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Solicitor/Cyfreithiwr
County Legal and Democratic Services
Officer
Swyddog Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol a
Democrataidd y Sir



**TO: Councillor: Arnold Woolley
(Chairman)**

Councillors: Carol Ellis, Patrick Heesom, Mel Higham,
Dennis Hutchinson, Nancy Matthews JP, Neville Phillips
OBE, Tony Sharps, Nigel Steele-Mortimer, Helen Yale

Your Ref /
Eich Cyf
Our Ref / Ein NG
Cyf
Date / Dyddiad 21/08/2008
Ask for /
Gofynner am Graham
Connah
Direct Dial /
Rhif Union 01352 702336
Fax / Ffacs

Dear Sir / Madam,

A meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** will be held in the **CLWYD COMMITTEE ROOM,
COUNTY HALL, MOLD** on **TUESDAY, 15 JULY 2008** at **09:30** to consider the
following items.

Yours faithfully

Assistant Director (Democratic Services)

AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES**

2. **MINUTES**

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on
24/06/2008 (copy enclosed).

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING REPORTS

STRATEGIC REPORTS

4. **SINGLE STATUS PROJECT UPDATE**

Report of the Interim Assistant Director of Human Resources and
Organisational Development - Portfolio of the Executive Member for
Corporate Governance and Strategy

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The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English
Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawau gohebiaeth yn y Cymraeg neu'r Saesneg

ESTYN INSPECTION OF EDUCATION SERVICES IN JANUARY 2009
Report of the Assistant Director - Schools Services - Portfolio of the
Executive Member for Education and Youth

5. ADOPTION OF THE RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN
Report of the Acting Director of Environment & Regeneration - Portfolio of
the Executive Member for Environment
6. FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2008/2009
Report of the Acting Director of Environment & Regeneration - Portfolio of
the Executive Member for Leisure and Public Protection
7. POST OFFICE CLOSURES - NORTH WALES
Report of the Chief Executive - Portfolio of the Executive Member for
Corporate Governance and Strategy
8. THE FLINTSHIRE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN 2008-2011

Report of the Director of Community Services and Chief Education Officer -
Portfolio of the Executive Member for Education and Youth

OPERATIONAL REPORTS

9. EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND (ERDF) PRIORITY FOUR
Report of the Acting Director of Environment & Regeneration - Portfolio of
the Executive Member for Environment
10. HRMIS PROJECT UPDATE AND PHASE 2 BUSINESS CASE
Report of the Interim Assistant Director of Human Resources and
Organisational Development - Portfolio of the Executive Member for
Corporate Governance and Strategy
11. WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION PAPERS -
BUSINESS RATES
Report of the County Finance Officer - Portfolio of the Leader and Executive
Member for Finance and Asset Management
12. PROPOSED NEW CEMETERY AT CONNAH'S QUAY
Report of the Acting Director of Community and Housing - Portfolio of the
Executive Member for Housing Strategy and Planning

EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS
Report of Chief Executive enclosed

EXECUTIVE
24 June 2008

Minutes of the meeting of the Executive of Flintshire County Council held at County Hall, Mold on Tuesday, 24 June, 2008.

PRESENT: Councillor A. Woolley (Chairman)

Councillors: C. A. Ellis, P. G. Heesom, M. Higham, H. D. Hutchinson, N. M. Matthews, N. Phillips, L. A. Sharps and H. Yale.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors: K. Armstrong-Braun, R. C. Bithell, J. Falshaw, R. Hampson, R. Jones, D. Mackie and Mrs D. Mackie.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Executive, Director of Community Services, County Finance Officer, County Legal and Democratic Services Officer, Acting Director of Community and Housing, Chief Education Officer, Assistant Director of ICT and Customer Services, Interim Assistant Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development, Chief Planning Services Officer and Principal Committee Services Officer.

APOLOGIES:

Councillor N R Steele-Mortimer.

22. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 3 June, 2008, copies of which have been previously circulated to Members, were confirmed as a correct record.

The Chief Executive referred to minute number 290 and thanked all Members and Officers who had taken part in the 2 day Interview Panels for the appointment of the two Directors posts. He said a candidate for each post had been offered the job and both had verbally accepted. The post of Director of Lifelong Learning had been offered to Ian Budd from Shropshire County Council and the Director of Environment had been offered to Carl Longland from Telford and Wrekin Council.

23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In response to a question from the Chairman regarding Agenda Item number 9 and whether or not it was necessary for the Buckley Town Councillors to declare an interest, the County Legal and Democratic Services Officer referred to the new Code of Conduct in which there had been a significant change regarding personal interests and which he explained to Members. It was his advice that as the report did not create a conflict (personal or prejudicial) between the ward roles of Members representing Buckley and their decision making roles they therefore did not need to declare a personal interest.

The Chief Executive concurred with this view but suggested that the new Ombudsman for Wales be invited to Flintshire to explain and discuss the new Code of Conduct as it was open to wide interpretation, which was agreed by Members.

24. REGULATORY PLAN UPDATE 2006/07

A report of the Chief Executive, copies of which had been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The Chief Executive presented the report, the purpose of which was to provide an update on the regulatory activity as contained within the Regulatory Plan for 2006/07 and any implications which needed to be addressed.

The Chief Executive explained that the Appendix to the report provided a summary of the work programme of the Regulatory Plan to date and reports and findings of both recognition of progress / good practice and also where further work was needed, which was already being addressed. The outstanding items in the Appendix would be reviewed with the relevant Officers.

The Executive Member for Corporate Governance and Strategy supported the recommendations outlined in the report.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the update of the Regulatory Plan activity be noted;
- (b) That the decision that all regulatory reports are presented to the Executive within three months of conclusion by the relevant Director and then referred to the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny or Audit Committee for any further input be reaffirmed; and
- (c) That the Executive receive detailed reports from the relevant Director of the regulatory reports identified in section 3.02 of the report which included proposals for actions to address any issues raised.

25. REGULATORY PLAN 2007/08

A report of the Chief Executive, copies of which had been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The Chief Executive presented the report, the purpose of which was to inform Members of this years Regulatory Plan which summarised the work to be done by the Wales Audit Office (WAO) and PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC). In presenting the report, the Chief Executive emphasised the significance of the information and said a lot of work had been done by the previous administration, the new administration, officers and the regulators in support of an effective and proportionate Regulatory Plan.

The Chief Executive referred to Exhibits 4 and 5 on pages 10 and 11 of the Appendix. Exhibit 4 reflected a number of the high risk areas currently facing the Council as agreed with its regulators at the recent Joint Risk

Assessment meeting. The regulators had acknowledged that work was also being undertaken within the Council to mitigate risks. Some of the work would be undertaken jointly with the Wales Audit Office as part of their inspection programme which was reflected in Exhibit 5. The table indicated those pieces of work which lead to a full review, in order to provide assurance and those where only a summary report was anticipated.

The Chief Executive explained that ongoing discussions were taking place with the Regulators to stress the value for money aspect of regulation, in that those who provided the service were accountable both for the quality of the service and timeliness of the work, and that the Regulatory Plan placed appropriate assurance over the performance of the Authority and the ability of the Authority to demonstrate improvement effectively. He said level of fees charged by the regulatory bodies appeared to increase each year and the fee base for Flintshire was the same as last year with the addition of inflation. This was despite the level of efficiencies that authorities were required to generate each year and a case had been made to the WAO that regulators should be seeking to generate and pass on similar efficiencies.

The Executive Member for Corporate Governance and Strategy supported the recommendations outlined in the report and referred to the rising fees and supported, in particular, the matter of value for money.

RESOLVED

- a) That the contents of the report and the 2008 Regulatory Plan be noted; and
- b) That all external regulatory reports be received and accountable for by the Executive and reports be referred to the appropriate Audit or Overview and Scrutiny Committee for due consideration.

26. PERFORMANCE OUTTURNS FOR 2007/08

A report of the Chief Executive, copies of which had been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The Chief Executive presented the report, the purpose of which was to review Flintshire County Council's outturn performance for 2007/08 of the various sets of performance indicators and measures. The 288 indicators were shown as Appendix 1 to the report. The report also considered the progress made against improving upon last year's performance and meeting the 2007/08 targets.

The Chief Executive stressed the significance of the report which was required to be produced annually under the requirements of the Wales Programme for Improvement. The annual report considered all the indicators to be included as a statutory requirement within the Improvement Plan which would be published by 31 October. By monitoring progress towards achieving targets and whether the trend was positive or negative, the Authority could be better informed about where action may need to be taken to redress seeming under-performance.

The Executive Member for Corporate Governance and Strategy supported the report and recommendations and said it was important to read the commentary alongside the data information.

The Chairman, in response to comments made by Members, said that any urgent indicators would be looked at closely and it could be possible to receive information which was broken down to enable them to look at either the top or the bottom indicators.

RESOLVED

- (a) That Flintshire County Council's performance in those service areas identified by appropriate performance indicators for the period April 2007 to March 2008 be accepted;
- (b) That the target analysis of performance against the targets set for 2007/08 be accepted, where appropriate;
- (c) That the trend analysis of the 2007/08 performance outturns against the performance of the previous year be accepted; and
- (d) That the areas of under performance be considered.

27. CONTROL OF NOISE AT WORK

A report of the Chief Executive and Occupational Physician, copies of which had been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The Chief Executive presented the report, the purpose of which was to seek approval for the implementation of a Noise at Work Management system in order that the Authority fulfil its statutory duties under the Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005.

The Chief Executive explained that the 2005 Regulations had introduced new statutory requirements for action to be taken by employers. Employers must take action to protect workers health at levels of 5 decibels lower than in the 1989 Regulations, and now required health surveillance for workers regularly exposed above 85 decibels. Additionally, exposure limit values had been lowered. The system by which the Authority would fulfil its statutory duties and how it would implement the necessary control measures were detailed in the Appendix to the report.

The Executive Member for Corporate Governance and Strategy supported the report and said it was essential that the effectiveness of controls were monitored through regular inspections, regular communication with managers and supervisors and health surveillance.

RESOLVED

That the policy document detailing the Management System for the Control of Noise at Work in order to comply with its statutory duty under the Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005 be approved.

28. FLINTSHIRE BUSINESS WEEK 2008

A report of the Acting Director of Environment & Regeneration, copies of which had been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The Chief Planning Services Officer presented the report, the purpose of which was to advise Members of the intention to hold the second Flintshire Business Week from 29 September to 8 October 2008.

The Chief Planning Services Officer explained that the 2007 event was widely regarded as a success and attracted considerable press interest and positive publicity for the Council. It also provided a significant opportunity for business networking and had led to greater inter-trading and also raised the profile of many Flintshire companies. The event was an excellent showcase for local economic achievement and highlighted the sharing of best practice between public, private and voluntary sectors.

The event was estimated to cost £20,000 which would be met from external sponsorship however a contingency element of £5,000 had been set aside within the wider Regeneration budget which would be utilised if necessary.

The Executive Member for Regeneration and Tourism supported the Flintshire Business Week and said he hoped the event would be well publicised. He said an invitation would be extended to all Members to attend the event.

Members referred to the report and queried whether the dates suggested would be the most suitable for MP's. A suggestion was also made that a presentation be delivered to various schools to highlight the week and for them to become involved in some way. The Chief Planning Services Officer explained that the session scheduled for the MP's could be re-arranged if necessary.

RESOLVED

That the content of the report be noted and that Flintshire Business Week become an annual event be endorsed.

29. BUCKLEY MULTI AGENCY SUPPORT CENTRE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

A report of the Assistant Director, Schools Services, copies of which had been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The Assistant Director, Schools Services presented the report the purpose of which was to advise Members of the Executive of plans for a new facility for young people in the centre of Buckley. Also sought was an agreement in principle to the development of a multi agency support centre for young people in Buckley, subject to the identification of suitable premises.

The Assistant Director, Schools Services referred to the Centre in Holywell which had surpassed all expectations and had been seen as a model of excellent practice by the Welsh Assembly Government and Ministers. Flintshire Youth and Community Service and Flintshire Youth Justice Service had worked together to develop the Holywell facility and this had been supported by a range of local agencies. The Holywell Centre had been equipped and designed according to a national (Wales-wide) specification for Information Shops for Young People, provided by Canllaw Online.

Based on the success of the Centre in Holywell, the Welsh Assembly Government was keen to support further similar developments within Flintshire and had indicated that capital funding would be available to achieve it. The Welsh Assembly Government had approved the fitting out of any proposed premises, and the rental costs for six years, through a grant of £250,000.

The proposed development of a new Centre has the full support of the Flintshire Community Safety Partnership, and of the Community Safety Partnerships of all North Wales Authorities.

The Executive Member for Social Services supported the report and recommendation and said a land search would be carried out to determine a suitable location. She also said that consultation with Buckley Town Council would be taking place.

RESOLVED

That the creation of a multi agency Information Shop and Support Centre for young people to be located within the town of Buckley be approved, in principle.

30. EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS

An information report of the Chief Executive, copies of which had been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The purpose of the report was to inform Members of actions taken under delegated powers.

The actions taken were as set out below:-

- a) Release of restrictive covenant – land adjacent to Northop Service Station, Holywell Road, Northop – Community & Housing.
- b) Approval to implement a programme of Local Road Safety Schemes, education, training and publicity funding by the Welsh Assembly Government – Environment & Regeneration.

31. DURATION OF MEETING

The meeting commenced at 9.30am and ended at 10.35am.

32. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

There were three members of the press in attendance and one member of the public.

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Chairman

SUMMARY OF DECLARATIONS MADE BY MEMBERS
IN ACCORDANCE WITH FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S
CODE OF CONDUCT

EXECUTIVE	DATE: 24 June 2008
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MEMBER	ITEM	MIN. NO. REFERS

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 4

REPORT TO: **EXECUTIVE**

DATE : **15 JULY 2008**

REPORT BY: **INTERIM ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES
AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

SUBJECT : **SINGLE STATUS PROJECT UPDATE**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To update Executive on the Single Status Project and outline the work still required to finalise the project and implement the Agreement

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Single Status project was set up to implement the National Agreement on single status conditions of service between former Manual and former Administrative, Professional, Technical and Clerical staff which was concluded in 1997 and reviewed in 2004. The project is central to the development of an equality-proofed pay structure which is the Authority's future defence against equal pay claims; and has played a key role in the work being done in response to grievances and litigation about equal pay in the current pay arrangements in the Council.

2.02 This is a large and complex corporate project which when completed will have major impact upon most employees of the Council. It is a project of such a scale that it was impossible to predict at the outset the exact timetable to evaluate such a large number of posts and to design the new pay and grading agreement. As a consequence the project has been funded incrementally. The project is now reaching the final stage and the communication activities detailed below describe the remainder of the process which will require experienced resource up to final implementation.

- Approval on Single Status Agreement sought from Flintshire County Council and Trade Union National Offices
- Employee briefings on the proposed Single Status Agreement
- Individual notification by letter to Green Book employees regarding their job evaluation score and how that relates to the proposed grading structure within the proposed agreement
- Trade Unions ballot on the proposed Single Status Agreement
- Individual notification to Green Book employees on the approved agreement, confirming their pay grade and terms and conditions, with details of the implementation date and appeals process.

Date: 19/08/2008

The exact timescales will be dependant on a number of assumptions and dependencies, namely that:

- Green Book colleagues who have not yet submitting outstanding job questionnaires do so immediately , so that they can be evaluated
- We will obtain the necessary approvals
- The agreement will be accepted at ballot by Trade Union members

2.03 The project has two workstreams feeding in to the main work of pay negotiations. These are job evaluation and pay data preparation. Once they are complete, proposals can be costed and a draft Pay and Grading Agreement can be consulted on and balloted. The draft Agreement will be presented to Council for authority to proceed prior to consultation commencing with employees. Employee consultation will include all affected staff through a major series of presentations. It is also necessary to gain the approval of Trade Union national offices prior to ballot. Implementation of the new pay scheme for 4000 Authority staff and 2000 school-based staff can then follow.

2.04 An exercise of this scale and nature requires both a strategic orientation and an attention to high level, high volume detail on the part of the project team. It also creates a major impact on managers as fundamental changes to pay, grading and conditions of service are made and they will need to communicate the corporate message and support their teams throughout the process.

2.05 The focal point in this process for members is when the new Single Status Agreement is presented to Council for approval. Recent experience from other Councils in both Wales and England has shown us that ownership of the results and commitment to supporting the new agreement from members and all managers within the Council is essential if the organisation is to maintain service standards during a time of change and uncertainty.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 Current Position (12 June 2008) – Authority Posts

For the Authority posts, the project has evaluated 1124 full job questionnaires and 137 Interim questionnaires (done for costing purposes pending the postholders being in a position to do a full questionnaire). Only 40 full and 12 interim questionnaires now remain outstanding; plus 170 to convert from interim to full questionnaires. However, this has to be considered in the context of the original deadlines put to Directorates, which should have seen completion of job evaluation by 3 August 2007. The delay has had a double impact on the project: timelines are delayed and resources are diverted to progress chasing.

3.02 Current Position (12 June 2008) – Schools Posts

The Schools workstream was considerably delayed by a uncertainty over employment and financial responsibility. A management decision was not made until March 2008 and the project now has job questionnaires in for almost all schools posts. These are being quality assured by a job analyst and will then be evaluated over the next couple of months. It had originally been hoped that this workstream would have been completed by the end of the 2006/7 academic year.

3.03 Impact

Due to needing job evaluation information to feed the pay and grading designs work and the subsequent negotiations, the project has been delayed beyond its funded period up to June 2008 and full completion is expected in December 2008. The work needed from completion of job evaluation to completion of the project includes completion of pay modelling and pay negotiations, including equalities impact assessments, consultation with all parties and notification of results to staff.

3.04 Appeals

The appeals stage will follow the implementation stage described above. The agreement on the process provides a preliminary enquiry stage which is effectively an informal resolution stage. Formal appeals will have to be lodged by eight weeks after results. After this they will be scheduled, evaluated and outcomes will be reported. It is estimated that this may take up to six months to process and requires a task and finish team.

3.05 Development Work

The work in progress on the Pay & Grading Agreement has highlighted that further development will be needed to achieve full benefit from it in the future. These development issues are in large part elements of a Total Reward Strategy. There are four HR workstreams. The first two relate to the Working Time Directive and to Flexible Working (in its widest sense). The first is essential for legal compliance; the second for effective work/life balance policies supporting flexible service delivery. The other two workstreams are the development of a competence-based pay progression scheme, moving us away from service based progression with automatic annual increments; and the introduction of job and structural/organisational design support as a corporate function; there is development work to be done on this before it is mainstreamed in to the HR function.

These workstreams require the services of a Reward Adviser to the HR function. Without this, the development work cannot take place and an ongoing service to managers cannot be provided.

3.06 Maintenance

It is critical that the grading structure is maintained, in order to protect the Authority from future equal pay claims. It is already known that there have been a considerable number of structural changes during the life of the project, which the initial project was not scoped to evaluate and which must be included in a maintenance workstream. It is highly likely that at least in the first year of the project there will be a further high demand for maintenance job evaluation as organisational changes are developed, and it is prudent to plan accordingly.

3.07 Extension of the Agreement to Red Book/Craft staff

There is an opportunity to review the pay and conditions of service of Craft staff following the implementation of the Single Status Agreement.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That the Executive approve a one-off contribution of £78,000 from unearmarked reserves to cover the cost of completion of the project by December 2008

4.02 That the Executive approve a one-off contribution of £50,000 from unearmarked reserves to fund development work for a time limited period to enable mainstreaming into the HR function

4.03 That the Executive note that a further paper be submitted in due course on the future structure needed in the Pay & Grading function once at the maintenance stage.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 The full cost of extending the contracts of the existing the team for 6 months is £97,248. £19,454 can however, be found within existing budgets. Therefore, a one-off allocation from unearmarked reserves of £78,000 is required from July to December to complete the current project.

Project Manager	£26,100
Job Analysts/Evaluator	£20,621
Trade Union Link Officer	£11,861
Financial Planner	£18,332
Clerical Help (x2)	£20,334

5.02 A one-off allocation from unearmarked reserves of £50,000 is required to fund the necessary development work on a total reward strategy. This is based on the assumption that a specialist adviser will cost approximately £1,200 per week and that it will take almost 12 months to complete the necessary work.

5.03 Based on estimated levels of appeals the cost of support staff for the process can be found within the existing project budget. If, however, levels of appeals considerably exceed current estimates, staffing levels may need to be reviewed.

5.04 A further report to Executive will follow once the pay and grading function has been reviewed.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 The project is the means by which the Authority will ensure an equality proofed pay structure for the future

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 The project affects the pay and conditions of service of 6000 staff

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 As appropriate with joint trade union colleagues and employees.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 None

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **EXECUTIVE**

DATE : **15 JULY 2008**

REPORT BY: **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR - SCHOOLS SERVICES**

SUBJECT : **ESTYN INSPECTION OF EDUCATION SERVICES IN**
 JANUARY 2009

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.01 To inform Executive of the forthcoming inspection by Estyn, of Educational Services in January 2009.
- 1.02 To inform Executive of the proposed approach to be taken in preparation for the inspection.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 Estyn has a statutory duty to undertake LEA inspections. Under this legislation Estyn agreed with each Authority a programme of inspections that covered all or most of the LEA's functions over a period of six years. In 2007 support for school improvement services was inspected. Following on from this and following a number of discussions between the Chief Executive, the Interim Director of Education, Children's Services and Recreation and Estyn, it was agreed that the following areas will be inspected during January 2009;

- Additional Learning Needs (including Able and Talented);
- Access;
- Promoting social Inclusion and the wellbeing of learners;
- Strategic management; and
- Support services for schools and other services.

Within these areas the following Services are covered:

- Access – admissions & transport;
- Capital projects and planning;
- Early years – Sure Start (sufficiency, quality, access);
- Facilities services (school meals);
- Financial management (including grants & benefits);
- ICT (in relation to support infrastructure); and
- Inclusion Service;
- Racial equality;

- Staffing and governance; and
- Youth & Community Services (with regard to contribution to Inclusion and in relation to previous Inspection);

2.02 The inspection will be based on the LEA's self evaluation and subsequent action planning processes which include reporting against a number of key and local performance indicators and performance in previous inspections. The key steps to preparing for an inspection are:

- ensuring that there is a working knowledge of the *Inspection Framework*;
- ensuring that all programmed self evaluations have been consistently completed and are fully understood, with robust action plans in place;
- ensure all action plans are monitored, analysed, reported and reviewed at consistent timely intervals;
- liaising with the Reporting Inspector to ensure all administrative aspects of the inspection are considered, including collation of relevant documents, meetings and interview arrangements, parking, etc;
- ensuring that the appropriate Members, officers and stakeholders are available during the inspection period; and
- ensuring all relevant documentation is available.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 To ensure that the LEA is fully prepared it is proposed that Flintshire adopts the process employed by a number of other authorities of establishing a project board and team to assist officers in their preparation for the inspection. This process has been deemed to be good practice.

3.02 Project Board & Team

It is proposed that a project board and team be established to assist the Authority and each service in:

- preparing for the inspection;
- carrying out self evaluation reports ensuring that all of the elements of *Challenge, Compare, Consult and Compete* are included and that a consistent approach is maintained throughout;
- establishing robust action plans;
- ensuring local performance indicators are relevant and support key performance indicators in providing a view of the services performance as a whole;
- ensuring all relevant documentation is available; and
- ensuring all evidence to support the good practice of strategic and performance management throughout the Directorate and services is readily available.

3.03 **The role of the Project Board** will be to:

- represent the senior decision making roles of the Authority;
- represent the strategic direction to the Project Team;
- formally approve the proposed project plan once it has been developed;
- share information regarding the progress of the project and inspection with the strategic managers and decision makers of the Authority.

It is proposed that the corporate project management technique, which utilises the Prince2 methodology be used. Part of this methodology is that the Project Board manages through exception i.e. whilst the Board will receive regular updates (at timed intervals specified by the Board) these updates will be focussed on deviations from the approved Project Plan should there be any. (A copy of the Draft Proposed Project Plan is attached in Appendix 1). The Project Board will only meet if a significant exception has been reported that requires further strategic direction and approval.

