Barry Davies LL.B (Hons)
Solicitor/Cyfreithiwr
County Legal and Democratic Services
Officer
Swyddog Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol a
Democrataidd y Sir

CYNGOR
Sir y Fflint
Flintshire
COUNTY COUNCIL

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Your Ref / *Eich Cyf*	
Our Ref / *Ein Cyf*	NG
Date / *Dyddiad*	19/09/2008
Ask for / *Gofynner am*	Mike Thomas
Direct Dial / *Rhif Union*	01352 702324
Fax / *Ffacs*	

Dear Sir / Madam,

A **SPECIAL MEETING OF THE FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL** will be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, MOLD** on **THURSDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER 2008** at **14:00** to consider the following items.

Yours faithfully

Assistant Director (Democratic Services)

A G E N D A

1. **PRAYERS**

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

4. **WELSH CLASSROOM ASSISTANT OF THE YEAR AWARD**
   A presentation will be made to Ms Andrea Davies of Ysgol Y Llan, Whitford, who has won this prestigious award

5. **MINUTES**
   To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 26/06/2008 (copy enclosed).

6. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

County Hall, Mold. CH7 6NA
Tel. 01352 702400 DX 708591 Mold 4
www.flintshire.gov.uk
Neuadd y Sir, Yr Wyddgrug. CH7 6NR
Ffôn 01352 702400 DX 708591 Mold 4
www.siryfflint.gov.uk

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

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7.   **<u>POST OFFICE CLOSURES - NORTH WALES</u>**
       Report of the Chief Executive enclosed. Representatives of the Post Office will be in attendance

8.   **<u>STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2007/08</u>**
       Report of the County Finance Officer enclosed. Members are asked to bring with them to the meeting the copy of the Accounts which were circulated with the papers for Audit Committee which is scheduled to be held on 24 September 2008

9.   **<u>MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION 2008/09</u>**
       Report of County Finance Officer enclosed

10.   **<u>DRAFT RECRUITMENT POLICY</u>**
       Report of the Chief Executive enclosed

11.   **<u>SENIOR MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE: PROGRESS REPORT</u>**
       Report of Chief Executive enclosed

Minutes of a Special Meeting of Flintshire County Council held at County Hall, Mold on Thursday, 26th June, 2008.

PRESENT:

Councillor Q R H Dodd (Chairman), Councillor C Legg (Vice-Chairman).
Councillors: K Armstrong-Braun, J B Attridge, S R Baker, D Barratt,
G H Bateman, R C Bithell, C S Carver, Mrs J C Cattermoul, E G Cooke,
D L Cox, Mrs R Dolphin, B Dunn, Mrs C A Ellis, E F Evans, J E Falshaw,
Ms E V Gay, F Gillmore, R J T Guest, Ms A M Halford, R G Hampson,
G Hardcastle, P G Heesom, M Higham, Mrs C Hinds, R Hughes,
 H T Isherwood, R Johnson, Mrs C M Jones, R B Jones, Mrs S Jones,
R P Macfarlane, D I Mackie, Mrs D L Mackie, Mrs N M Matthews,
D Macfarlane, Mrs A Minshull, W Mullin, E W Owen, M J Peers,
P R Pemberton, N Phillips, H G Roberts, I B Roberts, Mrs C A Thomas,
D T Williams, D E Wisinger, A Woolley, M G Wright and Ms H Yale.

APOLOGIES:

Councillors L A Aldridge, P J Curtis, R Davies, Mrs A J Davies-Cooke,
A G Diskin, Mrs G D Diskin, C J Dolphin, H T Howorth, Mrs N Humphreys,
G James, Mrs N M Jones, Mrs H J McGuill, T Newhouse, M A Reece,
L A Sharps, A P Shotton and N R Steele-Mortimer.

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, Assistant Director of Financial Management, Chief Regeneration Officer and Head of Committee, Members and Electoral Services.

13. PRAYERS

The Chairman's Chaplain, the Reverend Anthapurusha conducted prayers at the commencement of the meeting.

14. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the following Minutes of the meetings of the Council be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman:-

a) Ordinary Meeting held on 8th April, 2008
b) Annual Meeting held on 13th May, 2008.

MATTERS ARISING

Minute No.10 - Former Councillor Elvet Matthews

The Chairman responded to an enquiry from the Leader of the Council that it was his recollection that it was intended to invite Mr Matthews to County Hall and that no decision had been made by the Council to send him a letter. This was still the situation and it was also agreed that a similar invitation should be extended to former Councillor John Ovens.

Minute No.8 (d) – Appointment of Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Standing Committees

The County Legal and Democratic Services Officer referred to the decision of the Council to appoint Councillor Adele Davies-Cooke as Vice Chairman of the Social and Health Overview Scrutiny Committee and her subsequent resignation from that position. It was agreed that Councillor Hilary Isherwood be the new Vice-Chairman.

Minute No 8 (i) – Standards Committee

The County Legal and Democratic Services Officer referred to Resolution (b) and explained to Members that the reference to Councillor D Mackie as a nomination to the Standards Committee should be corrected to Councillor M Peers and this was agreed.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The County Legal and Democratic Services Officer responded to a question regarding Declarations of Interest in respect of Councillors who were Members of the Clwyd Pension Fund. He advised Members that under the new Code of Conduct, if they were a member of the pension fund panel or were a contributor to the pension fund they would need to declare a personal interest but they would be able to stay in the chamber and vote on any matters raised as their interests would not be prejudicial.

The following Councillors then declared personal interests:-

Councillors J B Attridge, D Barratt, R C Bithell, Mrs J C Cattermoul, E F Evans, Mrs C Hinds, Mrs S Jones, Mrs A Minshull, H G Roberts and I B Roberts.

16. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2007/08

A report of the County Finance Officer, copies of which had been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The County Finance Officer presented the report the purpose of which was to advise on the process for the Council to receive a recommendation from the Audit Committee the previous day in relation to the draft Statement of Accounts 2007/08. A supplementary report had been tabled at the commencement of

the meeting which advised the Council of the comments and recommendations of the Audit Committee in relation to the draft Statement of Accounts 2007/08.

The County Finance Officer thanked Members for their attendance and referred to the recommendation from the Audit Committee which had resolved to recommend adoption and approval of the draft Statement of Accounts 2007/08 to this meeting of the Council. A number of Members had attended training sessions with the Assistant Director over the previous 2-3 weeks and it was hoped that these sessions had been helpful to Members. Reference was also made to the "drop-in" sessions that had also been arranged. It was hoped that these had been beneficial for new Councillors who were being asked to approve the draft Statement of Accounts in relation to the previous County Council.

The County Finance Officer then made a presentation on the draft Statement of Accounts for 2007/08 and explained that this was a draft at this stage with the final version to be considered by the Audit Committee and County Council in September following the external audit. She thanked all Members and Directors and their staff together with the staff in her own department for the preparation of the draft Statement of Accounts.

The County Finance Officer then referred to the much earlier timescale that had to complied with when compared to previous years. The presentation outlined the work to date and the process that would follow. Once approval had been made by the Council the Pension Fund Accounts would be audited by PWC commencing 23rd June, the Council Accounts would be audited by PWC commencing 1st July and the findings would be reported to the Audit Committee on 24th September with those recommendations being submitted to County Council on 25th September, with the final statement published on 30th September. A Public Notice had been given that the Accounts were "on deposit" and had been open to inspection by the public.

The County Finance Officer then referred to specific sections of the Statement in relation to accounting policies which were on pages 3-8, the net General Fund Surplus of £5.419m on page 17, the Balance Sheet on page 19 and to note 30 on the Provisions being down by £1.8m and note 33 on the General Fund Balances being up by £5.6m and the HRA by £0.08m. Details on the HRA were contained on pages 49-52, the Group Accounts on pages 53-59 and the Clwyd Pension Fund Accounts on pages 60-68.

The Chairman of the Audit Committee, Councillor I B Roberts, moved the recommendations of the report and thanked all staff in a number of departments and particularly the Finance staff for the work undertaken in bringing together the Statement of Accounts for consideration at this meeting and this was duly seconded by the Vice-Chairman of the Audit Committee, Councillor W Mullin.

A number of questions were raised by Members which were duly answered by the Officers present, and it was,

RESOLVED:

a)   That the comments of the Audit Committee be noted
b)   That the recommendation from the Audit Committee be received
c)   That the Draft Statement of Accounts 2007/08 be approved and adopted.

17.   DURATION OF MEEETING

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and ended at 2.45 pm.

18.   MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were 2 members of the public present.

…………………………..
Chairman

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

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL	DATE:	26TH JUNE 2008

MEMBER	ITEM	MIN. NO. REFERS
J B Attridge	Clwyd Pension Fund	15
D Barratt	Clwyd Pension Fund	15
R C Bithell	Clwyd Pension Fund	15
Mrs J C Cattermoul	Clwyd Pension Fund	15
E F Evans	Clwyd Pension Fund	15
Mrs C Hinds	Clwyd Pension Fund	15
Mrs S Jones	Clwyd Pension Fund	15
Mrs A Minshull	Clwyd Pension Fund	15
H G Roberts	Clwyd Pension Fund	15
I B Roberts	Clwyd Pension Fund	15

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 7

REPORT TO: **SPECIAL MEETING OF THE FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

DATE : **25 SEPTEMBER 2008**

REPORT BY: **CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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

1.00 **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01 To update County Council on the proposed Post Office closure proposals for Flintshire and North Wales and to agree the Council's formal response to these proposals.

2.00 **BACKGROUND**

2.01 The Government has announced that the Post Office is to close 2,500 post offices across the country and to set up 500 outreach centres to mitigate closures in some areas. The closure programme is now well underway and is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2008. This will leave a post office network of approximately 11,700 post offices once the closure programme is finished. Post Office Limited has split the UK into 47 review areas based on groups of Parliamentary Constituencies and is consulting on its proposals for each review area on a rolling basis.

2.02 On July 29th 2008 Post Office Limited announced details of proposed branch closures across North Wales and opened a seven week public consultation on its Area Plan for North Wales (attached as Appendix 1).

Of the 323 existing branches 66 are proposed for closure and of these 14 will be replaced with a much more limited "outreach service".

3.00 **CONSIDERATIONS**

3.01 Within Flintshire 10 branches are proposed for closure - Golftyn Deeside; Pontybodkin Mold; Brynford Holywell; Carmel Holywell; Holway Holywell; Lixwm Holywell; Gwernymynydd Mold; New Brighton Mold; Rhosesmor Mold; Gronant Prestatyn.

The Post Office has also announced it intends to trial an additional outreach outlet at Spar Store 1, Golftyn lane, Connah's Quay and would be looking at its performance and usage to determine whether it should remain in the longer term.

Date: 19/09/2008

3.02   In announcing its branch closure programme for Flintshire and North Wales, Post Office Limited says that it has sought to ensure that people continue to have adequate access to post Office services by applying the minimum access criteria prescribed to it by the Government i.e. Nationally -

- 99% of the UK population to be within 3 miles and 90% of the population within 1 mile of their nearest Post Office branch.
- 99% of the total population in deprived urban areas across the UK to be within 1 mile of their nearest Post Office branch. (Deprived urban - the most disadvantaged urban parts of the UK based on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation).
- 95% of the total urban population across the UK to be within 1 mile of their nearest Post Office branch (urban = a community with 10,000 or more inhabitants in a continuous built up area).
- 95% of the total rural population across the UK to be within 3 miles of the nearest Post Office branch (rural = a community not covered by the definition of urban above).

Additionally -

- 95% of the population of the postcode district to be within 6 miles of their nearest Post Office branch.

3.03   Executive at its meeting of 5th August gave initial consideration to the Network Change Programme - Area Plan Proposal for North Wales.

Executive noted that the seven week consultation period was a very limited exercise not designed to provide a forum for debate on individual branch closures.

The Chief Executive's initial response on behalf of the County Council records the Council's dissatisfaction and disagreement with the Network Change Programme consultation stating that the term "consultation" is a misnomer and that in effect the consultation process is advance notification of a rationalisation and change programme to the network of post offices across the United Kingdom (see Appendix 2 attached).

The Post Office have been invited to discuss openly with elected members and officers the following four areas of Network operation -

- resourcing Post Offices to be retained to meet the additional customer demands transferred from areas no longer to be served by a Post Office
- how Outreach services will support in practice the areas no longer to be served by a Post Office
- the operation of the Post Office Development Fund (see para 3.05)
- the impacts of Council services for those customers who access Council services/make payments via post offices which include rents, council tax, education, invoices, library receipts and mortgages. The evidence of transactions within a 12 month period demonstrates the importance of

retaining the Post Office network in Flintshire. The ability of customers to make payments locally within their communities is crucial along with the importance that the Council places on the partnership arrangements with the Post Office in maximising points of access to facilitate a wide range of payment points to pay for many Council services.

The Post Office were informed that the Council would be discussing these four issues at its meeting to be held on 25th September and have been invited to provide further information to inform our debate and to attend in person.

3.04 The Chairman of Postwatch Wales has written to the Chief Executive setting out Postwatch's role within the current closure programme and outlining particular issues which persons/organisations might wish to raise with Post Office Limited when responding to the consultations.

The letter together with the Chief Executive's reply is attached as Appendix 3 to the report.

3.05 Post Office Development Fund

On 7th August 2008 Welsh Assembly Government issued a consultation document "A refocused Post Office Development Fund" (PODF) setting out some draft proposals regarding the type of support a new fund could provide to diversify and improve post offices within Wales and inviting comment on the proposals. The new PODF would open from January 1st 2009 and would provide both capital and revenue monies. The initial scheme operated between 2002-2004. Grants totalling £4.1m were provided to 106 post offices within the Principality, but were for capital costs only.

The closing date for responding to the consultation document is 30th October 2008. The consultation document comprises a series of specific questions around the key issues of :

- the type of activities the refocused Post Office Development Fund (PODF) will support.
- The levels of funding awarded.
- The eligibility criteria.

Attached as an appendix to this report is an issues paper for consideration which sets out a series of specific questions for the County Council to consider around the above issues.

3.06 Post Office Card Account

Currently a large number of individuals receive a variety of state benefits by means of a Post Office Card Account. The tender for the delivery of these

benefits is currently being reviewed by the Government and it is understood that at least one other organisation has expressed an interest in securing the contract. If the Post Office Card Account contract is awarded to another party it will have a serious adverse effect on the future viability of a large number of post offices across the UK, with some estimates claiming that up to 3,000 additional post office branches would close if the Post Office failed to secure the Post Office Card Account contract.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01   County Council is recommended to -

    i.   Consider the post office branch closures proposed in Flintshire.
    ii. consider the impacts of the closures and the resultant impacts in the local community
    iii. to seek guidance from the Post Office representatives about:
- resourcing post offices to be retained to meet the additional customer demands transferred from areas no longer to be served by a post office

- how Outreach services will support in practice the areas no longer to be served by a Post Office.

    iv. Support in principle the proposed reopening of a refocused Post Office Development Fund and respond to the consultation paper in relation to the questions posed at appendix 4.
    v.   Request the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions making clear the importance that the County Council places on the social role that post offices plan in their local community and its concern about the impact that any future loss of business will have should the Post Office Card Account be discontinued.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01   There are no financial implications associated with this report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01   There are no anti-poverty impacts contained within this report noting that the closure of post offices could adversely affect:

    i.   Vulnerable people; and
    ii. Rural communities

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01   There are no environmental impacts contained within this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 There are no Equalities impacts contained within this report. Although any 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 implications arising from this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 There is no requirement for consultation directly associated with this report.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 None.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Contained on the relevant files held by the Policy and Performance Unit

Contact Officer: Peter Kane
Telephone: 01352 702126
E-Mail: peter_kane@flintshire.gov.uk

Post Office Ltd

Network Change Programme

Area Plan Proposal North Wales

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Proposed Local Area Plan
3. The Role of Postwatch
4. Proposed Outreach service Points
5. Additional Outreach outlets
6. List of Post Office® branches proposed for "Outreach"
7. List of Post Office® branches proposed for closure
8. List of Post Office® branches proposed to remain in the Network

- Frequently Asked Questions Leaflet
- Map of the Local Area Plan
- Branch Access Reports - information on proposed closing branches, replacement Outreach services and details of alternative branches in the Area

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1. Introduction

The Government has recognised that fewer people are using Post Office® branches, partly because traditional services, including benefit payments and other services are now available in other ways, such as online or directly through banks. It has concluded that the overall size and shape of the network of Post Office® branches ("the Network") needs to change.

