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Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol a Democrataidd

To: Cllr Tim Newhouse (Chairman)

Councillors: Haydn Bateman, Marion Bateman,
Clive Carver, Peter Curtis, Ian Dunbar,
Ron Hampson, Patrick Heesom, Trefor Howorth,
Richard Jones, Richard Lloyd, Mike Lowe,
Paul Shotton, Ian Smith and Arnold Woolley

Dear Sir / Madam

A meeting of the **CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** will be held in the **DELYN COMMITTEE ROOM, COUNTY HALL, MOLD CH7 6NA** on **THURSDAY, 13TH JUNE, 2013** at **10.00 AM** to consider the following items.

Yours faithfully

Democracy & Governance Manager

A G E N D A

1 **APOLOGIES**

2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**

3 **MINUTES** (Pages 1 - 8)

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2013.

4 **WALES AUDIT OFFICE ANNUAL IMPROVEMENT REPORT** (Pages 9 - 56)

Report of Chief Executive enclosed.

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

5 **REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2012/13 (MONTH 12)** (Pages 57 - 110)

Report of Head of Finance enclosed.

6 **FINANCE AS A FLINTSHIRE FUTURES WORKSTREAM** (Pages 111 - 116)

Report of Head of Finance enclosed.

7 **WORKFORCE INFORMATION QUARTER 4 - JANUARY-MARCH 2013** (Pages 117 - 124)

Report of Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development enclosed.

8 **QUARTER 4 AND YEAR END SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORTS** (Pages 125 - 210)

Report of Member Engagement Manager enclosed.

9 **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 211 - 216)

Report of Member Engagement Manager enclosed.

<u>CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u>
<u>16 MAY 2013</u>

Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held at Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold CH7 6NA on Thursday, 16 May 2013

<u>PRESENT:</u>   **Councillor Tim Newhouse (Chairman)**
Councillors: Clive Carver, Peter Curtis, Ian Dunbar, Ron Hampson, Patrick Heesom, Richard Lloyd, Mike Lowe, Paul Shotton, Ian Smith and Arnold Woolley

<u>SUBSTITUTION:</u> Councillor Joe Johnson (for Trefor Howorth)

<u>APOLOGY:</u> Councillor Richard Jones

<u>ALSO PRESENT:</u> Councillors: Bernie Attridge and Kevin Jones

<u>CONTRIBUTORS:</u> Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance, Cabinet Member for Corporate Management, Chief Executive and Head of ICT & Customer Services

Corporate Finance Manager and Finance Manager for minute number 4
Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development for minute number 5

<u>IN ATTENDANCE:</u>
Member Engagement Manager and Committee Officer

1.   <u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)</u>

During discussion under Agenda Item 4: Revenue Budget Monitoring 2012/13 Month 11, Councillor R.G. Hampson declared a personal interest.

2.   <u>URGENT ITEM - APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR</u>

The Chairman sought nominations for a Vice-Chair for the Committee. A nomination for Councillor P.J. Curtis was duly seconded and on being put to the vote, this was carried. No further nominations were received.

<u>RESOLVED:</u>

That Councillor P.J. Curtis be appointed Vice-Chair of the Committee.

3.   <u>MINUTES</u>

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18 April 2013 had been circulated to Members with the agenda.

Councillor P.G. Heesom thanked officers for the note detailing actions arising, which had previously been circulated.

Accuracy

Revenue Budget Monitoring 2012/13 Month 10 - Councillor P.J. Curtis pointed out that his comments about a slide related to the swimming baths in Holywell and not a play area. He explained his concerns that the removal of the slide may have led to a loss of revenue and that an increased ratio of inspections may have helped to avoid the removal of such features.

Matters Arising

Minute 91: Customer Services as a Flintshire Futures Workstream - Councillor Heesom made reference to the minutes of the meeting in January 2013 and requested that information be shared with Members on capacity proposals.

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance took the opportunity to welcome the new Chairman and Vice-Chairman and thanked the former Chairman and Vice-Chairman for their contributions. He acknowledged the request from Councillor Heesom and gave a commitment that an update would be provided on the allocation of ringfenced funding.

The Chief Executive said that the Council would be revisiting priorities in June as part of work on the Medium Term Financial Plan in terms of the fiscal gap and changing services. He spoke of positive work on Organisational Change and the need to increase this further to address the gap which would necessitate major debate with Members.

Minute 93: Revenue Budget Monitoring 2012/13 Month 10 - Councillor Heesom queried whether proposed changes to the catering service in secondary schools would also apply to primary schools, as indicated in recent press reports.

The Leader said that following a similar question raised at the previous meeting, the breakdown of projected overspend in Facilities Services, which had been provided to the Committee, indicated a primary school deficit of £100K. He added that a report would be brought back to the Committee, as shown on the Forward Work Programme.

Minute 94: Workforce Information Quarter 3 Oct-Dec 2012 - Councillor A. Woolley advised that following discussion with officers, it had been agreed that there would be a change in the way in which future statistics were presented.

RESOLVED:

That subject to the amendment, the minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4.   **REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2012/13 MONTH 11**

The Corporate Finance Manager introduced a report to provide Members with Revenue Budget Monitoring 2012/13 (Month 11) information for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) due for submission to Cabinet on 21 May 2013.

It was reported that the projected year end position, as estimated at Month 11, was a net underspend of £2.334m on the Council Fund and a projected net underspend of £0.574m on the HRA. For Council Fund, the table in 3.01 showed a reduced overspend of £0.590m in Lifelong Learning, which was offset by underspends in other directorates, most notably of £2.564m in Community Services. Reasons for all the movements from month 10 were detailed in Appendix 1. The report also included various requests for carrying forward funding as detailed in 3.16 - 3.21 and an update on non-standard inflation which remained unchanged from the previous month.

The Corporate Finance Manager confirmed that the report now included estimates for the additional costs arising from the impact of the severe weather period earlier in the year totalling £1.2m. The estimate included actual costs arising when the incident occurred (falling in 2012/13) of £0.629m and other estimated costs in relation to the recovery period (majority falling in 2013/14) of £0.621m.

It was reported that the in-year costs had been dealt with in 2 ways. Firstly, an amount of £0.245m had been drawn down from the Winter Maintenance reserve and secondly it was recommended that the remainder be met from contingency reserves. Consideration would need to be given on whether to reinstate the Winter Maintenance reserves in full or in part when the final outturn was known. Costs relating to the recovery period would be approved for the next financial year and officers were exploring the possibility of Welsh Government (WG) support via the Emergency Financial Assistance Scheme (EFAS), however a threshold of £487K would apply to Flintshire for 2012/13.

Whilst costs had been reported for the operational phase of dealing with the impact of severe weather, the Chief Executive spoke of plans for the recovery phase which principally involved repairs to roads. An application had been made for discretionary support under EFAS and in view of the severity of the weather conditions and arising impact, it was hoped that there would be a positive outcome with costs reinstated into the budget.

On the request for carry forward in Corporate Services to fund improved electronic communications with Members, Councillor C.S. Carver asked if an outcome had already been agreed as a specific figure of £80K was mentioned. The Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance said that the amount quoted related to the business case which would provide savings to the Council and that this had been shared with Group Leaders. Responses to questions raised would be brought back to the next meeting with Group Leaders on 6 June 2013 where full support would be required on the business case in order to move forward. The Head of ICT & Customer Services said that the £80K represented advance investment required for the procurement of hardware, software and support which, as discussed at the Group Leaders' meeting, would involve iPads. He added that there would be payback in the first year. The Chief Executive said that the request for carry forward was not intended to assume a particular outcome. The Cabinet Member for Corporate Management spoke of the need to demonstrate best use of information technology and modernisation combined with savings.