3.04 **Membership of Project Board**

It is proposed that the following members and officers constitute the Project Board:

- Leader - Councillor Arnold Woolley
- Chief Executive – Colin Everett (Chair)
- Corporate Director of Life Long Learning
- Acting Chief Education Officer – Elwyn Davies
- Interim Head of Resources & Development - Kim Garcia
- Executive Member for Education: Nigel Street Mortimer
- Lifelong Learning Overview & Scrutiny Committee Chair Peter Macfarlane

The membership shown above is proposed because it is known that the primary focus of the inspection will be on Strategic Management and as such a suitably strategic body of Members and officers is suggested to provide support for this inspection. In addition to the above named Members it is suggested that the following are Co-opted onto the Project Board as appropriate:

- Director of Community Services
- Head of Children's Services
- Executive Member for Community Services
- Social & Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee Chair

3.05 **Project Team**

To assist Services and Managers in preparing for the inspection it is proposed that this support is provided via a Project Team that will ensure:

- a robust, timely and accurate reporting mechanism to:
 - the Project Board (at intervals specified by the Board);

- all relevant committees including Executive and Scrutiny (as and when required and appropriate)
- all relevant stakeholders including schools and Headteachers;
- a rigorous communication plan is in place that ensures all Officers are fully informed of progress to date regarding self-evaluation questionnaires, action plans and reviewing and monitoring processes;
- a consistent approach is undertaken to self-evaluation reporting and subsequent action plans;
- all documentation is readily available and in a suitable format. Documentation includes:
 - relevant strategies, policies and plans;
 - financial and budgetary data;
 - performance management data (Core, Key and Local);
 - consultation exercises, analysis of results and any outcomes.

3.06 **Membership of Project Team**

It is proposed that the following officers constitute the Project Team:

Key Project Team Members:

Inclusion Service – Trevor Payne

Directorate Improvement Manager – Jane Freeman

Pupil Support Manager – Gill Yates

CYPP Coordinator – Emma Jones

Co-opted Members to be invited as and when required:

Governor Development Coordinator – Kim Brookes

Principal Accountant (Schools Finance) – Steve Gadd

Performance Information Manager – Jenny Dobson

Property Programming Manager – Paula Vogt

It is suggested that a critical friend be invited onto the Project Team. The current suggestion is Mr Graham Edwards (Head of Service, Education Inclusion – Wrexham County Borough Council) who has been informally approached and has given his agreement in principle pending approval of this report.

3.07 It is proposed that the project team undertake a number of generic tasks with each manager. This will ensure a consistent approach has been applied across the Directorate. The main tasks identified as essential are:

- identify the services to be included within the inspection
- undertake self-evaluation assessment to answer the key questions that will be the focus of the inspection, namely:
 - How effective is the Authority's strategic planning?
 - How effective are services and how does performance compare, including value for money?

- How effective are leadership and strategic management?
- How well do leaders and managers monitor, evaluate and improve services?

Within each of these questions are a number of areas of enquiry utilised by the Inspectors to assist them in identifying good practice and areas for improvement.

- Cross-reference findings with consultation results from exercise carried out as part of the development of the Children & Young People's Plan (The Single Plan) and outcomes of corporate risk assessment;
- identify areas for improvement;
- development of an action plan to address these areas and to assist the service in continuous improvement. Included within this step is the development of Focus Groups to assist the implementation of actions to ensure cross-cutting themes and overarching issues are tackled in an appropriate manner;
- include these action plans within the strategic planning processes and align to Directorate, Corporate and Partnership aims and objectives;
- gather evidence of progress on previous inspections recommendations
- identify officers, Members and stakeholders that are likely to be subject to interview by the Inspectors;

3.08 It should be noted that it is felt that there is a significant amount of work to be undertaken in order for the Directorate to ensure that the Authority is fully prepared for this Inspection and as such it is proposed that approval be granted for the Inclusion Service Representative (Trevor Payne), Directorate Improvement Manager (Jane Freeman), Pupil Support Manager (Gill Yates) and two administrative personnel to be allocated a day a week to give to work for the inspection priority over and above any other priorities that might arise. As the inspection date becomes closer this will need to be reviewed with the potential for it to increase.

3.09 **Reporting Mechanisms**

Should the proposal to establish a Project Board and Team be approved, it is suggested that the following reporting mechanisms are employed:

- Monthly progress reports to the Lifelong Learning Directorate's Management Team, with any significant exceptions being reported immediately to the Chair of the Project Board.
- Bi-monthly progress reports to the Project Board, with any significant exceptions being reported immediately to CMT, Executive and the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.
- Quarterly progress reports to CMT, Executive and the appropriate Scrutiny Committee, with final report to include the final report from Estyn and the draft action plan to Council.

3.10 **Communication Plan**

It is proposed that the following methods are employed to ensure that all officers and stakeholders are kept fully informed of progress, consulted as appropriate and have the opportunity to input into any subsequent action plans as necessary:

- Regular articles in *Flintshire Focus*
- Regular update within *Teambrief*
- Introduction of a “newsletter” giving information on the Project Team and the Inspection progress and processes for Directorate staff, school staff and headteachers to be published at least bi-monthly.
- Introduction on internal Infonet of a webpage for regular progress updates and opportunity to post questions to the Project Team.

References:

1. Estyn have a statutory duty to undertaking LEA inspections under section 38 of the Education Act 1997 and section 51 of the of the Children Act 2004 from April 2006.
2. The Framework includes the Inspection of LEA Services and the relevant Guidance for the Inspection of Local Education Services in Wales from April 2006.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 That the report and proposals outlined in Section 3 and impending Inspection are noted.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 Currently there are no financial implications for Flintshire County Council.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 There are no direct implications that would affect any poverty-related issues for children and young people.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.01 There are no direct implications that would affect any environmental or sustainable services or policies.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.01 Currently there are no foreseen implications that would have any direct equalities impact, however it should be noted that a full Equalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken of all Services within the scope of the Inspection that have been identified previously as being High Priority under the Authority’s Race Equalities Scheme.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.01 Should the proposals outlined within the report be approved there is, inherent within this report, a request that all Officers give priority to requests from the Project Team.
- 9.02 In addition to the above, the effects upon the workloads and request for a one day prioritisation to be given to the Inspection for those outlined within paragraph 3.08 should be noted.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

- 10.01 As part of the Self-evaluation process the following Officers, Members and Groups would need to be consulted with:
- Chief Executive
 - Director of Lifelong Learning
 - Chief Finance Officer
 - Executive Member for Education
 - Chairs of Lifelong Learning and Social & Health Overview & Scrutiny Committees
 - Focus group of Scrutiny Members
 - Heads and Managers of Services (to include Children's Services)
 - Users of Services:-
 - Focus group of School Governors
 - Focus group of Headteachers
 - Focus group of Parents
 - Focus group of learners (representatives from School Councils)
 - Focus group of Children & Young People (via CYPP consultation groups and Youth & Community Services consultation groups)

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

- 11.01 Life Long Learning Directorate Management Team

12.00 APPENDICES

- 12.01 Appendix 1 - Draft Project Plan

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Guidance for the Inspection of Local Authority Education Services in Wales from April 2006.

Contact Officer: Jane Freeman
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Key Activity	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan 09	Feb 09	Mar 09	Activity completed by end of:
1	Establish Project Team											May-08
2	Establish Project Board											May-08
3	Identify Nominee											May-08
4	Identify Services to be inspected											May-08
5	Identify Focus Groups to be consulted											May-08
6	Contact Managers to arrange self-evaluation											May-08
7	Interview Managers and Staff using self-evaluation template (ensure have evidence for each grade allocated to service)											Jun-08
8	Work with Managers to formulate action plans to develop service in response to self evaluation											Jun - Jul 08
8a	Look at comparisons with neighbouring authorities both physical & statistical neighbours identify differences & reasons if possible.											
9	Consult Focus Groups on self evaluation results and action plans											Jul - Aug 08
9a	ED - meeting Sec Heads											
9b	JD/TP meeting representative group of Primary Heads											
9c	RD - meeting with Special Schools Heads											
9d	Remind Headteachers to complete and return SLA questionnaires											
10	Confirm Action Plans											Aug-08
11	Report to Project Board results of Self Evaluation and draft Action plans. Project Team to suggest grade for prospects and formally report at meeting to P											Aug-08
12	Align Action Plans within Services Plans to Council Plan, CYPP Single Plan and NSF											Aug - Sep 08
13	Final prep for inspectors											Dec-09
14	Inspection											Jan-09
15	Receive Draft Report											Date to be confirmed by Inspection team
16	Report to Board											
17	Prepare response											
18	Receive final report											
19	Report to Committees											
A/B	Continuous activity throughout											

Continuous activity throughout

A	Continuous monitoring, reporting and reviewing action plans and progress of service improvement including, regular updates, Newsletter and reports on progress, gathering information and evidence, log and set up folders.	May - Jan 08
B	Ensure any issues raised are looked into and covered within project as appropriate via an Issue Log.	May - Jan 08
C	Folders to be set up within L Drive so can be accessed by all relevant Officers and Senior Managers	May-08
D	L Drive folders to contain a hyper-linked index for quick file access	May - Aug 08

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 6

REPORT TO: EXECUTIVE

DATE : 15 JULY 2008

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & REGENERATION

SUBJECT : ADOPTION OF THE RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To seek Members approval for the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, to be granted delegated powers to adopt the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) on behalf of the County Council in order that the Plan may be submitted to the Welsh Assembly Government by September 2008.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Executive at its meeting on 11 March 2008 approved the draft ROWIP for statutory consultation under the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000.

2.02 The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) in April 2008 contacted Authorities, who still had to publish their ROWIP, advising that they would be providing additional funding for ROWIP implementation, subject to certain conditions, one of which is that the ROWIP is adopted and in place by September.

2.03 WAG also suggested and supported that the consultation period for the draft ROWIP could be reduced from the recommended 12 weeks to 8 weeks. The key interests on the Local Access Forum were consulted upon this and accepted the reduced consultation period. The consultation period therefore ends on the 7 July 2008.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 WAG has made £1.7 million available for the funding of ROWIP in 2008/09 and a similar sum is allocated on a provisional basis for the following two financial years. The funding is to be allocated to ROWIP authorities on the basis of a formula.

3.02 The Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) will be administering the WAG

ROWIP Funding Programme for the implementation of priority ROWIP actions.

- 3.03 A condition of the funding is that the authority must formally adopt the ROWIP by September 2008 having presented it for a formal period of public consultation. CCW reserve the right to withdraw the offer of funding in the event that an authority fails to meet this condition.
- 3.04 Any funding provided under the WAG ROWIP Funding Programme must be additional to the planned funding for general countryside management work and must not displace the authority's own funding and resources for rights of way work.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 That Members approve that the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Authority, be granted delegated powers to adopt the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) on behalf of the County Council, in order that the Plan may be submitted to the Welsh Assembly Government.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 Not adopting the ROWIP by September 2008 could jeopardise the authority receiving funding from the WAG ROWIP Funding Programme, being administered by CCW on behalf of WAG. The indicated allocation for 2008/09 is £60,315, with further funding in 2009/10 and 2010/11.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 No identified impact.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.01 The adoption of the ROWIP and the provision of the additional funding from the WAG will enable improved management and accessibility of the rights of way network. This will open up the countryside and encourage more sustainable forms of transport.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.01 The improved management and accessibility of the rights of way network will open up the countryside to all, including those members of the community with disabilities.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 No identified impact.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Consultation is required with all interested parties in accordance with the CROW Act and guidance and subsequent communications issued by WAG.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Consultation is currently being undertaken in accordance with 10.1 above, which concludes on 7 July 2008.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

The draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 7

REPORT TO: EXECUTIVE

DATE : 15 JULY 2008

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & REGENERATION

SUBJECT : FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2008/2009

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.01 To seek Members' approval for the Food Service Plan for Flintshire County Council which details the service delivery programme for the period 1st April 2008 to 31st March 2009. This Plan includes a review of the Service Plan 2007 and therefore cannot be finalised until all the statistical data and all other information is compiled and reviewed for the previous year.

2.00 BACKGROUND

- 2.01 Local Authorities throughout the UK have been directed by the Food Standards Agency to take the necessary action to implement the new Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement, operational from 1st April 2001. The Framework has been developed to ensure a consistent food law enforcement service throughout the Country.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.01 The Service Plan, a copy of which is available in each of the Members' Rooms, has been produced by Officers of the Environmental Health and Trading Standards Departments in line with the model format contained with the Framework Agreement. It outlines the proposals for Service Delivery for the period 1st April 2008 to 31st March 2009, as well as a review of the Service Plan for 2007 with overall performance for 2007-08 shown as Appendix 1 within this document.

Food Safety Law Enforcement is delivered by the Environmental Health Department.

Food and Agricultural Standards Law Enforcement is delivered by the Trading Standards Department.

Both of these Departments are located in the Public Protection Division of the Environment and Regeneration Directorate.

- 3.02 The Service Plan outlines how the Service will be delivered over the coming financial year. This Plan will be backed up by comprehensive documentation

Date: 19/08/2008

and procedures which will be developed to ensure that the Council's Food Law Enforcement activities meet the requirements.

3.03 The Service Plan will be subject to annual review.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 To seek approval of a recommendation to County Council.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 The cost of implementing the agreement on Food Law Enforcement will be met from within the existing Directorate of Environment and Regeneration revenue budget.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 N/A.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 N/A.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix I – Performance 2007-08

12.02 Appendix 2 - Performance Tartgets 2008-09

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

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APPENDIX I – PERFORMANCE 2007-08

3. Service Delivery

3.1.1 Programmed Inspection Activity

Food Safety

Risk	Programmed	Achieved
A)	6	5
B) High Risk	87	85
C)	302	301
D	196	63
E	99	25
Unrated/Unclassified	49	29
TOTAL	739	509
Approved Premises (not on programme)	14	6
TOTAL Number of Revisits undertaken		418

Trading Standards

Risk	Programmed	Achieved
High	23	22
Medium	285	253
TOTAL	308	275

3.2 Food and Feeding Stuffs Complaints

Food Safety number of complaints	-	142	
% achieved within Target Response time	-	94%	
Trading Standards number of complaints	-	30	
% achieved within Target Response Time	-	87%	

3.3 Home Authority Principle

Food Safety	-	20 referrals received	
Trading Standards	-	18 referrals received	

3.4 Advice to Business

Food Safety	-	209 requests for advice	
% achieved within Target Response Time	-	98%	
Trading Standards	-	26 requests for business advice	
% achieved within Target Response Time	-	92%	

3.5 Food and Feeding Stuffs Inspection and Sampling

Food Safety	-	232 samples – statutory and monitoring	
Trading Standards	-	112 samples – monitoring	

3.6 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease

Food Safety only

Sporadic Notifications	-	238	
Sporadic Outbreaks	-	8	(7 outbreaks of Viral Gastroenteritis – not thought to be food related) (1 outbreak of E.coli 0157 – not thought to be food related)

3.7 Food Safety Incidents

Number of Food Alerts	-	63	
Number of Foot and Mouth Export Certificates issued	-	31	

3.8 Welsh Food Hygiene Award

Number of premises eligible for: Gold 5 Silver 47 Bronze 42

Appendix 2

Performance Targets 2008/2009

Programmed Inspections – Food Safety

Risk	Number Due
A	2
B	76
C	296
D	181
E	Alternative Enforcement Strategy
Unrated	69
Approved Premises	12
Total - 636	

Revisits to Premises = Between 400-500

Programmed Inspections – Trading Standards

High Risk	18
Medium Risk	254
Feeding Stuffs – High Risk	2
Total - 274	

Revisits to Premises = Approx. 20

Reactive work for Food Safety and Trading Standards

The target is to deal with 100% of all reactive work received by both the Food Safety and Trading Standards Sections.

Reactive work can include such matters as:

- ❖ Food Complaints
- ❖ Feeding Stuffs Complaints
- ❖ Home Authority Principle Referrals
- ❖ Advice to Business
- ❖ Food Sampling
- ❖ Feeding Stuffs Sampling
- ❖ Control and Investigation of both Sporadic Cases and Outbreaks of Food Related Infectious Diseases
- ❖ Food Safety Incidents

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 8

REPORT TO: **EXECUTIVE**

DATE : **15 JULY 2008**

REPORT BY: **CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

SUBJECT : **POST OFFICE CLOSURES - NORTH WALES**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To inform Executive of the impending announcement from Post Office Ltd regarding proposed post office closures in North Wales and the subsequent consultation exercise.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Government has announced that the Post Office is to close 2500 post offices across the country and to set up 500 outreach centres to mitigate closures in some areas. The closure programme is underway and is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2008. This will leave a post office network of approximately 11700 post offices once the closure programme is finished .

2.02 Post Office Ltd has split the UK into 46 review areas based on groupings of Parliamentary Constituencies and is consulting on its proposals for each review area on a rolling basis.

2.03 Customers will only know if their local post office is to close at the start of the public consultation in their area and this information will be available via the internet.

2.04 Once the proposals for an area are known customers have six weeks to respond to Post Office Ltd. A final decision as to whether to proceed with the proposed closures will be announced once the consultation process has been completed. The process of informing Post Offices and franchises has been widely criticised.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

Proposals for Flintshire/North Wales

3.01 The Local Public Consultation in North Wales is due to commence on 29th July 2008. Recognising that this scheduled consultation period is due to be held at the height of the summer holiday period when County Councils and Community Councils are in recess Councils in North Wales have written to

Post Office Ltd requesting that the consultation period be deferred until September 2008 to avoid the busy summer period. The Post Office has responded and agreed only that the consultation period be extended by one calendar week. In North Wales the period of public consultation will therefore last for seven weeks and will commence on 29th July and end on 15th September 2008.

- 3.02 The Post Office has been further requested to extend the consultation period by a month but to date no further concession has been granted.
- 3.03 Details of the proposed post office closures in Flintshire and North Wales will be released on Tuesday 29th July 2008. In January the Post Office said is envisaged in the region of 197 closures across Wales. To date in South and Mid Wales a total of 109 proposed closures have been announced, consultation is currently ongoing regarding 40 proposed closures in Swansea and South West Wales. On the basis of the above figures we would assume, although we have been unable to obtain confirmation, that the balance of approximately 48 will be affected across North Wales. However it is not possible at this juncture to anticipate the closure and outreach centre programme proposed for Flintshire
- 3.04 The precise details of all the proposals for Flintshire and North Wales will be available on the Post Office website under the heading 'Network Change Programme' on **July 29th 2008**.
- 3.05 The consultation period for responding to proposed closures is very tight particularly coming during the summer holiday period. As soon as the proposals are announced a briefing paper outlining the main proposals will be prepared and circulated to all members of the Council.

Regional Perspective

- 3.06 In England where the closure programme is nearing completion a number of local authorities e.g. Essex County Council have expressed an interest in providing financial support to particular post offices earmarked for closure. Where Post Office Ltd receives a serious approach to financially support a post office it has committed to engaging with the interested party on the costs that would need to be covered and the contractual terms and conditions which would apply. Sue Huggins, Head of the Post Office's network change programme, said once the scheme was up and running other authorities would be able to use the same model and tailor it to their needs. She also warned of the difficulties in undertaking such a scheme. **(Source: LGA website)**
- 3.07 Only when the detailed proposals for North Wales are released will it be possible to consider whether the provision of financial support from local authorities or other organisations is an appropriate or viable option.

- 3.08 The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) is in continuing dialogue with Post Office Ltd over its potential post office closures across Wales and possible local government involvement in post office business in the future.

Whilst it accepts that there is a rationale for change based on mounting financial losses and falling customer numbers to the UK post office network, the WLGA is urging Post Office Ltd to keep open across Wales as many parts of the Post Office network as possible arguing that the Post Office is at the 'heart of community life' for many communities, offering a vital service that keeps people, particularly elderly people and other socially excluded groups connected to their community as well as other towns and villages.

The WLGA is urging Post Office Ltd to ensure that this consultation is not driven by profit consideration alone.

- 3.09 The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) in its One Wales document made a commitment to:

"reinstate and focus the Post Office Development Fund, exploring with local government colleagues, ways in which Post Offices might better be used for local authority, business and other local services and also encouraging the location of free ATMs in post offices.

The WLGA is working closely with WAG over the possible reintroduction of this scheme.

- 3.10 Flintshire County Council have received no direct approach from either the Welsh Assembly Government or the Welsh Local Government Association to consider whether Council's would want to diversify into some partnership arrangements.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 Executive is recommended to

(i) consider and make its response to the consultation exercise, the proposed closure and outreach centres programme and the impact within Flintshire;
(ii) to take a position on the reintroduction of the Post Office Development Fund;
(iii) agree to receive an update on the Post Office closures for Flintshire at its meeting on the 5th August, 2008 following the announcement of the closure on the 29th July 2008.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 There are no financial implications implicit in this report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 There are no anti poverty impacts contained in this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 There are no environmental impacts contained in this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 There are no equalities impacts implicit in this report. Any proposed Post Office closures will have equalities implications particularly for those with a disability or who are reliant on public transport.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 There are no personnel implication arising from this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 There is no requirement for consultation.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 None

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 9

REPORT TO: EXECUTIVE

DATE : 15 JULY 2008

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES AND CHIEF
EDUCATION OFFICER**

**SUBJECT : THE FLINTSHIRE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN
2008-2011**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To seek Members' approval for the Flintshire Children and Young People's Plan 2008-2011. The Local Authority has a statutory duty to publish a plan setting out its strategy for discharging its functions as required by Section 26 Children Act 2004.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Welsh Assembly Government has set out its national vision for the children and young people of Wales in the background documents mentioned in this report. Attached as Appendix 1 is the Flintshire Children and Young People's Plan which sets out the local vision and aspirations for the children and young people of Flintshire. The plan aims to improve outcomes for children and young people through strengthening co-operation across public services and with partners in the voluntary and independent sectors. It places children, young people and their families at the centre, enabling active participation in service planning and delivery.

2.02 Regulations relating to Section 26 of the Children Act 2004 require each local authority to publish a plan setting out its strategy for discharging its functions in relation to all children and young people - defined as all those up to and including age nineteen and those over the age of nineteen receiving services under Sections 23C to 23D of the Children Act 1989 (young people leaving care) or youth support services within the meaning of Section 123 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000.

2.03 The Children and Young People's Plan (Wales) Regulations 2007 relate to the following guidance:

- Stronger Partnerships for Better Outcomes
- Shared Planning for Better Outcomes

Date: 21/08/2008

The statutory guidance came into force on the 1st September 2007. The aim of the Children Act 2004 and its related guidance is to ensure that the local authority and its partners work together to improve the well being of children and young people in their local authority area.

- 2.04 Through the Children and Young People's Plan the local authority also has to discharge its responsibility under Section 22 and 26 of the Childcare Act 2006. Section 22 requires that the local authority undertakes an assessment of the sufficiency of childcare to enable parents to work or train. Section 26 relates to the duty to develop a Family Information Service which provides information to families with children and young people up to the age of nineteen years.
- 2.05 The new guidance and regulations replace the requirements for :
- The (Social Services) Children's Services Plan
 - The Single Education Plan
 - The Young People's Partnership Strategy and Annual Youth Plan for Youth Support Services
 - The Children First Management Action Plan
- 2.06 Current statutory duties and responsibilities for delivery of services remain. Each partner retains their existing accountability for the delivery of services for which they are responsible. The implementation of the Children and Young People's Plan will depend on the cooperation of partners and their will to work collectively to improve outcomes for the children, young people and families of Flintshire.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.01 In accordance with their statutory responsibilities the Assembly Government expects local authorities to take the lead in driving forward partnership working that puts in place effective integrated services for all children and young people.
- 3.02 The Children and Young People's Plan is the defining statement of strategic planning intent and priorities for all children and young people's services in the area. The arrangements need to be citizen-focussed, placing the needs of children and young people at the centre and enabling their active participation in service planning. The focus is achieving on positive outcomes for children and young people.
- 3.03 Local partners, led by the local authority in the context of its community leadership role, are expected to work together to implement the necessary changes in organisational culture and practice. The responsibility of

partnerships is joint strategic planning, driven by shared profiling of service provision and identification of need, to support integrated provision of services.

3.04 The Welsh Assembly Government has adopted the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child as the basis of all its work for children and young people. This is expressed in 7 core aims that all children and young people:

- have a flying start in life;
- have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities;
- enjoy the best possible health and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation;
- have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities;
- are listened to, treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised;
- have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional wellbeing; and
- are not disadvantaged by poverty.

3.05 The Children and Young People's Plan is structured around the 7 core aims and identifies how we aim to ensure that the children and young people of Flintshire's rights and entitlements are met. In planning the Partnership adheres to the following principles:

- Applies the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Increases the priority given to meeting need
- Ensures that the voices of children, young people and families are heard
- Gives the highest priority to those in greatest need
- Plans for preventative services
- Integrates safeguards for children and young people
- Includes universal services
- Integrates delivery through joint commissioning and pooled funding
- Values diversity and promotes equality of opportunity

3.06 The first Children and Young People's Plan must be published by 30th September 2008. This plan will cover the period 2008-2011. The plan will have to be reviewed annually and a new plan published every three years. The next plan will have to be published by the 1st April 2011.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 To seek approval of a recommendation to County Council.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 There are no immediate financial implications. However the statutory planning guidance requires the Partnership to develop a strategy for the joint commissioning of services. Such a strategy will support the opportunities to pool budgets, or share resources both informally or formally when appropriate.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 One of the 7 core aims states that children should not be disadvantaged by poverty. The plan details the actions to be taken to reduce the impact of poverty on the children and young people of Flintshire.