In May 2007, following a national public consultation, the Government announced a range of proposed measures to modernise and reshape the Network and put it on a more stable footing for the future. A copy of the Government's response to the national public consultation ("the Response Document") can be obtained at www.berr.gov.uk/consultations/page36024.html.

Post Office Ltd has now put in place a Network Change Programme ("the Programme") to implement the measures proposed by the Government. The Programme will involve the compulsory compensated closure of up to 2,500 Post Office® branches (out of a current Network of 14,000 branches), with the introduction of about 500 service points known as "Outreaches" to mitigate the impact of the proposed closures. Compensation will be paid to those subpostmasters whose branches are compulsorily closed under the Programme.

To support the necessary changes to the Network and put it on a more stable footing and to support the reshaped Network of the future, the Government has proposed an investment of up to £1.7bn as a funding package.

The majority of Post Office® branches - more than 80% - will not change as a result of the Programme. Post Office Ltd is seeking to implement those changes that do take place as efficiently and sensitively as possible.

One of the key ways in which Post Office Ltd will make sure that people continue to have the best possible access to Post Office® services is by applying the minimum access criteria prescribed by the Government in the Response Document:

Nationally:

- 99% of the UK population to be within 3 miles and 90% of the population to be within 1 mile of their nearest Post Office® branch.

- 99% of the total population in deprived urban[1] areas across the UK to be within 1 mile of their nearest Post Office® branch.

- 95% of the total urban[2] population across the UK to be within 1 mile of their nearest Post Office® branch.

- 95% of the total rural[3] population across the UK to be within 3 miles of their nearest Post Office® branch.

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[1] Deprived urban – The most disadvantaged urban parts of the UK based on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (top 15% Super Output Areas in England, 15% of Data Zones in Scotland and 30% of Super Output Areas in Wales and Northern Ireland).

[2] Urban – A community with 10,000 or more inhabitants in a continuous built up area.

[3] Rural – A community not covered by the definition of Urban above.

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In addition, for each individual postcode district:

- 95% of the population of the postcode district to be within 6 miles of their nearest Post Office® branch.

Changes to the Network can only take place within the prescribed access criteria.

In order to deliver the changes set out in the Response Document, Post Office Limited has divided the UK into 47 areas ("Areas"). For each of these Areas Post Office Limited will develop a local area plan proposal ("Area Plan Proposal") which will set out the changes that it proposes to make within it. The Area Plan Proposal for North Wales has been developed and in this booklet you will find information on the changes proposed for North Wales. Full details of the Area Plan Proposal for North Wales are available on our website www.postoffice.co.uk/networkchange or by contacting us at the address given below.

When developing the Area Plan Proposal for North Wales, Post Office Limited analysed a number of factors. These included the proximity of the Post Office® branches proposed for closure to other nearby branches, the number of customers currently using a particular Post Office® branch, the size and ability of nearby branches to absorb extra customers, and the commercial implications of any decision for Post Office Ltd.

Post Office Ltd has also taken into account obstacles such as rivers, mountains and valleys, motorways and sea crossings to islands in order to avoid undue hardship to customers. In addition, the availability of public transport, alternative access to key Post Office® services (such as cash withdrawals, bill payments, mail services), local demographics and the impact on local economies have all been considered. Post Office Ltd has sought information from a number of external organisations and people, including subpostmasters, local authorities and regional development agencies to assist with this process.

Postwatch, the independent consumer watchdog for postal services, has worked with us in assessing the options for change during the period leading up to the publication of the Area Plan Proposal. Post Office Ltd has also engaged with other stakeholders, including relevant MPs.

Local Public Consultation

Each Area Plan Proposal is subject to local public consultation to ensure that the views of local people are taken into account before any final decisions are made by Post Office Limited.

The local public consultation on the Area Plan Proposal for North Wales will commence on 29 July 2008.

The local public consultation will last for a period of six weeks and the closing date for feedback is 15 September 2008. Exceptionally, in this instance, we have extended local public consultation by one week to allow for the summer holiday period. Please send your views and comments in writing regarding access to future Post Office® services in this Area to the address detailed below (payment of postage is not required to a Freepost address). Please note that your comments will not be kept confidential unless you expressly ask us to do so by clearly marking them 'In Confidence'.

Steve Geraty
Network Development Manager
C/o National Consultation Team
FREEPOST CONSULTATION TEAM
Email: consultation@postoffice.co.uk
Customer Helpline: 08457 22 33 44

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2. The Area Plan Proposal for North Wales

Post Office Ltd is acutely aware of the concerns that changes – including closures – affecting Post Office® branches in North Wales will cause. In fulfilling the Government's requirement to reduce the overall size of the Post Office® network ("the Network") – and to do so in a way which creates similar results across the UK as a whole, and ensures that no group of inhabitants at an area level is overall significantly more adversely affected than any other – we are proposing to retain a total of 271 Post Office® branches across the North Wales area, but to close 52 existing branches and to replace a further 14 with Outreach Services.

The purpose of this local public consultation is to obtain your views on Post Office Limited's proposals to ensure that the branches that are ultimately selected for closure, or closure and replaced with an Outreach Service, are appropriate. From the outset of the Network Change Programme, Post Office Limited has made it clear in its communications that the Programme is not designed to provide a forum for debate on whether branches should close, but is about ensuring that Post Office Limited has the best available knowledge to allow it to make the most informed decisions about which branches should close.

If these proposed changes take place, Post Office Limited will remain the largest retailer by network size in the area, and will still have more branches open than the number of branches of major banks and building societies combined. 98.8% of the population will see no change to the branch that they currently use or will remain within one mile of an alternative outlet.

At present North Wales' 665,000 residents are served by a total of 323 branches. Usage of Post Office® branches is falling, in line with national trends, as more customers access services at other places, make more use of the internet and have their Government benefits paid directly into bank accounts.

This Area Plan Proposal supports achievement of the national accessibility criteria set by the Government, forms part of an overall reduction in the number of branches by up to 2,500 across the UK and does not disproportionately affect the inhabitants of the area relative to other parts of the country.

In addition to meeting these criteria, when preparing this Area Plan Proposal, Post Office Limited has considered factors relating to geography, the availability of local transport and alternative access to key Post Office® services, local demographics and the impact on local economies. All branches, where changes are proposed, have been visited by members of Post Office Limited's staff to make sure that local factors that needed to be considered in developing an Area Plan Proposal have been assessed first hand.

North Wales is diverse in nature from the urban, industrial areas of Wrexham and Deeside, the University city of Bangor and the seaside towns of Llandudno and Rhyl, to the predominantly rural communities of Arfon, the Lleyn Peninsula, Vale of Clwyd, Anglesey and Conwy Valley. 76% of the population live in rural communities and 24% in urban areas. In order to meet the Government's access criteria, and avoid undue hardship, Post Office Ltd is proposing a future Network in the region comprising 31 branches in urban towns and cities and 240 branches in rural areas.

The needs of those living in communities defined as deprived have been carefully considered in this Area Plan Proposal, reflecting the specific national criteria set by the Government to give greater safeguards on the accessibility of branches in these communities. Some 17% of the area's total population live in deprived communities, 6% of them in urban areas and 11% in rural areas. This proposal for future network provision in North Wales provides for 9 branches being located in urban deprived communities.

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Post Office Limited has engaged with various stakeholders when preparing this Area Plan Proposal. We have consulted with the independent consumer watchdog on postal services, Postwatch, and have asked all local authorities within the North Wales area to provide information and views relevant to the factors which we are able to consider. Our aim throughout has been to minimise the impact, as far as possible, on our customers and to produce the most effective overall proposal for the future.

In our conversations and correspondence with stakeholders, we have been made aware of regeneration plans affecting areas within the overall proposal and have taken these into consideration when constructing the Area Plan Proposal. These include regeneration and development plans and housing strategies from Wrexham County Borough Council, Cyngor Gwynedd Council, Conwy County Borough Council, Powys Council, Flintshire Council, Denbighshire County Council and the Isle of Anglesey Council. Our proposed Network for North Wales takes account of the locations affected by these and other schemes, their likely implementation timescales, and has regard to the needs of the communities affected by these changes. We will keep provision under review should demand increase beyond anticipated levels in the future.

Powys County Council and Conwy County Borough Council have advised Post Office Limited of major road schemes that could materially change the accessibility to branches for particular communities. Similarly, Conwy County Borough Council has provided information regarding public transport provision.

In finalising the Area Plan Proposal, all branches were carefully considered against the Government's minimum access criteria which Post Office Limited must meet, and with regard to the other factors that we must consider. 29% of the initial Area Plan Proposal has been changed as those factors were considered, and as information from stakeholders and Postwatch was reviewed and assessed.

Future service provision:

The Area Plan Proposal envisages a Post Office® Network of 271 branches in the North Wales area, which ensures that Post Office Ltd would comply with the minimum access criteria set by the Government. For almost 91.5% of customers this would mean no change to the Post Office® branch that they currently use.

The Network now proposed for North Wales continues to offer better access to services than that of any similar organisation, while accepting the Government's decision to reduce overall branch numbers. Subject to the Government's overriding criteria, we have considered geography, transport provision, demographics and local economic impact where appropriate. We are pleased to maintain 65 branches that support the only essential retailer in their community and 129 that provide the only access to cash in a particular community.

Post Office Ltd understands the importance of its role in both urban and rural communities and is keen to continue to provide access to services for as many customers, in as many of these communities, as possible. We have also considered the relative convenience of alternative branches for those customers whose closest branch is proposed for closure. Of the 8.5% of customers who use a branch that will close, 7.3% would have access to Post Office® services within one mile as measured by road distance (3.7% being within half a mile of their nearest alternative). In total 98.8% of the population will either see no change, or will be within one mile of an alternative branch.

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As part of these proposals we will provide outreach services to the following 14 communities in North Wales:

Betws yn Rhos
Capel Curig
Cerrigydrudion
Dolwyddelan
Efailnewydd
Gwyddelwern
Llandrillo
Llansannan
Llanuwchllyn
Llithfaen
Pantglas
Pentrefoelas
Rhydycroesau
Trawsfynydd

The consultation will be looking at visiting days and times the outreach models will visit these communities. Local feedback is being sought from the communities where we propose to change access to our services.

There are four types of outreach: hosted, partner, mobile and home, all of which are operated by a core subpostmaster from a larger nearby branch. The models have been successfully tested across the UK.

More details about outreach services are given within this document in Section 4.

Post Office Limited is keen to assist as many customers as possible to access information and take part in the consultation process concerning the Network Change Programme. As part of the local public consultation period, Direct Enquiries the Nationwide Access Register and source of information for people with disabilities, the elderly and people with pushchairs, has conducted an independent access assessment of each of the Post Office branches in the North Wales Area Plan Proposal. These assessments are published on their website (www.directenquiries.com).

Through Direct Enquiries, customers can also take part in the local public consultation about proposed closures in the area by completing a questionnaire at www.directenquiries.com. Customers with no internet access should contact Direct Enquiries on 01344 360 101, or textphone 01344 457 200, to be sent a copy of the questionnaire.

Next steps....

During the local public consultation, which will last for a period of seven weeks, we will seek views on the proposed future service provision in the region as outlined in this Area Plan Proposal.

Subject to the conclusion of the local public consultation period, and after consideration of feedback received, no changes would be implemented before November, 2008.

Post Office Limited is at a crucial point. Customer numbers are falling, customer habits are changing and many of our traditional services are available elsewhere. It is essential that the changes, which include a reduction in the number of branches, are made if the Network is to have a sustainable future. We therefore welcome your views and comments regarding access to future Post Office® services in this area. In particular we ask for your views on accessibility to the nearest Post Office® branch.

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3.

postwatch

The consumer watchdog

Postwatch is the independent watchdog for postal services, created by the Postal Services Act 2000. Postwatch is working with Post Office Ltd and local communities throughout the programme to help secure the best possible outcome for customers.

What Postwatch will do

Postwatch operates through nine regional and national committees across the UK. Postwatch's role during the programme – prescribed by government - is to scrutinise Post Office Ltd's proposals and give feedback, ensure local consultations are meaningful, and that Post Office Ltd's decisions are sensible and in line with government criteria.

Each Postwatch regional office investigates Post Office Ltd's closure proposals. Postwatch receives area plans in advance of public consultation, allowing the time to examine proposals, and Post Office Ltd the chance to refine their proposals before going to public consultation.

Once public consultation is underway, Postwatch works to raise awareness of local consultations, and encourage participation. Postwatch will also work to ensure the minimum access criteria set out by the government are maintained.

Where Postwatch thinks proposals are unsatisfactory, they will work with local communities and Post Office Ltd to address these problems. There is an agreed review mechanism between Postwatch and Post Office Ltd for such instances. It is important to note that Postwatch does not have a power of veto on Post Office Ltd's decisions.

Further information

Postwatch and Post Office Ltd have agreed a Memorandum of Understanding, which sets out in detail the role Postwatch will play in the Programme. This is available on the Postwatch website at www.postwatch.co.uk.

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4. Proposed Outreach Service Points

In some cases, Post Office Ltd is proposing to mitigate the impact of a proposed branch closure by putting in place an Outreach Service. Outreach Services are an innovative way to continue to provide Post Office® services and a means by which Post Office® products and services are provided by a 'Core' Subpostmaster (who already operates a Post Office® branch in the community) to nearby communities.

Outreach Services build on Post Office Ltd's experience of successfully operating over 250 satellite branches since 2000 and have been tried and tested in a number of pilot schemes.

There are currently four different Outreach Service models: the Mobile Service, the Hosted Service, the Partner Service and the Home Service. Details of the current Outreach Service models are set out below.

Mobile Service

The Mobile Service is a travelling Post Office® situated within a mobile vehicle and brings Post Office® and retail products and services to communities without relying on fixed premises. The Mobile Service is provided from the back of the vehicle with a Post Office® counter inside. The vehicle has an access lift so that disabled customers can also access the vehicle.

The Mobile Service will be operated by a Core Subpostmaster from his nearby Core Post Office® branch. The vehicle will visit communities at specified times and days each week and will park at a pre-determined central and safe location.

The technology used in the vehicle means that the Core Subpostmaster (or his staff) are able to provide our customers with a range of Post Office® products and services including:

- Post Office® Card Account.
- Postage and Post Office® Savings Stamps.
- Bill and Budget Payment Schemes.
- Financial and Banking Services.
- Telephony products including Homephone.

Other products and services including car tax, travel money, travel card and travel insurance may also be available if these are available at the Core Post Office® branch.

Hosted Service

The Hosted Service provides customers with access to a range of Post Office® products and services at a fixed site during specified hours on set days.