Councillor P.G. Heesom welcomed the increased level of underspend in Community Services but questioned the reason for this. He raised concerns about healthcare pressures and asked about the Council's approach in dealing with this. The Chief Executive said that a number of increases in underspend were due to changes in practices and management. He went on to speak of major pressures in social care on UK level which were not financial sustainable and would require greater flexibility by all. On health care, regional reviews were ongoing which would impact on services. There was an awareness of changes in the NHS and the medium term future was an issue.

The Leader agreed that a valid point had been made by Councillor Heesom and said that critical work on the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) would take into account any impact from new legislation such as the Social Care Bill.

Councillor Heesom requested early debate on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to ascertain whether this was the best toolkit to address the pressures faced. On Social Care, the Chief Executive spoke of positive changes such as success with commissioning on a regional level and the intention for the MTFP to be smarter to improve services. The Cabinet Member for Corporate Management made reference to the Betsi Cadwaladr public meeting at which a number of Members had raised concerns at changes. He spoke of the importance of sustaining a level of underspend to offset any increase in costs, for example, from out of county placements.

Councillor A. Woolley remarked on the efforts of the Occupational Therapy team to cope with an increased demand for services and called for additional resources in that area. The Chief Executive gave reassurance that professional colleagues in Social Care had determined resources needed, which included Occupational Therapists at the core of the team.

Whilst reflecting on the current underspend position in Community Services, Councillor R.G. Hampson referred to proposals to withdraw free transport for people with learning disabilities and pensioners attending day centres. The Leader said that a cautious approach had been taken in preparing the Council for the challenges ahead, particularly in light of the Chancellor's recent announcement on cuts to the WG budget which would have implications for Councils. There was an aspiration to reinstate some of these services, however discussion on the MTFS would need to take into account all projections and pressures. The Chief Executive understood the sensitive nature of the issue but pointed out that the budget would currently be in deficit if difficult choices had not been made in the previous budget.

Councillor W.P. Shotton praised the work carried out by Streetscene during the severe weather and was hopeful of a positive outcome from WG in the application for costs for the recovery phase, mindful that bids had also been submitted by Wrexham and Denbighshire.

On the variances for Waste Disposal and Waste Collection shown in Appendix 2, Councillor Heesom felt that the explanation provided was not satisfactory. He also raised concerns about the Youth Service and asked if this could be analysed in more detail. The Leader referred to previous debate and

Members' concerns about the Leisure service and said that a scoping report was awaited. He went on to say that questions would need to be asked as to the cost of Leisure to the Authority and that this was a non-discretionary service which was important to communities and Members. In response to the query on Waste, the Chief Executive said that further information could be sought from officers outside the meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

5. **MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

The Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development introduced a report which provided an overview of the Council's current Management Development framework delivered in partnership with Deeside College. She explained that Heather Johnson, who had been involved in the development of the project, was unable to attend the meeting.

The Chief Executive detailed the background and said that although Flintshire had previously invested well in training, there had been no coherent programme. This development programme in partnership with Deeside College was thought to be a unique arrangement in Wales and provided generic training to support employees in career progression. Discussions were taking place with Wrexham County Borough Council on how the programme could be further enhanced and the Chief Executive gave examples of a number of Flintshire employees who had successfully completed the Management Development programme.

The Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development said that the framework had been developed around expectations of managers and supervisors fused with requirements from the National Management qualification framework. She advised that Welsh Government (WG) funding could be accessed via Deeside College enabling the programme to be cost neutral and also commented that Flintshire was one of three finalists competing for the Vocational Qualification Employer of the Year Award. Benefits of the programme were that training was tailored to meet the Council's requirements and included input on the modules by leadership teams. An 'Aspiring Leaders' programme was also being developed with Deeside College for employees who had completed Level 5 of the Management Development programme. Although this did not attract WG funding, the partnership would enable Deeside College to assist in delivering and resourcing the training, with the remaining costs relating to the residential element being met by the Council.

Councillor P.G. Heesom spoke of the importance of understanding the roles and responsibilities of elected Members and relationships with officers. The Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance said that the modules in the programme should recognise the unique role of Members in the organisation. He spoke of practice in previous years where Modern Trainees had spent time with Executive Members during inductions to gain an understanding of their roles.

The Chief Executive said that although there was not a specific module which dealt with this, expectations of working with Members were built in to a number of modules and this could be reflected on at a later stage. The Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development added that some modules included a level of awareness of the Council along with the roles of senior management and relationships with Members.

In welcoming the report, the Cabinet Member for Corporate Management commented on the Council's positive relationship with Deeside College and said that the programme was tailored to Flintshire's needs and could assist with the appraisal process.

Following a query by Councillor I. Smith, the Chief Executive said that the Management Development training would take place over half-day modules spread over a year and managed around work commitments. The Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development said that delegates were expected to undertake a large amount of work in their own time to complete the course and achieve the qualification.

Councillor A. Woolley was supportive of the programme but raised concerns about any possible threats to future funding.

Councillor W.P. Shotton agreed that strong management development was essential to the organisation and asked about potential numbers on the Aspiring Leaders programme and whether alternative funding should be sought for this. The Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development explained that the Aspiring Leaders programme was currently under development and that potential delegates would need to undergo a competitive process based on their personal ambition and need, together with sponsorship and support from their Heads of Service. She anticipated a maximum of one programme per year and said that alternative options of funding were being explored.

Councillor P.J. Curtis spoke in support of the benefits to the Council but expressed concerns about the potential for trained employees to move on to other Local Authorities. He asked if Team Leaders who had undergone training and had authority of supervision had impacted on managerial structures in the organisation. The Chief Executive said that following service reviews and Single Status work, a maximum of seven tiers would apply in any part of the organisation.

In response to a query from Councillor T.R. Lloyd, it was confirmed that the Aspiring Leaders Level 7 qualification was recognised as equivalent to a Masters degree. Councillor Lloyd proposed a vote of thanks to Councillors R.B. Jones and C.S. Carver for their hard work as the former Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee. This was duly seconded and agreed by the Committee. The Member Engagement Manager said that he would write to Councillor Jones on behalf of the Committee.

Councillor M. Lowe asked whether delegates of the Aspiring Leaders programme would be expected to contribute to training costs as they would benefit from the qualification. The Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development said that this would be a consideration. The Chief Executive

pointed out that this training would only be commissioned for a small number of employees.

RESOLVED:

(a)   That Corporate Training complete a review of all programmes to ensure content is relevant and current in line with the new Behavioural Competency Framework and the new qualification standards;

(b)   That Corporate Training explore other qualifications at Level 5 that would attract funding and would therefore remove the reliance on Deeside College to provide this programme at their own cost;

(c)   That the Management Development programmes are promoted across the organisation to ensure all employees have the opportunity to take up the learning and development available to ensure that they have the skills and expertise to undertake their roles competently;

(d)   That Corporate Training explore further the option of offering the 'Aspiring Leaders' programme at Level 7 for those managers wishing to progress from Level 5 at a cost of £658 per delegate; and

(e)   That the Member Engagement Manager write to Councillor R.B. Jones to express the Committee's appreciation for his work as the former Chairman.