6.02 One of the main priorities of the plan is to provide support for those adults who are parents. One aspect of that support will be to enable parents to access learning opportunities which will enhance their skills and reduce the risk of families experiencing poverty.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 The plan has the potential to have a very positive impact in that it aims to ensure that the parents, children and young people of Flintshire are aware of their role in promoting sustainable development.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 Whilst this plan relates to promoting the wellbeing and development of all of the children and young people of Flintshire it has a particular aim to promote the well being and development of the most vulnerable families. The plan has been the subject of the Flintshire Equalities Impact Assessment and also the Flintshire Integrated Policy Assessment Tool.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 The plan includes a section which gives details about training and developing the children and young people's workforce.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 The planning guidance stipulated that the development of the plan must include a public consultation period. Further details of the consultation are given in the paragraphs below in section 11.00.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

- 11.01 During the process of developing the plan there have been two periods of consultation. Firstly there was a period of consultation when the public and partner agencies were given the opportunity to comment on the priorities which had emerged from the Needs Assessment. This was a joint consultation held in conjunction with the consultation on the Health, Social Care and Well-being Strategy and was undertaken between October 2007 and December 2007.
- 11.02 Secondly a twelve week period of consultation was held between March 10th 2008 and June 2nd 2008 when an opportunity was offered to comment on the draft plan. The consultation has been an extensive participatory process which has involved significant numbers of young children, young people, parents, carers and representatives from statutory, voluntary and independent sector partners.

12.00 APPENDICES

- 12.01 The Children and Young People's Plan is attached as Appendix 1. Within the plan, on page 3, reference is made to a series of draft appendices relating to the draft plan. These documents are of a substantial size and can be accessed in electronic format at www.Youngflintshire.co.uk.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Extending Entitlement Supporting Young People in Wales (2002)

Children and Young People: Rights To Action (2004)

Children Act 2004.

Stronger Partnerships for Better Outcomes. Guidance on local co-operation under the Children Act 2004.

Shared Planning for Better Outcomes. Planning guidance and regulations for local authorities and their Partners on Children and Young People's Plans.

Childcare Act 2006.

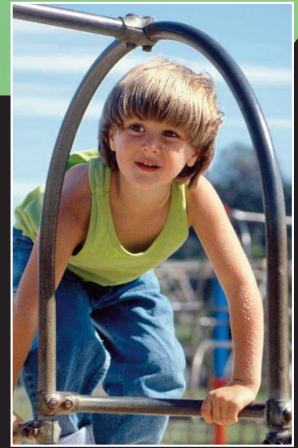
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Flintshire

Children and Young People's Plan

2008-2011

Addressing the needs of children, young people and families in Flintshire



This plan is about the needs of children, young people and families in Flintshire and how services, working and planning together, will respond to these needs.

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June 2008 Final Draft V.1.

LIVING IN FLINTSHIRE



Children and young people told us what is important to them and how it feels to live in Flintshire. Below are some of their comments:

I like living in Flintshire because it's a safe place. (Youth Forum member)

If the older generation spoke to young people, they would find out that they are OK. (A parent with a disability)

There is a massive pressure to 'fit-in' and a lot of young people get stressed. (16yr old leaving care)

Bus services are quite good in the towns, but are non-existent in the more rural areas. (Unemployed young person)

We are discriminated against by older members of the community who see us all as trouble-makers. (14 yr old Young Carer)

Need to have stricter laws on bullying – teachers should always tackle bullying in the class. (12 yr old with Special Needs)

We think we could hold parenting sessions, teaching parents to look after us. (7-11 yr old)

Flintshire is full of nice people and there are loads of activities (Youth Forum members)

It would be better if more people cared about the community. (Youth Forum Member)

I like living here – the area is nice. It's fun and there's lots of stuff to do. (Child in care)

Stop parents smoking to get ill. (7-11 yr old)

Help Parents to teach children. It will make them feel better. (7-11 yr old)

It's important to have your voice heard so...they will know how we feel...when something is wrong, you can help. (Child in Care)

Anger Management for mums and dads. (7-11 yr old)

We can't comment on teenage rights, because we don't believe we have them. (15 yr old excluded from school)

More cops on duty. (Child in Care)

These are quotes from children, young people and parents who were part of the consultation on the Needs Assessment and the priority areas for this plan.

LIVING IN FLINTSHIRE

What do the numbers and statistics tell us about living in Flintshire?



The Flintshire Children and Young People's Plan is for ALL children and young people in Flintshire, and while some services need to be universal and open to all, other services need to be targeted or need to be specialist services – the figure below shows a snapshot of the situation in Flintshire.

Numbers quoted are those most recently available – as of February 2008

TIER 4 : SPECIALIST	
Number of children attending Special Schools	221

TIER 3 : REFERRED	
Children in Need	614
Pupils permanently excluded from school in current academic year	5
Homeless aged 16 and 17 in priority need	0
Homeless families with dependant children in priority need	14
Looked after children aged under 18 yrs	187
Children under 18yrs on child protection register	81
Young offenders on a court order	128
Young offenders on a court order at high risk of re-offending	14
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services Tier 3 Active Cases	500
Aged under 25 receiving incapacity benefit and disability living allowance	180
Total homeless young people aged 16-24	8
Number of Children educated in Pupil Referral Units	110
Children/young people receiving education at home due to illness/medical condition	9
Young People educated outside mainstream school	150

TIER 2 : TARGETED	
16-19 not in education, employment or training (NEETS)	67
Young Carers in Flintshire	approx 2000
Eligible for free School Meals	2049
Young People receiving programmes designed to prevent offending	40
Teenage conceptions of under 16 yr olds (9 th Lowest in Wales)	57

TIER 1 : UNIVERSAL	
Children	
0-4 years	8914
5-9 years	9582
10-14 years	10077
15-19 years	9213
20-24 yrs	7848
Total	45635
Number of pupils in Primary Schools full time	11, 878
Number of pupils in Secondary School	10,568
Number of children and young people who are members of libraries	18,974
Number of young people who engage with the Statutory Youth Service	approx 6875

Tier 4 : Specialist

Tier 3 : Referred

Tier 2 : Targeted

Tier 1 : Universal

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**The appendices are available on the Young Flintshire website:
www.Youngflintshire.co.uk**

These will include....

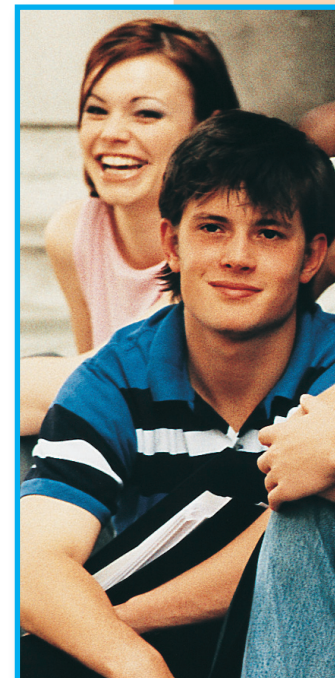
1. CYPP Terms of Reference & membership
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FOREWORD

On behalf of the Children and Young People's Partnership, we are delighted to introduce the Flintshire Children and Young People's Plan. This plan has been developed with children, young people and families as well as the many professionals who work with them. We are confident therefore that the plan has been developed based on evidence of the needs of children and young people, and that the actions will make a positive difference to their lives.

This Plan is relevant to all children and young people and those services and organisations who work with them. We would therefore hope that you agree with the Children and Young People's Partnership's vision for this plan and for all Children and Young People living in Flintshire, which is:



Children and young people of Flintshire will be heard, valued, respected and supported to have the best possible start in life, participate in and influence decisions that affect them, and achieve their full potential in all aspects of their lives.

To support this vision the Partnership operates within a set of values that run through all of the work we do together:

- We are children and young person centred, and will listen to their needs
- We will work on behalf of all children and young people, especially those most in need
- We will be open and honest in our work and methods
- We will use evidence based practice
- We will be brave in our decisions
- We will value diversity and promote equality of opportunity
- We will work ethically and in a way that we promote the use of sustainable resources.

The Partnership acknowledges that, in order to achieve this, particular attention will need to be given to the following four areas:

①

Investing in our workforce to ensure they are skilled, knowledgeable, competent and have the capacity to achieve the vision.

②

Improving access to services for children, young people and families.

③

Working in Partnership and sharing of resources resulting in cost-effective, holistic and integrated delivery of services.

④

Services matched to the local and individual needs of children, young people and families – shaping and organising the services around the child and family.

We hope that, through the work of the Partnership, all individuals, organisations and services who work with children, young people and families in Flintshire will sign up to the vision and values, and take into account the priorities within this plan to ensure a brighter future for our children and young people.

Sign

FCC

LHB

NHS Trust (Lead Directors)

¹ Children and Young People's Partnership Terms of Reference and membership in Appendix 1

INTRODUCTION

This plan is the **Children and Young People's Plan for Flintshire** for the period from April 2008 to March 2011. The Welsh Assembly Government now requires, under the *Children Act 2004*², that every County must develop a plan that sets out the priority areas and actions needed to improve the lives of local children, young people and their families.

This Children and Young People's Plan is a major strategic plan that has been developed in partnership, with services working together to achieve shared goals. All organisations that provide services for children, young people and their families should be working towards these priorities as they are the areas most in need according to the evidence. An integral part of this process must be the planning for all services to become bilingual. Each of the statutory organisations will have a Welsh Language Scheme and the Partnership's aim will be to support all voluntary and private sector service providers to meet the Statutory Welsh Language Scheme requirements in their service delivery too.

This Plan covers the various services that **all** children and young people may want to access whilst growing up. This includes schools and colleges; youth support services, health services, sport, play and leisure activities, housing, childcare and volunteering opportunities. There will be fewer children, young people and families who will need targeted and or specialist services, such as social services, substance misuse services, mental health services, or intervention / support from the police or probation service. Children and young people might move from tier to tier over time because of different needs and depending on the nature and severity of their needs, which might be as a result of their own difficulties and experiences or the difficulties of those who take care of them. Services should collectively attempt to ensure that all children and young people's needs are met by universal services and prevent the need to access more targeted or specialist services. This is illustrated in the figure on page 1 of this Plan.

The Children and Young People's Plan is for everyone aged 0-19 years in each County. It also encompasses youth services and support for young people leaving care up to the age of 25 years. It is underpinned by the Partnership's commitment to Children's Rights and is therefore based and shaped around the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the 7 Core Aims³ that every child and young person is entitled to according to the Welsh Assembly Government. The table below shows how the 7 Core aims and the 10 Entitlements⁴ for young people aged 11-25 years living in Wales cross-reference and inter-relate:

7 CORE AIMS	10 EXTENDING ENTITLEMENTS
1. The Early Years – have a good start in life	
2. Access to good education and learning opportunities	1. Education, training & work experience 2. Basic Skills to open doors to a better future 7. Careers advice
3. Good Health, Freedom from Abuse and Exploitation	5. Advice on health and housing benefits
4. Access to Play, Sport, Leisure and Culture	6. Leisure and sporting opportunities 9. Sporting, artistic, musical and outdoor experiences
5. Be respected and listened to	3. Opportunities to participate in activities 10. Be listened to and heard.
6. A safe home and community	8. Confidential support and advice
7. Freedom from Poverty	4. Responsive and accessible services

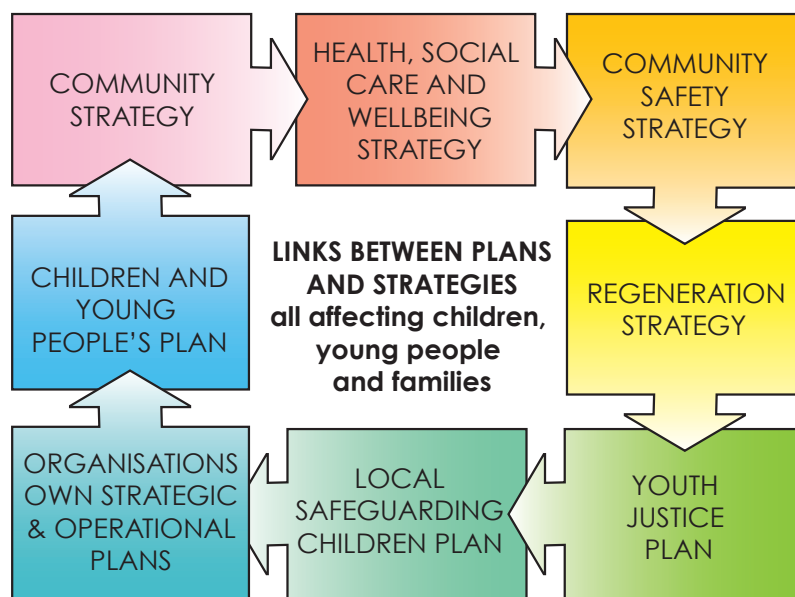
² Children Act 2004: specifically Sections 25-28

³ 7 Core Aims – Welsh Assembly Government's overarching aims for all children and Young People – based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

⁴ 10 Entitlements for all Young People 11-25 years set out in Directions and Guidance

INTRODUCTION

This plan and the priorities highlighted within it are very much linked to the other main strategies within the County, such as the Community Strategy, the Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Strategy, and other key strategies related to areas such as Communities First Planning, Community Safety, Transport, Leisure, Youth Justice and the Environment. All of these plans can have an impact on children and young people. They are as shown in the diagram below:



There will be an expectation for organisations to reflect the priorities highlighted within this Plan within their own service delivery and operational plans describing how they will develop and re-configure services to achieve the vision and priority outcomes outlined in this document. This will effectively mean moving from separate planning processes to joint planning. For example, School Development Plans, Children's Service Plans, Health Trust Plans etc. will share some common targets and outcomes.

While it is everybody's responsibility to work towards these agreed priorities, it is the role of the **Children and Young People's Partnership (CYPP)** to make sure that developments take place around the priority areas over the next 3 years, and that services and organisations work together, in partnership.

The Children Act 2004 is also clear in its expectation that children and young people's ideas must be listened to and included in the developments of plans and actions. This Plan includes the views of children, young people and their families and how they have influenced the decisions around the priority areas, and what they think should be done about them.



HOW THIS PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

The guidance on this plan was very specific and clear about the process to be followed, this is outlined below. Each stage has ensured that a wide audience has been consulted and involved and the different views put forward have been considered and incorporated in the final plan.

Step 1 Look at the needs of children, young people and families and what is happening already. This is called a Needs Assessment and is attached to this Plan.

1

The Children and Young People's Partnership has consulted twice – once on the priority areas and once on the draft plan. On both occasions the views of children, young people, families, organisations, services and the wider community were gathered and taken into account before making changes.

Step 2 Agree what the priorities are locally and ask people, including children and young people what they think about the priorities.

2

Step 3 Look at people's comments & make changes to the priorities. Then develop a draft Plan and consult on the changes / actions.

3

Step 4 Listen to the comments and make final changes to the plan and targets. The CYPP agree the Plan and actions before getting on with the work in the plan.

4

Step 5 Monitor the plan to check if things are changing and improving for children, young people and their families.

5



As well as the Needs Assessment in step 1, a profile has been completed to map all the work that is currently being done. This has helped to show what the difference is between the needs and current service provision. It will also suggest what should happen in the future – which services/projects should continue, which should be changed or no longer continued, and which should be newly established.

The Plan has also been through two specifically important processes:

- Flintshire Integrated Tool (FIT) – this is a process designed to ensure the Plan is contributing to the needs in Flintshire and to align the actions with the other multi-agency Strategic Partnerships rather than work in conflict with them or undermine them. The process encourages dialogue and integrated planning and actions.
- Flintshire's Equality Impact Assessment – This is a process designed to assess the likely impact of the content of the Plan and minimise any negative impact on children and young people at risk of discrimination because of their ethnicity, gender, language, disability, and other characteristics or experiences including poverty, and to promote equality and diversity where possible. In addition this plan aims to proactively address the needs of all children and young people but with particular regard to those with the greatest needs. This would include black, minority and ethnic groups as required in the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 and in accordance with Flintshire's **Ra49** Equality Scheme.

WHAT THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT TOLD US?

While we were working through steps 1, 2 and 3 of the process outlined previously we asked children, young people, families and people who work with them what are the things we should be concentrating on the most in Flintshire. We also used statistical and other information as a basis of evidence including inspection reports, external evaluations, various self-assessments and our own extensive assessment of need and provision.

It is important to note that the *National Service Framework for Children and Young People and Maternity Services*, which is a set of standards that services collectively measure themselves against, have also informed the Needs Assessment. Reference is made throughout the Needs Assessment to these Standards.

To help us understand the situation in Flintshire, we asked five key questions in relation to each Core Aim, which were:

- **What is the issue and why should we be concerned?**
- **What is the situation in Flintshire, and how do we compare to other places?**
- **What does the evidence suggest are the best ways of addressing the issue?**
- **What Services are there already in Flintshire to address this issue?**
- **What are the implications for Flintshire?**

We found many examples of excellent work in Flintshire and overall it was a very positive process which confirmed that Flintshire has many good features and services to support its children and young people which should be maintained. However, there were some areas that needed improvement and change. The detail of all findings is available in the supporting documents for this Plan, including a copy of the full Needs Assessment.⁵

The key points that emerged from the Needs Assessment were:

KEY	
◆	Fact
▲	Need to improve
▼	Need to decrease

Demography

- ◆ Flintshire borders England as well as two Welsh Counties and is influenced by England's policies and services as well as Welsh ones.
- ▲ Around 22% of children and young people aged 3-19 years are able to speak Welsh but there is a lack of provision through the medium of Welsh.
- ◆ The County is varied in its geography and has very urbanised areas and very rural areas, with transport and access to services being a continued issue especially for young people in rural areas.
- ◆ There is a significant increase in the numbers of children and young people whose first language is not Welsh or English due to the number of migrant workers who are increasingly bringing their families to Flintshire and placing different demands on services but also bringing new opportunities and forming a positive replacement to compensate for the declining birth rate in the county.



⁵ All supporting documents are available on the www.youngflintshire.co.uk website

WHAT THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT TOLD US?

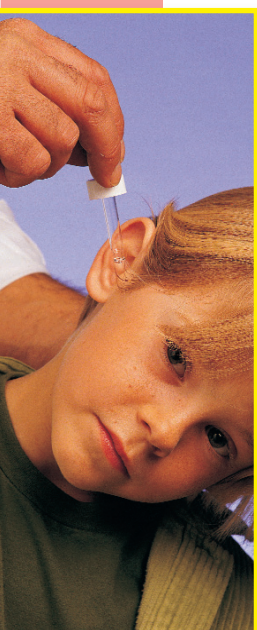


Employment

- ▼ Whilst Flintshire has low unemployment and is not considered a particularly economically deprived area there are communities with significant indicators of deprivation. These relate to five areas across the County which are designated Community First Areas.⁶
- ▼ In Flintshire, there are three areas where between 40% and 60% of children aged under-16 years are living in households that depend on worklessness benefits.
- ▼ 65-70% of all enquires to Flintshire CAB services have been concerned with welfare benefits and claims. Many of these enquires are linked to debt and employment issues
- ▲ Proportionally fewer young people under 25 years are claiming Job Seekers Allowance in Flintshire however a larger proportion of claimants have been claiming for a period longer than twelve months.
- ▼ 18.4% of employers surveyed in Flintshire reported a significant gap between the type of skills possessed by employees and those required to meet business objectives, with basic skills as a major issue.
- ▲ Flintshire has the highest economic activity rate (in the 16+ age group) of any county in Wales. Residents are classed as "economically active" if they are either in work or seeking work.

Health and well-being

- ◆ There is a decrease in the number of births and child population in Flintshire which is set to continue for at least the next ten years, reflecting the position of many other Counties in Wales.
- ▼ Flintshire has a lower proportion of low birth weight babies, congenital anomalies and childhood mortality than the Welsh average.
- ▲ There is generally an upward trend in the uptake of the recommended childhood immunisation
- ▲ The percentage of children registered with a dentist is lower than the average for Wales and England.
- ▼ It is estimated that more than 2000 children and young people in Flintshire have a 'moderate to severe' mental health problem and at least 500 more have problems 'sufficiently severe to be disabling'.
- ▼ While the number of Flintshire people aged 0-24 years admitted to hospital is significantly lower than the Welsh average, the rate of emergency admissions for unintentional injuries and poisoning in Flintshire is higher.
- ▼ The number of teenage pregnancies in Flintshire is below the Welsh average, but there has been a significant increase in infection rates for chlamydia in 13-19 year old females.
- ▼ There are increasing levels of the identification of obese and pre-obese children, with 25% of young people in Flintshire inactive and girls less likely to take part in any sport or physical activity.
- ▲ Flintshire's playing fields are underused by children and accessibility to play for disabled children is difficult in some areas.



Childcare

- ▲ Parents are generally happy with the number of child care places available. However, such places are not always affordable, located in the most accessible places or flexible and responsive in meeting the individual need. There is also a specific need for Welsh medium provision.

WHAT THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT TOLD US?

Education

- ▲ Flintshire can provide an early years education place for all children from the term after their 3rd birthday.
- ▲ Attendance levels for year 11 pupils were the highest in Wales.
- ▲ While educational achievement is higher overall than the Welsh average, there are areas of concern in Key stage 3 and at post 16 level.
- ▲ Many school premises in Flintshire require significant investment to improve their condition and make them 'fit for purpose'.
- ▲ In Flintshire 18.8% of young people aged 16-24 years have no educational, vocational or professional qualifications compared with 19.9% across the rest of Wales.

Substance Misuse

- ▼ In the Communities That Care Survey 2004 - 33% (of approx 2000 young people questioned) self-reported that they had smoked a cigarette by the age of 13 or younger, with girls in Flintshire significantly more likely to smoke than boys.
- ▼ Young People in Flintshire have identified that alcohol consumption is a particular concern, not only among themselves and their friends, but also among their parents, carers and other adults.

Housing

- ▼ One area in Flintshire is in the top 10% for housing deprivation, with another 5 areas in the top 20%.
- ▼ Houses are less affordable in Flintshire than the Welsh average and single individuals on an average income struggle to afford the cost of a private property.
- ▼ There has been considerable growth in homelessness (with 550 cases considered as unintentionally homeless and in priority need in the year 2006-2007). The main reasons for youth homelessness in Flintshire were reported as 'parents no longer willing / able to provide accommodation' and 'rent arrears'.
- ▼ 38% of children and young people are living in poor housing (defined as overcrowded and/or without central heating), with many families experiencing fuel poverty.

Crime

- ▼ There has been an increase of 72% in hate related incidents recorded in Flintshire, with the majority being race related incidents, with more than half carried out by persons under the age of 20 years.
- ▼ The overall crime rate in Flintshire is relatively low, but the 'fear of crime' amongst the public does not reflect this. Overall data shows promising indicators that suggest youth crime may be reducing in Flintshire.
- ▼ Alcohol continues to be a significant contributory factor relating to criminal behaviour with more than 50% of all young offenders in Flintshire being under the influence of alcohol when committing crime.
- ▼ While there has been an increase in reported incidents of domestic abuse in Flintshire, many feel this might be more to do with women feeling more confident in reporting incidents due to the more sophisticated support network, improved information sources and revision of Police procedures.



PRIORITY AREAS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN FLINTSHIRE



From the Needs Assessment and consultation with children, young people, families and those who work with them, the following list is what the evidence is telling us that we should prioritise.⁷ This does not mean we should not be doing other things as well, it just means that these areas should be given the most attention and that this should be done through Partnership working.