The Core Subpostmaster will provide the Hosted Service from the premises of a local business or a community building such as a shop, café, church, garage or village hall ("Hosted Premises"). The Hosted Premises will set aside space for the portable Post Office® computer equipment.
The provision of a Hosted Service maintains a Post Office® presence in the community and may also lead to increased sales for the Host if the Hosted Premises contain a retail business.

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The Hosted Service provides customers with a range of Post Office® products and services including:

- Post Office® Card Account.
- Postage and Post Office® Savings Stamps.
- Bill and Budget Payment Schemes.
- Financial and Banking Services.
- Telephony services including Homephone.

Other products and services including car tax, travel money, travel card and travel insurance may also be available if these are available at the Core Post Office® branch.

Partner Service

The Partner Service provides Post Office® products and services to customers at a fixed site through a third party retailer.

The Partner Service can be operated from many types of existing business premises including convenience stores and cafés. The Partner provides Post Office® products and services to customers from his premises on behalf of the Core Subpostmaster. The Core Subpostmaster will provide support and assistance to the Partner in managing the Partner Service. The Core Subpostmaster pays the Partner for operating the Partner Service which is provided from a fixed counter position within the Partner's Premises. The Partner Service will be available to customers during the same hours as the normal opening hours of the Partner's retail business.

The provision of a Partner Service maintains a Post Office® presence in the community and may also lead to increased sales at the retail business of the Partner.

A wide range of Post Office® products and services are available from the Partner Service including:

- Post Office® Card Account.
- Postage and Post Office® Savings Stamps.
- Bill and Budget Payment Schemes.
- Banking Services.
- First class, first class recorded delivery and special delivery of inland letters / packets up to 6kg.
- Second class and second class recorded delivery of inland letters / packets.
- International letters / packets up to 2kg.
- Acceptance of pre-paid home shopping returns packets / parcels.
- Mobile phone top up e-vouchers.

Home Service

The Home Service enables customers to order Post Office® products and/or services and have these delivered direct to their homes or alternatively the products or services will be available for collection by the customer at a Drop-In Session held at a fixed time and location.

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Customers who register for the Home Service can telephone the Core Subpostmaster to order Post Office® products and services including:

- DWP Giro cheque encashment.
- Inland Revenue cheque encashment.
- Non-automated personal cheque encashment and deposits.
- Post Office® saving stamps.
- Non-automated Bill payment.
- Mails acceptance.

The Home Service is likely to be most suited to, for example, small communities of around 50 people or less. Although there will not be a physical Post Office® building in the community, the Home Service enables customers in these areas to access certain Post Office® products and services.

Post Office Ltd is proposing to introduce a number of Outreach service points as part of this Area Plan. A list of the branches proposed for replacement with an Outreach service is provided in section 5 of this booklet and full details of the proposed new services are provided in the appropriate section towards the end of the appendix.

As part of the local public consultation, we would like to seek views from our customers and their representatives in relation to each individual proposal, in particular:

- our proposal to close the Post Office® branch concerned and replace it with an Outreach Service;

- the type of Outreach Service to be provided;

- our current Outreach Service proposal (for example, whether it is a suitable type of Outreach Service for the area and community concerned, whether there are any particular local factors that we should be aware of that may influence what type of Outreach Service is most appropriate for the area and community, whether there are any benefits or disadvantages regarding the type of Outreach Service in the area and community);

- whether the extent of Outreach Service (in terms of hours and Post Office® services provided) proposed is suitable for the area and community;

- suitable locations for the Outreach Service in the local community;

- all other potential Outreach Services for the area and the communities concerned. As explained above, while Post Office Ltd is currently proposing to establish a specific Outreach Service, following local public consultation (and having regard to all relevant factors) it may decide to establish one of the other Outreach Services in the area concerned.

When commenting on our proposals we would particularly be interested in your views on the availability of public transport, alternative access to key Post Office® services, local demographics (such as age, sex, disability, race, religion and ethnicity) and the impact on customers and the local economy.

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5. Additional Outreach outlets

Post Office Ltd is committed to developing our service in ways which benefit customers and help us to ensure that the wider network is sustainable. We know that we have to continue to look at innovative ways to run our outlets. We announced in April that we will undertake trials of outreach outlets, similar to those already well established in rural communities, into urban communities.

Where we trial an outreach outlet, which will provide Post Office services for more flexible hours in an urban area, we will be adding to the overall future network which is proposed in this Area Plan and on which we are consulting locally.

We intend to trial an additional outlet, on this basis at the location detailed below and are therefore including the detail alongside our proposal for the future of the network in North Wales so that all our customers have all the information currently available about our plans.

Post Office® Golftyn Outreach Service, Spar Store, 1 Golftyn Lane, Connahs Quay, CH5 4BH

As this outlet will be provided on a trial basis, we will be looking at its performance and usage to determine whether it should remain in the longer term.

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6. North Wales area -
Post Office branches proposed for Outreach

Branch Name	Address	Town/City	Postcode	Constituency	Local Authority
Pantglas	Pantglas	Garndolbenmaen	LL51 9DJ	Caernarfon	Gwynedd County Council
Llithfaen	The Post Office	Pwllheli	LL53 6NN	Caernarfon	Gwynedd County Council
Efailnewydd	Efailnewydd	Pwllheli	LL53 5TH	Caernarfon	Gwynedd County Council
Gwyddelwern	Gwyddelwern	Corwen	LL21 9DH	Clwyd South	Denbighshire County Council
Llandrillo	The Stores, Llandrillo	Corwen	LL21 0ST	Clwyd South	Denbighshire County Council
Rhydycroesau	Rhydycroesau	Oswestry	SY10 7PS	Clwyd South	Powys County Council
Betws Yn Rhos	Betws Yn Rhos	Abergele	LL22 8AW	Clwyd West	Conwy County Borough Council
Cerrigydrudion	Cerrigydrudion	Corwen	LL21 9SU	Clwyd West	Conwy County Borough Council
Llansannan	Canol Y Llan, Llansannan	Denbigh	LL16 5HG	Clwyd West	Conwy County Borough Council
Pentrefoelas	Pentrefoelas	Betws-Y-Coed	LL24 0HU	Clwyd West	Conwy County Borough Council
Capel Curig	A5 Services, Capel Curig	Snowdonia	LL24 0EL	Meirionnydd Nant Conwy	Gwynedd County Council
Dolwyddelan	Castle Terrace	Dolwyddelan	LL25 0NJ	Meirionnydd Nant Conwy	Conwy County Borough Council
Llanuwchllyn	The Post Office	Bala	LL23 7TY	Meirionnydd Nant Conwy	Gwynedd County Council
Trawsfynydd	3 Ty Gwyn, Trawsfynydd	Blaenau Ffestiniog	LL41 4RW	Meirionnydd Nant Conwy	Gwynedd County Council

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7. North Wales area -
Post Office branches proposed for Closure

Branch Name	Address	Town/City	Postcode	Constituency	Local Authority
Aberangell	Aberangell	Machynlleth	SY20 9QG	Meirionnydd Nant Conwy	Gwynedd County Council
Abergele Road	123 Abergele Road	Colwyn Bay	LL29 7SG	Clwyd West	Conwy County Borough Council
Acton Park	36 Rhosnesni Lane, Acton Park	Wrexham	LL12 7NA	Wrexham	Wrexham County Borough Council
Alexandra Road	48 Alexandra Road	Llandudno	LL30 2DQ	Conwy	Conwy County Borough Council
Bradley	Glanllyn Road, Bradley	Wrexham	LL11 4BB	Wrexham	Wrexham County Borough Council
Brynford	Brynford Hill	Holywell	CH8 8AD	Delyn	Flintshire County Council
Brynhedydd (Temporarily closed)	31 Rhyl Coast Road	Rhyl	LL18 3RD	Vale of Clwyd	Denbighshire County Council
Bwlchtocyn (Mobile service)	Bwlchtocyn	Pwlheli	LL53 7BN	Caernarfon	Gwynedd County Council
Caergeiliog	Caergeiliog	Holyhead	LL65 3YF	Ynys Mon	Anglesey County Council
Carmel	Arfryn, Allt Y Golch, Carmel	Holywell	CH8 8QT	Delyn	Flintshire County Council
Carneddi	Carneddi, Bethesda	Bangor	LL57 3SG	Conwy	Gwynedd County Council
Church Drive	106 Penrhyn Avenue, Rhos-On-Sea	Colwyn Bay	LL28 4LG	Clwyd West	Conwy County Borough Council
Church Terrace	Church Terrace	Holyhead	LL65 2HP	Ynys Mon	Anglesey County Council
Clocaenog	5 Maes Caenog, Clocaenog	Ruthin	LL15 2AU	Clwyd West	Denbighshire County Council
Cwm-y-Glo	Cwm-y-Glo, London House	Caernarfon	LL55 4DT	Caernarfon	Gwynedd County Council
Cymau	Cymau Road	Wrexham	LL11 5EW	Alyn and Deeside	Denbighshire County Council
Deiniolen (Temporarily closed)	Deiniolen	Caernarfon	LL55 3HR	Caernarfon	Gwynedd County Council
Four Mile Bridge	Four Mile Bridge	Holyhead	LL65 2PJ	Ynys Mon	Anglesey County Council
Gerlan	Gerlan, Bethesda	Bangor	LL57 3TL	Conwy	Gwynedd County Council
Golftyn	124 Church Street	Deeside	CH5 4AR	Alyn and Deeside	Flintshire County Council
Grange Road	Grange Road	Rhyl	LL18 4DA	Vale of Clwyd	Denbighshire County Council
Gronant	Gronant	Prestatyn	LL19 9TG	Delyn	Flintshire County Council
Gwernymynydd (Temporarily closed)	Rainbow Garage, Ruthin Road, Gwernymynydd	Mold	CH7 5LG	Delyn	Flintshire County Council
Holway	Londis Stores, Holway Road, Holway	Holywell	CH8 7NN	Delyn	Flintshire County Council
Lixwm	2 Bronant, Lixwm	Holywell	CH8 8NG	Delyn	Flintshire County Council

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7. North Wales area -
Post Office branches proposed for Closure

Llaingoch	Community Centre, South Stack Street, Llaongoch	Holyhead	LL65 1LU	Ynys Mon	Anglesey County Council
Llanbedrgoch	Ffordd Deg	Llanbedrgoch	LL76 8TQ	Ynys Mon	Anglesey County Council
Llanbedrog	Fford, Bedrog, Llandbedrog	Pwllheli	LL53 7PF	Caernarfon	Gwynedd County Council
Llandegfan	Bron Craig	Old Llandegfan	LL59 5PW	Ynys Mon	Anglesey County Council
Llandudno Junction	73 Conway Road	Llandudno Junction	LL31 9LT	Conwy	Conwy County Borough Council
Llandudno Road	49 Llandudno Road	Colwyn Bay	LL28 4EX	Clwyd West	Conwy County Borough Council
Llanfrothen	The Post Office, Llanfrothen	Penrhyndeudraeth	LL48 6AX	Meirionnydd Nant Conwy	Gwynedd County Council
Llanfwrog	Denbigh Road, Llanfwrog	Ruthin	LL15 1PB	Clwyd West	Denbighshire County Council
Llangian	Llangian	Pwllheli	LL53 7LP	Caernarfon	Gwynedd County Council
Llanwnda	The Post Office	Caernarfon	LL54 5SD	Caernarfon	Gwynedd County Council
Marchwiel	Wrexham Road, Marchwiel	Wrexham	LL13 0PH	Clwyd South	Wrexham County Borough Council
Morfa	25 Penmaen Road, Morfa	Conwy	LL32 8HA	Conwy	Conwy County Borough Council
New Brighton	Bryn Y Baal Road, New Brighton	Mold	CH7 6RD	Delyn	Flintshire County Council
New Broughton	New Road, New Broughton	Wrexham	LL11 6SY	Clwyd South	Wrexham County Borough Council
Penmorfa	The Village Hall, Penmorfa	Porthmadog	LL49 9RT	Caernarfon	Gwynedd County Council
Ponciau	Bank Street, Ponciau	Wrexham	LL14 1EN	Clwyd South	Wrexham County Borough Council
Pontybodkin	Reflections Hairdressers, Corwen Road, Pontybodkin	Mold	CH7 4TG	Alyn and Deeside	Flintshire County Council
Rhos Y Medre	High Street, Rhos y Medre	Wrexham	LL14 3YE	Clwyd South	Wrexham County Borough Council
Rhosesmor	Rhosesmor Road, Rhosesmor	Mold	CH7 6PJ	Delyn	Flintshire County Council
Rhosrobin	Dodds Lane, Rhosrobin	Wrexham	LL11 4RA	Wrexham	Wrexham County Borough Council
Summerhill	Hill Street, Summerhill	Wrexham	LL11 4UA	Wrexham	Wrexham County Borough Council
Talwrn	Siop Isa, Talwrn	Llangefni	LL77 7SS	Ynys Mon	Anglesey County Council
Talybont	Talybont, Talybont	Barmouth	LL43 2AA	Meirionnydd Nant Conwy	Gwynedd County Council
Tanyfron	Llwyn Ifor Stores, St Albans Road, Tanyfron	Wrexham	LL11 5SY	Clwyd South	Wrexham County Borough Council

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7. North Wales area -
Post Office branches proposed for Closure

Tanygrisiau	Blaenau-Ffestiniog	Blaenau Ffestiniog	LL41 3SG	Meirionnydd Nant Conwy	Gwynedd County Council
Trevor	Llangollen Road, Trevor	Llangollen	LL20 7TB	Clwyd South	Wrexham County Borough Council
West End (Pwllheli) (Temporarily closed)	West End	Pwllheli	LL53 5NT	Caernarfon	Gwynedd County Council

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8. North Wales area -
Post Office branches proposed to remain in the Network

Branch Name	Address	Town/City	Postcode
Aberdaron	Spar Stores, Aberdaron	Pwllheli	LL53 8BE
Aberdovey	Penrhos Service Station	Aberdovey	LL35 0NR
Aberech Road (Mobile service)	Aberech Road	Pwllheli	LL53 5LS
Aberffraw	30 Bodorgan Square, Aberffraw	Ty Croes	LL63 5BX
Abergele	21 Market Street	Abergele	LL22 7AG
Abergynolwyn	Y Ganolfan Gymunedol, Abergynolwyn, Tywyn	Gwynedd	LL36 9UU
Abersoch	Abersoch	Pwllheli	LL53 7AP
Amlwch	1 Salem Street	Amlwch	LL68 9DR
Aston	21-23 Central Drive, Aston	Deeside	CH5 1LU
Bagillt	High Street	Bagillt	CH6 6ED
Bala	50 High Street	Bala	LL23 7AB
Bangor	264 High Street	Bangor	LL57 1PB
Bangor Isycoed	High Street, Bangor Isycoed	Wrexham	LL13 0AU
Barmouth	High Street	Barmouth	LL42 1DW
Beaumaris	Church Street	Beaumaris	LL58 8AB
Beddgelert	Caernarfon Road	Caernarfon	LL55 4UY
Benllech	Gwynfryn, The Square, Benllech	Tynygongl	LL74 8SR
Bethel	Bethel	Bodorgan	LL62 5NE
Bethel	Bethel	Caernarfon	LL55 1YT
Bethesda	Spar Stores, High Street, Bethesda	Bangor	LL57 3AR
Betws Y Coed	Betws Y Coed	Betws Y Coed	LL24 0AA
Blaenau Ffestiniog	15 High Street	Blaenau Ffestiniog	LL41 3DF
Bodedern	2 Church Street, Bodedern	Holyhead	LL65 3TU
Bodelwyddan	Spar, 5 Church View, Bodelwyddan	Rhyl	LL18 5TF
Bodfari	Bodfari Fish And Game Farm, Bodfari	Denbigh	LL16 4DW
Bodffordd	Post Office, Bodffordd	Llangefni	LL77 7LZ
Bontnewydd	Bontnewydd	Caernarfon	LL55 2UG
Borth-Y-Gest (Mobile service)	Borth-Y-Gest	Porthmadog	LL49 9UB
Botwnnog	Botwnnog	Pwllheli	LL53 8RA
Broughton	Broughton Hall Road, Broughton	Chester	CH4 0QR
Brymbo	Kirkham House, High Street, Brymbo	Wrexham	LL11 5BL
Bryn Eglwys	Parish Hall, Bryn Eglwys	Corwen	LL21 9LG
Bryn Hafod	6 Prince Charles Road	Wrexham	LL13 8YB
Bryncir	Bryncir	Garndolbenmaen	LL51 9LX
Brynrefail	Brynrefail	Caernarfon	LL55 3NR
Brynsiencyn	Brynsiencyn	Llanfairpwll Gwyngyll	LL61 6UG
Brynteg	49 Hill Street, Pentre Broughton	Wrexham	LL11 6DA
Buckley	10 Brunswick Road	Buckley	CH7 2EF
Bwlchgwyn	Community Centre, Stryt Maelor, Bwlchgwyn	Wrexham	LL11 5YA
Cae Mur	Cae Mur	Caernarfon	LL55 1DR
Caergwrle	Wrexham Road, Caergwrle	Wrexham	LL12 9HN
Caernarfon	Castle Square	Caernarfon	LL55 2ND
Caerwys	Central Stores, Water Street, Caerwys	Mold	CH7 5AT