6.   **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Member Engagement Manager introduced a report to enable the Committee to consider the Forward Work Programme. He drew attention to the large number of items scheduled for the meeting on 13 June 2013 and suggested that some of these items could be dealt with at a special meeting which could be arranged for the end of June or start of July, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

Following earlier discussion, the Chief Executive suggested that the Medium Term Financial Plan could be brought in July 2013. On the Wales Audit Office (WAO) Annual Improvement Report, he advised that the WAO report had been omitted from the Cabinet agenda as it was finalised at a later stage and would be made available the following day. The full document would be submitted to the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee at the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the Member Engagement Manager liaise with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to arrange a special meeting of the Committee and schedule the items accordingly.

7.   **MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE**

There were no members of the press or public in attendance.

(The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 11.25 am)

....
Chairman

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

DATE: THURSDAY 13TH JUNE 2013

REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

SUBJECT: WALES AUDIT OFFICE ANNUAL IMPROVEMENT REPORT

1.00   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01   Members to receive the Council's Annual Improvement Report 2012 as published by the Auditor General for Wales and to note the Council's response.

2.00   BACKGROUND

2.01   The Auditor General is required by the Local Government (Wales) Measure to report on how well Welsh Councils, fire and rescue services and national parks are planning for improvement and delivering their services.

2.02   This will be the third Annual Improvement Report for Flintshire which will also contain the Appointed Auditor's Annual Audit Letter as previously reported to Audit Committee in March 2013.

3.00   CONSIDERATIONS

3.01   The Annual Improvement Report is publicised by the Wales Audit Office (WAO) on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales. It brings together, with the co-ordination of other inspectorates such as Estyn and the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW) a picture of what the Council is trying to achieve and how it is going about it.

3.02   The full report was received by Cabinet on 18th May 2013 and will be considered by Audit Committee on 12th June.

3.03   The report builds on the work of the relevant Welsh inspectorates, as well as work undertaken by the Wales Audit Office over the last year. The report is in three main sections, which cover the Council's delivery and evaluation of services in relation to 2011/12, and it's planning of improvement for 2012/13.

3.04   The Auditor General is making no formal recommendations or

proposals for improvement.

3.05   The Council, as is practice, makes a formal public response to any findings within the report. The Council's response to the draft Annual Improvement Report (AIR) is included at Appendix 2.

3.06   The Annual Improvement Report is developed and improved with input from senior officers at the Council to ensure accuracy, fairness and validity.

4.00   RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01   Members are asked to receive the Council's Annual Improvement Report 2012 as published by the Auditor General for Wales and to note the Council's response.

5.00   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01   This report refers to the financial resourcing of the council's priorities.

6.00   ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01   This report refers to how the council is helping to reduce poverty.

7.00   ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01   This report refers to how the council is improving the environment.

8.00   EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01   Safe and supportive communities is referred to within the report.

9.00   PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01   The People Strategy is referred to in the report.

10.00   CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01   None required at this stage.

11.00   CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01   Senior officers have had input into the report. The Annual Audit Letter was presented to the council's Audit Committee in December 2012.

12.00   APPENDICES

12.01   Appendix 1: WAO Annual Improvement Report 2013

Appendix 2: Council's Executive response.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Contact Officer: Karen Armstrong
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Email: Karen.armstrong@flintshire.gov.uk

Wales Audit Office Annual Improvement Report 2012
Executive Response

This Annual Improvement Report (AIR) is broadly a fair, evidenced and agreeable summary of the position of the Council. The report is a further positive endorsement of another year of achieving continuous improvement in Flintshire.

There are no new statutory recommendations or proposals for Improvement. Listed below are the principal topics within the AIR. The number in brackets refers to the paragraph in the AIR where the issue can be found

Topic	Issue	Response
Carbon Reduction (11)	Performance	Greater organisational commitment and action on energy usage reduction required
Domestic Waste (15)	Performance	Organisation confident of meeting collection and recycling targets post service changes
Vulnerable Residents (17)	Performance	Council has a full action plan in response to CSSIW recommendations
Education (21)	Performance	Council has a full action plan in response to 2011 Estyn inspection and 2013 monitoring visit
Housing (31)	Achieving the Wales Housing Quality Standard (WHQS)	Council has a revised and updated Housing Business Plan showing achievement of the WHQS by 2022. Negotiations are advanced with the Welsh Housing Task Force on options to achieve WHQS by 2020
Housing Benefits (38)	Performance	The Housing Benefits Services is a priority service for continued local improvement
Economy (41)	Strategic impact	Economic Development continues to be a top Council priority
Performance Systems and Information (46, 64 and 70)	Further improving and simplifying performance systems	• The Improvement Plan and Annual Performance Report formats and contents have been reviewed to improve the impact of the documents • The reviewed and streamlined outcome-based Council Priorities/Improvement Objectives are to be reported in June with a new style Improvement Plan to be published in June 2013 • The Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges will be incorporated in the Improvement Plan

		• The organisation is improving the consistency of its self-evaluation methods
Governance (63)	Improving Governance systems	The Council has strengthened its arrangements for reviewing and reporting on Governance. A recent Wales Audit Office national study has made positive conclusions on the arrangements in Flintshire
Information Management (66)	Performance	The Council has an adopted ICT and Customer Services Strategy and is reviewing the structure and priorities of the ICT Division
Single Status (80)	Achieving a Single Status Agreement	• All work-streams in the 'recovery plan' from 2009 have been completed • A provisional agreement on Part 3 Terms and Conditions has been agreed • Final options on a future Pay and Grading Model are being reviewed against affordability • There is a parallel strategy to settle against potential Equal Pay liabilities
Flintshire Futures (81)	Clear planning for and achievement of efficiency targets through organisational change	• The governance and management of the Flintshire Futures five work-streams has been improved • Overall achievement of efficiency targets runs at around 85% • Further efficiency target planning is running as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan and Council Priorities review
Human Resources Strategy (82)	Progress with the Strategy	The strategy has been reprioritised and performance of the strategy and the individual work-streams are reported regularly to both Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny
Financial Planning (84)	Publication of the second Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)	• The second MTFP will be published in June 2013 alongside the Improvement Plan • The MTFP will be far more advanced in planning the costs of Council Priorities and investments and in setting new efficiency targets for the period to 2018 • The changing financial national picture and it's impact on Council financial planning is important context

Welsh Language (91)	Performance	The Council has an adopted Welsh Language Plan which is under continuous review