1. Support Parenting:					
Providing parents with information	●				●
Promoting positive health and well being	●			●	
Supporting parents / carers mental health	●			●	
Encouraging and supporting breastfeeding	●			●	
Supporting childcare providers and places	●				●
Preventing injury	●	●	●	●	
Preventing/reducing obesity	●			●	
Involving and supporting parents / carers in the overall development, wellbeing and education of their children/young people	●			●	

2. Reduction of behaviour and/or conditions that put children and young people at risk:					
Reduce smoking	●	●		●	
Reduce substance misuse including prescribed drugs	●	●	●	●	
Reduce alcohol misuse	●	●	●	●	
Reduce eating disorders and obesity	●	●		●	
Reduce unsafe sexual practice	●	●		●	
Reduce mental health problems e.g. self harm, bullying	●	●	●	●	

3. Supporting vulnerable individuals and groups in their:					
Access to services and information	●			●	●
Education	●				●
Health and well being	●	●		●	●
Transition into adult services	●			●	
Inclusion	●		●	●	
Accommodation and Housing	●		●		

4. Safeguarding all children and young people:					
Preventing bullying	●	●	●		
Promoting the well being and safety of children and young people	●	●	●	●	●
Make it everybody's business – within the wider community	●	●	●		●
Promoting safe parenting	●	●	●		
Training, skilling and informing our workforce	●	●	●		●



⁷ This list is not ranked in order of priority

PRIORITY AREAS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN FLINTSHIRE



5. Raising children and young people's attainment in learning settings through:					
The implementation of new and revised guidance and initiatives	●				
Support for schools in their planning		●	●		
Investing in schools to make them 'fit for purpose'					
Extending and enhancing learning opportunities for all children and young people					●
Maximising the opportunities for developing and supporting schools for the whole community and programmes for learning outside school hours.		●			●



6. Inclusion of all children and young people:					
Access to services and information	●			●	●
Promoting participation and positive citizenship	●		●		●
Promoting Advocacy (representing the views, wishes and needs of children and young people to decision makers)	●	●			
Promoting a socially inclusive and cohesive society	●	●	●		●

7. Reducing the impact of poverty and deprivation through:					
Financial literacy					●
Employment (access and support)	●			●	●
Affordable and suitable housing	●	●			●
Good and Safe transport links	●		●		●

8. Workforce Development - to maintain a skilled, competent and knowledgeable workforce, especially in the areas of:					
Safeguarding, including child protection	●	●		●	●
Foundation phase/play	●				
Training in role re. positive mental health and wellbeing	●			●	
Welsh language and culture	●			●	
Other languages and culture	●			●	
Recognising and challenging discriminating behaviour					
Children and young people's rights/participation		●			
Collaborative Service planning and Service delivery	●	●	●	●	●

9. Information to be more available and accessible to all:					
Information provided in varied formats and languages	●	●	●	●	●
To include promotion of available services	●	●	●	●	●



Key

- Joint Priority with National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services
- Joint Priority with Local Safeguarding Children's Board
- Joint Priority with Community Safety Partnership
- Joint Priority with Health Social Care and Wellbeing Strategy
- Joint Priority with Regeneration Partnership

HOW WILL WE KNOW IF WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE?



This Children and Young People's Plan sets out a framework in which we can work together, with common priorities and goals, and collectively make a positive difference.

As referred to previously, the Plan will be based on the Seven Core Aims for children and young people. The next section sets out national and local priorities and actions for each Core Aim. The local priorities are those highlighted on pages 10 and 11, and the national priorities are those which the Welsh Assembly Government has determined are common issues across Wales. There are strong links and overlaps between the 7 Core Aims. It is important to note that each aim contributes to and is affected by actions in others.

For each Core Aim there will be an action plan that includes:

Objectives	Actions	Outcomes	Current Performance	Targets	Responsibility
what needs to be achieved	What we will do to make progress against the objective	how we will measure if we are making a difference	how we are doing at the moment	Performance we want to achieve in the future	Who will make sure this is happening

These action plans will outline specifically what will be done, when and by whom. The action plan will also show the current performance in Flintshire and our aspirations for the future.

It is the responsibility of the Children and Young People's Partnership, which is made up of many organisations that work with children, young people and families, to oversee the Plan and make sure the actions are implemented. The Partnership will do this by monitoring the values, targets and the outcomes. The actions and targets will be developed throughout the consultation period and finalised by July 2008 to ensure there are robust mechanisms in place.

It is the responsibility of all services and organisations that work with children, young people and families to contribute to these outcomes as no one organisation can achieve this on their own.

This will require in some cases a change in how services and organisations work, moving towards a multi-agency approach to priorities and actions, with the possibility of pooling and aligning budgets and resources where this will result in a more effective use of those resources. It will mean that services and organisations will plan service delivery in a more collaborative way to ensure value for money and better outcomes for children, young people and families.



Core Aim 1: The Early Years

'To ensure that the children and young people of Flintshire have a flying start in life'

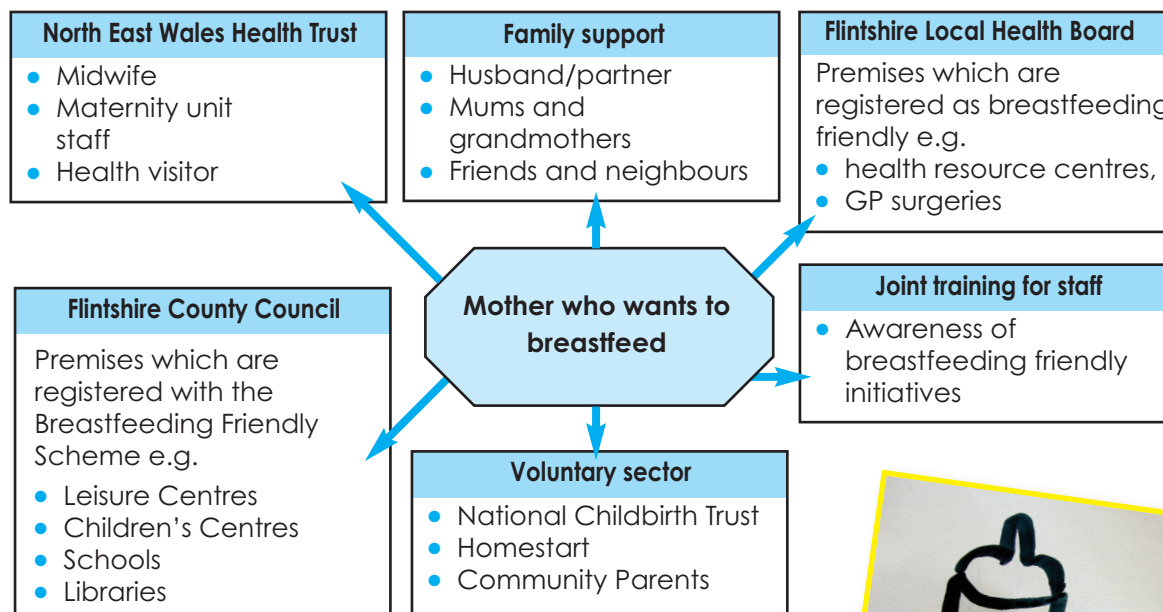
All children should have the best start in life and the best possible basis for their future growth and development. Many childhood and lifelong problems can be prevented through interventions with the very youngest children, their parents, the wider family and the communities in which they live.

A positive parenting style has a strong and beneficial impact on children's outcomes and can act as a protective factor against other risks. There is also evidence to suggest that good, enthusiastic parenting is not determined by social class or ethnic background and importantly that it can be learned.

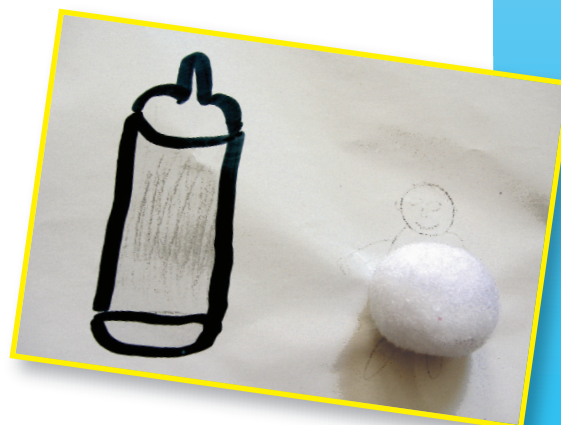
Research shows that effective help and support at this stage is more cost effective than dealing with problems later in life. All of us should be working to reduce or eliminate the risk factors and supporting the positive activities that protect our children and give them a better chance in life.

There are a number of programmes and initiatives across Wales that have been invested in this area, including *Sure Start*, *Children's Information Service*, *Flying Start*, *the Foundation Phase*, *the Childcare Act*, *Investing in a Better Start: Promoting Breastfeeding*, and the *Parenting Action Plan*. There are also specific projects such as the Children's Centres, of which there are three in Flintshire, to promote a co-ordinated approach to meet the needs of individual children, young people and families.

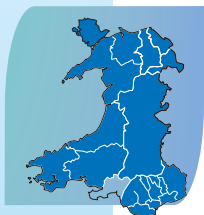
All the good work that is currently going on in Flintshire should be continued. This include services working together focusing on the child and the family, for example:



However, the evidence is showing us that more support and development is needed to take forward the National and Local priority areas.

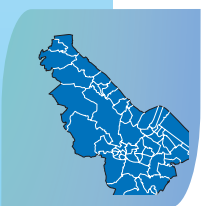


Core Aim 1: The Early Years



Areas for improvement in Wales

- There will be improved ante-natal and maternity services.
- There will be more places for younger children at schools and nurseries, in particular for those families living in disadvantaged areas or for children with greatest need.
- Services in every area will help families bring up their young children and offer access to parenting skills.
- Children and young people have a right to the best health care when they are born and all through their childhood, and have the same rights to health care services as adults do.
- Children and young people have the right to play, have fun and learn as they grow and develop.



Areas of priority in Flintshire⁸ (described in further detail on page 10)

- Support Parenting
- Reduce behaviours and/or conditions that put children and young people at risk
- Support vulnerable individuals and groups
- Safeguard children and young people
- Raise children and young people's attainment in learning settings
- Promote the inclusion of all children and young people
- Reduce the impact of poverty and deprivation
- Develop the workforce - to maintain a skilled, competent and knowledgeable workforce
- Provide information which is available and accessible to all

Working together to address the national and local priorities, we will....



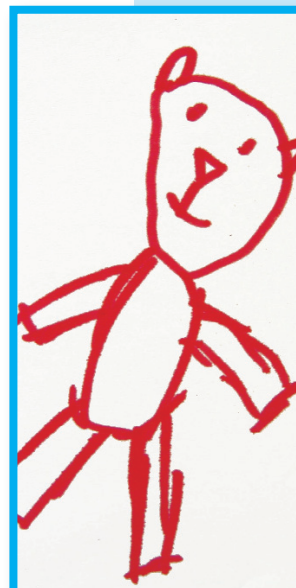
Actions – What we will do	
NATIONAL PRIORITIES	Assess the impact of current provision and work towards extending access to a range of integrated early years services for families.
	Increase the availability and accessibility of advice and guidance to families who require it, through enhanced non-stigmatised parenting programmes for parents of children aged 0-10yrs.
	Increase parental support and access to ante-natal and post-natal services to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase and maintain breast feeding rates through support • Screen, prevent and where appropriate treat mothers who have mental health problems • Consider the recommendations made as a result of a review of maternity services and implement changes that will benefit families.
	Raise awareness and provide training to the childcare workforce on the Foundation Phase and the benefits of learning through play.

⁸ More information can be obtained about how these priority areas were selected and what is currently being done to support these issues in Flintshire in the Needs Analysis.

Core Aim 1: The Early Years

Working together to address the national and local priorities, we will....

	Actions – What we will do
LOCAL PRIORITIES	Complete a Childcare Sufficiency Assessment and consider the results when developing the range of good quality childcare for families who wish to work or take training opportunities.
	Continue to provide early education places for all children from the term after their 3rd birthday through a language of their choice and also in a setting of their choice which is local to the child's home. Families who choose Welsh medium should not have to travel to another town.
	Improve the range of early years support and counselling for parents of children with a disability or serious health conditions.
	Ensure the needs of children with additional needs are identified at the earliest opportunity so that appropriate arrangements can be made for them in the pre-school settings and on entry to school.
	Promote healthy lifestyles in all early years settings and support parents to provide the best nutrition and opportunity for physical activity for their children for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the delivery of the Community Food and Nutrition Skills Course • Ensure that all workers are aware of and are using the All Wales Infant Feeding Guidelines and the local Food and Fitness Action Plan.
	Develop and promote the Family Information Service and its wider remit to support and inform parents and professionals. Ensure strong links with library services in order to use them for the local delivery of information and to promote access to services. In addition ensure that information is made available to parents whose preferred language is Welsh in accordance with the statutory Welsh language schemes.
	Finalise and implement the Flintshire Parenting Strategy that sets out the work that organisations will implement collectively to support parents/carers in their parenting role.
	Deliver the 'Flying Start' programme in 4 targeted communities in Flintshire.
	Promote unintentional injury prevention, especially in the home through the Sure Start / Flying Start Projects.
	Further develop and promote the integrated family support centres that have proved to be a successful model of integrated multi-agency delivery in Flintshire.
	Support parents to understand their role in promoting their child's learning in the child's early years. This is the point to initiate the development of a child's sense of belonging and to develop an understanding of sustainability, environment and how they relate to their community and the wider world.
	Promote positive emotional health in very young children by ensuring the parents and carers are supported in their role by having access to a range of support services for example counselling, access to childcare, accurate information to enable them to access services.
	Raise awareness of the rights of parents/carers and very young children by supporting early years services, and those agencies that support them, to ensure that children and families, and other relevant people, participate in decisions and processes that are about them - ensuring that they are given a voice and that their opinion is considered.
Implement Iaith Pawb and work with partner agencies such as Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin and Twf to promote bilingualism in the pre-school years.	



Core Aim 2: Education and Learning Opportunities



'To ensure that the children and young people of Flintshire have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities'

All children and young people should have access to a comprehensive range of education, training and learning opportunities, including gaining essential basic and key skills, personal skills and social/life skills.



Core Aim 2 focuses on opportunities for formal education and learning. Informal and non-formal learning opportunities that are vital to the holistic development of a child are discussed in other Core Aims (such as Core Aims 3/4/5).

In Flintshire there are 74 Primary schools – 5 of which are Welsh medium, 5 of which are Roman Catholic Schools and 9 of which are Voluntary Aided.

There are 12 Secondary schools - 11 of which offer post-16 provision, one of which is a Welsh medium school and another is a Voluntary Aided Roman Catholic School.

Flintshire currently has three Special schools which are being reorganised into two new Special schools (one primary and one secondary) from September 2009.

There are 2 Further Education Colleges, a Portfolio of 6 Pupil Referral Units and a number of off-site satellite centres and link courses to FE through Youth Access. Both FE Colleges are considered to be training providers, and there are other training providers that offer opportunities for young people in Flintshire, such as North Wales Training and A4E. All schools and colleges offer work experience opportunities as does Careers Wales North East, training providers, the Volunteer Bureau and various voluntary organisations.



While the Local Authority education establishments and training providers will take a lead on this Core Aim, there are many organisations that provide the pupils/students with direct and specialist input such as youth workers, school nurses, school liaison officers, theatre groups, voluntary sector organisations and invited guests. There is also the vast input that children and young people receive under the heading of Personal and Social Education (PSE) coordinated in schools by the PSE and Healthy Schools Co-ordinators e.g. Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship, Sex and Relationships Education, Mental Health and well being, Food & Fitness, Race Equality & Cultural Diversity and School Councils.

Flintshire has clear aspirations for learners and places the learner at the centre of planning, resourcing and development. Our children and young people are encouraged and supported to attend full-time education and to achieve their full learning potential. To do this, barriers need to be identified and removed at the earliest stage. Learning settings, supported by external organisations, should assist in ensuring pupils / students are given timely and tailored support. This is especially true for children who may be vulnerable due to their circumstances and who need additional support at transitional stages.

The Needs Analysis shows that children and young people's attainment has generally improved in Flintshire and seems favourable compared to All-Wales statistics. This is to be celebrated and maintained. There is a clear area for improvement at post-16. Also, the LEA seeks to regain recent past good standards achieved at KS4 relative to Wales. The data suggests a focus on boys performance at GCSE is one way to achieve this as whilst the performance of Flintshire boys has compared favourably to boys ⁵⁹the whole of Wales it has been below the

Core Aim 2: Education and Learning Opportunities

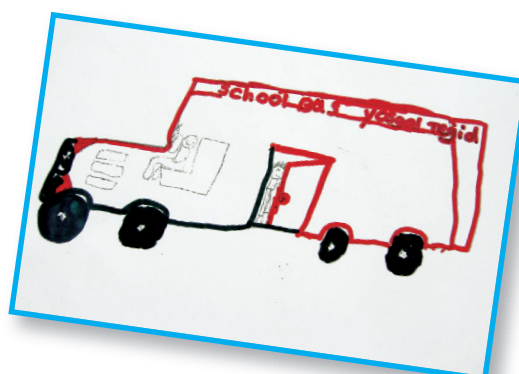
performance of Flintshire girls. The results over recent years also suggest that girls performance-although ahead of boys at KS2- can be further improved to that of girls in Wales, especially in maths and science .

There are a number of national policies and developments in Wales that support learners to achieve their potential including:

- **Iaith Pawb** – A National Action Plan for a Bi-lingual Wales. Equal status must be given to Welsh and English in the provision of inclusive education opportunities, training and support. Where parents or carers opt for Welsh medium or bilingual education for children and young people with additional learning needs, there is also a need for associated services to be available through the medium of Welsh or bilingually.
- **The Foundation Phase** is the new approach to education in the early years. It recognises the child's stage of development and encourages experiential learning through structured play activities. This will be phased into operation between 2008 and 2010.
- **The Learning Country: Vision into Action** which includes guidance on development, improving school performance and standards, supporting transition, practitioners learning and effective teaching, Healthy Schools Scheme, school based counselling service.
- **Community Focused Schools** is a Welsh Assembly Government funded agenda to support improved learning for children, young people, families and communities. Schools are supported to work in partnership to deliver activities and services to meet identified needs. Current development is based on school development plans, supports delivery of the seven core aims and helps to address the priorities within the Children and Young People's Plan.
- **Basic Skills Strategy for Wales** which aims to have a significant influence on the development of national, regional and local strategies to improve basic skills in both English and Welsh.
- **Revised National Curriculum** - from 2008, there will be a revised statutory skills based National Curriculum implemented in all educational phases, as well as revised assessment arrangements to be implemented in schools and consistency in moderation achieved across all phases.

Locally, there has been investment to support the educational achievement of children and young people. This has been done in a variety of ways. In addition to implementing the above developments, the following local plans and strategies have been developed and implemented:

- Primary and Secondary Strategies for School Improvement
- College Improvement Plans
- Disability Access Strategies
- School Admissions Policy and Procedures (including Welsh Medium)
- School Travel Plans
- Inclusion Service Plan – identifies how support to access education will be provided to vulnerable groups such as:-
 - School age parents
 - School refuses
 - Gypsy and travellers
 - Young Offenders
 - Children at risk of exclusion



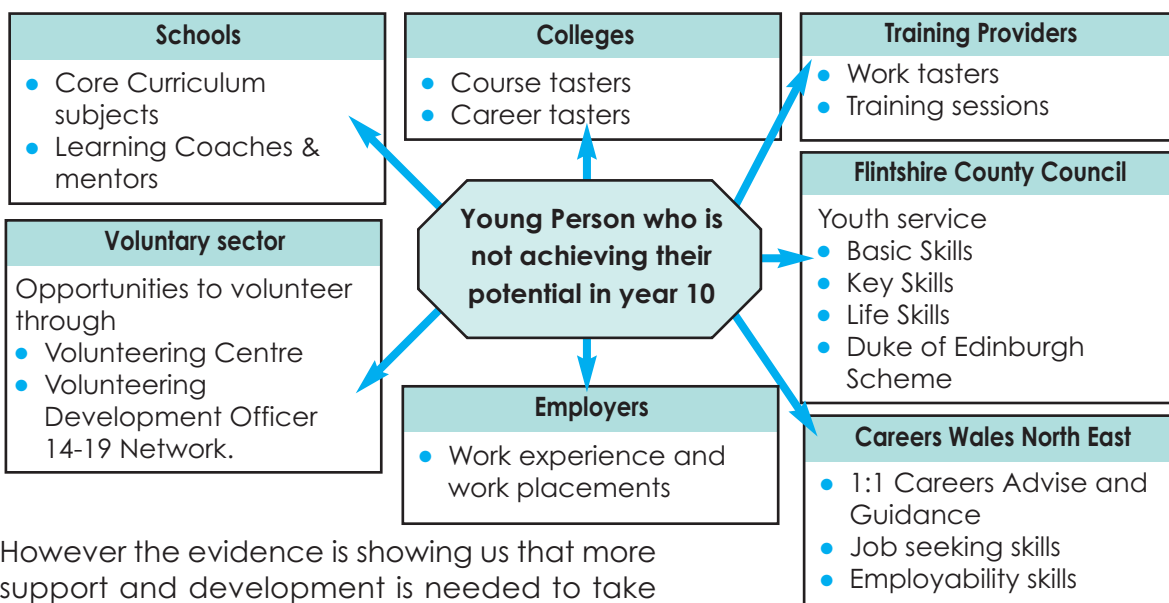
Core Aim 2: Education and Learning Opportunities



- Children being educated outside school settings
- Children from black, minority ethnic groups
- Children with additional needs
- Plan for School Building Improvement Grant
- Entitlement 1,2 & 7 of Extending Entitlement – including Careers Wales Business Plan & Flintshire Basic Skills Strategy
- Personal & Social Education including sustainable development and global citizenship
- Support through non-formal learning - etc.
- Able and Talented Policy
- Flintshire Basic Skills Strategy
- Appetite for Life
- Healthy Schools Programme
- Welsh Education Scheme
- Cwricwlwm Cymraeg
- Community Focused School Programmes

There has also recently been a review of the statutory youth Service in Flintshire as required by the *National Youth Service Strategy - Securing a Vibrant and Varied Youth Support Service* which will result in a Flintshire Youth Service Strategy for 2008-2011.

All the good work that is currently going on in Flintshire should be continued. This includes services working together focusing on the child and the family, for example:



However the evidence is showing us that more support and development is needed to take forward the National and Local priority areas.

Areas for improvement in Wales

Local Councils and partners must make sure:

- All Children and young people have access to a good education and can make decisions about their own learning.
- All Children and young people have access to support to enable them to learn, develop and obtain skills and qualifications.
- Schools premises are improved through investment in buildings.
- School transport is reliable and safe.
- Pupils are safe from bullying.
- All 16 to 19 year olds will be able to train, work or study.
- Improved outcomes for all learners and more personalised learning opportunities.
- Looking at the 'whole' needs of children and young people in school settings, including in particular the promotion of their well-being.
- Developing community learning and promoting positive engagement with education for a range of children and young people who are not engaging.



Core Aim 2: Education and Learning Opportunities



Areas of priority in Flintshire⁹ (described in further detail on page 10)

- Support Parenting
- Reduce behaviours and/or conditions that put children and young people at risk
- Support vulnerable individuals and groups
- Safeguard children and young people
- Raise children and young people's attainment in learning settings
- Promote the inclusion of all children and young people
- Reduce the impact of poverty and deprivation
- Develop the workforce - to maintain a skilled, competent and knowledgeable workforce
- Provide information which is available and accessible to all

Working together to address the national and local priorities, we will....

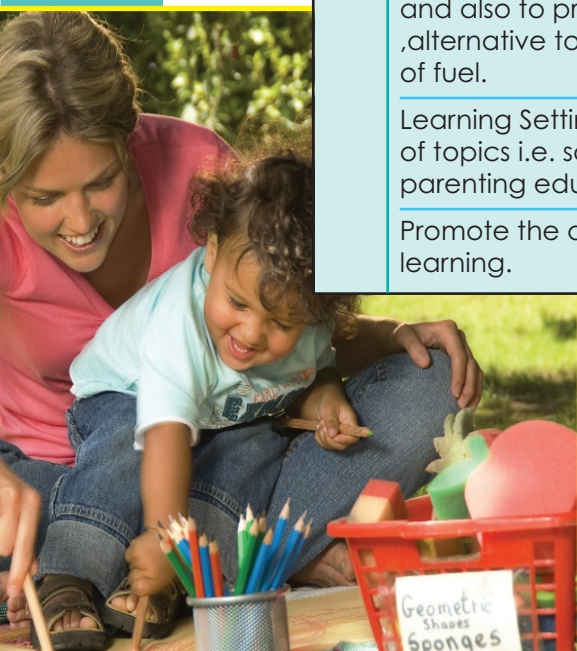
	Actions – What we will do
NATIONAL PRIORITIES	<p>Support learning providers to deliver continued improvements in attainment, by implementing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Revised National Curriculum • 14-19 Network Learning Pathways - Develop more flexible learning paths to be offered to students/pupils to include formal, in-formal and non-formal educational experiences working with a number of organisations including the voluntary sector and employers. These opportunities to be made available in both English and Welsh medium settings. • The Foundation Phase - the new curriculum phase for 3-7yr olds. • The focus on transition between education phases –ensuring smooth transition stages especially for vulnerable children and young people and also for the children and young people who are in the Welsh medium sector especially at the transition from KS2 to KS3. • Development and implementation of 'Partnership Agreements' between Local Education Authorities and all maintained schools setting out what each partner is expected to deliver and how they will work together. This supports the Flintshire Monitoring, Support and Intervention Strategy. • Iaith Pawb - Ensuring Bi-lingualism. • Basic Skills Strategy. • Changing population patterns and pressures / additional support needed for learning settings. • Continue to develop children and young people so they experience and understand educational development and global citizenship and wider social issues. <p>Further develop the Community Focused Schools agenda to meet identified needs, including the creation of new school-based childcare places and holiday provision to address the outcomes of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment in both the English medium and Welsh medium schools.</p> <p>Develop schools to be a source of early years settings/childcare and holiday care for families and also a range of leisure opportunities which could be developed through the Community Focused Schools Programme and joint provision with other services.</p>



⁹ More information can be obtained about how these priority areas were selected and what is currently being done to support these issues in Flintshire in the Needs Analysis

Core Aim 2: Education and Learning Opportunities

Working together to address the national and local priorities, we will....