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8. North Wales area -
Post Office branches proposed to remain in the Network

Carrog	Village Hall, Neuadd Pentref Carrog, Carrog	Corwen	LL21 9AS
Cefn Mawr	Crane Street, Cefn Mawr	Wrexham	LL14 3LN
Cemaes Bay	Cemaes Bay	Cemaes Bay	LL67 0HH
Chester Road	Jones Motor Services, Chester Road	Flint	CH6 5DZ
Chirk	2 Colliery Road, Chirk	Wrexham	LL14 5PA
Chwilog	The Post Office	Pwllheli	LL53 6SH
Cilcain	Celyn Mali Road, Cilain	Mold	CH7 5NW
Clawddnewydd	Siop y Fro, Clawddnewydd	Ruthin	LL15 2NF
Clwtybont	Clwtybont	Caernarfon	LL55 3DH
Clynnogfawr (Mobile service)	Clynnogfawr	Caernarfon	LL54 5PB
Coedpoeth	7 High Street, Coedpoeth	Wrexham	LL11 3RY
Colwyn Bay	The Spar Store, 8 Station Road	Colwyn Bay	LL29 8BU
Colwyn Heights	Wenworth Avenue, Colwyn Heights	Colwyn Bay	LL29 6DD
Connahs Quay	6 Redhall Shopping Centre, Connahs Quay	Deeside	CH5 4TS
Conway Road	103 Conway Road	Colwyn Bay	LL29 7LW
Conwy	7 Lancaster Square	Conwy	LL32 8HT
Corris	Corris Village Institute, Corris	Machynlleth	SY20 9SH
Corwen	Bridge Street	Corwen	LL21 0DF
Craig Y Don	The Chocobox, Carmen Sylva Road	Llandudno	LL30 1EQ
Criccieth	High Street	Criccieth	LL52 0BU
Cynwyd	Cynwyd	Corwen	LL21 0LA
Deganwy	Station Road	Deganwy	LL31 9DB
Denbigh	20 High Street	Denbigh	LL16 3SA
Derwen (serve and store)	Derwen, Derwen	Corwen	LL21 9SG
Dinas Mawddwy	Village Hall, Dinas Mawddwy	Machynlleth	SY20 9JA
Dolgarrog	Conwy Road, Dolgarrog	Conwy	LL32 8JU
Dolgellau	Siop Glyndwr, Plas Yn Dre Street	Dolgellau	LL40 1AD
Drury	15 Drury Lane	Buckley	CH7 3DU
Dwyran	Dwyran	Llanfairpwll Gwyngyll	LL61 6YD
Dyffryn Ardudwy	Dyffryn Ardudwy	Dyffryn Ardudwy	LL44 2EL
Dyserth	High Street, Dyserth	Rhyl	LL18 6AA
Edern	Edern	Pwllheli	LL53 8YS
Eglwys Bach	Pen Y Bont, Eglwys Bach	Colwyn Bay	LL28 5UD
Eryrys	2 Cae'r Odyn, Eryrys	Mold	CH7 4BY
Ewloe	The Highway, Ewloe	Deeside	CH5 3DN
Fairbourne	2 Beach Road	Fairbourne	LL38 2PZ
Ffestiniog	Blaenau-Ffestiniog	Blaenau Ffestiniog	LL41 4NA
Ffrith	Ffrith	Prestatyn	LL19 7YF
Ffynnongroyw	Main Road, Ffynnongroyw	Holywell	CH8 9SN
Flint	39-41 Church Street	Flint	CH6 5AD
Froncysyllte	Holyhead Road, Froncysyllte	Llangollen	LL20 7RA
Gaerwen	Tyn Gamfa Stores, 1 Tyn Gamfa, Lon Groes	Gaerwen	LL60 6DD
Garden City Sealand	35 Welsh Road, Garden City	Deeside	CH5 2HU

8. North Wales area -
Post Office branches proposed to remain in the Network

Garden Village	175 Chester Road	Wrexham	LL12 8DW
Garndolbenmaen	Minffordd Stores, Minffordd House	Garndolbenmaen	LL51 9TX
Glan Conwy	Glan Conwy	Colwyn Bay	LL28 5SS
Glanadda	Glanadda	Bangor	LL57 4SB
Glanydon	Coast Road, Glanydon, Mostyn	Holywell	CH8 9DZ
Glyn Ceiriog	Maybury Avenue, Glyn Ceiriog	Nr Llangollen	LL20 7EY
Glyndyfrdwy	Bryn Derwyn Terrace	Glyndyfrdwy	LL21 9HB
Greenfield	7 New Shop Parade, Greenfield Road, Greenfield	Holywell	CH8 7QS
Gresford	23 Chester Road, Gresford	Wrexham	LL12 8NB
Groeslon	Groeslon	Caernarfon	LL54 7DF
Gwalchmai	Gwalchmai	Holyhead	LL65 4PU
Gwersyllt	Hope Street, Gwersyllt	Wrexham	LL11 4HT
Gwytherin (serve and store)	Gwytherin	Abergele	LL22 8UU
Halkyn	Halkyn	Holywell	CH8 8ES
Hanmer	Hanmer	Whitchurch	SY13 3DE
Harlech	High Street	Harlech	LL46 2YA
Hawarden	1 The Highway, Hawarden	Deeside	CH5 3DG
Henllan	Henllan	Denbigh	LL16 5AR
Henryd	Henryd	Conwy	LL32 8YB
Higher Kinnerton	The Old Chapel, Bennetts Lane, Higher Kinnerton	Chester	CH4 9AR
Highfield Park	20 Churton Road	Rhyl	LL18 3ND
Hightown	49 Kingsmills Road, Hightown	Wrexham	LL13 8NL
Holt	Village News Stores, Castle Street, Holt	Wrexham	LL13 9YL
Holyhead	13a Boston Street	Holyhead	LL65 1BP
Holywell	50 High Street	Holywell	CH8 7AA
Hope	The Lion Stores, Fagl Lane, Hope	Wrexham	LL12 9PY
Johnstown	Merlin Street, Johnstown	Wrexham	LL14 1NL
Kinmel Bay	72 Foryd Road, Kinmel Bay	Rhyl	LL18 5AY
Leeswood	Queen Street, Leeswood	Mold	CH7 4RQ
Llanaelhaearn	Llanaelhaearn	Caernarfon	LL54 5AL
Llanarmon Yn Lal	Village Store, Liverpool House, Mill Lane, Llanarmon yn ial	Mold	CH7 4QF
Llanbedr	The Post Office	Llanbedr	LL45 2HH
Llanbedr (serve and store)	Tan Y Bwlch, Llanbedr D.C.	Ruthin	LL15 1UN
Llanberis	36 High Street	Caernarfon	LL55 4EU
Llanddaniel	Yr Efail, Llanddaniel Fab	Gaerwen	LL60 6ES
Llanddulas	Llanddulas	Abergele	LL22 8HH
Llandegla	Village Stores, Llandegla	Wrexham	LL11 3AG
Llandrillo Yn Rhos	Llandrillo Yn Rhos	Colwyn Bay	LL28 4PS
Llandudno	14 Vaughan Street	Llandudno	LL30 1AA
Llandyrnog	Llandyrnog	Denbigh	LL16 4HG
Llanerchymedd	Allaw Stores, 5 Bridge Street	Llanerchymedd	LL71 8EU
Llanfachraeth	Llanfachraeth, Llanfachraeth	Holyhead	LL65 4UL
Llanfaelog	Llanfaelog	Ty Croes	LL63 5SS

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8. North Wales area -
Post Office branches proposed to remain in the Network

Llanfaethlu	Coffee Shop House, Llanfaethlu	Holyhead	LL65 4NP
Llanfairfechan	Village Road	Llanfairfechan	LL33 0AA
Llanfairpwllgwyngyll	Ffordd Caergybi	Llanfairpwllgwyngyll	LL61 5YQ
Llanfairtalhaiarn	Swan Square, Llanfairtalhaiarn	Abergele	LL22 8RY
Llanfechell	Llanfechell	Amlwch	LL68 0RA
Llanfynydd	P.O. Llanfynydd	Wrexham	LL11 5HH
Llangaffo	Llangaffo	Gaerwen	LL60 6LU
Llangedwyn	Llangedwyn Mill, Llangedwyn	Oswestry	SY10 9LD
Llangefni	18 Church Street	Llangefni	LL77 7DY
Llangernyw	Rhyd-Y-Foel, Llangernyw	Abergele	LL22 8PP
Llangoed	Llangoed	Beaumaris	LL58 8NW
Llangollen	41 Castle Street	Llangollen	LL20 8RU
Llanllechid	Llanllechid Bangor	Bangor	LL57 3EE
Llanrhaeadr	Llanrhaeadr	Denbigh	LL16 4NT
Llanrhaeadr Ym Mochnant	Llanrhaeadr Ym Mochnant	Oswestry	SY10 0JG
Llanrhos	2 Maes Y Castell, Llanrhos	Llandudno	LL30 1NG
Llanrug	Llanrug	Caernarfon	LL55 4AB
Llanrwst	Ancastor Square	Llanrwst	LL26 0LD
Llansilin (serve and store)	Caple Wesle, Llansilin	Oswestry	SY10 7QP
Llay	Market Square, Llay	Wrexham	LL12 0SA
Llwyngwril	Meirion Stores	Llwyngwril	LL37 2JU
Llysfaen	1 Dolwen Road, Llysfaen	Colwyn Bay	LL29 8SS
Lon Y Bryn	Lon Y Bryn	Caernarfon	LL55 2EP
Maesgeirchen	Maesgeirchen	Bangor	LL57 1LT
Maldwyn	Spar Stores, Lon Ganol, Llandegfan	Menai Bridge	LL59 5UA
Malltraeth	High Street, Malltraeth	Bodorgan	LL62 5AS
Mallwyd	Mallwyd Service Station, Mallwyd	Machynlleth	SY20 9HN
Mancot	Mancot Lane, Mancot	Deeside	CH5 2AH
Meliden	Meliden	Prestatyn	LL19 8LA
Meliden Road	40-42 Meliden Road	Prestatyn	LL19 9RT
Melin Y Wig (serve and store)	2 Awel Clwyd, Melin Y Wig	Corwen	LL21 9RL
Menai Bridge	Bridge Street	Menai Bridge	LL59 5DN
Minffordd (Mobile service)	Minffordd	Penrhyndeudraeth	LL48 6HG
Mochdre	278 Conway Road, Mochdre	Colwyn Bay	LL28 5DS
Moelfre	Moelfre	Moelfre	LL72 8HU
Mold	18 Earl Road	Mold	CH7 1AA
Morawelon	37 Ffordd Tudur, Morawelon	Holyhead	LL65 2DT
Morfa Bychan	Morfa Bychan	Porthmadog	LL49 9UY
Morfa Nefyn	Morfa Nefyn	Pwllheli	LL53 6AP
Mostyn	67 Ffordd Pennant, Mostyn	Holywell	CH8 9NX
Mynydd Isa	Spar Store, 5 The Square, Mercia Drive, Mynydd Isa	Mold	CH7 6UY
Mynydd Mechell (serve and store)	Fron Deg, Mynydd Mechell	Amlwch	LL68 0TG
Mynytho	Mynytho	Pwllheli	LL53 7RH

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APPENDIX 1

8. North Wales area -
Post Office branches proposed to remain in the Network

Nannerch (serve and store)	The Memorial Hall, Village Road, Nannerch	Mold	CH7 5RD
Nasareth (Mobile service)	Nasareth	Caernarfon	LL54 6DW
Nefyn	Nefyn	Pwllheli	LL53 6HW
Newborough	Madryn House, Newborough	Llanfairpwll	LL61 6TA
Northop	High Street, Northop	Mold	CH7 6BQ
Northop Hall Village	Northop Hall Village Post Office	Mold	CH7 6HS
Old Colwyn	290-292 Abergele Road, Old Colwyn	Colwyn Bay	LL29 9LN
Overton	4 High Street, Overton	Wrexham	LL13 0DT
Pandy Tudor	Ty Celyn, Pandy Tudor	Abergele	LL22 8UL
Pantymwyn	Cilcain Road, Pantymwyn	Mold	CH7 5EH
Penmaenmawr	Westminster House, Pant Yr Afon	Penmaenmawr	LL34 6BY
Penmaenrhos	466 Abergele Road, Penmaenrhos	Colwyn Bay	LL29 9LE
Pennal	The Post Office	Machynlleth	SY20 9JT
Penrhewl	Heol Esgob Shop, St. Asaph	St Asaph	LL17 0PN
Penrhosgarnedd	Penrhosgarnedd Post Office, Penrhosgarnedd	Bangor	LL57 2NY
Penrhyn Bay	107 Llandudno Road, Penrhyn Bay	Llandudno	LL30 3HN
Penrhyndeudraeth	14-15 High Street	Penrhyndeudraeth	LL48 6BN
Pensarn	Marine Road, Pensarn	Abergele	LL22 7PR
Pentraeth	Pentraeth Service, Bangor Road, Pentraeth	Anglesey	LL75 8AZ
Pentre Halkyn	The Village, Pentre Halkyn	Holywell	CH8 8HP
Pentre Maelor	18 Bridgeway East, Pentre Maelor	Wrexham	LL13 9RB
Penycae	Hall Street, Penycae	Wrexham	LL14 2RU
Penyffordd	9 Chester Road, Penyffordd	Chester	CH4 0JZ
Penyffordd	The Village, Penyffordd	Holywell	CH8 9HJ
Penygroes	Water Street	Penygroes	LL54 6LW
Penysarn	Penysarn	Penysarn	LL69 9YB
Plas Madoc	4 Woodwards Walk, Plas Madoc	Wrexham	LL14 3UY
Pontfadog	The Post Office, Pontfadog	Llangollen	LL20 7AR
Porthmadog	Bank Place	Porthmadog	LL49 9AD
Porthyfelin	Porthyfelin	Holyhead	LL65 1AU
Prestatyn	SPAR, 26 High Street	Prestatyn	LL19 9BB
Pwllheli	The Colonnade, New Street	Pwllheli	LL53 5HH
Queens Park	83 Holt Road	Wrexham	LL13 8NG
Queensferry	13-17 Station Road, Queensferry	Deeside	CH5 1SU
Rhosddu	Spar Store, Rhosddu Road	Wrexham	LL11 2NS
Rhosgadfan	Mountain Rangers Sports & Social Club, Rhosgadfan	Caernarfon	LL54 7ET
Rhosllanerchrugog	Market Street	Rhosllanerchrugog	LL14 1AG
Rhosneigr	Station Road	Rhosneigr	LL64 5JX
Rhosnesni	12 Dean Road, Rhosnesni	Wrexham	LL13 9EH
Rhostyllen	50 Wrexham Road, Rhostyllen	Wrexham	LL14 4DH
Rhosybol	Siop Paget, Rhosybol	Amlwch	LL68 9PU
Rhuddlan	Spar, 131-136 High Street, Rhuddlan	Rhyl	LL18 2UB