Annual Improvement Report

Flintshire County Council

Issued: May 2013
Document reference: 260A2013
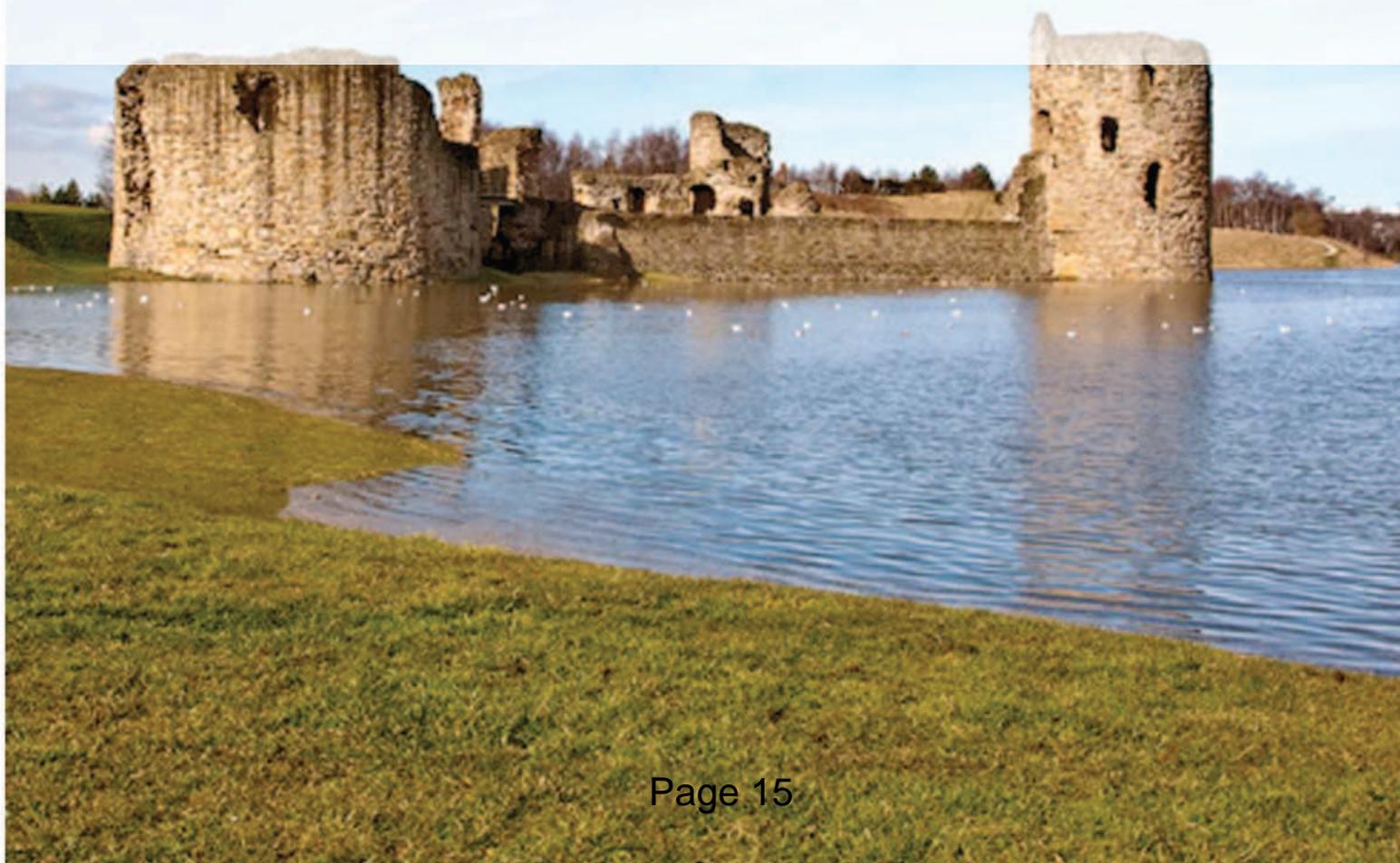
About the Auditor General for Wales

The Auditor General is independent of government and is appointed by Her Majesty the Queen. He leads the Wales Audit Office and is held accountable by the Public Accounts Committee of the National Assembly for the Wales Audit Office's work.

The Auditor General is the external auditor of the Welsh Government and its sponsored and related public bodies, the Assembly Commission and National Health Service bodies in Wales. He also appoints the external auditors of Welsh local government bodies, including unitary authorities, police, probation, fire and rescue authorities, national parks and community councils. The Auditor General's appointed auditors are responsible for the annual audit of nearly £5.5 billion of funding that is passed by the Welsh Government to local government in the form of general and specific grants. Local government, in turn, raises a further £2.1 billion through council tax and business rates.

As well as carrying out financial audit, the Auditor General's role is to examine how public bodies manage and spend public money, including achieving value in the delivery of public services. The Wales Audit Office aims to make public money count, by promoting improvement, so that people in Wales benefit from accountable, well-managed public services that offer the best possible value for money. It is also committed to identifying and spreading good practice across the Welsh public sector.

This Annual Improvement Report has been prepared on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales by Karen Lees and Huw Lloyd Jones under the direction of Alan Morris.

Contents

Summary report

1   Each year, the Auditor General must report on how well Welsh councils, fire and rescue authorities, and national parks are planning for improvement and delivering their services. Drawing on the work of the relevant Welsh inspectorates, as well as work undertaken on his behalf by the Wales Audit Office, this report presents a picture of improvement over the last year. The report is in three main sections, which cover the Council's delivery and evaluation of services in relation to 2011-12, and its planning of improvement for 2012-13.

2   Overall the Auditor General has concluded that service performance remains good in many areas but the Council's Improvement Plans and performance reports are not as clear and outcome-focused as they could be.

3   We found that the Council is making good progress in delivering improvements in several of its service-based improvement priority areas. We reached this conclusion because:

- The Council is helping to support a sustainable environment by reducing energy usage and improving domestic recycling collection rates:

  – good progress has been made in reducing carbon emissions; and

  – the Council is now collecting a wider range of domestic waste than before.

- Services to support vulnerable residents continue to improve:

  – the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales has published a positive assessment of the Council's services for children and families, reflecting strong leadership and improving outcomes;

  – progress has been made towards achieving a modern and high-performing education service across the county, but pupils' performance in primary schools remains lower than expected;

  – the Council is finding it challenging to deliver its priority of meeting the housing need in the County, but steady improvements are being made; and

  – the arrangements for administering housing benefit improved in 2011-12.

- Good progress has been made in delivering planned activities relating to growing the local economy and supporting people who are vulnerable to poverty.

- Performance information indicates that the performance of individual services is often good, and continues to improve.

4   We also found that the Council's evaluation and reporting of its performance are of inconsistent quality and not as outcome-focused as they could be. We reached this conclusion because:

- The Council has discharged its improvement reporting duties under the Measure, but it should ensure that it acts more in accordance with the Welsh Government guidance:

    – the Annual Performance Report for 2011-12 meets the requirements of the Measure; but

    – the Annual Performance Report makes too little use of data and other information to support a balanced narrative evaluation of the Council's work in addressing its Improvement Objectives.

- The Council is able to produce balanced, well-evidenced self-evaluations of some specific aspects of its work, but its Annual Performance Report is less robust:

    – social services and education have produced mature service-specific analyses of their performance, but the Council's Annual Performance Report is less robust;

    – despite the service improvements, the Council is not fully able to identify and report the impact of its activities on achieving the Improvement Objectives; and

    – the Council's on-going review of its governance arrangements is wide-ranging and well evidenced.

- The Council is better placed than in the past to use information effectively to support improvement:

    – the accuracy of the Council's performance data has improved but there remains scope to improve the use of data in the Council's self-evaluation; and

    – the Council manages information well and its approach is generally sound.

5   Finally, the report sets out our views on how well the Council is planning for, and making arrangements to support improvement. We concluded that the Council's corporate arrangements and planning support improvement more effectively than in previous years, but progress has been slower than planned in a few areas:

- The 2012-13 Improvement Plan meets the majority of statutory requirements, but is not easy for residents to understand.

- Based on, and limited to, work carried out to date by the Wales Audit Office and relevant regulators, the Auditor General reported in October 2012 that he believed that the Council was likely to comply with the requirement to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement during the financial year 2012-13. We reached this conclusion because:

- the Council had made reasonable progress in acting on several of the recommendations in the 2012 Annual Improvement Report but some key projects supporting the corporate improvement priorities were taking longer than anticipated;

- work on the medium-term financial plan has continued, but the Council did not succeed in completing the plan by the end of September 2012, as intended;

- the Council's arrangements for the use of technology are likely to support continuous improvement; and

• The Council is continuing to try and increase the use of the Welsh Language within its business.