	Actions – What we will do
LOCAL PRIORITIES	Continue to achieve high standards at every key stage within children and young people's education, but focus our resources on areas of greatest need i.e. to improve achievement at Key Stage 3 and post-16yrs.
	Develop innovative approaches to the delivery and organisation of services for post-16 education in light of the Webb Review. Promote volunteering as an opportunity to acquire learning and skills.
	Ensure that learning settings both English and welsh medium, and those agencies that support them, enable children and young people to participate in decisions and processes that are about them - ensuring that they are given a voice and that their opinions are considered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On an individual basis. • In relation to School Councils and College Forums - Support the further development of effective School Councils / College Forums. Support for learning settings to implement good practice to ensure a meaningful experience for members and those they represent. • When there is an issue to be resolved, all children and young people have access to a complaints process and the children and young people's advocacy service if appropriate.
	Continue to identify as early as possible those children at risk of poor learning and poor academic achievement. Assess their holistic needs and adopt a multi-agency approach to intervene appropriately to support them. Utilise the Common Assessment Framework to access additional services where appropriate.
	Develop guidance and advice for schools and parents in the education of more able and talented pupils.
	Invest in schools to make them 'fit for purpose' and to ensure that they are eco friendly and meet the Green Dragon Environmental Management System, use the current Unitary Development Plan and subsequent Local Development Plan to assess the current and future need in Flintshire to develop a costed plan that will be implemented according to the funding available. This process to include the improvement of accessibility to school buildings for persons with a disability and also to promote travel plans which promote alternative modes of transport ,alternative to the use of petrol, such as cycling, walking and renewable sources of fuel.
	Learning Settings to become a focal point for information for families on all kinds of topics i.e. safe parenting, nutrition, play, social opportunities, support, parenting education – supported by The Family Information Service.
Promote the active involvement of parents / carers in the child's education and learning.	



Core Aim 2: Education and Learning Opportunities

	Actions – What we will do
LOCAL PRIORITIES	Careers Wales North East working with organisations and agencies to identify- and prioritise support and guidance for all young people, and those who choose their education to be delivered through the medium of welsh and in particular young people who are vulnerable because of their circumstances. Careers Wales North East will raise awareness amongst young people of opportunities and support those in training to remain and complete the programme.
	Provide substance misuse and sexual health education, and counselling services in school and youth service settings with signposting and referral mechanisms in place to refer to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) where appropriate.
	Audit the Bullying Policies in learning settings – working collaboratively with other services to ensure that the children, young people and families are aware of them and are confident that they are there to safeguard and support. Ensure all learning settings have clear and effective anti-bullying policies that are known to all children and young people and their families.
	Implement continuing professional development for staff in learning settings through short courses, area based working and regional collaboration, ensuring that they are informed and able to consider the learners wider needs and access the appropriate intervention.
	Ensure that PSE co-ordinators have the skills and knowledge to be able to promote understanding of the holistic needs of children and young people and have the support to cascade this through the learning setting and amongst colleagues. This will include the promotion of healthy lifestyle choices and the promotion of a whole school approach to making choices that result in positive well being.
	Continue to support and promote the use of evidence-based initiatives that are provided in or alongside schools to meet the holistic needs of children and young people. Promote evidence-based initiatives in schools, such as healthy schools, PATHS, financial literacy and anti-bullying programmes.
	Implement and review the Welsh Language Education Scheme.



Core Aim 3: Health, Freedom from Abuse and Exploitation



'To ensure that the children and young people of Flintshire enjoy the best possible health and freedom from abuse, victimisation and exploitation'

In terms of preventing ill-health and/or social disadvantage in the long term, the importance of promoting and protecting the health and well-being of children and young people cannot be underestimated. The aim is to promote health and well-being for all children and young people and to ensure timely accessible services for those who experience illness, disability or other problems. Children and Young People should be encouraged and supported to adopt healthy lifestyles.

In health terms, childhood and adolescence are particularly important times of life. Certain behaviours, such as substance use, are initiated during the adolescent years, while some patterns of behaviour, such as eating habits and physical activity, can become established in earlier childhood. Parental support for behaviours more likely to have a positive, rather than a negative health impact, is essential.

Children's needs must be met in an appropriate and age-sensitive manner, and they must be safeguarded from abuse, neglect and exploitation. Children and young people's health and protection services make an important contribution to their chances of participating and enjoying life both while they are young, and throughout their later lives.

There are a number of programmes and initiatives across Wales of relevance to this Core Aim, including the All-Wales Child and Adolescent Mental Health Strategy (CAMHS) 'Everybody's Business, Design For Life, Rights to Action, All Wales Child Protection Procedures, NHS Commissioning Guidance, NICE guidelines¹⁰, SAFF Guidelines.¹¹

And locally, the following Strategies, Plans and schemes have contributed to highlighting the issues for children, young people and families as well as to develop actions to address these:

- The Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Strategy.
- The Local Safeguarding Children's Strategy.
- Substance Misuse Strategy.
- Food for Health.
- Active for Life.
- Free School Breakfast Scheme.
- Healthy Schools Scheme.
- Personal and Social Education.
- The work that has been completed on the National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services and the National Service Framework for Adult Mental Health Services.
- Community Focused School Programmes

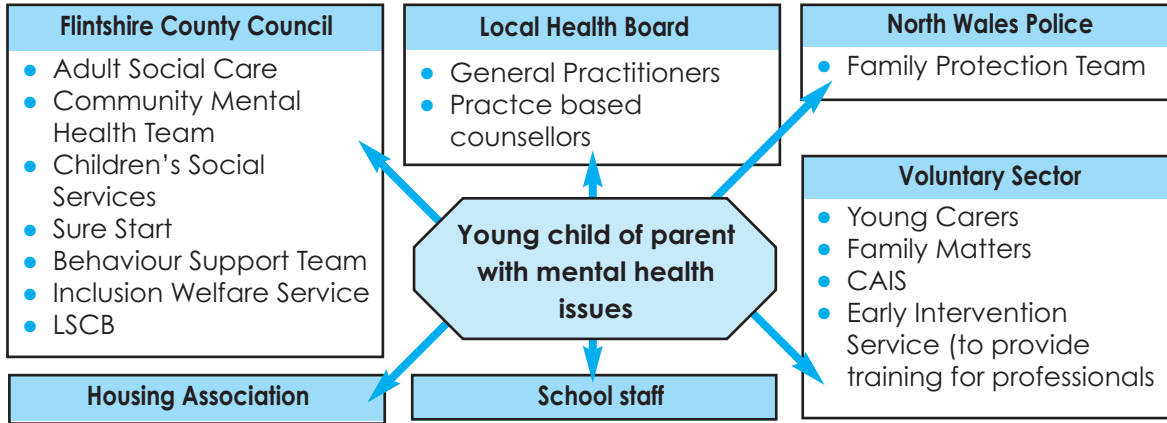


¹⁰ National Institute for Clinical Excellence

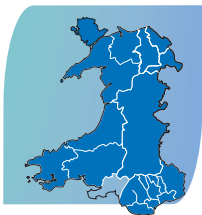
¹¹ Service and Financial Framework

Core Aim 3: Health, Freedom from Abuse and Exploitation

All the good work that is currently going on in Flintshire should be continued. This includes services working together focusing on the child and the family, for example:



However, the evidence is showing us that more support and development is needed to take forward the National and Local priority areas

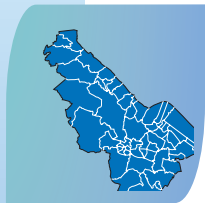


Areas for improvement in Wales

- Children and young people have the right to grow up healthy and safe with their family in their community.
- Children and young people should be encouraged to adopt healthy behaviours, supported to have good nutritional health and good mental health.
- Children and young people should have access to specialist services when they are needed.
- All Children must be listened to and can have an Advocate to support them and make a complaint if they need to.
- Local Councils must have plans to keep children safe and give support and protection when needed.
- Every local area will establish a **Local Safeguarding Children Board** that will plan to make sure children and young people are safe, protected from abuse and exploitation.



Core Aim 3: Health, Freedom from Abuse and Exploitation



Areas of priority in Flintshire¹² (described in further detail on page 10)

- Support Parenting
- Reduction of behaviour and/or conditions that put children and young people at risk
- Supporting vulnerable individuals and groups
- Safeguarding children and young people
- Raising children and young people's attainment in learning settings
- Inclusion of all children and young people
- Reducing the impact of poverty and deprivation
- Workforce Development - to maintain a skilled, competent and knowledgeable workforce
- Information to be more available and accessible to all



Working together to address the national and local priorities, we will....

	Actions – What we will do
NATIONAL PRIORITIES	Implement the requirements of Iaith Pawb.
	Ensure that all early years and childcare settings are aware of their role in promoting safeguarding and inclusion of all children.
	Ensure that all schools and education services implement the requirements of Guidance on Safeguarding Children in Education (April 2008) and Working Together Under the Children Act 2004.
	Ensure all schools are signed up to the Healthy Schools Scheme – working with the Healthy Schools Co-ordinator
	Further promote accessible advice and information about healthy lifestyles that meets the appropriate age and need – to enable this to be done through a number of methods promoted by the Flintshire Public Health Team and implemented via support services in the statutory, voluntary and independent sector.
	Further develop the role of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board to ensure that they promote: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The duty to co-ordinate a multi-agency approach when there are concerns about a child's welfare or safety. • The duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are in need and to work collectively to enable the upbringing of these children within their families by providing a range and level of services appropriate to their needs. • The safeguarding role and responsibilities of everybody working with children and young people as well as a role for the whole community. • The development and implementation of an effective multi-agency training programme to increase the awareness and skills of a range of staff in safeguarding children and young people (to include child protection). • Their relationship with the Parenting Strategy Group to promote safe and positive parenting therefore reducing the incidents of neglect and unintentional injury through compromised parenting. • The flexibility around arrangements for holding multi-agency child protection conferences.

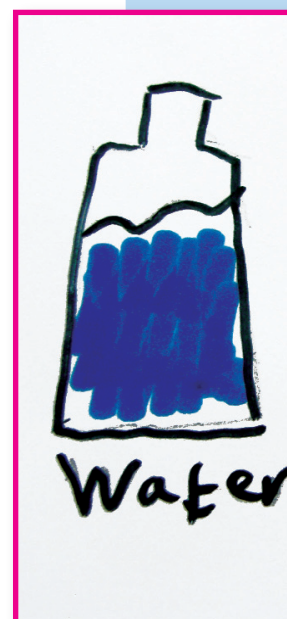


¹² More information can be obtained about how these priority areas were selected and what is currently being done to support these issues in Flintshire in the Needs Analysis

Core Aim 3: Health, Freedom from Abuse and Exploitation



NATIONAL PRIORITIES	Actions – What we will do
	<p>Reduce the waiting times for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, occupational therapy assessments and family support services.</p> <hr/> <p>Use health screening to identify local needs for obese and overweight children and young people and ensure that they, and their families, have access to help and support programmes and information to improve the situation.</p>



	Actions – What we will do
LOCAL PRIORITIES	<p>Support the Police in their role to safeguard children and young people on a National and International level – to include cyber abuse and the misuse of technology.</p> <hr/> <p>Integrate services across health (including primary, acute and specialist services), education and social services to better meet the needs of children with complex, long or life time illness and disabilities, including those children placed out of County, to ensure that their emotional, social, physical and educational needs are met e.g. residential schools or long-term hospital stay.</p> <hr/> <p>Implement the young carers element of the Flintshire Carers Strategy - consider the individual needs of Young Carers, prioritise those in greatest need and work in Partnership to enable this vulnerable group to access mainstream services. This to include the development of an agreed multi-agency Young Carers Assessment.</p> <hr/> <p>Jointly with the Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Strategy ensure that there is a seamless transition from children's services to adult services for those most vulnerable young people – working across agencies, putting actions into place at an early stage and involving the young person and their family at all stages to enable independent living.</p> <hr/> <p>Work in partnership to further develop, cross reference and implement the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flintshire Sexual Health Strategy and Action Plan – providing information, education, advice and treatment services for children and young people. To include a review of some current services to ensure they are preventative, appropriate and accessible for children and young people. • Substance Misuse Strategy for Children, Young People and Families – providing advice and treatment and information services for children and young people. • Tobacco Free Alliance Action Plan – providing advice and treatment and information services in education settings and in the community • Food for Health Plan – which considers the nutrition priorities and actions identified in a number of key documents including Food and Fitness – working in partnership to promote healthy eating and nutrition for children and young people in Wales. • Active for Life Plan – working in partnership to promote the positive health and wellbeing of being physically active and adopting healthy lifestyles. • Management of Obesity Plan - working in partnership to specifically look at the increasing concerns over levels of obesity and to develop and implement an action plan.



Core Aim 3: Health, Freedom from Abuse and Exploitation

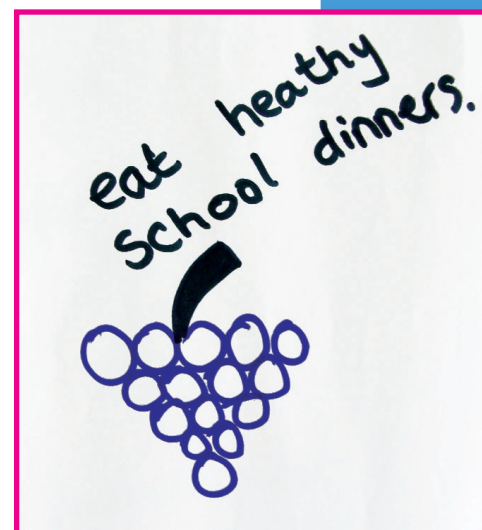


Actions – What we will do	
LOCAL PRIORITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jointly with the Health Social Care and Wellbeing Strategy Group implement the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Strategy (CAMHS) and the Mental Health Promotion Action Plan – To promote positive emotional wellbeing and improve the Mental Health services for children and young people. Increase the level of help and support for staff working with children and young people around the early identification and intervention for children and young people's emotional and mental health, especially for vulnerable children and young people.
	<p>Consider these strategies collectively and the implications regarding the underlying issues for children and young people.</p>
	<p>Ensure that the local National Health Service reorganisation will improve the services and outcomes for children and young people i.e. moving to a model of locality health teams that cover all ages and all areas of Flintshire.</p>
	<p>Ensure that Health and Social Care settings, and those agencies that support them enable children and young people, and other relevant people to participate in decisions and processes that are about them - ensuring that they are given a voice and that their opinions are considered</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On an individual basis. When developing Strategies, Plans and Services When there is an issue to be resolved, all children and young people have access to a complaints process and advocacy service if appropriate.
	<p>Local authorities, with the support of partners, to discharge their statutory duties and functions under the Children Acts of 1989 and 2004, Adoption and Children Act 2002, Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000, Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000 and implement the Children Services Business Implementation Plan that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instituting proceedings in the family court in order to safeguard children and promote their future care. Supporting children to live with their families and friends and in their communities. Implementing the Corporate Parenting Strategy and having a corporate and elected member line of responsibility for children and young people. Providing accommodation for children who cannot live with their families and in their communities, to include the recruitment, availability and diversity of foster carers, especially teenage and sibling group fostering. Maintaining a register of children at risk of harm, disabled or looked after. Ensure all agencies making referrals to Children's services are informed regarding the outcome and progress of a referral.



Core Aim 3: Health, Freedom from Abuse and Exploitation

Actions – What we will do	
LOCAL PRIORITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that in the planning, provision and commissioning of a range of services. • Children and young people's needs are assessed. • Neglect and abuse are prevented. • Family support is offered. • Accommodation is provided where appropriate (foster care and residential care). • Disabled children and their families are supported, including with respite care. • Support and services are provided for children in need, including children looked after by the local authority, and those in secure accommodation. • Adoption services are provided, designed to meet the needs of children who may be adopted, their parents and guardians, persons wishing to adopt a child and adopted persons, their parents, natural parents and former guardians. <hr/> <p>Complete a review to establish a detailed picture of the current situation, identifying good practice and mapping gaps in the provision of services to children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and implement recommendations.</p> <hr/> <p>Promote the safeguarding and promotion of the wellbeing of children and young people at risk of offending and those who are already identified as offending.</p> <hr/> <p>Work towards the delivery of services in an appropriate and sensitive manner and through the language of choice for the child/young person.</p>



Core Aim 4: Play, Sport, Leisure and Culture

'To ensure that the children and young people of Flintshire have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities'



To secure optimum health and wellbeing, all children and young people (regardless of their abilities or circumstances) should be able to enjoy and benefit from a variety of recreational activities. All children and young people should have access to, and participate in, play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities appropriate to their age and stage of development. This also includes opportunities to volunteer and participate in active citizenship.

While there are many opportunities for these kinds of activities in formal learning settings, such as school or college, there is also a need to enable children and young people to access them on a non-formal and in-formal basis, through other organisations and services or in their own time and through the medium of Welsh.

Research has shown that if a child / young person is involved in various activities, this very often supports other agendas, such as crime prevention, reduction of obesity, improvement in key and basic skills and a benefit to the community as a whole.

There are a number of policies, programmes and initiatives across Wales of relevance to this Core Aim, including the Welsh Assembly Government Play Policy and Implementation Plan, Climbing Higher Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity, Food & Fitness: promoting healthy eating and physical activity, Youth Strategy for Wales, Health Challenge Wales: Action on Food and Fitness for Children and Young People, and various reviews of the arts in Wales.

And locally, the opportunities for sports, play, leisure and culture provided by statutory services and voluntary services collectively provide over 1000 opportunities for children and young people to participate in Flintshire. These include:

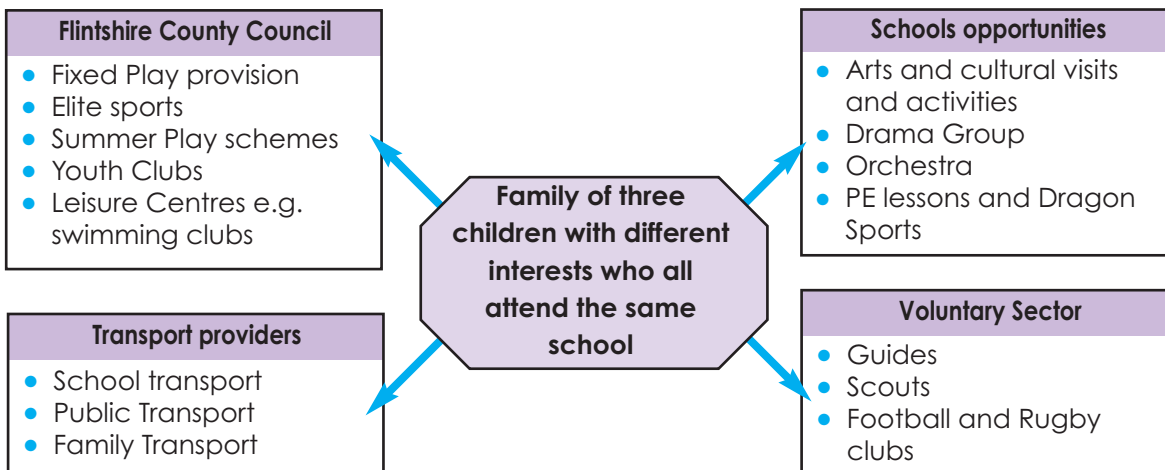
- Play and learning opportunities which are provided in early years and childcare settings
- Local Play Strategy which offers open access play opportunities, adventure play and play areas and promote inclusive access to all.
- Strategic and Operational Sports Flintshire Plan.
- Library Lifelong Learning Strategy, which offers open access as well as targeted services for disadvantaged areas and certain groups.
- Sure Start scheme provides a toy library service for families with very young children to encourage early learning and development
- Various Voluntary organisations such as the Urdd, Young Farmers, Scouts and Guides, Cadets, Daffodils, Groundwork etc offer a variety of opportunities to get involved in physical activities and sport, while the Local Voluntary Council and other voluntary organisations promote and enable children and young people to volunteer
- The 9 Leisure Centres and voluntary sports clubs also offer a number of opportunities
- The Flintshire Youth Service are the licensed authority to provide the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme to a number of young people, including those in school, those in danger of losing their place in school and those who are educated outside mainstream schools.
- The local Arts, Culture and Events Department offer various events working alongside schools, charitable organisations and Communities First Officers to widen participation.
- Theatr Clwyd is a resource that offers drama and dance opportunities and specific workshops and activities for children and young people.



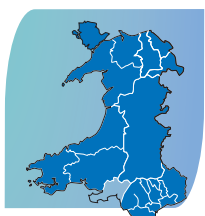
Core Aim 4: Play, Sport, Leisure and Culture

- The County's Music Service provides free instruments, with approximately 650 children and young people participating in the after-school county music school. There are also 3 choirs, 3 string orchestras, 3 wind bands, a jazz group and a harp group.
- The County Play Scheme Programme that provides activities at 71 sites across Flintshire, and involves the recruitment of 110 summer play-workers to supervise and ensure safety. Some play schemes operate bi-lingually (Welsh & English) and additional support for Polish, Chinese and Lithuanian speaking children when required. Children with a disability are supported to access the schemes through a paid 'buddy'.
- Flintshire Youth Service provide access to a wide range of leisure, recreational and non-formal learning opportunities throughout Flintshire.
- Community Focused Schools Programmes provide a wide range of activities.

All the good work that is currently going on in Flintshire should be continued. This includes services working together focusing on the child and the family, for example:



However the evidence is showing us that more support and development is needed to take forward the National and Local priority areas.

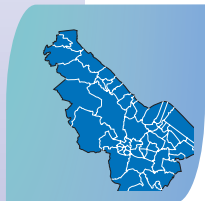


Areas for improvement in Wales

- All children and young people have the right to have fun, play and be involved in leisure activities as they grow up, including joining clubs, groups and organisations, and not be excluded for reasons of ability, language, race or gender.
- All schools provide pupils with opportunities to participate in sports and other creative activities such as drama and the arts.
- The CYPP must consider what activities are available for children and young people across Flintshire i.e. Children's Centres which can engage younger children in play schemes and Youth Support Services which offer activities for older children and young people.
- The Council has to have land for playgrounds and open spaces.
- The Council has to provide a library service.
- Free or cheap transport is needed to make sure children and young people can get to the activities they want to attend.



Core Aim 4: Play, Sport, Leisure and Culture



Areas of priority in Flintshire¹³ (described in further detail on page 10)

- Support Parenting
- Reduction of behaviour and/or conditions that put children and young people at risk
- Supporting vulnerable individuals and groups
- Safeguarding children and young people
- Raising children and young people's attainment in learning settings
- Inclusion of all children and young people
- Reducing the impact of poverty and deprivation
- Workforce Development - to maintain a skilled, competent and knowledgeable workforce
- Information to be more available and accessible to all

Working together to address the national and local priorities, we will....