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8. North Wales area -
Post Office branches proposed to remain in the Network

Rhyd Uchaf (serve and store)	Rhyd Uchaf	Bala	LL23 7SD
Rhyl Counter	2 Water Street	Rhyl	LL18 1AA
Riverbank	Boot Garage, Bagillt Road, Bagillt	Holywell	CH6 6JB
Roewen	Groesffordd Roe Stores	Roewen	LL32 8TR
Ronald Road	163 Conway Road	Llandudno Junction	LL31 9EG
Rossett	Station Road, Rossett	Wrexham	LL12 0HE
Ruabon	1a New High Street, Ruabon	Wrexham	LL14 6NL
Ruthin	18 St Peters Square	Ruthin	LL15 1YL
Saltney Ferry	3 Mainwaring Drive, Saltney Ferry	Chester	CH4 0AX
Sandycroft	98 Phoenix Street, Sandycroft	Deeside	CH5 2PE
Sarn	Waterloo House, Sarn	Pwllheli	LL53 8DT
Shotton	Shotton	Deeside	CH5 1BX
Soughton	London Road, Sychdyn	Mold	CH7 6EL
South Beach	The C Store, South Beach	Pwllheli	LL53 5AD
Southsea	1 Southsea Road, Southsea	Wrexham	LL11 6PP
St Asaph	8-10 Chester Street	St Asaph	LL17 0RE
St Gwynans	Treforris Road, St Gwynans	Penmaenmawr	LL34 6UB
St Margarets Drive	St Margarets Drive	Rhyl	LL18 2HT
Talacre	Mca's Store, Station Road, Talacre	Holywell	CH8 9RD
Talsarnau	High Street	Talsarnau	LL47 6TY
Talybont	Conway Road	Talybont	LL32 8SE
Talysarn	Station Road	Caernarfon	LL54 6HL
Town Hill	30 Town Hill	Wrexham	LL13 8NB
Townsend	Vale Street	Denbigh	LL16 3BS
Towyn	Towyn Road, Towyn	Abergele	LL22 9HE
Trearddur Bay	Lon St. Ffraid, Trearddur Bay	Holyhead	LL65 2YR
Trefnant	Trefnant	Denbigh	LL16 5TY
Trefor	Trefor	Caernarfon	LL54 5LW
Trefriw	Trefriw	Llanrwst	LL27 0JJ
Trelawnyd	London Road, Trelawnyd	Rhyl	LL18 6DN
Tremadog	8-10 Church Street, Tremadog	Porthmadog	LL49 9RA
Treuddyn	The Old Co-op, Treuddyn	Mold	CH7 4PA
Tudweiliog	Tudweiliog	Pwllheli	LL53 8NB
Tywyn	High Street	Tywyn	LL36 9AD
Upper Bangor	55 Holyhead Road, Upper Bangor	Bangor	LL57 2HE
Valley	Station Road, Valley	Holyhead	LL65 3EB
Wepre	92 High Street, Connahs Quay	Deeside	CH5 4DD
West Shore	26 Great Ormes Road	Llandudno	LL30 2BW
Wrexham Town Centre	15 Henblas Street	Wrexham	LL13 8AE
Y Felinheli	89-91 Bangor Street	Y Felinheli	LL56 4PJ
Y Ffor	Londis Gwynfa Stores, Y Ffor	Pwllheli	LL53 6UR
Yr Hendre	Yr Hendre, Yr Hendre Stores, Fford Eryri Hendre Estate	Caernarfon	LL55 2UF
Ysbyty Ifan	Ysbyty Ifan, Betwsy Y Coed	Llandudno	LL24 0NH

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Mr. Steve Geraty,
Network Development Manager
c/o National Consultation Team
FREEPOST CONSULTATION TEAM

CE/SEC

5 August 2008

Colin Everett

01352 702100

E Mail Address:
Chief_executive@flintshire.gov.uk

Dear Mr. Geraty,

Network Change Programme

Thank you for making available to Flintshire County Council the Network Change Programme - Area Plan Proposal for North Wales.

Flintshire County Council wishes to record its dissatisfaction and disagreement with the conduct of the Network Change Programme consultation. The description 'consultation' is a misnomer. The consultation is advance notice of a rationalisation and change programme to the network of post offices across the United Kingdom. The consultation is limited in both scope and timescale and is not an example of good practice of conduct for a former public body which is regarded as a national institution.

The Council understands that Post Office Limited is a commercial entity which operates in a commercial environment and is subject to changing customer need and demand. The Council invites Post Office Limited to discuss openly with its elected members and officers the following four areas of Network operation:-

- resourcing Post Offices to be retained to meet the additional customer demands transferred from areas no longer to be served by a Post Office;
- how Outreach services will support in practice the areas no longer to be served by a Post Office;
- the operation of the Post Office Improvement Fund; and
- the impacts of Council services for those customers who access Council services/make payments via Post Offices.

The Council will be discussing these four issues at its meeting to be held on 25 September and we invite Post Office Limited to both provide further information on these four issues to inform our debate and to attend in person.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Colin Everett
Chief Executive

golwg ar bost cymru
poslwatch wales

Colin Everett
Chief Executive
Flintshire County Council
County Hall
MOLD
CH7 6NB

29 July 2008

Dear Mr Everett,

Post office closure programme — North Wales area plan
52 branches proposed for closure with 14 additional Outreach service points.

You will be aware that Post Office Ltd's seven week public consultation on post officeS closures in North Wales has now commenced pending on the 15 September 2008. Post Office Ltd has proposed to close 52 branches in the North Wales area. This will leave in place 271 post offices and 14 additional 'outreach' service points (typically part-time services offered from a van or from within a local facility like a village hall) serving the area. I thought it would be helpful if I set out Postwatch's role in the weeks ahead.

Post Office Ltd's public consultation in this area covers the following parliamentary constituencies:

Alyn & Deeside	Delyn
Caernarfon	Meirionydd Nant Conwy
Clwyd South	Vale of Clwyd
Clwyd West	Wrexham
Conwy	Ynys Mon

Prior to the start of public consultation, Postwatch received Post Office Ltd's plans on a confidential basis. Two weeks after we received the proposals, Post Office Ltd started confidential commercial discussions with the subpostmasters concerned.

Postwatch has scrutinised and provided initial comments on the proposals and has had constructive discussions with Post Office Ltd. As a result, Post Office Ltd has made a number of changes to the original proposals. As prescribed by Government,

our focus was on whether Post Office Ltd's proposals meet the minimum access criteria for post offices, which aim to ensure communities are within a reasonable distance from a post office. We also examined whether local factors — such as publia transport arrangements, pertinent topographical features, demographics and the impact on the local economy — had been properly considered.

Following our scrutiny of the proposals, Post Office Ltd has made a number of adjustments to the plan. We welcome these changes. However, we still have some concerns, and would particularly welcome customers giving their views and information on the suitability of public transport to reach alternative Post Office branches and topographical features in these areas that may make it difficult for certain customers to access services.

Postwatch wants customers and their representatives to express their opinions on all Post Office Ltd's proposals. We urge representatives and customers to give their views to Post Office Ltd on how they will access alternative post offices in the event of Post Office Ltd's proposals going ahead. In particular we would suggest that responses provide Post Office Ltd with factual information about the impact on the local economy (particularly the last shop in the area and the impact on local businesses), including access to cash and local demographics.

We also want customers to give their views to Post Office Ltd about the ability of remaining post offices to accommodate the increased numbers of customers in the event of Post Office Ltd's proposed closures.

Additionally, we hope members of those communities where outreach services are proposed will comment on the accessibility and appropriateness of the arrangements.

Postwatch's final views on this area plan will be informed by feedback given to Post Office Ltd during public consultation. POstwatch will be working throughout the consultation period to ensure the exercise is meaningful. Post Office Ltd should use the consultation as an opportunity to engage with customers — to set out clearly the proposed changes, and be responsive to feedback. Likewise, we will be working to encourage customer participation to be constructive, as this will help secure a better outcome for customers. It is important to note that Postwatch does not have the power of veto on Post Office Ltd's proposals. At the end of the consultation period, we will write to Post Office Ltd to set out our final view. Our letter will be publicly available on our website **www.postwatch.co.uk** Information on the proposals and the programme is available online at **www.postoffice.co.uk/networkchange**.

We hope you will be able to give your views on the proposals to Post Office Ltd. This can be done by writing to National Consultation Team, Post Office Ltd, FREEPOST CONSULTATION TEAM, or email consultation@postoffice.co,uk. If possible, we

would be grateful if you could also provide Postwatch with a copy of your response, either via email to: info or by post to: Postwatch Wales, 3rd Floor, Capital Tower, Greyfriars Road, Cardiff CF1 0 3AG.

I also enclose copies of Postwatch's leaflets on the closure programme. I hope these are of use in providing background information, and please let me know if you would like any further copies for your office.

If you have queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Eifion Pritchard QPM
Chairman, Postwatch Wales

Cwynion Cwsmeriaid T 08456 012265
Golwg ar Bost Cymru, Sydd Llawr, T'A'r y Ddinas
Heol y Brodyr Liwydion, Caerdydd CF1 0 SAG
Ff029 2066 3859
info@postwatch.co.uk www.postwatch.co.uk
Cyngor Defnyddwyr Gwasanaethau Post

Customer complaints T 08456 013265
Postwatch Wales, 3rd Floor, Capital Tower
Greyfriars Road, Cardiff, CF1O SAG
F 029 2066 3859
info@postwatch.co.uk www.postwatch.co.uk
The Consumer Council for Postal Services

Mr. Eifion Pritchard, QPM
Chairman,
Postwatch Wales,
3rd Floor,
Capital Tower,
Greyfriars Road,
Cardiff. CF10 3AG

CE/SEC

7 August 2008

Colin Everett

  01352 702100

E Mail Address:
Chief_executive@flintshire.gov.uk

Dear Mr Pritchard,

Post Office Closure Programme - North Wales Area Plan

Thank you for your letter dated 29 July.

Please find enclosed a copy of Flintshire County Council's initial response to the National Consultation Team of the Post Office Limited which is self-explanatory.

Yours sincerely,

Colin Everett
Chief Executive

**WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON
"A REFOCUSED POST OFFICE DEVELOPMENT FUND"**

On 7th August 2008 the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) issued a consultation document seeking views on its proposals to establish a new fund to help sub-postmasters and postmistresses diversify and improve their Post Offices. The new fund will come into operation on January 1st 2009 and is anticipated will run for three years.

The consultation document comprises a series of specific questions around the key issues of:

- The type of activities the refocused Post Office Development Fund (PODF) will support.
- The levels of funding awarded.
- The eligibility criteria.

The closing date for responding to the consultation is **30th October 2008**.

Questions

1.   It is proposed to limit capital grants to £20k.
      – **Is this an appropriate limit?**

2.   The Welsh Assembly Government is considering whether applicants should contribute a percentage of the total project costs where they exceed £5,000 and is proposing a 25% contribution above this level.
      - Is this acceptable?

3.   The Welsh Assembly Government suggest that capital grants exceeding £5k should be dependent on the sub-postmaster first receiving business advice – funded by the revenue stream of the Post Office Development Fund.
      - **Is this acceptable?**

4.   A recommendation arising from the evaluation of the previous Post Office Development Fund is that "funding should be conditional on the provision by the applicant of a robust business plan demonstrating the value to be added by the project".
      - **Is this acceptable?**

5.   Consideration needs to be given to the type of assessment criteria the Welsh Assembly Government should use to decide which are the most worthwhile projects to support?
      - **views are sought.**

6.   It is suggested that revenue funding be limited to no more that £15k per applicant.
      - **Is this fair?**

7. Because of the anticipated high demand for the scheme it is suggested that recipients of funding from the previous scheme should be ineligible for the new scheme.
    - **Is this fair?**

8. It is suggested that some form of spatial targeting is used to prioritise the funding for certain areas and only those post offices located in or serving people from eligible areas would be awarded. For example, priority could be given to urban deprived areas as defined by the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation and rural areas. (The previous fund was targeted at the 125 most deprived and 125 most isolated areas in Wales as defined by WIND)

    Should the fund be targeted?
    Are deprivation and rurality the most relevant indices?
    Should we seek a ring fenced element of the fund for North Wales?

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 8

REPORT TO: **SPECIAL MEETING OF THE FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

DATE : **25 SEPTEMBER 2008**

REPORT BY: **COUNTY FINANCE OFFICER**

SUBJECT : **STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2007/08**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To seek Members' approval of the final Statement of Accounts for 2007/08.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 At Council on 26th June 2008, Members received a recommendation from the Audit Committee and approved and adopted the Statement of Accounts for 2007/08 (subject to audit).

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The audit of the 2007/08 accounts has now been completed. The statutory closure audit notice will be reported in the press in due course.

3.02 As part of the final accounts process, PricewaterhouseCoopers presented to the Audit Committee on 24th September 2008 the report "ISA 260 - Communication of audit matters to those charged with governance". The ISA (International Standards on Auditing) 260 requires the auditor to communicate relevant matters relating to the audit of the financial statements to those charged with governance of the entity.

3.03 During the audit, a number of changes to the draft statement of accounts were agreed with PricewaterhouseCoopers and these have been incorporated into the final document.

3.04 In addition, a number of items remain unadjusted on the basis of materiality, as detailed in the attached ISA 260 extract.

3.05 A copy of the final Statement of Accounts for 2007/08 has been circulated with the agenda for the Audit Committee 24th September 2008, and Members are requested to bring this document to the meeting.

3.06 If Audit Committee recommend any changes to the document or wish to make any specific comments to Council, these will be tabled at the meeting.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

Date: 19/09/2008

4.01   Members are requested to approve the final Statement of Accounts for 2007/08.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01   None.

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   None required.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01   None required

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01   None

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

PricewaterhouseCoopers report to Audit Committee on 24th September 2008.

Contact Officer: Ian Ll Jones
Telephone: 01352 702207
E-Mail: ian_ll_jones@flintshire.gov.uk

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 9

REPORT TO: **SPECIAL MEETING OF THE FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

DATE :   **25 SEPTEMBER 2008**

REPORT BY: **COUNTY FINANCE OFFICER**

SUBJECT :   **MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION 2008/09**

1.00   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01   To present to Council the recommendations of the Executive in relation to the setting of a prudent minimum revenue provision for the repayment of debt.

2.00   BACKGROUND

2.01   At its meeting of 5th August 2008, the Executive considered the County Finance Officer's report in respect of the calculation of Minimum Revenue Provision for 2008/09 (and retrospectively for 2007/08).

2.02   The report of 5th August 2008 detailed the revised requirements and associated guidance, in respect of -

- the 4 available options for making prudent provision.