• The Council is starting to streamline its complex governance arrangements as the systems are developing.

Recommendations

6   We make no new recommendation in this
      report.

Detailed report

Introduction

7   Under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (the Measure), the Auditor General must report each year on how well Welsh councils, fire and rescue authorities, and national parks are planning for improvement and delivering their services. Appendix 1 provides more information about the Auditor General's powers and duties under the Measure. With help from Welsh inspectorates, Estyn (for education) and the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (the CSSIW), we have brought together a picture of what each council or authority in Wales is trying to achieve and how it is going about it. This report also sets out the progress the Council has made since the Auditor General published his last annual improvement report, drawing on the Council's own self-assessment.

8   We do not undertake a comprehensive annual review of all Council arrangements or services, and we have not looked at all of the Council's Improvement Priorities. The conclusions in this report are based on our cumulative and shared knowledge and the findings of prioritised work undertaken this year.

9   Given the wide range of services provided and the challenges facing the Council, it would be unusual if we did not find things that can be improved. The Auditor General is able to:

- recommend to Ministers of the Welsh Government that they intervene in some way;

- conduct a special inspection and publish the report with detailed recommendations;

- make formal recommendations for improvement – if a formal recommendation is made the Council must respond to that recommendation publicly within 30 days; and

- make proposals for improvement – if we make proposals to the Council, we would expect them to do something about them and we will follow-up what happens.

10   We want to find out if this report gives you the information you need and whether it is easy to understand. You can let us know your views by e-mailing us at info@wao.gov.uk or writing to us at 24 Cathedral Road, Cardiff CF11 9LJ.

Service performance remains good in many areas but the Council's Improvement Plans and performance reports are not as clear and outcome-focused as they could be

The Council is making good progress in delivering improvement in several of its service-based priority areas

The Council is helping to support a sustainable environment by reducing energy usage and improving domestic recycling collection rates

Good progress has been made in reducing carbon emissions

11   The Council's carbon management strategy is having a positive impact, and the Council is successfully reducing the amount of carbon used. In 2011-12, the Council exceeded the Welsh Government's annual target of three per cent carbon reduction, and narrowly missed its own, more challenging, target of four per cent. This is the third year of annual improvement. The Council is also on track with its plans to meet its ambitious target of a 60 per cent reduction in carbon emissions by 2021. The reduction in carbon usage has also led to the Council forecasting overall savings of just over £1 million by the end of 2011-12.

12   Progress to date has been good, and there has been strong political support from members. The Council took the approach of prioritising its investment in areas which offered the greatest energy-saving potential. However, this inevitably means that the cost of achieving further carbon reduction will increase. It will therefore become harder and more costly to meet future annual carbon reduction targets.

13   The Council acknowledges that it has been less successful in its plans to raise staff awareness of their role in reducing the Council's energy costs. Encouraging all members of staff to have wider ownership of, and collective responsibility for, the carbon reduction strategy has the potential to achieve further success at low cost.

14   Although performance data has been routinely reported as part of the Council's performance framework, the financial benefits associated with the carbon management strategy have not been promoted, internally or externally. The financial benefits are worthy of being celebrated more widely, particularly at a time when budget pressures are escalating and sustainability issues are gaining a higher profile. Unless the use of information about the benefits is addressed, there is a risk that lack of awareness about the impact of these initiatives could weaken political support and organisational commitment, prejudicing on-going investment.

The Council is now collecting a wider range of domestic waste than before

15   The Council's approach to dealing with household waste has also had a positive impact on carbon reduction. Increasing the amount of waste that is recycled and reducing the amount sent to landfill both indirectly reduce carbon emissions. In 2011, the Council extended its kerbside recycling collection scheme to all residents and, at the same time, introduced food waste collections. The transition process generated a range of concerns from service users. However, the Council responded promptly to these concerns and, shortly after the roll-out was completed, developed and implemented an improvement plan.

16   The service performance for domestic waste collection improved during 2011-12, even though the main focus of the Council's efforts was the introduction of the new service. Because of the transition to the new service, the Council's performance in the year did not improve quite as fast as other councils across Wales. As a consequence, the Council ranking slipped from eighth out of 22 councils in 2010-11, to 16th in 2011-12 for the percentage of waste sent to landfill. However, the Council is optimistic that the revised waste collection arrangements, which were completed in the latter half of 2011, will have a significant impact on its waste collection performance for 2012-13 and beyond.

Services to support vulnerable residents continue to improve

The Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales has published a positive assessment of the Council's services for children and families, reflecting strong leadership and improving outcomes

17   In June 2012, the CSSIW published a report on the quality of the Council's services for children and families. The CSSIW's overall assessment of services is positive. It found that:

- information about the role of Children's Services is widely available and there is an effective response to those who make contact, with prompt advice and support arrangements;

- there is an increasing focus upon prevention and early intervention that supports the whole family, with better outcomes for children as fewer are needing care;

- partnership arrangements work well in delivering a co-ordinated approach to meeting needs;

- the Head of Children's Services provides strong strategic and operational leadership and managers are working with the workforce to gain commitment to modernised ways of delivering services;

- there are good systems in place to ensure work is appropriately prioritised; and

- staff morale is good and social work staff and their managers feel well supported.

18 Although there were many positive features in the CSSIW report, there are nevertheless a number of areas where the Council needs to improve. These include:

- ensuring consistency of approach, practice and understanding among all workers and in the quality of professional supervision;

- ensuring that there is an appropriate component of experienced workers within the duty system;

- continuing to address sickness absence in some areas;

- improving the timeliness of case conference minutes and their subsequent distribution; and

- ensuring a consistent level of competent use of computer systems by all staff and that data is promptly and consistently recorded within the computer system.

19 As part of the planned work programme, the CSSIW has recently undertaken a site visit to look at some aspects of adult safeguarding by the Council, and the feedback letter is currently being prepared. We will report on the findings of this review, and the Council's response, in our next Annual Report.

20 Many of the improvement activities planned for the Council's Improvement Priority of 'making our communities safe and to safeguard the vulnerable, with children and older people being priority groups' are medium-term projects. Several key deliverables are due to be completed in 2012-13, and we will report on the Council's progress in delivering on this broad-based priority in our next Annual Improvement Report.

Progress has made towards achieving a modern and high-performing education service across the county, but pupils' performance in primary schools remains lower than expected

21 Following Estyn's inspection of education services for children and young people in October 2011, the Council was identified as requiring follow-up through Estyn monitoring. A monitoring visit took place in February 2013, and the team judged that 'the local authority had made good progress towards addressing the recommendations in the inspection report'. As a result, the Council will be removed from the follow-up category of Estyn Monitoring.

22 Estyn's letter following the monitoring visit reported on the Council's progress against the recommendations made after the 2011 inspection. We include extracts from Estyn's letter below.

23 'The authority has improved its arrangements to support and challenge schools. It provides its schools and officers with a good range of data analysis, including comparisons with similar schools using

the free-school-meal benchmarks. Officers use this wide range of data to identify more accurately school strengths and areas for development. The regional categorisation model has a clear focus on assessing the standards achieved by pupils and the quality of leadership and management in schools. However, the level of support that schools will be entitled to as a result of their categorisation is not always fully understood by headteachers and governors. Following visits to schools officers produce useful reports on standards and provision. However, these reports vary significantly in content and quality and identified actions for future improvement do not always focus sufficiently on raising standards.'