	Actions – What we will do
NATIONAL PRIORITIES	<p>Implement the requirements of Iaith Pawb.</p> <hr/> <p>Implement Climbing Higher: Next Steps - a plan to encourage all children and young people to get involved in sports and leisure activities outside school hours, and the Flintshire 'Active for Life' Action Plan to encourage and raise awareness of all sports, leisure, play and physical activity opportunities in Flintshire through promotion and support of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5x60 programme – to encourage at least 5 hours of physical activity per week to all secondary school aged children. • Ensure all school pupils receive the recommended 2 hours of physical education each week. • Active8-16 programme – to work with health to identify and support those children and young people aged 8-16 years who do not access physical activity because of their personal circumstances – linking into sustainable coaching sessions. • Dragon Sport clubs in primary schools (for 7-11 year olds). • National Governing Body programme for 4-18 years – promoting specific sports such as rugby, football and hockey • Disability Sport Wales – to support children 0-11 years to be able to access and take an active part in physical activity. • Holiday Activity Programme for 4-7 year olds. • Millennium Volunteering programme for young people aged 16 years +. • Healthy Schools Scheme – physical activity theme. • Training to increase the skills and capacity of staff working in leisure services and other relevant settings. <p>Developing the multi-agency Local Authority Partnership Agreement with the Sports Council for Wales – specifically the Active Plan which has a focus on the involvement of children and young people in play, physical activity and sport.</p> <hr/> <p>Promote the use of leisure and cultural opportunities to divert vulnerable young people from anti-social and offending behaviour, or behaviour and / or conditions that put them at risk and to provide experiences which promote positive self esteem, self confidence and a sense of belonging.</p> <hr/> <p>Implement the recommendations of the Russell Commission – to promote and increase the opportunities to volunteer, tailored to a young person's interest. Raise awareness of the Youth Volunteer Adviser and the Volunteer Centre.</p>

¹³ More information can be obtained about how these priority areas were selected and what is currently being done to support these issues in Flintshire in the Needs Analysis

Core Aim 4: Play, Sport, Leisure and Culture



	Actions – What we will do
LOCAL PRIORITIES	<p>Implement the local Play Strategy and Action Plan to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively manage existing play provision. • Raise awareness of the issues, needs and gaps in play provision. • Ensure that doorstep play provision is within the pedestrian travel distance of young children, overlooked by nearby housing and separated from busy road systems. • Provide local equipped areas for the middle school age child within the normal pedestrian travel range. • Provide play opportunities for children in special circumstances for example children in hospital. • Provide larger neighbourhood, all age family oriented play facilities. • Provide community playwork provision such as adventure play provision, open access after school play clubs, holiday play schemes. • Play and recreational facilities such as wheeled play areas and multi-purpose games areas. • Advocate and pro –actively promote the child’s right to have space in which to play by influencing the decisions made about land use in Flintshire. <hr/> <p>Develop opportunities for improved access to play, leisure, sport and cultural opportunities as well as youth support services and lifelong learning opportunities by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness and promoting amongst children, young people, parents and carers, and those professionals who work with them the many opportunities that currently exist. • Considering and developing innovative methods such as multi-agency outreach and mobile provision. • Targeting disadvantaged communities and vulnerable groups i.e. Communities First Areas, children with disabilities etc. • Identify resources to provide support to children and young people who may need additional support to access play, leisure and/or cultural experiences. • Support the voluntary sector who provide leisure and cultural opportunities for children and young people of Flintshire. • Increase opportunities to participate through the medium of Welsh. <hr/> <p>Work with transport providers to address issues where they represent a barrier to accessing leisure and or cultural activities.</p> <hr/> <p>Ensure that children and young people, and other relevant people, participate in decisions and processes that are about them - ensuring that they are given a voice and that their opinion is considered in relation to the development and implementation of local and national policies which have an impact on play, leisure, sport and culture.</p> <hr/> <p>Develop an action plan to implement the findings from the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment.</p> <hr/> <p>Consider and adhere to the regulations regarding open spaces for play, leisure and recreation when developing or agreeing planning permission - in line with the Local Development Plan.</p> <hr/> <p>Develop opportunities within leisure and cultural experiences to raise awareness of workers, parents, children and young people the link between food and nutrition and physical activity and how this impacts on childhood obesity.</p> <hr/> <p>Develop appropriate support for children and young people who have a disability to access a range of play, leisure, sport or cultural opportunities.</p> <hr/> <p>Promote the public library and museum service as a free child and young people friendly leisure and cultural opportunity.</p> <hr/> <p>Promote the youth service as a service that provides a wide range of non-formal learning for the young people of Flintshire. In line with the National Youth Service Strategy and the Learning and Skills Act 2000.</p>

Core Aim 5: Respect

'To ensure that the children and young people of Flintshire are listened to, respected and have their race and cultural identity recognised'.

All services who work with children and young people, have an equal responsibility to promote children and young people's right to participate, to be listened to on things that will affect them, and to involve children and young people in the development of their service whether this is through the medium of English or Welsh. This is their right according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which the Welsh Assembly Government are signed up to.

But what does this mean? The Welsh Assembly Government, working with young people, has developed the following definition:

"Participation means that it is my right to be involved in making decisions, planning and reviewing any action that might affect me. Having a Voice, Having a Choice".

(Sound bite by children and young people, adopted by WAG)

There is a danger that when considering children and young people as a social group, their diversity and differences could be forgotten or ignored. It is vital that when planning and developing services, under-represented or 'hard to reach' children and young people are actively considered and targeted. The reasons for their potential exclusion are many and varied and include: practical difficulties (e.g. language and communication difficulties), their vulnerability (e.g. looked after children, young carers, children with a disability) cultural reasons (e.g. black and ethnic minority groups), geographical reasons (e.g. those living in rural or remote areas).

Ensuring inclusion implies that any discrimination should be challenged and that diversity in children and young people should be respected and valued. Their inclusion and involvement will strengthen the process and make any consultation or other participation activity more robust.

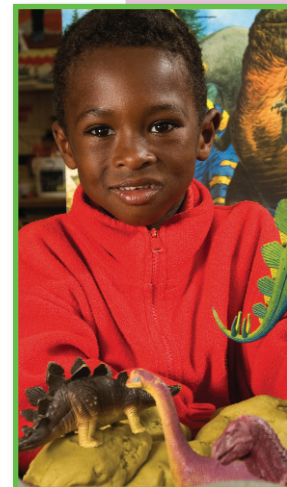
There is a huge national drive towards ensuring that children and young people have a voice in shaping local communities, in the planning, policy development, delivery, evaluation and review of local services, and in specific services or processes that provide a direct service to them individually. This is supported by a set of National Standards for Participation which all services should measure themselves against and work towards, and many publications and training opportunities have been developed specifically in Flintshire as a result of local need.

There are already many and varied mechanisms in place to seek and represent the views of children, young people and families in Flintshire. These include: school councils, college forums, youth forums, youth advisory groups, youth inspectors, youth theatre forum, young people on steering / management groups, parents and carers networks, young people's attendance and involvement in the Young People's Partnership meetings etc.

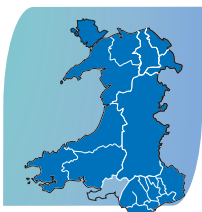
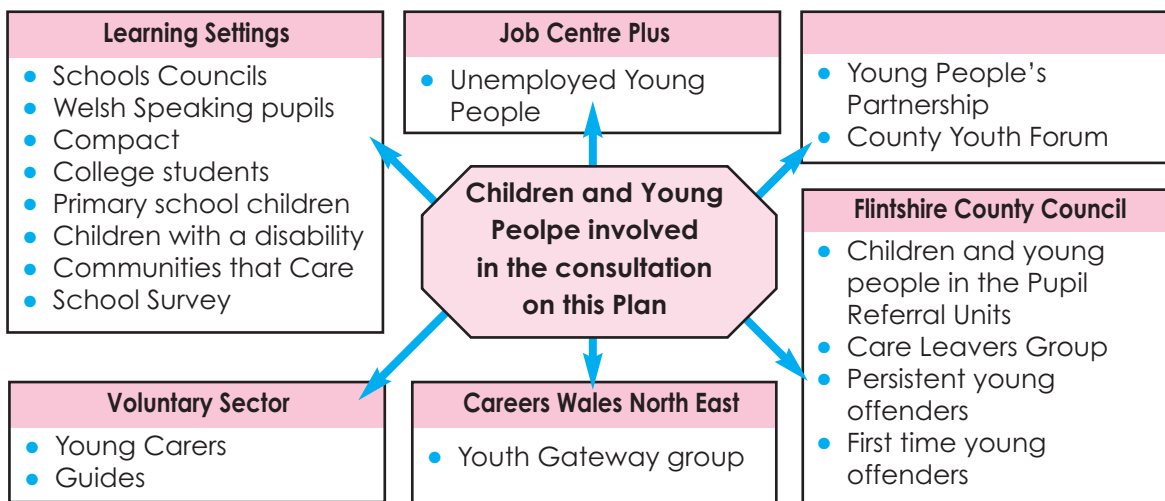


Core Aim 5: Respect

The Involvement Sub-Group of the Children and Young People's Partnership takes a lead on co-ordinating and promoting the participation of children and young people in Flintshire. This includes specifically targeting children and young people who traditionally may not be given the opportunity to have a voice, or may need additional support to make that voice heard. The Involvement Sub-Group has also been tasked with developing a Flintshire Participation Strategy in line with the Welsh Assembly Government guidance. This strategy is an appendix to this plan and will outline the partnership approach to participation as well as encourage and enable services and organisations to develop their own action plans to demonstrate how they will involve children and young people.



All the good work that is currently going on in Flintshire should be continued. This includes services working together focusing on the child and the family, such as:



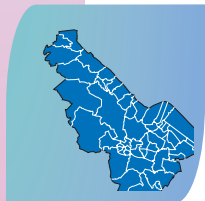
However the evidence is showing us that more support and development is needed to take forward the National and Local priority areas.

Areas for improvement in Wales

- All children and young people have the right to have a say about things that affect them, have the right for their views to be valued and taken seriously and have their race, culture and identity respected
- Every Partnership now has to make sure that children, young people and their families are involved in plans and projects that affect them
- Race and culture have to be considered by all the statutory organisations, including health, education and social services, when they develop their joint planning to ensure everyone is respected equally.



Core Aim 5: Respect



Areas of priority in Flintshire¹⁴ (described in further detail on page 10)

- Support Parenting
- Reduction of behaviour and/or conditions that put children and young people at risk
- Supporting vulnerable individuals and groups
- Safeguarding children and young people
- Raising children and young people's attainment in learning settings
- Inclusion of all children and young people
- Reducing the impact of poverty and deprivation
- Workforce Development - to maintain a skilled, competent and knowledgeable workforce
- Information to be more available and accessible to all

Working together to address the national and local priorities, we will....



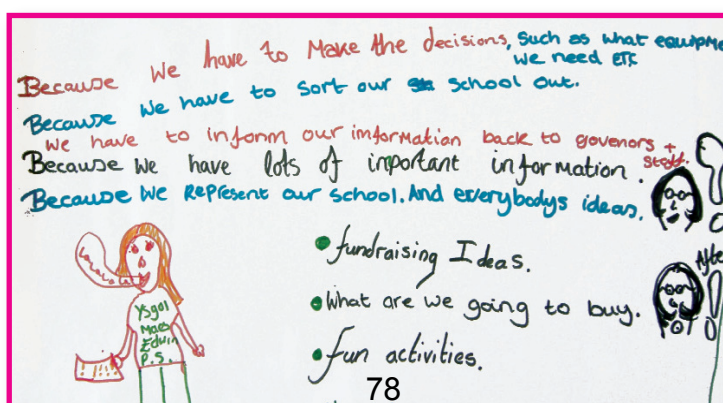
	Actions – What we will do
NATIONAL PRIORITIES	Promote and raise awareness of The Participation Consortium set of Standards to check whether children and young people are "Having a voice, having a choice".
	Ensure that an effective and meaningful school / college council to be present in every learning setting.
	Flintshire representatives to have the opportunity to attend Flintshire Youth Forum , Youth Conferences and Funky Dragon The Young People's National Assembly for Wales. The Children and Young People's Partnership will develop effective systems for sharing information from these bodies to all of the children and young people of Flintshire.
	Develop a Flintshire Advocacy Service for all children and young people who feel they need support to have their voice heard on decisions that affect their lives. Continue to promote the current Advocacy service that is specifically for children who are in the care system or in custody.
	Explore the existing complaints processes for children and young people in a range of settings, and consider the need to expand, enhance, amend and raise awareness of these processes.



¹⁴ More information can be obtained about how these priority areas were selected and what is currently being done to support these issues in Flintshire in the Needs Analysis

Core Aim 5: Respect

	Actions – What we will do
LOCAL PRIORITIES	<p>Multi Agency Participation Strategy and action plan to be in place and to be an appendix to this plan to ensure that children and young people, and other relevant people, participate in decisions and processes that are about them - ensuring that they are given a voice and that their opinion is considered in relation to the development and implementation of local and national policies and plans which have an impact on them. This will be relevant to services delivered through the medium of English and Welsh.</p>
	<p>The Children and Young People's Partnership ensure that actions are taken to develop participation in accordance with the strategy and action plan.</p>
	<p>Work in Partnership to further develop forums and mechanisms for all children and young people who may not always have a voice e.g. Young offenders, children with a disability, children who are in care, children and young people who are lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender, young carers, children whose parents are in prison etc.</p>
	<p>Further development of the Youth Inspectors, who scrutinise and inspect various elements of services, promotional materials or plans from a young person's perspective. Promote the work of the Youth Inspectors and share their findings about service provision in order to improve current service provision and to learn from services with notable practice.</p>
	<p>Information for children, young people, parents/carers and professionals to be accessible and available in a variety of formats and languages</p>
	<p>Work with the Community Strategy and other strategic partnerships to identify the true current profile of the population of Flintshire, including children and young people.</p>
	<p>Provide training for the workforce on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Welsh Language and culture. ● Other languages and culture. ● 'Challenging discriminatory behaviour' which includes raising awareness of difference race, gender, language, culture, religion, sexuality and disability as well as mechanisms to challenge unacceptable discriminatory behaviour in a safe and effective manner. ● Children's rights and participation mechanisms / methods in order to promote the development of children and young people as active local and global citizens. <p>Raise children and young people's awareness of their Rights and Entitlements through a variety of methods, mechanisms and media.</p>



Core Aim 6: A Safe Home and Community



'To ensure that the children and young people of Flintshire have a safe home and safe community which support physical and emotional well-being'

Without a safe home, and a safe environment, children and young people will be unlikely to achieve their full potential.

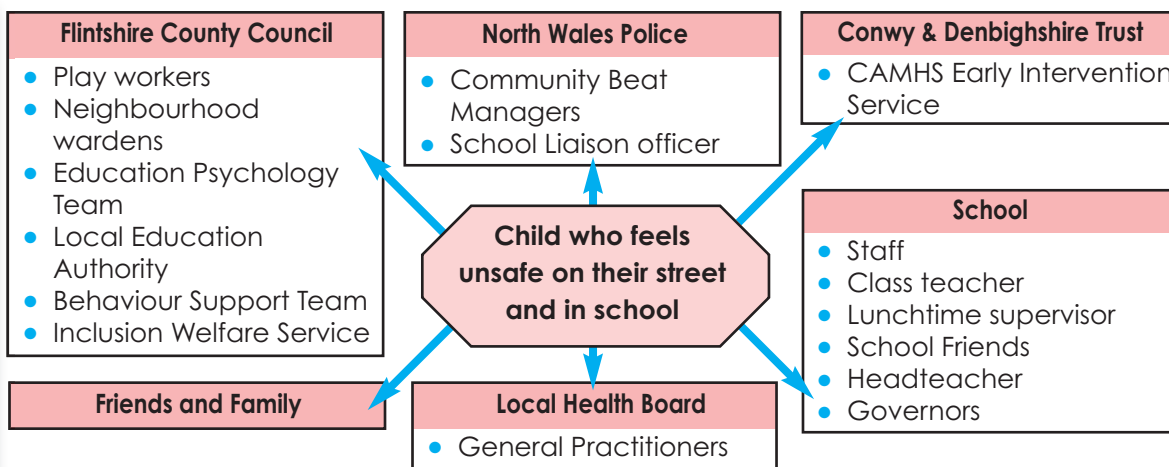
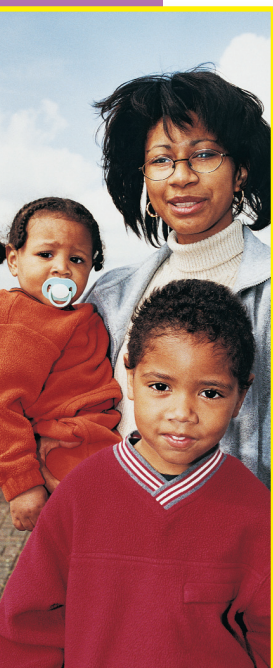
Poor social, environmental and economic circumstances present the greatest threat to a child's growth, and combined with a lack of emotional support raise the lifetime risk of poor physical health and reduced functioning in adulthood.

The effects of such circumstances may manifest themselves in behaviour that themselves put children and young people at risk. In a survey of over 2000 young people in Flintshire, young people themselves identified the issues of alcohol, substance misuse and bullying as main areas that need to be addressed. Other issues that have been considered under this Core Aim are domestic abuse, anti-social behaviour and crime.

While Flintshire statistically is a relatively safe place to live, the fear of crime amongst the public does not reflect this.

There are a number of policies, programmes and initiatives across Wales of relevance to this Core Aim, and local plans and strategies have been developed to reflect these, including Flintshire's Community Safety Strategy, Substance Misuse Action Plan, Youth Justice Service Plan, Domestic Abuse Action Plan, Joint Action Group's Action Plans, Injury Prevention Group Plan, Supporting People Strategy, The Local Housing Strategy and Homelessness Strategy and the work of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and School Security Task Group. The vast majority of these have been developed through multi-agency groups with a holistic approach.

All the good work that is currently going on in Flintshire should be continued. This includes services working together focusing on the child and the family, for example:



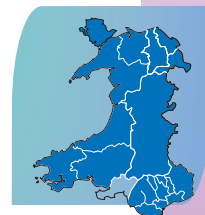
However, the evidence is showing us that more support and development is needed to take forward the National and Local priority areas.

¹⁵ More information can be obtained about how these priority areas were selected and what is currently being done to support these issues in Flintshire in the Needs Analysis

Core Aim 6: A Safe Home and Community

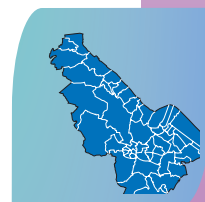
Areas for improvement in Wales

- Children and young people have a right to be safe at home and to be looked after properly if they have to live away from their family.
- Children and young people have the right to be protected from drugs, crime, danger and health risks.
- The police, fire, health agencies and the local council should tackle crime and make sure communities are safe places to live. The Welsh Assembly Government require the Community Safety Partnership to develop multi-agency plans setting out how agencies will work together to achieve this.
- Children and young people who might get (or have been) in trouble with the law should be supported to make sure they do not re-offend.
- Agencies should work together to protect and support children and young people who experience abuse in their families.
- Everyone should be able to live in a good home that they can afford.
- Local councils should provide somewhere to live for certain homeless people including those with children, leaving care or under 21 in unsafe situations.



Areas of priority in Flintshire¹⁵ (described in further detail on page 10)

- Support Parenting
- Reduction of behaviour and/or conditions that put children and young people at risk
- Supporting vulnerable individuals and groups
- Safeguarding children and young people
- Raising children and young people's attainment in learning settings
- Inclusion of all children and young people
- Reducing the impact of poverty and deprivation
- Workforce Development - to maintain a skilled, competent and knowledgeable workforce
- Information to be more available and accessible to all:



Working together to address the national and local priorities, we will....

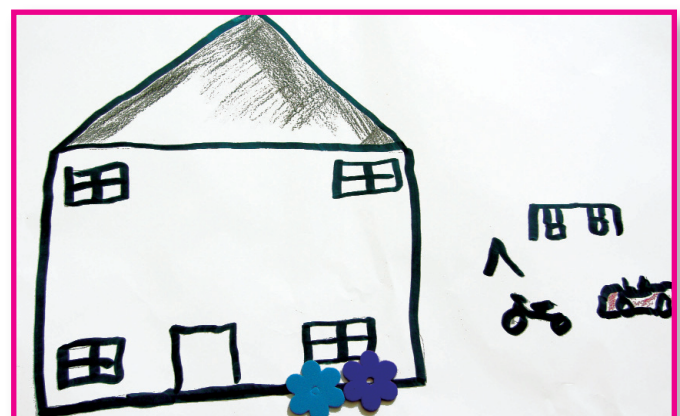
Actions – What we will do	
NATIONAL PRIORITIES	<p>Develop safe communities through contributing to and supporting the work of the Community Safety Partnership to identify hot spot areas and high risk communities by implementing strategies for diversion and changing behaviour and attitudes within those communities. To address issues such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substance misusing (drug and alcohol) parents and children/young people. • Domestic abuse. • Anti-social behaviour. • Bullying in community settings. • Crime and disorder. • Feeling safe and being safe. • Providing information on safety initiatives. • Injury Prevention in the home. <p>This work to continue to take place in learning settings as well as the wider community.</p>
	<p>Work with transport providers to provide safe transport. This to include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reduction of road casualties in line with national reduction targets • Inclusion of traffic management schemes when considering planning applications and their implications for children and young people in that community. • The promotion of safer and alternative routes to settings used by children and young people. • Promoting the use of safe routes to schools.



Core Aim 6: A Safe Home and Community



Actions – What we will do	
LOCAL PRIORITIES	<p>Monitor the levels of environmental pollution in Flintshire through the work of the local authority. Proactively promote the need to reduce environmental pollution to ensure that the communities of Flintshire are safe environments for children and young people.</p>
	<p>Clearly understand accommodation issues for young people and provide suitable support to establish and maintain tenancies.</p>
	<p>Reduce the number of children, young people and their families living in temporary and overcrowded accommodation.</p>
	<p>Raise the level of the quality of housing to meet the Welsh Quality Housing Standard.</p>
	<p>Improve the availability of good quality housing and a choice of appropriate accommodation for vulnerable young people living independently; including for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Young people leaving care ● Homeless young people ● Young people who are substance misusers ● Young people who offend ● Young people in crisis
	<p>Proactively promote the development of the built environment by influencing the Unitary Development Plan and the subsequent Local Development Plan to ensure that the environment of Flintshire promotes the optimum development of all children and young people who live in Flintshire.</p>
	<p>Develop a wider range of supported placements to enable vulnerable children and young people to sustain their living arrangements.</p>
	<p>Develop a range of appropriate support and accommodation to improve outcomes for looked after children.</p>
	<p>Ensure that services and agencies that focus on safety and accommodation, enable children and young people, and other relevant people, to participate in decision making and processes that are about them - ensuring that they are given a voice and that their opinions are considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On an individual basis. ● When developing Strategies, Plans and Services. ● When there is an issue to be resolved, all children and young people have access to a complaints process and advocacy service if appropriate.



Core Aim 7: Freedom from Poverty

'To ensure that the children and young people of Flintshire are not disadvantaged by financial poverty or adverse material circumstances'

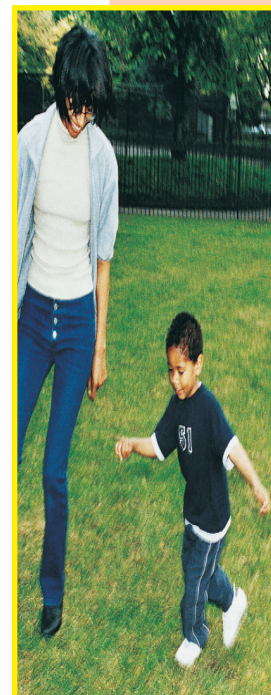
Poverty is not just about income but about the effective exclusion of people from ordinary living patterns, customs and activities. It is about not having access to what others in your society take for granted.

Evidence shows that poverty hinders a child's development in terms of health, education, psychosocial well-being, participation in culture, sport, recreation activities, and also undermines future prospects and lifetime chances. Children and Young People living in poverty are more likely to be premature, have a low birth weight, be at risk of accidents, infectious or respiratory disease, colds, flu and long-term illnesses, depression, poor mental health, anxiety & stress, below average education attainment, stigma and social exclusion and below average physical, mental and social development and well-being. They are also more likely to have a poor diet and nutrition.

The UK is the fourth largest economy in the World but has one of the highest levels of income child poverty of all industrialised countries. 27% or 170,000 of children in Wales are living in poverty [defined as households with incomes below 60% of the national median income]. However, on a more positive note, there has been a sharp decrease in child poverty rates since 1999, but with rising Fuel Poverty figures, rising housing and energy prices and increase in general cost of living there is concern that this trend will reverse.

Who is at risk of experiencing poverty?

- Children of lone-parent families (39%).
- Children in large families (more than 3 children).
- Children growing up in households where there is no-one in full-time employment.
- Children from some minority ethnic communities.
- Children in households with a disabled child or adult.
- Children of migrant workers/asylum seekers.
- Children in couple families where one person is working (40%).
- Families with a child who need hospital care.
- Children of prisoners.