- the circumstances for using the options, 2 of which are available in respect of capital expenditure funded by way of Welsh Assembly Government supported borrowing, and a further 2 in respect of unsupported (prudential) borrowing.

- capitalised expenditure by virtue of capitalisation directions.

3.00   CONSIDERATIONS

3.01   The recommendations of the Executive to County Council are set out in Section 4.00 of the report to Executive of 5th August 2008, a copy of which is included as Appendix 1 to this report.

4.00   RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01   Council is requested to agree the recommendations of the Executive, being that -

(a) Option 1 (Regulatory Method) be used for the calculation of the minimum revenue provision in 2008/09 (and retrospectively 2007/08), for all supported borrowing.

Date: 19/09/2008

(b) Option 3 (Asset Life Method) be used for the calculation of the minimum revenue provision in 2008/09 (and retrospectively 2007/08) for all unsupported (prudential) borrowing.

5.00   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01   As set out in the report.

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   None required.

11.00   CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01   None required

12.00   APPENDICES

12.01   Appendix 1 - Report to Executive 5th August 2008 : Minimum Revenue Provision 2008/09.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Various WAG papers.

Contact Officer: Ian Ll Jones
Telephone: 01352 702207
E-Mail: ian_ll_jones@flintshire.gov.uk

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **EXECUTIVE**

DATE :   **05 AUGUST 2008**

REPORT BY: **COUNTY FINANCE OFFICER**

SUBJECT :   **MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION 2008/09**

1.00   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01   To present proposals for the setting of a prudent minimum revenue provision for the repayment of debt, as required under the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2008.

2.00   BACKGROUND

2.01   Local authorities are required each year to set aside some of their revenues as provision for the repayment of debt i.e. a provision in respect of capital expenditure financed from borrowing or credit arrangements.

2.02   The calculation of Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) was set out in former regulations 21 and 22 of the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (Wales) Regulations 2003, as amended ('the 2003 Regulations'). The system has now been significantly revised by the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (Wales) Regulations 2008 ('the 2008 Regulations').

2.03   Amendment Regulation 3(1) of the 2008 Regulations has revised the former regulation 22. In the new regulation 22, the detailed rules are replaced with a simple duty for an authority to each year make an amount of MRP which it considers to be 'prudent'. The regulation does not itself define 'prudent provision'. However, the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) has provided guidance which makes recommendations to authorities on the interpretation of the term.

2.04   The operative date of the change was 31st March 2008, which means that it applies to the financial year 2007/08 and to subsequent years.

2.05   Authorities are required to prepare an annual statement of their policy on making MRP, which mirrors the existing requirements to report on the prudential borrowing limit and investment policy.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01   Meaning of 'Prudent Provision'

3.01.1 The main part of the WAG guidance is concerned with recommendations on the interpretation of the term "prudent provision" as used in the amended regulation 22. The guidance proposes a number of options for making 'prudent provision'.

It explains that provision for the borrowing which financed the acquisition of an asset should be made over a period bearing some relation to that over which the asset continues to provide a service. The present system of MRP does not necessarily achieve that result.

3.02 Options for Prudent Provision

3.02.1 Option 1: Regulatory Method

For debt which is supported by Revenue Support Grant (RSG), authorities may continue to use the formulae in the current regulations, since the RSG is calculated on that basis. Although the existing regulation 22 is revoked by regulation 3(1) of the 2008 Regulations, authorities will be able to calculate MRP exactly as if it were still in force.

3.02.2 Option 2: CFR Method

This is a technically simpler alternative to Option 1 and may also be used in relation to supported debt. While still based on the concept of the Capital Financing Requirement [CFR], which is easily derived from the balance sheet, it avoids the complexities of the formulae in Regulation 22. However, for most authorities it will probably result in a higher level of provision (and subsequent impact on service budgets) than Option 1, as it would for Flintshire County Council.

3.02.3 Option 3: Asset Life Method

For new borrowing under the Prudential system for which no Government support is being given and is therefore self-financed, there will be two options. Option 3 is to make provision in equal annual instalments over the estimated life of the asset for which the borrowing is undertaken. This is a possibly simpler alternative to the use of depreciation accounting (Option 4), though it has some similarities to that approach.

3.02.4 Option 4: Depreciation Method

Alternatively, for new borrowing under the Prudential system for which no WAG support is being given, Option 4 may be used. This means making MRP in accordance with the standard rules for depreciation accounting.

3.03   Conditions for Using the Options

3.03.1 The intention is that Options 1 and 2 should be used only for WAG supported borrowing. Options 3 and 4 should be used in relation to all capital expenditure incurred on or after 1st April 2008 which is to be financed by unsupported borrowing or credit arrangements. Transitional measures are provided within the guidance which allow some discretion in the use of the various options for the financial years up to 2009/10.

3.04   Capitalised Expenditure

3.04.1 Authorities may borrow to meet expenditure which is treated as capital expenditure by virtue of either a capitalisation direction (section 16(2)(b) of the 2003 Act) or regulation 20(1) of the 2003 Regulations. The guidance recommends that MRP in such cases is determined under Option 3. The basic principle is that, where the capitalised expenditure can be indirectly linked to an asset, the estimated life of that asset should be used. In other cases, 25 years is proposed as a reasonable default. But for the acquisition of share or loan capital (regulation 20(1)(d)), the slightly shorter period of 20 years is specified, because the aim of that regulation is to discourage the use of those particular forms of investment. Similarly, 20 years is specified in the case of expenditure capitalised by direction, since the Government again does not wish to encourage reliance upon that practice.

4.00   <u>RECOMMENDATIONS</u>

4.01   That Members approve and recommend to County Council on 25th September 2008 -

(a) Option 1 (Regulatory Method) be used for the calculation of the minimum revenue provision in 2008/09 (and retrospectively 2007/08), for all supported borrowing.

(b) Option 3 (Asset Life Method) be used for the calculation of the minimum revenue provision in 2008/09 (and retrospectively 2007/08) for all unsupported (prudential) borrowing.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01   The 2008/09 general fund revenue budget provides for the minimum revenue provision in respect of all supported borrowing, on the basis of the Option 1 - Regulatory Method calculation. The 2007/08 budget provided for MRP on the same basis (and the final accounts completed accordingly).

5.02   Any planned use of unsupported (prudential) borrowing, will need to take account of the revenue consequences of the Option 3 – Asset Life Method calculation, as part of the overall options appraisal and budget setting processes.

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 None.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 None.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Various WAG papers

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Date: 18/07/2008

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 10

REPORT TO: **SPECIAL MEETING OF THE FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

DATE : **25 SEPTEMBER 2008**

REPORT BY: **CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

SUBJECT : **DRAFT RECRUITMENT POLICY**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To recommend the adoption of a Recruitment Policy for Flintshire County Council.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 It is essential that Flintshire County Council has a Recruitment Policy which supports the development of the workforce with the flexibility and potential to meet the future needs of the Council.

2.02 An effective Recruitment Policy will recruit into and from within the Council, people with the required behaviours, knowledge and skills in a fair, professional, timely and cost effective manner and will promote the Council as an employer of choice.

2.03 The policy will ensure that the Council has an objective, fair and transparent recruitment process which will not only protect the Council from claims of illegal discrimination, but will also ensure we select the best candidates for any given position.

2.04 The key objectives of this policy are:

- To create a workforce which reflects the local community
- To provide equality of opportunity
- To select the preferred candidate on merit
- To appoint candidates at the right time
- To ensure a quality induction for all new employees
- To minimise the use of agency workers
- To ensure a consistent approach to recruitment

2.05 The proposed Recruitment Policy incorporates details of how the Managed Service (Matrix) will operate in relation to the procurement of agency workers.

The policy defines the criteria to be applied to ensure agency workers are only used in appropriate circumstances.

2.06   The proposed Recruitment Policy has been developed in conjunction with the new HR Management Information System (HRMIS) and the Establishment Control procedure as part of the wider modernisation of HR processes.

2.07   A subsequent review of the draft Policy has identified an anomaly in relation to the wording of Section 15 which refers to Probationary Periods and the relevant section on Probationary Periods in the Operational Procedure. This has now been further clarified and to avoid confusion, a minor revision has been made to align the wording in both the draft Policy and the Operational Procedure.

3.00   CONSIDERATIONS

3.01   The main considerations in developing this policy were:

- Ensuring a process based on merit and free from any form of potential discrimination
- Reducing the time taken to fill a vacancy
- Increasing web based and online recruitment

4.00   RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01   To adopt the proposed Recruitment policy which includes:

- an objective assessment and selection process
- a competency based approach to interviewing
- Welsh language skills assessment for positions
- Psychometric testing for recruitment of positions above M3
- a six month probationary period
- pre-employment checks e.g Criminal Records Bureau, eligibility to work in the UK

4.02   That the Interim Assistant Director of HR & OD be delegated authority to make any minor revisions to the draft Policy which   may arise as a result of changes in operational or legislative requirements.

5.00   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01   Costs associated with training line managers to use the new policy effectively which will be bourne by the Corporate Training Department.

5.02   The cost of qualifying Human Resources (HR) managers/advisers to interpret Psychometric tests has already been met by the HR Department. Costs of

Date: 19/09/2008

testing will be bourne by the recruiting directorate within their overall recruitment budget for the individual post.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 Consideration of part time or job share may remove barriers to employment for groups with caring or other responsibilities, allowing them to access employment.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 Minimal.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 An emphasis on potential and competence of candidates rather than years of experience will help prevent age discrimination.

8.02 Provision will be made to allow reasonable adjustments for candidates/employees with a disability to ensure they are not disadvantaged during any part of the selection process.

8.03 The Equalities Impact Assessment (Appendix A) provides more details on identification of impacts and measures to minimise any detriment to disadvantaged groups.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 The removal of the requirement for an HR representative to sit on every selection / interview panel will release HR resource to concentrate on more pro-active HR advice support for their directorates.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 None

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 The initial draft was developed in conjunction with the HR department.

11.02 This draft was then sent to all the identified stakeholders including the Corporate Management Team (CMT), Flintshire Joint Trade Union Committee [FJTUC], Education, Legal Services, Corporate Training, Occupational Health, Welsh Language and Equalities Officer. Feedback was considered and taken into account to create the Final version, which is attached at Appendix B.

12.00 APPENDICES

Appendix A – Equalities Impact Assessment.

Appendix B - Draft Recruitment Policy (18a).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

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Appendix B

CYNGOR
Sir y Fflint
Flintshire
COUNTY COUNCIL

(DRAFT RCT 18a)

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
(Excluding staff employed by School Governing Bodies)

Recruitment Policy

youHR

Author: [Ian Warren]

FJTUC Consultation Completed: [21/07/08]

Date Approved by CMT/Council: [Insert Date]

Date Implemented: [Insert Date]

1.   **POLICY STATEMENT**

Flintshire County Council (FCC) recognises employees are vital in delivering the Councils Corporate Plan.   Our Recruitment Policy will support the development of a workforce capable of meeting current needs and with the flexibility and potential to meet the future needs of the organisation.

2.   **AIM**

To recruit into and from within the Council, people with the required behaviours, knowledge and skills in a fair, professional, timely and cost effective manner and to promote the Council as an employer of choice.

3.   **SCOPE**

This policy will apply to all recruitment in Flintshire County Council, with the exception of positions advertised by School Governing Bodies, this policy is commended to them as good practice. This policy also covers the engagement of agency workers to provide temporary cover when required,(see Appendix D6 for operational guidance).

4.   **OBJECTIVES**

The Recruitment Policy will:

- Support working towards a diverse workforce that reflects the local community
- attract high quality candidates for positions from within as well as outside the Council
- provide equality of opportunity
- enable the selection of candidates objectively based on merit using appropriate assessment
- ensure the appointment of candidates at the right time
- ensure a quality induction for all new employees
- help minimise the use of agency workers
- help to make the best recruitment decisions and therefore contribute to a reduction in labour turnover
- introduce and ensure consistent recruitment training for managers

5.   **RESPONSIBILITIES**

5.1   Managers have a responsibility to ensure that all recruitment activity is carried out in accordance with this policy. For details on roles see Operational Procedure, Appendix A.

5.2   HR has a responsibility to act in an advisory capacity and to offer coaching/ advice to managers as required at any stage of the process.   The HR Service Centre will manage the administration of the process.

6.   CORE PRINCIPLES

Flintshire will apply the following principles in the application of this policy:

- Managers will review their departmental structure / working patterns and decide if the vacancy is required as part of their establishment or not, in order to review the necessity for recruitment on each occasion.

- The use of Agency workers will be minimised though effective workforce planning and the mandated use of the appointed managing agency.

- Opportunities will be actively promoted to internal candidates to support career development while still reserving the right to seek external candidates where appropriate.

- Where it is possible for the position to be filled effectively on a part time, job share or other flexible working pattern basis this will always be considered.

- Managers will always use the corporate advertising agency to place external advertisements and follow corporate guidelines on house style.

- The recruiting manager will always offer structured post interview feedback to both internal and external candidates short listed for interview in order to support their career development.

- The appropriate pre appointment checks will be always be carried out prior to employment commencing e.g. references, qualifications, medical clearances, CRB checks, right to work in the UK etc.

- Legislation and national best practice guidance advocate the involvement of service users in the recruitment process. For every appointment we make, where the post has a direct impact on, or contact with service users, we will consider the appropriateness and level at which service users should be involved in the selection process.

7.   EQUALITY

7.1   Flintshire County Council is committed to ensuring that all recruitment in the Council is free from any form of discrimination on the grounds of: sex, race, age, disability, religious belief, sexual orientation, language, transgender or nationality.

7.2   Where appropriate, the Council may decide to take positive action to target the recruitment of under represented groups. Any action taken will be carefully monitored to assess the impact. Any positive action

proposed will be authorised by the Corporate Equalities Review team or CMT.

7.3   The Council operates the "Two Ticks" scheme and will therefore guarantee all disabled candidates who meet the minimum essential criteria an interview.

7.4   Reasonable adjustments will be made for candidates who have a disability e.g. visual or hearing impairment; or for whom English is not their first language. Recruiting managers will ascertain if special arrangements or adjustments are appropriate at any stage of the recruitment process.   Examples include identifying ground floor locations for interviews, perhaps with wheelchair access, sign language interpreter etc. All applicants will be informed in advance of any tests/ assessments to ensure time for adjustments to be requested.

A completed Equalities Impact Assessment for this policy is attached at Appendix E.

8.   WELSH LANGUAGE

8.1   The Welsh Language Act 1993 ensures equality of opportunity for Welsh speakers by ensuring provision of information and communication in the applicants preferred language.

8.2   All recruitment advertising will comply with the Councils Welsh language scheme. All positions are subject to a formal Welsh language skills assessment to determine the level of Welsh language skills required.   Job application forms, information and correspondence will be available in English or Welsh language.

9.   ESTABLISHMENT CONTROL

9.1   The Establishment Control Process is designed to ensure that every position in FCC is accounted for and recorded accurately on the HRMIS system. If a manager is recruiting for a newly created or re-designed position, it is essential that they first complete the Establishment Control Procedure.

9.2   The organisational structure and all positions (vacant or filled) within Flintshire County Council will be monitored and managed by the Establishment Control Process. There are two categories of positions:

- Core Establishment – All permanent positions which are funded permanently from FCC base budget.

- Non Core Establishment – includes temporary fixed term, seasonal fixed term and relief positions only, which are funded temporarily, often from an external funding stream.

9.3   All positions must be on the approved Core Establishment or Non Core Establishment structure prior to recruitment activity commencing.   Further guidance is contained in the Establishment Control procedure.

9.4   Prior to recruitment activity commencing the recruiting manager will need to enter the details of the vacancy onto the recruitment management system to seek authorisation and begin the recruitment procedure.