24   'The authority has made good progress on developing a revised funding formula for its schools. Members and senior officers have engaged effectively with headteachers and finance officers to prioritise this work. The authority has also made good progress in monitoring provision for pupils with additional learning needs placed out-of-county. This work has included a thorough review of its procurement policy and of individual placements and has led to a significant reduction in the overall cost of the provision.'

25   Estyn's comments about the Council's improvement planning and its reporting arrangements are included elsewhere in this report.

26   We have previously reported that the Council is now making progress in reorganising its secondary schools in

order to make better use of resources. Following an informal public consultation, the Cabinet has agreed its preferred options for modernising its school provision in the Holywell, Connah's Quay/Shotton/ Queensferry and Buckley/Mynydd Isa/ Mold areas of the county. The Council has since consulted formally upon the preferred options. There has also been progress in the primary school sector; the Council has opened a new school in Connah's Quay and has amalgamated four pairs of infant and junior schools.

27   When we consider educational attainment levels, Estyn reported a mixed picture for 2012. There were improvements on some indicators in Flintshire, but this progress was not seen in all areas, and performance was below that which might be expected on a number of others, especially in primary schools.

28   Following its monitoring visit in February 2013 Estyn reported that, 'in 2012 performance in key stage 4 improved more quickly than Wales. It remains among the best in Wales for those indicators that involve English or Welsh first language and mathematics and also for the level 1 threshold. More able pupils do not attain as well as expected on the higher national curriculum levels and GCSE grades in secondary schools and in English in key stage 2. However the percentage of pupils gaining the core subject indicator in key stage 2 dropped below the average for Wales and performance in key stage 3 improved at a slower rate than Wales as a whole.

29   When the performance of Flintshire schools is compared to similar schools on the free school meal benchmarks performance in key stage 4 is above average on three of the five indicators and average on the remaining two. However it is below average in the Foundation Phase and in key stage 2 and well below average in key stage 3 where a half of all schools are in the bottom 25 per cent and no schools are in the top 25 per cent.

30   The gap in performance between boys and girls is less than the average for Wales in most indicators although it is larger at key stage 2.'

The Council is finding it challenging to deliver its priority of meeting housing need in the County, but steady improvements are being made

31   In our last Annual Improvement Report in January 2012, we reported that the Council had made continued progress towards a housing stock transfer ballot and that this represented an important step in improving the quality of its housing stock. In March 2012, the Council balloted its tenants on the option of transferring its stock to a housing association. There was a high turnout of 71 per cent of tenants. Of these, 88 per cent voted against the proposal to transfer the stock from the Council.

32   The Welsh Government Housing White Paper encourages more action by social landlords to achieve the Welsh Quality Housing Standard (WHQS) by its revised target of 2020. The Council has a Housing Asset Management Strategy for 2012-2018 that sets out the Council's plan for maintaining its housing stock. This plan takes into account the investment needs of homes across the county and the money available for improvements from the Housing Revenue Account. The Council has estimated that an investment of around £166 million is required to bring the properties up to the WHQS and the Council's updated business plan aims to achieve this target by 2022.

33   Flintshire is one of only three councils in Wales which is forecasting that its stock will not be fully compliant with the WHQS by the end of the decade. The Council forecasts that only 26 of its homes will fully comply with the Standard by 2020. Negotiations are continuing between the Welsh and UK Governments to reform Housing Revenue Account Subsidy, which may allow the Council to increase in future years the amount of capital expenditure available to achieve the Standards.

34   The Council reported that in 2011-12 it improved the efficiency of its housing services. This resulted in a reduction in the amount of time Council-owned properties were left empty, and there were improvements in response times for both emergency and urgent categories of repairs.

35   The Council's Improvement Priority for housing is wider than just improving the quality of Council-owned stock. The Council also wants to work with partners to ensure a sufficient supply of quality affordable homes, and support people who are or are about to become homeless. The Council has set itself a challenging target that, by 2016, no homeless person is placed in temporary accommodation for more than 12 months. The average time homeless households spent in temporary accommodation in Flintshire was 208 days in 2011-12. While this is an improvement on the 225 days in the previous year, this remains above the average of 140 days for councils in Wales.

36   In Flintshire, there has been a similar trend to that in Wales for the number of households accepted as homeless, and the Council's Homeless Service witnessed a 37 per cent increase in the number of people seeking assistance in 2011-12. The Council's performance for taking action to prevent homelessness declined in 2011-12, though it remains slightly above the average for Wales.

37   The Council is taking action to try to ensure a sufficient supply of quality and affordable homes and housing services in the social, mixed tenure and private sector markets. The 71 affordable homes completed in Flintshire in 2011-12 was close to the average for Wales, although less than the 115 homes completed in 2010-11 and below the targets the Council had set for itself. In addition to its own continuing work to make affordable properties available in the county, the Council is also working closely with other councils and partners, including Conwy, Denbighshire, and Wrexham Councils.

Arrangements for administering housing benefit improved in 2011-12

38   The Council's arrangements for administering housing benefits are improving. In 2011-12, the Council made good progress in improving average processing time for new claims and change of circumstance notifications, which were shorter than the Welsh average. The percentage of new claims decided within 14 days improved, and was higher than the Welsh average. Although the number of counter fraud referrals fell, the number of investigations and successful sanctions increased.

39   In some other key areas, performance was below the Welsh average. The percentage of overpayments identified and recovered fell and was below the Welsh average. More applications for reconsideration or revision were made and it took longer than the Welsh average to deal with these. The service had the highest number of appeals for any Welsh council and it also took longer than the Welsh average to submit these to the Appeals Service. A dedicated quality assurance and training team has been established to implement an improvement plan to address historical accuracy concerns that the Council feels are contributing to the number of appeals received.

40   The Council is focusing on reducing the time taken to deal with applications for reconsideration or revision and appeals. We will monitor progress in these areas during the year, as we recognise the challenges the Council faces with implementing the changes introduced though the UK Government's welfare reform.

Good progress has been made in delivering planned activities relating to growing the local economy and supporting people who are vulnerable to poverty

41   During 2011-12, the Council made good progress with initiatives intended to support and promote economic activity; for example, four new Town Centre Masterplans were launched. The Council also secured approval for a new Deeside Enterprise Zone as a key strategic location for Wales Advanced Manufacturing. This designation is particularly important for the County, since a third of its jobs are associated with manufacturing, nearly three times the all-Wales average.

42   Regeneration and economic development are challenging areas for councils to demonstrate impact. The influence of council initiatives on the economy may not be apparent for several years and the economy will also be significantly affected by external factors beyond the Council's control. Some councils use statistical data produced by external organisations to monitor and report on the state of their local economies, and on changes to poverty levels within their communities. The Council does not use data in this way as part of its routine quarterly or annual performance reporting arrangements.

43   Our own research suggests that Flintshire's economy remains reasonably resilient compared to some other parts of Wales. For example, unemployment levels in Flintshire are lower than the all-Wales average and, during 2011-12, reduced at a much faster rate[1]. Similarly, the proportion of Flintshire residents claiming Job Seekers Allowance is significantly lower[2] than the average for Wales; whilst the proportion of residents claiming Job Seekers Allowance in Flintshire did increase slightly during 2011-12, the average increase across Wales was larger. In 2008, Flintshire was ranked 221st out of 380 local authority regions across Wales and England on the UK Competitiveness Index[3]. In 2010, this ranking remained stable at 220th. Rankings for 2012 have not yet been released, but when available, will provide further insight into the effectiveness of efforts by the Council and its partners to protect and stimulate the local economy.