Core Aim 7: Freedom from Poverty

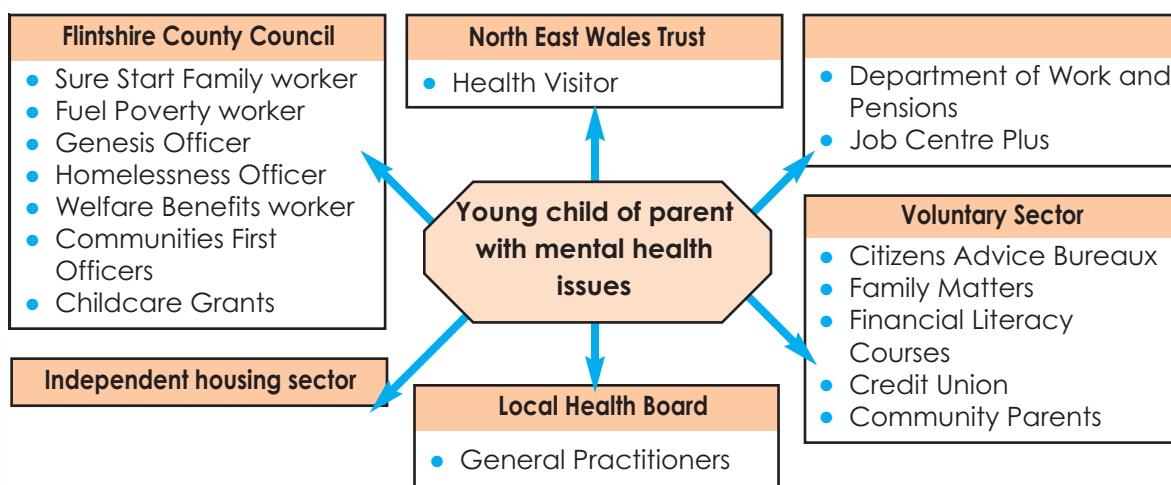


While Flintshire is considered to be an affluent County, there are pockets of high deprivation, both geographically and amongst specific groups and families. The Needs Analysis annexed to this Plan explores this further.

There are a number of policies, programmes and initiatives across Wales of relevance to this Core Aim, including the Welsh Assembly Government's Strategy to reduce child poverty – A Fair Future for Children and a subsequent Child Poverty Action Plan – Eradicating Child Poverty in Wales - Measuring Success; which include targets and milestones in relation to Income, Employment, Education, Housing and Health. However it must also be noted that some of the non- devolved government policies contribute to maintaining the children of asylum seekers in situations which we will advocate against but could be powerless to change.

There is also the Local Regeneration Partnership, the Communities First programme specifically aimed at improving the lives of people in the most deprived areas, and the Cymorth, Flying Start and Genesis Programmes specifically to improve the lives of children, young people and their families. There are also initiatives around the Welfare to Work agenda such as New Deal, Lone Parent Advisers, Basic Skills, Youth Gateway etc. and targeted support for children and young people from financially deprived backgrounds i.e. school uniform grants, free school meals, subsidised school trips and learning grants.

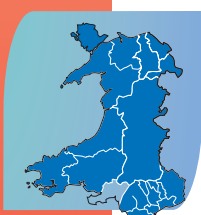
All the good work that is currently going on in Flintshire should be continued. This includes services working together focusing on the child and the family, for example:



However the evidence is showing us that more support and development is needed to take forward the National and Local priority areas.

Areas for improvement in Wales

- Welsh Assembly Government Vision – 'No Child in Wales is living in poverty by 2020'.
- Children and young people have a right to a good standard of living
- Children and young people have a right to financial support from the Government if needed and eligible.
- The Welsh Assembly Government has a **Child Poverty Strategy** and **Implementation Plan** which set out a number of recommendations to address the needs of those families experiencing particular financial difficulty.
- The Children and Young People's Partnership will play an important part in helping families to access opportunities to increase their potential to work and earn a decent level of income.
- Improve their income potential through improved advice and support.
- Childcare and transport should be available so that people can take up working or training.



Core Aim 7: Freedom from Poverty

Areas of priority in Flintshire¹⁶ (described in further detail on page 10)

- Support Parenting
- Reduction of behaviour and/or conditions that put children and young people at risk
- Supporting vulnerable individuals and groups
- Safeguarding children and young people
- Raising children and young people's attainment in learning settings
- Inclusion of all children and young people
- Reducing the impact of poverty and deprivation
- Workforce Development - to maintain a skilled, competent and knowledgeable workforce
- Information to be more available and accessible to all



Working together to address the national and local priorities, we will....

	Actions – What we will do
NATIONAL PRIORITIES	<p>Consider the implications of A Fair Future for Our Children – The Welsh Assembly Government Strategy for Tackling Poverty. Specifically promoting information and signposting to address:</p> <p>Income Poverty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce unemployment and support people to become economically active through initiatives such as New Deal • Promote opportunities for young people to develop entrepreneurial skills for the benefit of themselves and the future labour market and also the community as a whole. • Continue to proactively reduce the numbers of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEETS) through the Achievement Support Project. • Ensure that at the age of 16 young people who are leaving formal education are enabled to make a smooth transition to employment or training. • Improve and increase the opportunities for quality work-based learning for post 16 year olds. • Implement the Flintshire Basic Skills Strategy to support parents / carers to improve their basic and key life skills to support children and young people in their development, education and life opportunities. To include literacy and numeracy, financial literacy, employability skills, social skills. • Implementing the Local Skills and Employment Action Plan. • Work with Transport providers to improve access to employment, education or training opportunities. • Support parents/carers to achieve a work-life balance and achieve an adequate income level by increasing benefits uptake and support to access employment. • Increase Financial Literacy to enable individuals and families to manage their income and expenditure, and raise awareness of the impact of debt and fuel poverty. • Promote the availability and access to impartial advice on financial matters including access to benefits, debt management and credit union. • Promote the use of resources with young people which raise awareness of the issues relating to housing and homelessness: Housemate and the Right Track Pack from Shelter. • Promote access to local food co-ops as an affordable way of accessing fresh seasonal produce.



¹⁶ More information can be obtained about how these priority areas were selected and what is currently being done to support these issues in Flintshire in the Needs Analysis

Core Aim 7: Freedom from Poverty

Working together to address the national and local Priorities, we will....



Actions – What we will do	
NATIONAL PRIORITIES	<p>Participation Poverty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure people are not excluded because of their financial situation through universal access to services targeted at areas of high social need thus avoiding stigmatising individuals. • Improve the availability of information, advice and guidance to enable young people, parents and carers to make informed choices. • Provide training to enable the workforce to plan opportunities to ensure children and young people are not discriminated against because of their financial situation. • Implement W.A.G. Guidance to ensure that children and young people are not excluded from school activities because of cost of uniform, trips and materials.
	<p>Service Poverty – lack of access to services and opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness amongst all service providers as to how their service could minimise the impact of poverty on children, young people and families, and how they need to ensure that individuals and families are signposted to other services that could support them further. • Reduce stigma attached to accessing services such as free school meals. <p>Provide enough affordable childcare places to allow parents to return to work and training.</p>



Actions – What we will do	
LOCAL PRIORITIES	<p>Increase the range of accessible activities for children and young people by increasing the availability and affordability of services.</p>
	<p>Ensure that local strategic plans recognise the transport needs of children, young people and their families.</p>
	<p>Improve access to and the accessibility of transport for vulnerable groups of children, young people and families.</p>
	<p>Services and agencies who support individuals and families to eradicate poverty ensure that children and young people, and other relevant people, participate in decision making processes that are about them - ensuring that they are given a voice and that their opinions are considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On an individual basis. • When developing Strategies, Plans and services. • When there is an issue to be resolved, all children and young people have access to a complaints process and advocacy service if appropriate.

DEVELOPING OUR LOCAL WORKFORCE

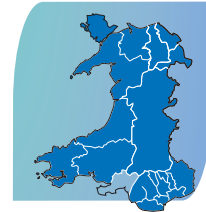


'A well trained professional workforce is fundamental to the delivery of quality services for children, young people and families'

Workforce issues are generally common to all organisations involved in the delivery of services to children and young people in Wales. These include elements relating to:

Areas for improvement in Wales

- More recruitment and retention of the right kind of staff.
- Continuous improvement of the skill base and quality of practice of all staff, including volunteers, carers, and self employed providers, as well as paid professionals.
- The strengthening of inter-agency and multi-disciplinary working.
- The strengthening of leadership, management, and supervision skills.
- The development of a common data set, providing information on the children and young people's workforce across health services, the local authority, voluntary and independent sectors.
- A Common Assessment Framework that equips those that work with children, young people and families to assess their needs.



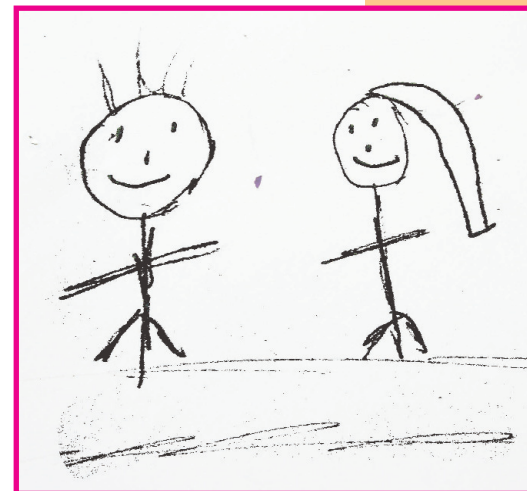
The children and young people's workforce, with its increased emphasis on integrated service provision, requires professionals who are aware of and value each other's contribution and way of working. In addition there are certain key professionals who are in short supply, such as:

- Early Years and Childcare workers
- Youth workers
- Health workers
- Volunteers in certain areas
- Social workers
- Specialist service workers

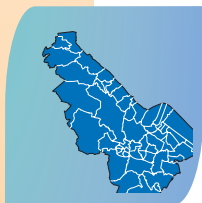
New initiatives, while welcomed, will have a further effect on staff shortages and there will be the potential for recruitment issues and skill shortages to be exacerbated. However, there are current Workforce Development Task Groups that are considering these issues on a National and Local level. In Flintshire, the Social Care Workforce Development Partnership and the School Remodelling Group are already considering some of these issues and need to be supported in their work. There are also franchise arrangements in place with various Higher Education Establishments and Recruitment and Retention Initiatives, as well as national and local training initiatives to invest in the current workforce.

The Children and Young People's Partnership will further consider the needs of the workforce who support Flintshire's children and young people, considering issues such as working conditions and wages, movement of staff, training and qualifications available, link to the voluntary sector and continuing professional development.

Certain workforce issues were identified in the Needs Analysis, and these will be a starting point to ensure we invest and support our workforce to be appropriately skilled, competent and knowledgeable.



DEVELOPING OUR LOCAL WORKFORCE



Areas of priority in Flintshire¹⁷ (described in further detail on page 10)

- Safeguarding, including child protection
- Foundation phase/play
- Training in role re. positive mental health and wellbeing
- Welsh language and culture
- Other languages and culture
- Recognising and challenging discriminating behaviour
- Children and young people's rights/participation
- Collaborative Service planning and Service delivery

And the four cross-cutting issues (outlined on page 3) that need to be considered further to achieve the vision and improved outcomes for children, young people and families:

Investing in our workforce to ensure they are skilled, knowledgeable and competent and have the capacity to achieve the vision.

Improving access to services for children, young people and families.

Working in Partnership and sharing of resources resulting in more cost-effective, holistic and integrated delivery of services.

Services matched to the local and individual needs of children, young people and families – shaping and organising the services around the child and family.

Working together to address the national and local Priorities, we will....

	Actions – What we will do
NATIONAL PRIORITIES	Identify the children and young people's workforce. Map provision against demand in order to identify gaps to inform decisions about recruitment, retention and development needs.
	Introduce and embed the Common Assessment Framework to enable the workforce to assess the individual needs of children, young people and their families.
	Improve Information Sharing and referral systems used at the right level – utilising Wales Accord for the Sharing of Personal Information (WASPI). Provide appropriate training and guidance for staff.
	Strengthen and develop leadership, management and supervision skills.
	Raise awareness of the differing roles and responsibilities of the workforce role in supporting children, young people and families to access a range of services that meet their individual need. Mechanisms to be in place to enable the workforce to access information that will allow them to do this effectively and make clear links between early intervention services as well as specialist services delivered in the communities where the children and young people live.
	Ensure that all members of the workforce are committed to service delivery in a culturally sensitive and non discriminatory way that focuses on the child and the families and puts their needs first.



¹⁷ More information can be obtained about how these priority areas were selected and what is currently being done to support these issues in Flintshire in the Needs Analysis

DEVELOPING OUR LOCAL WORKFORCE



Actions – What we will do	
LOCAL PRIORITIES	<p>Provide training and development opportunities for the workforce to ensure they are skilled, knowledgeable and competent, especially in the areas of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding, including child protection • Specialist professional areas • Training in role re: positive mental health and wellbeing • Welsh language and culture • Delivery of services through the medium of Welsh. • Other languages and culture. • Recognising and challenging discriminating behaviour. • Children and young people's rights/participation. • Collaborative Service planning and service delivery. • Common Assessment Framework. • Common Core Standards. • National Standards for Parenting. • Performance Management and Appraisal.
	<p>Gather information from existing workforce development plans and existing groups that are considering work force issues i.e. Social Care Workforce Development Partnership, School Remodelling Group.</p>
	<p>Organisations providing opportunities for joint training or offering places on training courses to other organisations that would benefit.</p>
	<p>Identify opportunities for collaboration with training providers and academic institutions to provide specialist training, for example the development of courses for play leadership in hospital settings.</p>



SHARING RESOURCES

'Partners are expected to make effective use of contributions from statutory, voluntary and private sectors to build a whole systems approach to the delivery of services for children, young people and families' Duty to Cooperate WAG 2006

Throughout this plan, the need to work in partnership, providing a holistic and seamless service, and placing the child at the centre of planning has been stressed. No one service can address all these issues. No one service should be expected to address these issues. Consultation has shown that children and young people are not particularly concerned about who provides the service as long as they are supported effectively when they need help or advice.

The emphasis therefore needs to be on services working together at a national and local level to ensure quality and efficiency. This can be done in a number of formal or in-formal ways, as appropriate:

- Signposting effectively to services.
- Sharing information effectively and within guidelines.
- Accessing funding as a multi-agency partnership.
- Contribution of resources i.e. office accommodation, transportation.
- Contribution of funding.
- Co-located staff.
- Contributing staff to multi-agency teams.
- Pooling of funding.
- Aligning of budgets.
- Joint Commissioning of services.

There are many examples of formal and in-formal working arrangements which have resulted in more effective and efficient service delivery for children, young people and families in Flintshire i.e. Youth Justice Service, Young Person's Substance Misuse Services, Children's Integrated Disability Service, Sure Start, etc. All the good work that is currently in place should be continued.

However, the evidence is showing us that more support and development is needed to facilitate joint working opportunities and further sharing of resources which will result in improved outcomes.



SHARING RESOURCES

Working together to address the national and local priorities, we will....

Actions – What we will do	
LOCAL PRIORITIES	Investing in our workforce to ensure they are skilled, knowledgeable and competent.
	Develop more integrated delivery of services by working in partnership with all agencies and including the voluntary sector and sharing resources resulting in more cost-effective, holistic and integrated service planning and delivery through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying opportunities to share resources such as staff, premises, equipment, knowledge, skills and budgets informally when this is appropriate. • Developing and creating situations where a range of opportunities are delivered together in an integrated and seamless manner. • Implementing, when appropriate, the Flintshire Joint Commissioning Strategy that will formally enable Partnerships to share resources, pool budgets, align finances or jointly commission when this is appropriate and will have the greatest impact. • Encouraging and developing services that are delivered in a more integrated manner, through actual or virtual teams of skilled multi-agency professionals. • Raising awareness of the roles and responsibilities of other members of the workforce in order to identify opportunities to work together for better outcomes, cost-effectiveness and integrated delivery of services.
	Better matching of services to the local and individual needs of children, young people and families – shaping and organising the services around the child and family.
	Develop a more co-ordinated approach to prevention and early intervention family support services targeted at gaps, and vulnerable groups or communities.



THE OUTCOMES WE AIM TO ACHIEVE



By working together to put the actions highlighted under each Core Aim in place, we are all aspiring to have a positive impact on the **priority areas**¹⁸ for children, young people and families resulting in:

1. Parents/carers will be healthy, well informed and confident in promoting healthy lifestyles and fully involved in their children's care and development.

2. Children and Young People will feel loved and cared for, are confident and have a positive self-image that reduces the risk of them engaging in risky behaviours or developing risky conditions.

3. Vulnerable individuals will feel included and have access to services that promote their health, learning and safety.

4. Children and Young people will be safeguarded by their parents/carers, the children and young people's workforce and the wider community.

5. Children and Young People will aspire to reach a high level of learning and will have an opportunity to access high quality learning settings.

6. Children and Young People will be respected and heard on matters that affect them, regardless of their personal circumstances.

7. Fewer children, young people and families will experience the impact of poverty and deprivation, and they will feel empowered to sustain living above the poverty line.

8. The children and young people's workforce will be skilled, competent and knowledgeable and work together effectively to ensure the best outcomes for children, young people and their families.

9. Children, young people, families and the workforce will be able to access a range of accessible and relevant information that will enable them to identify the appropriate services to meet individual needs.

All organisations and services have a part to play in making these outcomes a reality. No one service can make the impact needed to achieve the desired level of change. Therefore, all service providers need to broaden their knowledge and understanding of each other to ensure they are aware of where support can be accessed and subsequently provide a holistic, tailored and seamless service that all Flintshire children and young people have a right to receive.

¹⁸ See full details of the Priority Areas to which these outcomes refer on Page 10 of this Plan.

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 10

REPORT TO: EXECUTIVE

DATE : 15 JULY 2008

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & REGENERATION

**SUBJECT : EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND (ERDF)
PRIORITY FOUR**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.01 To seek approval from the Executive to submit the following sub regional (Flintshire / Wrexham) transport project as the sole bid for the North East Wales Area under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Priority Four.

2.00 BACKGROUND

- 2.01 The new European Structural Funds Competitiveness Programme (2007 - 2013) for East Wales, is divided into European Social Fund (ESF) and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) elements. Programme funding is provided by the European Union (EU) and administered by the Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO).
- 2.02 ERDF consists of four priorities. The objective of Priority Four: '*Regeneration for Growth*', is to provide support for integrated approaches to regeneration that will produce sustainable economic, environmental and social benefits. Total EU funds for this priority is approximately £7.3 million for East Wales.
- 2.03 This priority is expected to fund four sub-regional initiatives including one for North East Wales, covering both Flintshire and Wrexham. Whilst funding has not been ringfenced, a quarter share per initiative would equate to around £1.82 million for each area. Match funding of 60% of the project costs will be required, resulting in a total potential project value of approximately £4.6 million for North East Wales.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.01 The project will expand the Demand Responsive Transport Deeside Shuttle service (DRT) and to further develop both Hawarden Bridge and Wrexham General Railway Stations. It will focus on improving accessibility from areas of deprivation to the two major sub-regional employment growth hubs - Deeside Industrial Park / Northern Gateway in Flintshire and the expanding retail sector in Wrexham, in addition to widening the coverage of the DRT scheme across both local authority areas.

Date: 19/08/2008

- 3.02 Hawarden Bridge Station is currently under-used. Improvements to the facilities at the station will provide an interchange to a DRT link to Deeside Industrial Park and eventually Northern Gateway. Similar improvements will be made to Wrexham General Station to increase its use.
- 3.03 Since 2003, DRT services have made a significant contribution to improving access to employment. It is currently carrying 2700 passengers per week. User surveys of a sample of 157 showed that 39% were not working at Deeside Industrial Park before DRT existed. It has since been extended to Wrexham to assist more people to access employment and training. If funding was made available through the ERDF programme, there are opportunities to extend DRT to Broughton, Hawarden Business Park, St. David's Park and eventually Warren Hall Business Park.
- 3.04 The project was developed by Flintshire County Council, Wrexham County Borough Council and Taith, through meetings with Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) and WEFO. It has to support people in accessing services and the creation, accommodation and sustainability of jobs as outlined in the ERDF Priority 4 indicators. It is also a requirements that the project addresses the priorities of the Wales Spatial Plan and the West Cheshire / North East Wales Spatial Strategy.
- 3.05 In addition the project supports the objectives of the Taith Interim Regional Transport Plan 2008 which include optimising accessibility to employment, education, and health services. It also addresses the recommendations to extend and improve access to work through DRT within the Flintshire Employment Strategy 2005 - 2010 and is a priority within the emerging Business Plan of the Mersey Dee Alliance.
- 3.06 The project will need considerable further development including detailed schedules of works and costs and firm commitments of match funding before it can be submitted to WEFO. Approval to further develop and submit this project is being sought at this stage.
- 3.07 As this is a project covering both Flintshire and Wrexham, a report at the end of July will be submitted to Wrexham County Borough Council Executive from its officers to seek approval for the development of the project bid for submission to WEFO.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 That the Executive support the submission of the proposed project for the North East Wales ERDF Priority 4 programme.
- 4.02 A further report be submitted to Executive.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 The potential total project value would be approximately £4.6 million. If approved, ERDF funding would provide for approximately £1.84 million, and Flintshire County Council and Wrexham CBC will be responsible for identifying match funding for the remaining £2.76 million. Therefore, each Council would need to identify and secure match funding of £1.38 million as the project is developed further. If sufficient match funding is not secured from other external sources, the project will not be submitted. There will be no commitment upon the County Council to meet any shortfall from their own resources.

5.02 If sufficient match funding is not secured the project will not be submitted. There will be no commitment upon the County Council to meet any shortfall.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 The proposed project will assist with the removal of barriers to employment and training.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 The improvements to DRT, Hawarden Bridge and Wrexham General Stations will provide environmentally sustainable transport solutions.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 The improvements will assist more people to travel to employment and training from deprived areas of Flintshire and thereby increase equality of opportunity.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 Any additional personnel are expected to be funded through the initiative and will be identified as the project is developed further.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Further meetings are needed with Flintshire County Council, Wrexham County Borough Council, WEFO, WAG, Taith and the Northern Gateway stakeholders to develop the project further and prepare the Expression of Interest and Business Plan required to bid for the European funding available.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Initial meetings have been held between the aforementioned organisations

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

European Regional Development Operational Programme 2007 -2013
Wales Spatial Plan 2005 and reviews (2006- 8)
West Cheshire / North East Wales Sub Regional Study 2005
Taith Interim Regional Transport Plan 2008
Flintshire Employment Strategy 2005 - 10
Executive Report 11/12/07 European Structural Funds Programme 2007 -13

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 11

REPORT TO: EXECUTIVE

DATE : 15 JULY 2008

**REPORT BY: INTERIM ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES
AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

SUBJECT : HRMIS PROJECT UPDATE AND PHASE 2 BUSINESS CASE

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 The purpose of this report is to update the Executive on the progress of Phase 1 of the HRMIS project and to present a business case for Phase 2 which will provide for employee and manager self-service. Please refer to appendix A for the business case.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The HRMIS/Payroll project was supported in order to provide a fully integrated single point of data entry for all employee information and to provide electronic employee data records replacing the large number of duplicate employee files that are currently held, to retain accurate organisation establishment records; to provide real-time flexible corporate people reporting to support organisation decision making and employee costing.

2.02 This is an important corporate project that since approval at inception has been funded incrementally according to project phase.

2.03 The HRMIS/Payroll system and its progress have been reported to the Executive and People and Performance Scrutiny Committee periodically. It has always been accepted that a business case for Phase 2 would be put before Executive close to Phase 1 completion.

2.04 The business case at appendix A is presented for consideration by the Executive of the rationale to further develop the HRMIS system.

2.05 Significant additional benefits in terms of process streamlining and therefore potential cost savings could be obtained by implementing Phase 2 of the project.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 **Phase 1 update**

- 3.02 The HRMIS/Payroll system for payroll, absence, travel and core HR has now been built with all employee data having been completely cleansed and data migrated from the existing payroll system. The project has now entered the parallel run phase where the existing payroll system and the new system will run simultaneously. During parallel running, the existing system will continue to pay employees while the new system mirrors the process. Accuracy and effectiveness of both data and processing can be tested. Two parallel runs have been planned for July and August pay dates. Upon successful completion of these, the anticipated go-live will be September 2008.
- 3.03 During the parallel run period, corporate and operational reports will continue to be built and tested ready for go-live.
- 3.04 The new establishment control process will be implemented from July 1st. If a position is not held on the new system structure then an employee cannot be matched to the position and therefore will not be paid. The Head of HR Operations with the HR Managers are briefing Directorate Senior Management Teams. These briefings will be cascaded through Directorates and all documents relating to the process posted on the YourHR infonet site.
- 3.05 System training has been completed for employees in HR, payroll and for those who input travel expense claim forms. Training for Finance Officers, the schools staffing team and HR managers will take place during August.
- 3.06 The move of payroll employees from the second floor to the fifth within County Hall, to an integrated Service Centre has been successfully completed. The consultation process to move HR and Payroll employees into their new teams has also been completed.
- 3.07 As part of the establishment control work, service managers have been asked to check and verify their structure charts on a monthly basis during parallel run. This is to ensure that all changes are being communicated via the correct channels and recorded accordingly.
- 3.08 The web recruitment part of the system will continue to be developed during the parallel run period. This part of the system will streamline the recruitment process, in particular by capturing prospective employee data at the point of application and removing the need to key in paper applications. It is anticipated that the system will be available at the end of September.
- 3.09 **Phase 2 Proposal**
- 3.10 The employee and manager self-serve modules will benefit the Organisation considerably in terms of more efficient ways of working and better management information.