9.5   If a vacant position on the establishment has not been filled within 12 months, it will be removed from the establishment, unless an appropriate business case can be presented.

9.6   If the recruitment is linked to wider organisational change, the Organisational Design policy must be followed prior to recruitment activity commencing.

10.   MANAGED AGENCY STAFF SOLUTION (MASS)

10.1   If the position under consideration is of a temporary nature, the use of Agency workers may be considered only where no other solution is practicable. Consideration must first be given to options such as using a fixed term contract or a secondment to cover maternity leave or sharing duties among a team to cover a short term absence.   Effective succession planning and staff development can reduce the need for Agency workers.

10.2   All recruitment of Agency Workers must be sourced using the Managed Agency Staff Solution contract (MASS). Flintshire County Council has appointed Matrix through a competitive tender process to manage all agency worker resourcing within the Council.

10.3   Agency recruitment can be used to fill a core Establishment or Non-Core Establishment position. All agency positions will be authorised for a maximum of 6 months, then new approval will be required. Agency workers will not be used for longer than 12 months. Any existing agency workers identified as having more than 12 months continuous service will be reviewed by managers with advice from HR and appropriate action taken. See appendix D6 for operational details of the using the Managed Agency contract.

10.4 Managers will be able to seek authorisation and source agency workers by entering their requirements onto the Matrix system.

10.5   Authorisation for "urgent" agency workers will be defined according to the needs of each service, see appendix D6 for further guidance.

Managing Agency Workers

10.6   Agency Workers are employed by the Agency, not Flintshire County Council (FCC). To avoid any possibility of an implied employment relationship with FCC, managers must ensure the following principles are adhered to:

- Flintshire must not specify a particular individual, either in writing or verbally.

- The Agency (not FCC) must take responsibility for absence, disciplinary matters, holiday, sick pay and payment of wages – if there are any issues with the Agency Worker the line manager must raise these with the Agency and not directly with the worker. It is the responsibility of the Agency to resolve issues with the worker or organise a replacement.

- The manager must regularly review the requirement for the Agency Worker and be sure that the original justification for not filling the position through other means is still valid.

- It is the responsibility of an Agency to conduct an appropriate level of CRB check for any workers covering a position where this is a requirement. The recruiting line manager must specify this requirement to the agency and receive written notification from the agency that a satisfactory CRB check has been completed.

11.   POSITION LEVEL

11.1   All recruitment of positions graded SO1 and above will have a member of HR on the selection and interview panel.

11.2   For recruitment of positions graded below SO1, managers may complete the short listing and interview process without HR representation, ensuring they follow the procedure at Appendix A. All managers must have completed the Recruitment and Selection training and badged as an "accredited recruiter" in order to participate in recruitment.

12.   EXIT INTERVIEWS

Exit interviews must be conducted for every leaver. Information from them may inform changes to the Job Description or Person Specification and can aid improvements in job design.   Exit interviews must be conducted by the line manager for every employee who resigns or retires.

13.   PENSION TRANSFERS

Any transfer of pension funds from a previous employer will be only be permitted within 12 months of starting employment with the Council.

14.   PRIOR CONSIDERATION

14.1   Employees who are on a temporary or fixed term contract, or who have covered a position for 12 months or more, will be given prior consideration if the position subsequently becomes available on a permanent basis.

14.2   Other individuals who are "at risk" of redundancy, or who are to be redeployed on medical grounds, may also be considered for the position

provided there is a skills match. Prior consideration enables these individuals to be considered before advertising. There will be a requirement to attend an interview and undergo any appropriate selection tests to ensure they have the required skills and experience for the permanent position.

15.   PROBATION

All new appointments, including those employees who have been previously employed in other public sector organisations, will be required to serve a 6 month Probationary period. This may be extended or ended earlier if there are serious concerns regarding an employee's performance or conduct. Detailed guidance is included in Appendix D4.

16.   RECORD KEEPING

The HR Service Centre will keep a recruitment file for each vacancy which will clearly document the progress of the recruitment and selection process and contain details and justifications of all selection decisions made. See paragraph 10.1, Appendix A of the Operational Procedure for details. Unsuccessful applicant information will be stored securely for 6 months and then destroyed.   Successful candidate's information will be incorporated into their personal file. The HRMIS system will capture and record key recruitment information. All information will be managed, stored and processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1984.

17.   SELECTION

Flintshire is developing a competence framework to underpin all recruitment and development activities. Competencies are observable behaviours and characteristics. Flintshire will actively seek candidates with the potential to grow and develop within the organisation.   A variety of methods may be used to establish competencies of candidates during the selection process e.g. interview, presentation, psychometric testing, behavioural event interviews.

17.1   Shortlisting

 Candidates will be short listed objectively based on essential criteria for the advertised position. The scoring allows for the consideration of candidates who demonstrate the potential to meet criteria with future training or experience. Managers with advice from HR must ensure the essential and desirable criteria laid out in the Person Specification are up to date and accurately reflect the requirements of the position. For detailed guidance see section 3 of the Operational Procedure at Appendix A.

17.2   Interview

Questions will be competency based and seek evidence to illustrate how the applicant measures against the essential and desirable criteria.   Guidance is available from HR on developing competency based interview questions.

17.3   Psychometric Testing

Psychometric testing will form part of the standard selection process for positions graded M3 and above. Guidance is available in the Psychometric Testing policy.

18.   TIMESCALES

To avoid any adverse impacts on Council services, it is essential that vacancies are filled in a timely manner. It is the responsibility of recruiting managers to plan adequate timescales ensuring vacancies are filled at the right time.

19.   TRAINING & SUPPORT

19.1   All managers with recruitment responsibilities will be required to attend the "Accredited Recruiter" training course organised through the Corporate Training Department to ensure competent and consistent application of this policy.   Managers will not be able to recruit to positions without this badge of competence.

19.2   A rolling programme of Joint County Council / Trade Union training on this policy & procedure will be facilitated by the Corporate Training Department. It will be amended and revised from time to time.

19.3   Support and guidance in the implementation of this policy and associated procedures will be provided by the HR Operations Team.

20.   COMMUNICATION & IMPLEMENTATION

The policy will be communicated through the following media:

a.   Team Brief
b.   Workforce News articles and the infonet
c.   Flintshire Focus
d.   HR Managers briefings to Directorates

21.   REVIEW OF POLICY AND PRACTICE

21.1   Planned monitoring by the HR Operations Team will be carried out on Short listing procedures and Interviews, to evaluate procedures and support a consistent high standard.

21.2   Recruitment statistics including cost per hire and average time taken to fill vacancies, along with analysis of responses to adverts placed in different media will be developed as part of the new HR Management information System. This data will be used annually to assess the impact of this policy and to inform future development.

21.3 This policy and procedure will be reviewed by the Senior HR Adviser (Policy Development) and amended in light of emerging employment legislation / best practice.

22.   APPENDICES

A- Operational Procedure
B - Procedural Flowchart
C1 – Short listing & Selection Criteria Matrix
C2 – Short listing Matrix
D1 – Interview Scoring Matrix
D2 – Interview Notes
D3 – Recruitment Decision Form
D4 – Probationary Procedure
D5 – Probationary Report
D6 – Managed Agency Worker Procedure
E – Equality Impact Assessment

Chief Executive
Flintshire County Council   **Date: [Insert Date]**

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE

Prior to any recruitment activity commencing the line manager with advice from HR if required must consider any alternatives to recruitment, e.g. Re-structure, change in working patterns etc.

If the position under consideration is of a temporary nature, the use of Agency workers can only be considered where no other solution is practicable. Consideration must first be given to options such as using a fixed term contract or a secondment to cover maternity leave or sharing duties among a team to cover a short term absence.   Effective succession planning and staff development can reduce the need for Agency workers.

If, after due consideration, there is a need to source an Agency worker the procedure at Appendix D5 must be followed. For recruitment of all other forms of recruitment see below:

1.	**Step 1 – Establishment Control / Vacancy Authorisation – (Step 1)**

1.1	For new positions not already on the establishment, the establishment control process must be completed prior to recruitment activity commencing.

1.2	The recruiting manager will enter details of the vacancy to be filled on the Recruitment Management System (RMS).

1.2	The HR Service Centre will send an e mail stating who the allocated HR contact is and suggesting a meeting time or telephone discussion to plan the recruitment.

2.	**Step 2 – Planning and Going to Advert (Internal and external)**

2.1	The recruiting manager and HR contact discuss the campaign.(This may be in person or by phone as practicable). Consideration must be given to:

- The "At Risk" list of suitable candidates for redeployment.
- Internal or external advertising required and justification.
- Consider if the position requires welsh language skills by undertaking a welsh language skills assessment. Plan in time for Translation if applicable.
- Undertake an assessment of the appropriateness and level of service user involvement in the selection process.
- Review and update the Job Description and Person Specification to ensure they are correctly formatted and represent a true and accurate reflection of the vacant position. Ensure any essential criteria are justifiable and fair.   Consideration must be given to someone with the potential to fill the post, this should this be reflected in the person specification.
- Agree the short listing criteria, consider if recruiting for attitude and potential is more important than a skill which may be easily acquired? – See Appendix C1.

- Any additional requirements e.g. CRB check.
- Agree dates for recruitment: Closing date, Short listing date, Interview date, estimated start date.
- Agree who will complete the short listing and sit on the Interview panel, (minimum of 2 managers). All appointments of SO1 and above will have HR representation on the panel.
- Agree selection methods to be used e.g. Psychometrics, Presentation, Welsh language test, etc.
- Agree media choice considering how best to target potential candidates with the required knowledge, attitude and skills.
- The most cost effective method of advertising for the position.

2.2   If the position is to be advertised externally, the recruiting manager and HR contact will liaise with the appointed advertising agency and plan the advertising campaign. The recruiting manager must sign off the advert to check the details are correct before publication.   If Internal, the recruiting manager checks the adverts details before the advert is distributed.

2.3   All candidates must apply by completing the Flintshire County Council Application form, available in the following formats:

- Downloadable Application form from the website
- Complete application form online on the website
- Paper Application form sent from the HR Service Centre

All formats are available in English or Welsh.

2.4   All applications received electronically will receive an automated e mail response confirming receipt.   Paper copies received will only receive confirmation of receipt if a stamped addressed envelope is provided.

3.   Step 3 – Short Listing Process to Select Candidates for Interview

3.1   All application forms will be collated by the HR Service Centre and prepared for short listing. The recruiting manager and other appointed manager will complete the short listing exercise using the Matrix at Appendix C2.   The criteria for short listing will have been agreed in discussion with the appointed HR contact in Step 2.   Care must be taken to ensure compliance with the "Two Ticks" scheme, which states that all disabled candidates meeting the minimum essential criteria will be offered an interview.

3.2   The recruiting manager will draw up a shortlist of selected candidates for interview and inform the HR Service Centre of their decision. The HR Service Centre will send regret letters to all unsuccessful candidates. Any candidates identified as disabled will be given the opportunity to receive feedback on why they were not selected for interview.

3.4   Short listed candidates will be written to by the HR Service Centre and invited for interview and will be informed of any other selection methods that will be used as part of the process.

4.   Step 4 - Interview and Selection of Preferred Candidate

4.1   The recruiting manager will draw up their list of questions prior to the Interview and share these in advance with other members of the agreed Interview panel. The questions must focus on the key competencies required, related back to the Job Description and Person Specification.   If required HR is available to give advice on the questions and format of the interview . The mandatory training course for recruiters will cover competency based questions and provide a standard set of competency based questions as a template for guidance. It is essential that the questions draw out of candidates the required evidence upon which to base selection decisions.   It is acceptable to ask candidates during the interview to expand on their answers or to explore issues raised.

4.2   If the post requires the ability to speak Welsh, this should be verified during the interview.

4.3   All members of the Interview Panel will individually complete the scoring matrix at Appendix D1 to record the candidate's performance during the interview.

4.4   Scoring and recording for any other selection methods used will be agreed in advance by the recruiting manager and HR. All parts of the selection process will be applied consistently to each candidate.   Evidence collated from Psychometric testing will be interpreted by a suitably qualified member of the HR team and detailed feedback will be given to the Interview panel and the candidate.

4.5.   The panel will openly discuss their individual assessments to reach a consensus on the final selection decision. The recruiting manager informs the HR Service centre of their decision by phone and completing the Recruitment Decision form at Appendix A and sending or e mailing it to the HR Service Centre.

5.   Step 5 – Negotiation, Conditional Offer and Acceptance

5.1   The successful candidate will be informed as soon as possible by the recruiting manager, usually by phone and a conditional offer of employment made.

5.2   The starting salary offered must be at the starting point for the position. In exceptional circumstances a higher point may be offered subject to written justification by the recruiting manager and agreed with the director. Any justification may take into account the following factors:

     a.   existing salary of the applicant
     b.   relevant skills and experience
     c.   Market conditions for similar positions

 If the offer is accepted the HR Service Centre will send a Conditional Offer letter within 3 working days.

5.3   The offer is conditional on receipt of satisfactory references which must be current and relevant, completion of medical form, CRB check if applicable and any other evidence required specific to the position e.g. qualification certificates, work permits / evidence of right to work in the UK.

5.4   Only after verbal or written acceptance of the conditional offer from the 1st choice candidate has been received will the HR Service Centre send out regret letters to all unsuccessful candidates.   Consideration will be given to whether unsuccessful candidates may be suitable for other advertised positions either currently or in the future and their details kept for future consideration.

6.0   Step 6 - References and Qualifications Check

6.1   The HR Service Centre will request business references:

- a written reference from the current or most recent employer
- a verbal reference from the previous employer
- Personal references will not be accepted

6.2   For internal candidates a telephone reference will be taken by the HR Service Centre.

6.3   No formal offer of employment will be made to any candidate until the HR Service Centre has satisfactory receipt of all required references, medical clearances, qualifications, or if applicable CRB checks and /or proof of eligibility to work in the UK.

7.   Step 7 - Formal Offer and Acceptance

Upon receipt of satisfactory references, or if applicable CRB checks, a formal letter of appointment and contract with a start date agreed by the recruiting manager, will be issued by the HR Service Centre.

8.0   Step 8 - Induction

8.1   All new starters will receive a 2 hour induction from the HR Team on their first day with Flintshire County Council. Where this is not possible it will be booked for the earliest possible date after commencing the position.

8.2   The HR Service Centre will book a 2 day Corporate Induction Programme for all new starters, who will be required to attend this course as the soon as possible.

8.3   The line manager is responsible for planning and implementing a site specific induction and putting in place regular reviews over the initial weeks of employment.

9.   Step 9 - Probationary Period

All new appointments, including those employees from other public sector organisations, will be required to serve a 6 month Probationary period. Please refer to Appendix D4. This may be extended at the manager's discretion.

10.   Record Keeping and Data Protection

10.1   The HR Service Centre will keep a comprehensive recruitment file for each vacancy which will clearly document the progress of the recruitment and selection process and contain details of all selection decisions made.

10.2   The recruitment file will contain the following documents as a minimum:

- Job Description and Person Specification
- Welsh Language Skills Assessment
- Recruitment Advert
- Recruitment information pack
- Application and short listing scoring matrices
- Interview questions, scoring matrices and selection test results
- References

Recruitment information will be securely retained for a period of 6 months after which it will be shredded. Any CRB information will be handled according to Flintshire's CRB policy.

10.3   The HR MIS/ Payroll system will record responses to adverts placed in different media to build up data to inform future recruitment campaigns.

Appendix B – Procedural Flowchart

Complete Establishment Control Process prior to Step 1

Step 1 – Authorisation
Enter in details of the position to be filled into the Recruitment Management System.