44   The Council has also been active in developing initiatives to tackle poverty in the County and to mitigate the anticipated impact of welfare reforms on its citizens. The Council's Regeneration Strategy 2009-2020 notes that 'people's actual or potential economic circumstances are influenced by many factors including educational attainment, health status, living circumstances, caring responsibilities and their family situation'. Despite acknowledging

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1   Percentage of economically active, unemployed residents in September 2012: Flintshire: 6.3 per cent, Wales 8.4 per cent. ReductionChange in percentage unemployed, since March 2011: Flintshire one percentage point, Wales 0.1per centage points. Source: Nomis, a service provided by the Office for National Statistics. It provides free access to the most detailed and up-to-date UK labour market statistics from official sources. http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/default.asp

2   Percentage of resident population claiming JSA in February 2013: Flintshire: 3.3 per cent, Wales: 4.3 per cent. Increase in percentage claiming JSA between March 2011 and March 2012: Flintshire: 0.2 percentage points, Wales 0.4 percentage points. Source: Nomis

3   The Centre for International Competitiveness provides information on the competitiveness of economies and businesses. It produces the UK Competitiveness Index, which provides benchmarking data on the competitiveness of UK regions and localities http://www.cforic.org. The Index is updated every 2 years, most recently in 2010.

these factors, the Council uses a limited basket of indicators as measures of success for its work in this area. Unless the Council adopts a more informed approach, using a wider range of internally and externally-generated performance data, it will not be able to monitor the impact of the support it provides and tailor its approach accordingly. For example, in 2012 the average full-time wage for male residents in Flintshire was significantly higher[4] than the average for Wales and broadly in line with the average across Great Britain. By contrast, the average full-time wage for female residents was lower than the average for Wales and significantly lower than the average for Great Britain. Whilst the Council cannot influence wage levels, better awareness and routine monitoring of such differences might influence the way in which the Council and its partners tailor their education, training and business support provision.

45   The Council has struggled to demonstrate effectively the progress it has made towards achieving several of its Improvement Priorities. In many cases, this is due to the lack of outcome-focused measures in the 2011-12 Improvement Plan. In the next section of this report, we look in further detail at how well the Council has reported its performance for the year 2011-12.

Performance information indicates that the performance of individual services is often good, and continues to improve

46   Flintshire's performance in 2011-12 was better than the national average in over two-thirds of the statutory and non-statutory national indicators. The Council's performance shows an improvement in 28 (72 per cent) of the 39 national performance indicators for which comparison with previous years is possible.

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4   Average Gross Weekly Full Time Wages (2012) Flintshire Males £545.70, Wales: £493, Great Britain: £548.80, Flintshire Females £402.80, Wales: £406.70, Great Britain: £449.60. Source: Nomis

The Council's evaluation and reporting of its performance are of inconsistent quality and not as outcome-focused as they could be

47 Councils are required under the Measure to evaluate their performance in the previous financial year, benchmark this, and report the information. We review how well councils complied with this aspect of the Measure and the associated guidance. Our review of the Council's 2011-12 Annual Performance Report concluded that:

The Council has discharged its improvement reporting duties under the Measure but it should ensure that it acts more in accordance with Welsh Government guidance

48 We reached this conclusion because:

- the Annual Performance Report for 2011-12 meets the requirements of the Measure; but

- the Annual Performance Report makes too little use of data and other information to support a balanced narrative evaluation of the Council's work in addressing its Improvement Objectives.

The Annual Performance Report for 2011-12 meets the requirements of the Measure

49 The Council published its Annual Performance Report (the Report) in English and Welsh on its website on time. Meeting this deadline represents an improvement on last year and partly addresses one of our previous proposals for improvement.

50 The Report includes the Council's assessment of its performance against the Improvement Objectives set in the 2011-12 Improvement Plan. There are sections that include the Council's performance as measured by the full set of statutory performance indicators and a range of non-statutory indicators.

The Annual Performance Report makes too little use of data and other information to support a balanced narrative evaluation of the Council's work in addressing its Improvement Objectives

51 The Report provides a clear overall assessment, using a 'Red, Amber, Green' (RAG) colour coding, of how well the Council considers that it performed during 2011-12 against each of its 10 Improvement Objectives.

52 The Council's overall assessment of its performance against each Improvement Objective is broadly consistent with its assessment of the success or otherwise of the contributory improvement activities. However, the narrative tends to focus too heavily on success; even in those objectives and activities rated as amber. As a result, the Council's RAG assessments of the 'outcomes' of its work during the year are not fully supported by the evidence in the Report.

53 The Council acknowledges in the introduction to the Report that, in its 2011-12 Improvement Plan, the quantitative success measures associated with its Improvement Objectives were limited to a small number of national performance indicators. None of the measures reported relate, for example, to customer satisfaction or other data stemming from the Council's engagement with its citizens.

54 The Report is a long and detailed document. Though clearly written on the whole, it does not enable the reader to grasp readily a succinct evaluation of what the Council intended to achieve during the year, the resulting benefits to the public and what needs to be improved in future.

55 The Report does not, therefore, do as much as it might to enable the Flintshire public to hold the Council to account for its performance. This accountability is further limited by the fact that the Council, in reviewing its work during the year, made changes to its plans and targets, which were not then incorporated into the version of the 2011-12 Improvement Plan published on its website.

The Council is able to produce balanced, well-evidenced self-evaluations of some specific aspects of its work but its Annual Performance Review is less robust

Social Services and education have produced mature service-specific analyses of their performance, but the Council's Annual Performance Report is less robust

56 The CSSIW has judged that the annual report written by the Council's Director of Social Services provides a comprehensive and accurate account of the service's performance in 2011-12. The CSSIW also said that, in its self-evaluation, the Council had carefully aligned its evidence to support its evaluation, which was increasingly outcome-focused with measurable targets, underpinned by clearly-defined timescales and lines of accountability for delivery.

57 Similarly, in October 2011, Estyn described the Council's self-evaluation process with regard to its education services for children and young people as 'adequate' (strengths outweigh areas for improvement). Estyn reported that much of the Council's self-evaluation report was evaluative and used a range of evidence, including appropriate data. As a shortcoming, Estyn found that the Council had not included other stakeholders and agencies or young people well enough in making judgements about quality and standards.

58   When Estyn undertook the follow-up visit in 2013, they reported that the Council 'has comprehensive planning and performance management arrangements. It evaluates its performance quarterly and completes an annual self-evaluation. However, these arrangements mainly focus on recording actions that have been completed rather than evaluating whether these have brought about improvement. The Lifelong Learning directorate plan identifies appropriate themes and policy priorities for action. However, corporate and service plans focus on delivery measures rather than outcomes and individual initiatives and projects are not evaluated well enough to know whether they have an impact. As a result elected members and senior officers do not always know exactly how much progress has been made and are not able to consistently hold those responsible for delivering services and projects to account'.

59   Despite these useful service-level assessments, the evaluations within the Council's Annual Performance Report of those Improvement Objectives to which social services and education services contribute most extensively are, as described earlier, too focused on activity rather than on outcomes.

Despite the service improvements, the Council is not fully able to identify and report the impact of its activities on achieving the Improvement Objectives

60   The Council's limited use of clear links between the activities it delivers and the outcomes relates to many service areas. Much of the information provided does not refer to the stated outcomes, and the narrative often refers to work planned for the future. This shortcoming is particularly important at a time of restricted finances, when the Council needs to carefully weigh up how its wants to allocate its resources.