- 3.11 Key benefits include efficiencies in travel claim input, reductions in the production and distribution of payslips, potential increases in income from external customers, efficiencies in updating of personal data, efficiencies in overtime input, efficiencies in absence reporting, improvements in line management control and intervention, a job vacancy skills search facility, reductions in employee enquiries to HR/Payroll.
- 3.12 It is proposed that Phase 2 commence during the budget year 2009/10 once the new system is established.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 That Executive note the progress in achieving Phase 1 of the project.
- 4.02 That Executive note the contents of the business case for Phase 2, at Appendix A in particular the potential efficiencies and give their commitment to proceed with Phase 2 planning.
- 4.03 That Executive approve a one-off contribution from unearmarked reserves of £100,359 to fund the implementation of Phase 2.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 The funding for Phase 1 implementation has been made available and will cover the necessary costs.
- 5.02 A one-off contribution of £100,359 from unearmarked reserves is requested to cover the implementation of Phase 2 of the project. This contribution will fund a temporary project team for 6 months.
- 5.03 The implementation of Phase 2 brings potential for cashable efficiency savings of £29,354 and anticipated savings of £45,276 as detailed in Appendix 1. It should be noted that these savings depend upon the ability to realise savings which span several Directorates.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 n/a

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.01 n/a

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.01 All new processes within the system are subject to the Equalities Impact Assessment.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.01 Phase 2
- 9.02 There is potential for staffing efficiencies as a result of implementing Phase 2 self service.
- 9.03 Travel - due to employees being able directly input their own travel claims into the employee self service module there will no longer be a need for Directorate admin teams to data input from completed claim forms.
- 9.04 Payroll – due to improved process and the movement of employees from weekly pay to monthly pay during Phase 1 and also the introduction of electronic timesheet completion, there will be a reduction in workload within the payroll processing team.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

- 10.01 Phase 1 - Consultation has been completed for the implementation of the new integrated HR and Payroll team structure.
- 10.02 Phase 2 - Any staffing efficiencies that are identified and result in proposals that affect team structures will be properly reported and consulted upon with employees and their trade unions representatives.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

- 11.01 As above

12.00 APPENDICES

- 12.01 Self Service Business Case

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

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HR & Payroll MIS Implementation

Document Title	Phase 2 Business Case
Author	Naomi J Harrop – Project Manager
Version	4.0
Publication Date	15/07/08

Version Control

Date	Version	Summary of Changes
28/04/08	1.0	First Draft
23/06/08	2.0	Final Version
28/06/08	4.0	Changes following Chief Executive feedback

Distribution

For Approval

Name	Title	Date	Version
Colin Everett	Chief Executive	28/04/08	1.0
Pam Webb	Head of HR and OD	28/04/08	1.0
Executive	Executive	15/07/08	2.0

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Overview

It has been identified that business process and procedures must improve and better back office administration system implemented. The Authority requires better information on a timelier basis. To achieve this, the authority purchased an integrated HR and Payroll management Information system from Midland HR. The Trent system will be implemented as part of Phase1 of the project.

The cost of Phase 2 implementation is £100,359, with cashable savings of £29,354 per annum and anticipated process savings of £45,276.00. Authority is requested to sign up for the Phase 2 implementation.

Business Needs

The authority has identified a need to improve the business processes and authorisation process. The rationale behind implementing the self service module of Trent is to build upon the current foundation of investment. Self service for managers and employees will enable:

- Greater employee engagement and empowerment through provision of access to “their” data and the ability to make changes as and when they occur.
- Employees to have immediate access to online payslips.
- More effective line management by providing accurate team data.
- Faster and more efficient approval mechanisms for key employee processes such as recruitment, travel claims and absence recording.
- The ability to automate labour intensive processes such as the annual employee data audit.

Timescales

It is estimated that Phase 2 of the project will take six months to implement. This will involve a pilot of self service to a chosen area.

At the outset of the Phase a scoping exercise will be carried out to define what is included and excluded.

Hardware Environment

The core hardware is already in place from Phase 1. Access to computers by employees will need to be more widely available. ICT have made a commitment in the council plan to extend employee access to computers to 75% by March 2009. The full success and realisation of benefits of self service implementation will be dependent upon ICT achieving their commitment.

Cashable Efficiencies

The main cashable efficiencies of implementing the manager and employee self service modules are outlined below:

- Resource reductions:
 - Travel - due to employees being able directly input their own travel claims into the employee self service module the need for Directorate admin teams to data input from completed claim forms will be no longer. Initially due to employee access to computers there may be a small continued need until ICT provide all employees with the ability to access a computer. Work would need to take place to establish where the savings in time were to be able to identify where resource savings could be made across the Directorates.
 - Payroll – due to improved process and the movement of employees from weekly pay to monthly pay during Phase 1 and also the introduction of electronic timesheet completion.
- Removal of 50% of paper payslips:
 - With the introduction of self service it is possible for employees to access their payslip online. They will also be able to view historical payslips. This will enable them to print off their own copies for any queries such as proof of salary for mortgage applications, rather than contacting HR and waiting for delivery of a paper copy. From a corporate perspective savings will be made in production and distribution costs. For this business case we have excluded bureaux and schools, although further savings could be made if they were to be in scope.
- Increase of 5% for Bureaux service charges
 - With the introduction of self service it will be possible to offer the bureaux this as an additional service. In addition, additional reports can be provided to enable better management information for them. An estimated increase of 5% on the current costs has been suggested, however the market will need to be researched as to best practice on cost of services.

Non-Cashable Efficiencies

There are numerous non-tangible benefits that will generate subjective savings.

- Employee Benefits:
 - Employees can update name and address changes personally
 - Input overtime for approval
 - Input own absence when it occurs – this will help to reduce the number of days reported due to the immediate recording rather than payroll staff waiting for paper form.

- Managers:
 - Line management control so that managers can easily and simply track and control their staff. The enabling of expedient line management intervention when monitoring flags up a potential risk to performance and service delivery
 - Job vacancy skills search
 - Managers had online access to their staff's personal data;

- Central HR and Payroll
 - Reducing employee queries to HR through the increased accessibility of information thereby allowing HR and Payroll to focus on added value activities for the organisation, for example, pro-active intervention with absence. As the on-line notification and approval system will enable faster and more accurate reporting of absence, HR will be able to track trends in absence and help managers to reduce absence.
 - Allow automation of approval for a number of processes – authorisation to recruit, authorisation to appoint, travel claims, overtime claims, timesheet entry and absence notification.
 - Bureaux able to offer professional service – appropriately costed
 - Reduction in the absence rate:
With online access to absence input, employees will be able to report their absence immediately. This will then via online authorisation be routed to their authorising manager for approval. Efficiencies in this reporting and authorisation process will enable absence management information to be more accurate and allow managers to react in a timely manner with respect to managing their employees.
 - Online data audit
Currently FCC conducts an annual audit of employee data by sending out paper copies. With the introduction of self service employees will be able to update their personal details as and when they change. Additionally annual audits can be conducted with data collection on line. This should encourage a greater return rate due to ease of access. Savings will be realised through time spent preparing data to send out, tracking returns and inputting any changes.

Summary of Potential Efficiencies

Cashable Efficiencies:	Saving £k
Reduction of 1 payroll technician scale 3 *	21,340
Removal of 50% of paper payslips **	1,886
Reduction in number of paper pads for absence notification and new starters ***	3,128
50% of FLADS budget for postage **	3,000
Total Cashable Efficiencies	29,354

Process Efficiencies:	Saving £k
Reduction of Directorate travel administrator time at a scale 3 due to online travel claims *	42,680
Reduction in time for collating and distributing payslips	490
Increase of 5% for Bureaux service charges ****	1,926
Total Process Efficiencies	45,276.00

Notes:

- * Resource costs based on maximum scale point
- ** The cost of payslips for all payroll for the year 2007/8 broken down into weekly and monthly is as follows;

Weekly payslips October - March 783 @ 0.035p each = £ 27.41

Monthly payslips October - March 53,111 @ 0.035p each = £1858.85

Times the above by 2 for annual estimate. Then divide by 2 to exclude 50% of payslips from on-line delivery for schools and bureaux

TOTAL = £943.13

The monthly cost for postage for FCC payslips only is £500. It takes approximately 1 day per month to collate and distribute the FCC payslips. This excludes schools and bureaux.

12 months @ £500 x 0.5 = £3,000

- *** £782 for 200 packs containing 15 forms each, thus total forms equals 3000. Estimate 2200 new starters per annum, approximately 50% via paper form and 11000 absences per annum, estimate 9500 return via paper forms. Therefore 800 packs per annum required.

- **** The invoices sent to the 'OTHER EMPLOYERS' for payroll services for 2007/8 were as follows;

○ Llysfasi	£ 6485.50
○ Yale	£25518.70
○ Careers	£ 6519.17
○ Total	£38,523.37

We have assumed 5% increase in charges due to enhanced service offering. The Bureaux may decide not to enhance their service offering, thus the cashable revenue can only be realised following a post project review.

Costs

Cost Summary	£k
Project Manager	33,600
HR and Payroll Project Leader (SO2)	18,332
Project Key Users *2 (SC5)	27,427
Communications materials	10,000
Training materials	5,000
Project Team expenses	2,000
MidlandHR consultancy expenses	4,000
Total	100,359

Notes:

- Costs are based on a 6 month timescales
- Resource costs based on maximum scale point
- Project Manager based on 4 days per week for 28 weeks
- Communications management will be taken on by the Project Manager and Senior HR Management.

Risks

Risk 1

- Costs for resource reductions are based upon conservative assessments.

Countermeasures

- Further analysis work would need to be carried out to determine what resources would be required to deliver the travel and payroll service. This would form part of the definition and analysis phase of the project.

Risk 2

- An equipment survey and network performance testing have not been carried out. The costs are based upon the assumption that the existing provision as scoped during Phase 1 with ICT will be sufficient.

Countermeasures

- ICT to carry out an equipment survey and performance testing prior to commencing Phase 2. Following a review of the outcome a decision can be taken as to whether to progress.

Risk 3

- Non implementation of Phase 2 would result in non realisation of the full benefits and capability of the MidlandHR system. Further process improvement would not be possible.

Countermeasure

- None

Risk 4

- Bureaux may take business their business elsewhere due to the increase in costs.

Recommended Project Organisation Structure

Role	Key Responsibilities
Project Sponsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ultimately responsible for the successful delivery of the project. • Facilitates Board level decisions where required • Balances the needs of the Authority, the users and the suppliers.
Steering Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate corporate support for the program • Establish global policies and resources to support implementation • Set priorities and approve scope for the program • Support a multi-year program-funding plan. • Resolve any disputes between the SG project team and the directorates within 2 days • Obtain the appropriate organisational approvals and secure the necessary support and budget • Ensure the project remains viable • Provide overall guidance and direction • Represents all users of the new system in the decision making process of the project • Monitors overall project progress • Ensures project stays within scope and budget • Accepts major project deliverables • Delegates responsibility for review and acceptance of detailed project deliverables to appropriate personnel • If project is off track, reviews and decides upon Project Manager's recommendations concerning appropriate corrective action • Ensures commitment of project participants • Manages changes in user organisation and business procedures caused by new system, e.g., change in organisational structure • Authorise project closure • Ensure that the project is fully aware of other activities within the authority

Role	Key Responsibilities
Project Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop strategies and procedures for efficient implementation of HR& Payroll Project • Develop and maintain rollout schedule with program priorities • Develop and manage project scope, budget, and schedules in accordance with approved plans • Allocate and manage project resources • Monitor progress of and provide support of implementation program • Conduct formal reviews at completion of each phase • Resolve escalated issues in a timely manner • Communicate progress and status to project board • Ensures quality is consistently delivered • Risk management • Realign project priorities • Reviews and analyses Change Requests
Project Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage a set of deliverables within a specified area of the project • Proactively manage project deliverables, timescales and risk within their area. • Ensure business targets and objectives are met by the proposed system • Identify and document new business procedures • Change management activities for existing business processes necessary for successful system implementation • Work with change sponsors to implement processes within the business • Ensure departmental processes are duly covered by the implementation • Report progress and constraints to the Project Manager • Lead departmental project team members, deliver procedural training and go-live support, own master data, data cleansing, and provide long term implementation leadership • Responsible for deliverables as defined by statements of work • Deliver change communication workshops to business departments before training starts • Drive out specific change tasks and deliverables, and facilitate organisational change events when required (for example, job impact workshop) • Ongoing support to ensure the necessary changes happen to realise the business benefits • Testing Co-ordination
Project Key Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • integral to the design of the solution and is given the authority by the Project Sponsor to refine and prioritise requirements

Role	Key Responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users are expected to be fully familiar with their organisation, the business processes and requirements within their sphere of operation • Contribute to solution design, development and configuration • Ensure Trent business transactions are mapped to businesses processes (Design & configuration) • Identify business change issues • Adopt best business processes where possible • Deliver Job Role training to the end user team • Experts / Key users in existing systems • Data Cleansing and preparation of pre-formatted data. Provision of information required to effect conversion of data from the current systems. • Undertake data cleansing and preparation of pre-formatted data prior to data take-on • Testing to include Acceptance test criteria, test scripts and data for acceptance Testing. • Write User Desktop Procedures
Technical Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide guidance and advice for technical aspects of the Trent implementation • Ensure end user authorisation and roles are delivered on time • Learn technical aspects of Trent in sufficient detail to support after implementation • Implementation and maintenance of systems infrastructure • Provision of technical support for project team.

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 12

REPORT TO: EXECUTIVE

DATE : 15 JULY 2008

REPORT BY: COUNTY FINANCE OFFICER

SUBJECT : WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION PAPERS - BUSINESS RATES

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.01 To provide members with background information in relation to two Assembly Government Consultation Papers for Business Rates.
- 1.02 To seek Executive's endorsement of an officer response sent to WAG on 1st July 2008 relating to companies in administration.
- 1.03 To seek Executive's view on Assembly proposals to extend the small Business Rates Relief Scheme.

2.00 BACKGROUND

- 2.01 Two consultation papers have been received as follows:-
 - i. Proposals to exempt companies in administration (closing date 30th June 2008).
 - ii. Proposals to extend the Small Business Rate Relief Scheme (closing date 31st July 2008).

3.00 PROPOSALS TO EXEMPT COMPANIES IN ADMINISTRATION

- 3.01 The Assembly proposes to introduce legislation to exempt companies in administration from payment of business rates on empty properties. Historically, exemptions from empty property rates have only applied to companies that are in liquidation and to individuals subject to bankruptcy but not to companies that are in administration.
- 3.02 The proposals will bring a consistent approach in the way these companies are exempt from business rates on empty properties compared with companies in liquidation or individuals subject to bankruptcy. Also, the proposals will remove any potential for commercial decisions about whether to enter into administration or liquidation to be influenced by the existing differences in rates liability.

Date: 19/08/2008

- 3.03 There are no direct financial implications to the Council or to taxpayers since the Council collects Business Rates on behalf of the Assembly through the National Collection Pool for Wales, with amounts being re-distributed based on an authority's 18 plus population and Standard Spending Assessment (Council Tax and Revenue Support Grant being the other elements). Arguably there is a "round about" implication if the pool receives less money than there is less to distribute via the settlement.

The proposal simply brings consistency in the way in which empty business properties are treated. It also ends the anomaly between empty properties subject to 'administration' or 'liquidation'.

4.00 PROPOSALS TO EXTEND THE SMALL BUSINESS RATE RELIEF SCHEME

- 4.01 The Assembly Government intends to extend the provision of rates relief for shops involved in the sale of goods, including those selling prepared food ready for consumption, petrol filling stations, public houses, restaurants, cafes, registered child care providers and credit unions.
- 4.02 The new proposals are designed to support specific sectors of small business that currently fall outside of the existing Small Business Rate Relief Scheme because of rateable value cut-off limits. One of the features of the extended proposals of rate relief, with the exception of registered child care providers and credit unions, is that owners of more than one shop, petrol filling station, public house, restaurant, cafe or retailer of prepared food wherever it is in Wales, will only be able to claim relief for one property within Wales, which will be the one of their own choice.
- 4.03 Rate relief for the extended elements of the Small Business Rate Relief Scheme will provide relief of :-
- **25%** for shops involved in the sale of goods, including those selling prepared food ready for consumption, petrol filling stations, public houses, restaurants, cafes - if the rateable value is between £5,001 and £6,000. *(this raises the rateable value threshold for entitlement to 25% relief from £5,000 to £6,000)*
 - **50%** for registered child carers - if the rateable value is £12,000 or less. *(this raises the rateable value threshold for entitlement to 50% relief from £2,000 to £12,000)*
 - **50%** for registered credit unions - if the rateable value is £9,000 or less. *(this raises the rateable value threshold for entitlement to 50% relief from £2,000 to £9,000)*
- 4.04 The extended elements to the small business rate relief scheme will apply from the 1st April 2008 until 31st March 2012.

- 4.05 Members will be pleased to note that the proposals do not adversely effect existing entitlements to Small Business Rate Relief. In fact where the rateable value thresholds are increased certain businesses may be entitled to additional relief, potentially increasing relief from 25% to 50%.
- 4.06 It is estimated that based upon an initial assessment of businesses in Flintshire, the extent of these proposals mean that :-
- 110 shops, petrol filling stations, public houses, restaurants, cafes may receive relief of 25%
 - 15 day nurseries/child care providers may receive relief of 50%
 - 2 credit unions may receive relief of 50%

5.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.01 That the Executive endorse action already taken by officers in supporting the Assembly proposals for businesses in administration.
- 5.02 That the Executive support the Assembly proposals to extend the Small Business Rates Relief Scheme.

6.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.01 There are no direct financial implications to the Council or to taxpayers in relation to both proposals since the cost of awarding exemptions and reliefs are offset against the Councils contribution to the National Collection Pool for Wales, with amounts being re-distributed based on an authorities 18 plus population and Standard Spending Assessment (Council Tax and Revenue Support Grant being the other elements).

7.00 ANTI-POVERTY IMPACT

- 7.01 None

8.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 8.01 None

9.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 9.01 None.

10.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.01 None.

11.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

11.01 As part of the consultation process the views and endorsement of the Executive are sought.

12.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

12.01 The Assembly Government are managing the wider consultation exercise across Wales with business interest groups and all associated bodies representing the business community.

13.00 APPENDICES

13.01 None.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Welsh Assembly Government Consultation Papers on the Enhancement of Small Business Rate Relief and Exempting Empty Business Properties in Administration.

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 13

REPORT TO: EXECUTIVE

DATE : 15 JULY 2008

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND HOUSING

SUBJECT : PROPOSED NEW CEMETERY AT CONNAH'S QUAY

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To update Members on progress regarding the proposed new cemetery at Connah's Quay, to enable continued burial provision for local residents of the town and immediate area. To seek a final determination and preferred option from Members, in order for officers to proceed with implementing a suitable scheme as a matter of priority, to facilitate a new cemetery at Connah's Quay.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The existing cemetery at Bryn Road in Connah's Quay is nearing capacity for new graves. There is a maximum of **12 months'** burial provision remaining, therefore an urgent decision is required if the Council is to provide continued burial provision to residents of Connah's Quay and the immediate surrounding area.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 There are three options for the Authority to consider and further extensive detail is available within the attached Options Appraisal report. Members are reminded that urgent consideration is required in order to determine the preferred way forward. Even as matters stand now and if the scheme progressed immediately there is likely to be a period of some 6 to 8 months where no new grave burial provision will be available to local residents in their own local area.

3.02 **Option1 - Do Nothing**

That the Authority does not provide future new grave burial provision within Connah's Quay.

Local residents would not have a new grave facility within the town and therefore alternative cemeteries within the County would need to be utilised. The nearest Council controlled alternatives would be Hawarden and Flint, but these may not be suitable to the residents of Connah's Quay. Any burials which require diversion from Connah's Quay will have a detrimental impact on the remaining burial provision at that particular cemetery. This option will

also force the Council to consider plans to extend or provide new cemeteries in the affected areas much earlier than previously anticipated.

3.03 **Option 2 - Colomendy Farm**

Allocate a portion of Council owned land at Colomendy Farm and develop a cemetery of suitable size.

The Council would have £0.967m available to develop the site, as the land is already in the ownership of the Authority. However, there is a significant opportunity cost to the land at Colomendy, should the Council wish to dispose of the land and generate a capital receipt. The capital receipt which would be generated by such a disposal would depend on market conditions at the time of sale.

The cost of drainage at Colomendy Farm is likely to be similar to the scope of work required at Kelsterton Farm, as set out in Option 3 below. However, a detailed costing proposal has not been received for this site at this stage. A desktop survey has been undertaken, but if this option is to be considered further, a full costing appraisal would be required from a specialist in this field.

3.04 **Option 3 - Kelsterton Farm**

Purchase land at Kelsterton Farm and develop an eight-acre cemetery.

The Council would need to acquire approximately 8-acres of land. It is anticipated this site would provide burial provision to local residents for the next 50 years.

It will take at least 16 months to acquire the land, install the necessary drainage and complete the required infrastructure works. This timeframe is estimated and assumes all components are progressed without delay.

3.05 The Council would need to demonstrate on Options 2 and 3 that it is in full compliance with Environment Agency regulations. An engineering land drainage scheme would therefore be required for both locations. These engineering drainage measures are mandatory and are a condition of planning approval to develop a cemetery on either site. Option 3 has now been approved by the Environment Agency, subject to normal cemetery planning conditions.

3.06 Outline planning permission has been granted, effectively to facilitate a change of use of the Kelsterton Farm land, from agricultural to cemetery burial purposes.

3.07 Immediate progression is also critical in relation to negotiations to procure the land. Market conditions and the passage of time can complicate the negotiation process, which in turn could lead to further delays in securing continued new burial provision for local residents.

4.00 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.01 That Members approve the immediate progression of Option 3 as set out in 3.04 above, subject to full planning approval being granted. This would provide continued long term new burial facilities to residents of Connah's Quay and the immediate surrounding area. A full planning application will be submitted once approval is granted to effectively address access, road and car parking. This application can be submitted and progressed in tandem with negotiations to procure the land.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 There is £0.967m of funding allocated to the 2008/09 Capital programme to progress the provision of a new cemetery to serve local residents. This funding allows for the acquisition of land (Option 3) and all associated infrastructure works including drainage, roadways, pathways, boundaries and landscaping.
- 5.02 There will be ongoing revenue expenditure associated with the operation of a new cemetery. Typically this will include contracted maintenance charges for grave digging and grass cutting, and utility and service costs such as electricity, water, telephone landline and non-domestic rates. These costs will be offset to an extent by cemetery fee income, although the cemeteries service is currently subsidised. The anticipated revenue costs have been estimated at £0.030m, which should be contained within the existing base budget. If this is not the case a budget pressure bid will require submitting to cover any residual shortfall in due course.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 None.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.01 Land previously designated as agricultural at Kelsterton Farm has now been granted outline planning approval for a change of use for cemetery burial purposes.
- 7.02 An engineering land drainage scheme would be required at both the locations in order for the Authority to demonstrate it is in full compliance with Environment Agency regulations. This is also a condition of the recent outline planning approval granted in respect of Option 3 above.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.01 A new cemetery in Connah's Quay would enable residents to access local burial facilities within their own town, in keeping with other large towns within the County. Access for the bereaved may prove prohibitive if they have to travel further to alternative cemeteries.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Further consultation will be required with Planners as matters reach the full planning approval and scheme implementation stage.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Flintshire County Council
Corporate Valuers, Planning Department and Land Drainage Section.

11.02 Connah's Quay Town Council and The Parish of Connah's Quay
Consultation has taken place in the past with Connah's Quay Town Council around the suggestion of suitable sites for a new cemetery. The Parish of Connah's Quay have also stated their position, which is a local cemetery needs to be provided as a matter of urgency to minimise stress to bereaved residents. They have also expressed concern around the pressure which will be placed on other cemeteries such as Hawarden while no local new burial facilities are available.

11.03 Environment Agency
Recent correspondence received from the Environment Agency indicates it will accept the proposed dewatering drainage scheme at Kelsterton Farm, subject to the standard burial conditions.

11.04 Deeside Urban Wildlife Group
The Group state a cemetery would not be so damaging to wildlife as residential development. However, there would be a number of restrictions around disturbance of great crested newts and badger setts in the breeding season which would need to be managed in an appropriate manner.

11.05 Countryside Council for Wales
No objections in principle, but recommend consideration is given to support wildlife species which may reside in the area, such as great crested newts, birds, badgers, etc. The CCW also recommend consideration should be given to biodiversity and site design, with linear and continuous features, such as wildlife corridors, and habitats functioning as stepping stones, should be retained and appropriately managed. Landscaping schemes for the site should include planting native trees of known local provenance.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 A copy of the Options Appraisal Report is on deposit in the Members Library.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None

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