Step 2 - Planning & Going to Advert

The recruiting manager meets with the appointed HR contact to discuss and agree the campaign, keys factors:

-Consider alternatives to recruitment
-Decide if internal or external or both
-Review and update Job Description and Person Specification
-Agree short listing criteria and any other selection methods e.g. psychometrics
Agree make up of interview panel and format of interview
-Consider additional requirements e.g. welsh language, CRB etc
-Agree media choice / Cost and timescales
-Sign off the advert before publication

Step 3 -Short listing

The HR Service Centre collate applications.
The recruiting manager and other appointed manager will complete the short listing exercise using the matrix at Appendix D2.
The HR Service Centre writes to all candidates to either decline or invite to interview.

Step 4 – Interview & Selection

Recruiting manager and panel interview selected candidates and score individually.
Panel members discuss and reach a consensus on the final selection decision.
The recruiting manager will inform the HR Service Centre of the final decision

Step 5 – Conditional Offer and Acceptance

The successful candidate will be informed as soon as possible by telephone by the recruiting manager. If verbally accepted the HR Service Centre will send a Conditional Offer letter within 3 working days.
Only after a verbal or written acceptance of the conditional offer will the HR Service Centre send out regret letters to all unsuccessful candidates.

Step 6 -References + Checks

The HR Service Centre will request 2 references:
- A written reference from the current or most recent employer
- A telephone reference from the previous employer
For internal candidates a telephone reference will be taken by the HR Service Centre.

Step 7- Formal Offer and acceptance

Upon satisfactory receipt of references / CRB checks, a formal contract will be issued by the HR Service Centre.

Step 8 – Induction

A 2 hour HR Induction and a 2 day Corporate Induction will be booked for all new starters at the earliest opportunity

Step 9 - Probationary Period

All new appointments including internal and transfers from other Local authorities will be required to serve a 6 month probationary period. Please refer to Appendix E4.

SHORTLISTING & SELECTION CRITERIA

The Recruiting Manager and appointed HR contact must review the essential and desirable criteria from the person specification and ensure it is updated and amended to accurately reflect the position and agree on how this can be evidenced.   Use the template below:

*	**Essential Criteria (From Person Specification)** **(Include Welsh language and level if a requirement)**	**Evidence from Application Form (AF), Interview (I), Test (T), Presentation (P) or other (O).**
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
*	**Desirable Criteria (From Person Specification)** **Not to be used for short listing, to be evidenced at interview.**	
6		
7		
8		
9		

*Only essential criteria which can be evidenced from the application form can be used on the short listing matrix at Appendix D2.   Interview questions and relevant tests e.g. Psychometrics will provide evidence for any criteria which cannot be found from the application form for those short listed for interview.

<div align="right">**Appendix C2**</div>

SHORT LISTING MATRIX

Directorate: **Position**
Title:

Panel Member: **Date:**

Criteria:	Essential					Total Score	Comment	Selected Y/N
Candidate:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**			
1.								
2.								
3.								
4.								
5.								
6.								
7.								
8.								
9.								
10.								
11.								
12.								
13.								
14.								
15.								

Key

2 –Strong evidence of meeting the criterion in full

1 –Some evidence and demonstrates potential to meet the criterion in full with limited training or future experience or through evidenced transferable skills

0 – Does not provide evidence of meeting the criterion

Short listing Principles

- To be short listed for interview, candidates must score at least a 1 in all the essential criteria.

- Then, candidates scoring the highest points will be selected for interview

- No candidate scoring less than 50% of the total available score will be short listed

Appendix D1 – Interview Scoring Matrix

Directorate: **Position Title:**

Panel Member: **Date:**

Essential and Desirable Criteria from Person Spec.	CANDIDATE:	1	2	3	4	5	6
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
	TOTAL SCORE						

N.B. Questions will be competency based and seek evidence to illustrate how the applicant measures against the essential and desirable criteria
Scoring Key:

1 = Poor – showed sufficient negative evidence to be judged lacking in the knowledge/ skills/ competence
2 = Marginal - showed clear negative evidence and a little positive evidence
3 = Average – showed a balance of positive and negative evidence
4 = Good – showed clear evidence and little negative evidence
5 = Excellent – showed multiple clear evidence and no negative evidence

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Appendix D2 – Interview Notes

Directorate	
Position Title:	
Date:	73
Time:	
Candidates Name:	
Panel Members Name:	

Recruitment Decision Form

DIRECTORATE:	
POSITION:	
DATE:	

SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE:	

REASONS FOR APPOINTMENT:

Starting Salary £   **Justification:**

UNSUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE:	

REASONS FOR NON APPOINTMENT:

UNSUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE:	

REASONS FOR NON APPOINTMENT:

**Panel Members
Names(PRINT)………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………**

Panel Members Signatures

………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………

Probationary Procedure

1.   Rationale

Regular assessment during the probationary period is an important element of the Induction process of a new employee. It ensures that the employee knows how they are progressing and provides the manager with the opportunity to point out any areas of performance or conduct where improvement, development or training is required.

2.   Length and scope of Probationary Period

All new appointments will be subject to a 26 week probationary period, including those employees from other public sector organisations. It is possible to extend the probationary period for a short timeframe e.g. 6 weeks, to allow additional time for an employee to meet the minimum performance standards.

3.   Regular Review

3.1   A review meeting will take place at weeks 6, 12 and 20 weeks.

3.2   The Probationary Report form (Appendix E5) must be completed ensuring the judgements made are objective and measured against the requirements of the job description, person specification and expected standards of conduct.

3.3   The form is made up of a number of tick boxes against measurable standards. These boxes should be completed by the manager at each of the review meetings identifying at each stage whether performance / conduct is satisfactory, improvement required, or is unacceptable.

3.3   The employee must be informed of any shortfalls in their performance or conduct and advised of the improvements that are required with timescales. The discussion and agreed actions during the meeting will be recorded on the report form, signed and dated by both the manager and the employee.

3.4   At the 20 week Probationary Review Meeting, if the employee's performance or conduct is still not acceptable, the employee should be notified in advance (minimum 48 hours notice) of the meeting that their permanent employment may not be confirmed. At the meeting, the concerns regarding their performance or conduct will be discussed in detail and the employee will have the opportunity to respond. The employee will have the right to be accompanied by a work based colleague or Trade Union representative and the manager must ensure a HR representative is in attendance.

3.5   At the conclusion of the meeting, after consideration of all the facts and gaining approval from the Head of Service, the manager may decide to issue notice to terminate* their employment at the end of the 26 week probationary period, or sooner with the agreement of all parties.   The employee will have the right to appeal against the decision.

3.6   Where the employee has met the required standards of performance and conduct, the manager will confirm at the 20 week Review Meeting that their probationary period has been successful and they will receive formal notification that their permanent employment has been confirmed at the 26 week stage.

3.7   The manager must ensure the tear off slip at the bottom of the Probationary Report is completed at the 20 week stage, which informs HR of the outcome of the probationary period, see Appendix E5.

* The manager must ensure they confirm the notice of termination in writing and that any contractual periods of notice are given.

Name of Employee…………………..
Position:……………………..
Directorate:……………………………..   Date:………………………

6/12/20 WEEK PROBATIONARY REPORT

Standards	Meets Requirements	Requires Improvement	Unacceptable
1. Attendance			
2. Conduct			
2. Punctuality / Timekeeping			
3. Productivity			
4. Working relationships			
6. *Insert key criteria from JD and PS*			
7. " "			
8. " "			
9. " "			
10. " "			

Areas for Improvement / Training / Development:

1.
2.
3.

Comments/ Actions:

Date of Interview_____

Signed (Employee)_____

Signed (Manager)_____
…………………………………………………………………………………………………….
For use at 20 Week Review Only:

To: HR Service Centre
From: [*Insert managers name, position and Directorate*]

REFERENCE APPOINTMENT OF: [*Insert employees name and Position*]

I can confirm the permanent appointment of [*employees name*] in the position of [*insert position title*] effective from [*insert date*].

OR

I can confirm that[*Employees name*] has not met the required performance standards and the following action will be taken [*insert action to be taken*] effective from[*insert date*].

Signed………………………… …………..   Date:…………

Managed Agency Worker Procedure

TO BE COMPLETED

EQUALITIES RISK ASSESSMENT

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT TOOL KIT

Directorate: Corporate Strategy   Service: HR

Lead Officer: Ian Warren   Position: Senior Hr Adviser (Policy)

Policy/Service Title: Recruitment New/Existing Policy/Decision
(Delete as appropriate)

1. Policy/service Aims

What are the aims and objectives of the policy/service?

Aim:
 	
To recruit into and from within the Council, people with the required behaviours, knowledge and skills in a fair, professional, timely and cost effective manner and will promote the Council as an employer of choice.
 	
The key objectives of this policy are:
 	
    • To create a workforce which reflects the local community
    • To provide equality of opportunity
    • To select the preferred candidate on merit
    • To appoint candidates at the right time
    • To ensure a quality induction for all new employees
    • To minimise the use of agency workers
    • To ensure a consistent approach to recruitment

Who should benefit from the policy/service?
Prospective employees, managers, existing employees and the Council as a whole.
Are the aims consistent with the Corporate Diversity and Equality Policy?
Yes, they will improve the ability to make informed recruitment decisions

based on merit and suitability for the post, free from any form of discrimination.

2. Consideration of available data and research

a) Are there any obvious barriers to implementation of the policy/service?
No, although training will be required to ensure line managers understand the new policy and procedure, along with the underlying principles.

b) What types of data and research are available? (e.g. Tribunal Reports etc)
We have no useful data on the validity of our current recruitment decisions as a whole.   Research conducted by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development suggests that Competency based interviews can be one of the most reliable forms of assessment.

c) What does the data and research tell you about the policy/service?
That its adoption could lead to more objective recruitment decision making leading to a reduced risk of prejudice being a factor in decisions.

d) Is further information or research needed?
No

3. Assessment of impact

a) Are any groups over/under represented within the Service?
Women are under represented at a Senior management level.

b) Is there any evidence of actual or potential impact on different groups?

The new recruitment policy should reduce barriers to employment for groups whose out of work commitments may make working full time difficult. The policy will encourage positions to consider on a part time or job share basis where practicable.

Access or other issues for disabled applicants / employees. Reasonable adjustment will be made to ensure individuals needs are met. e.g. use of a screen reader for those with visual impairment. Again monitoring will be put in place to identify any potential risk.

c) Is there any evidence of adverse impact of such a policy/service?
No.

d) Is there any evidence of unlawful discrimination? If yes, under what legislation?
No.

e) Is the adverse impact avoidable?
N/A

f) Is it justified?
N/A

4. Consideration of alternatives

Are there any alternative means of achieving the objectives in (1) above? E.G Altering the policy or developing a new policy
N/A

5. Consultation

Who needs to be involved in a consultation process, and what methods of consultation will be used?

Self organised Group of Disabled employees FJTUC Corporate Training department HR Managers and Senior Managers Equality officer / Welsh language officer HR Team Corporate Communications
Outline the main issues from the different groups arising from the consultation process
Concern over Welsh language considerations not being highlighted in the 1st draft of the policy. – From the Welsh Language Officer. The need to involve service users in the recruitment process for posts where the post holder may have a direct impact e.g. in the recent recruitment for a Head Teacher, schoolchildren were involved in the design of the assessment techniques.
Specify how the issues above have been addressed in the development of the policy/service
A Welsh language heading and paragraph was inserted in the policy and reference made in the operational procedure to ensuring a Welsh language skills assessment is considered for each position. After discussion with Gill Watkins (Corporate Communications) the need to involve service users for key positions with a direct impact on service users was added to the key principles section of the policy.

6. Decision making

Is the service/ policy adopted? Yes/no Explain reasons

List actions to be taken with timescales. Actions should be transferred into Service Plans.			
Action	Timescale	By whom	Intended outcome

7. Monitoring and review

How will the policy/service be monitored and reviewed for impact and effectiveness?				
How	Who	Time scale	outcome	Review

8. Publication of results

How will the results of impact assessment, consultation and monitoring be published?

Signed:…………………………………. (Service Manager)

Date:…………………………………………

Approved:……………………………….. (Director)

Date:…………………………………………

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 11

REPORT TO: **SPECIAL MEETING OF THE FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

DATE : **25 SEPTEMBER 2008**

REPORT BY: **CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

SUBJECT : **SENIOR MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE: PROGRESS REPORT**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To update Council on the progress of the implementation of the first phase of the changes to the Senior Management Structure.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 Council has received regular updates on the progress of the implementation of the first phase of the changes to the Senior Management Structure since approval of the business case for change (5 December 2007) and the finalised structures and post titles, roles and responsibilities (19 February and 4 March 2008).

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The following is a summary of progress to date with the first phase:-

- appointments have been made to the three new posts of Director. The Director of Community Services (Susan Lewis through a matching process) is in post, the Director of Lifelong Learning (Ian Budd of Shropshire County Council appointed through a competitive recruitment exercise) is in post from 22 September and the Director of Environment (Carl Longland of Telford and Wrekin Council) is in post from 29 September;

- functions and services from the Directorate of Community and Housing are in the process of transfer to the new Directorates of Community Services and Environment with an apportionment of support services to each Directorate. Efforts are being made to communicate the changes and minimise disruption to services and anxiety amongst the workforce during a period of transition;

- an appointment has been made to the new position of Head of Public Protection (Paul McGreery of Cheshire County Council will be in post 1 October);

- the review of pay and gradings for the second tier is nearing completion and the outcomes will be reported to Council in October as scheduled for consideration;

Date: 19/09/2008

- the second tier posts which are occupied by internal acting-up arrangements or external interim management arrangements will be advertised for a competitive recruitment once the pay and grading review is complete and decisions have been made by Council;

- a temporary appointment has been made to the post of Head of Housing (Maureen Harkin) to manage housing management and maintenance services in the interim and oversee continued modernisation and improvement in those services;

- the four corporate heads of service posts are being reviewed as part of the review of pay and gradings for the second tier. These posts will be subject to a matching process or a competitive recruitment depending on the outcome of the review, the extent of any change to the existing posts on the structure and the circumstances of the individuals affected.

3.02   A full report will be made to the Executive on 29 October on the proposals for the second phase of organisational change. The second phase will involve:-

- a proposed corporate organisational design and change management method and approach which sets out how and why change will be achieved and how consultation will be managed;

- those areas of Council function and service to be subject to specific review and redesign.

3.03   Functions and services are being selected for proposal against criteria including the opportunities for greater integration as a direct consequence of phase one of organisational change; current performance and the scope for improvement; the scope for improved efficiency and productivity; the demand for services and public expectation; external change (e.g. Government policy, market forces). A number of the functions and services intended for review were listed in the 19 February 2007 report to Council, others have been referred to in Council documents including the Assessment of Strategic Risks and Challenges and the Regulatory Plan.

3.04   The corporate method and approach, once endorsed, will be shared for discussion with Trade Union colleagues and, inherent in this method and approach, early consultation will be offered on the reasoning for and the objectives of the specific reviews proposed for the selected functions and services.

3.05   The first phase is being implemented according to the agreement of Council within the timescales and budgets set for the change programme. The second phase is being developed for approval.

4.00   RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01   That the progress report is noted.

5.00   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01   As per previous report to Council on 5 December 2007, 19 February and 4 March 2008.

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   As per previous report to Council on 5 December 2007, 19 February and 4 March 2008.

10.00   CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01   As per previous report to Council on 5 December 2007, 19 February and 4 March 2008.

11.00   CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01   As per previous report to Council on 5 December 2007, 19 February and 4 March 2008.

12.00   APPENDICES

12.01   None

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

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