61   The Council has undertaken a lot of work in 2011-12, for example, in modernising street-scene services, a comprehensive review of support provided to all sheltered housing tenants, and co-locating all operational streetscene services at the Alltami Depot. Yet the benefits of these are not clear in the Annual Performance Report.

62   To a greater or lesser extent, the same issues apply across all 10 of the Council's priority areas. Its current arrangements for monitoring and reporting its performance remain necessary, not least because many of the indicators it reports on are mandatory. However, the lack of a clear statement that sets out the difference that the Council's work makes to the lives of people living and working in the County is significant. A more informed approach, able to capture and monitor benefits, outcomes and impact will help the Council to focus its efforts and its resources more intelligently.

The Council's on-going review of its governance arrangements is wide-ranging and well evidenced

63   The Council is undertaking a self-evaluation of its governance, as well as its strategic and service performance and the performance of partnerships to which it contributes. We continue to provide support and challenge to this work and will provide feedback in due course. At the time of drafting this Report, the Council's leadership has yet to decide how best to involve councillors fully in the self-evaluation. However, our early impressions suggest that officers have drawn on a wide range of evidence thus far.

The Council is better placed than in the past to use information effectively to support improvement

The accuracy of the Council's performance data has improved but there remains scope to improve the use of data in the Council's self-evaluation

64   We proposed in the 2012 Annual Improvement Report that the Council should improve quality assurance arrangements to ensure that data used to support performance management is accurate and robust.

65   In July 2012, we reported the results of our audit of the accuracy of a sample of the Council's performance indicators. Though our sample was smaller than in the past, the results were encouraging. We qualified none of the Council's performance indicators and we amended only one indicator. The robustness of performance data represents a key building block in enabling the

Council and its citizens to place reliance on the Council's assessment of its own performance. However, we have referred earlier in this report to areas in which the Council might improve and extend the way in which it uses data to evaluate its performance and improve the management of services.

The Council manages information and its approach is generally sound

66   We also reviewed how the Council manages its information. We found that:

- the Council manages its information well and is beginning to drive change more effectively than before, better supporting its aims to achieve service improvements and efficiencies; and

- the Council's Information Management arrangements are generally sound but the Council lacks robust training arrangements and a single accountable officer to take responsibility at a senior level for the information asset and the risks it poses to the Council.

67   The auditor appointed by the Auditor General recently gave his opinion on the Council's accounts and, based on this, the Appointed Auditor's view is that the Council complied with its responsibilities relating to financial reporting and use of resources. However, there is still scope to improve financial controls in a number of areas and the Council needs to further develop its financial planning to help it meet the financial challenges ahead. Appendix 3 gives more detail.

The Council's corporate arrangements and planning support improvement more effectively than in previous years, but progress has been slower than planned in a few areas

68   Following the local government elections in May 2012 the Council appointed a new Cabinet and a new Leader. The Cabinet includes seven Members of the Labour Party, and one Independent Member. The eight Members have Portfolio Lead responsibilities for a portfolio of Council activities. The Cabinet has agreed to continue with the existing 10 Improvement Objectives, although they have slightly amended the underpinning priorities and actions to reflect their political intentions.

69   The new Council adopted its Improvement Plan in October 2012, and we reviewed this Plan to assess the extent to which it complied with the Measure and associated Guidance. We found that the Council has discharged its improvement planning duties under the Measure, but it should ensure it acts more in accordance with Welsh Government Guidance.

The 2012-13 Improvement Plan meets the requirements of the Measure in all but one respect, but it is not easy for residents to understand

70   The Plan sets out the Council's priorities for the period 2012-2017. These 10 priorities, which also represent the Council's Improvement Objectives, are wide-ranging, and comply with at least one of the seven 'aspects of improvement' described in the Measure. Six priorities relate to public-facing service-based improvement, and four relate to improving the corporate workings of the Council. The Flintshire Local Service Board has endorsed the Council's Improvement Objectives as supporting the 'County Vision' as set out in the Community Strategy 2009-2019.

71   The Measure requires councils to report in their Improvement Plans their proposed actions in response to any statutory recommendations received during the preceding year. The Plan does not include this information but the required information was included in the Council's Annual Performance Report, published at the same time as the Plan. The Council's 10 Improvement Objectives are phrased in a way that reflects the Council's ambitions to improve outcomes for citizens over the five years to 2017. To support the Improvement Objectives, the Council has defined 66 Secondary Priorities which set out in more detail the Council's intentions. These Secondary Priorities are described mainly in terms of actions that the Council plans to take. However, in many cases, the Plan does not include enough information about current performance to enable councillors and readers of the Plan to hold the Council to account for its performance at the end of the year.

72   The Plan aims to fulfil two functions: it aims to be an internal management tool; and, at the same time, it represents a vehicle by which Flintshire citizens might better understand what the Council intends to achieve and hold it to account for doing so. In seeking to address these two aims, there is room for improvement in the presentation and content of the Plan. Currently the Plan includes too much information for citizens, but not enough for internal management purposes. The Council decided not to produce a summary of its Plan and, in doing so, missed an opportunity to engage with the public and to promote its aims and objectives more widely.

73   Given that the Measure requires councils to set their Improvement Objectives annually, the Council has agreed that it might usefully consider choosing fewer objectives from among its current priorities so that its focus in a single year is more sharply defined and to encourage citizens to engage more fully with the Council's planning and performance.

74   In our Letter in October 2012, we reported on the Council's likelihood to secure continuous improvement, as described under the Measure. The conclusion and supporting findings are described below:

Based on, and limited to, work carried out to date by the Wales Audit Office and relevant regulators, the Auditor General reported in October 2012 that he believed that the Council was likely to comply with the requirement to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement during the financial year 2012-13

75   To help us reach this conclusion we considered the arrangements the Council has in place to help it deliver its forthcoming Improvement Plan. We previously identified, in August 2010, that some of these arrangements were not fully supporting the Council to deliver its planned improvement, including the policy and strategy framework, use of resources, business processes and people management. The Council has made good progress on many of these areas.

76   We reached this conclusion in October 2012 because:

- the Council has made reasonable progress in acting on several of the recommendations in my last Annual Improvement Report, but some key projects supporting the corporate improvement priorities are taking longer than anticipated;

- work on the medium-term financial plan continues, but the Council has not succeeded in completing the plan by the end of September 2012, as intended;

- the Council's arrangements for developing, using and supporting technology are likely to support continuous improvement; and

- the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (the CSSIW) has published a positive assessment of the Council's services for children and families, reflecting strong leadership and improving outcomes (as described earlier in this report).

77   During the year, we and other organisations have undertaken reviews of services or arrangements at the Council. Several of these pieces of work were reported after we made our judgement of the Council's likelihood to secure continuous improvement in October 2012. We have included these below, as they contribute to the overall annual assessment we make in this Report, on the Council's improvement planning.

78   We have previously made a number of recommendations and proposals for improvement, and also noted some areas where we would undertake further work. We include a full list of previous recommendations and proposals for improvement in Appendix 5, along with our assessment of progress to date and our plans for future reporting. We summarise progress on some of these matters below.

79   The Cabinet (and previously the Executive) has received updates from officers on the Council's progress in delivering one of its 2011-12 Improvement Objectives, 'to be a modern, caring and flexible employer with fair and equal pay, and terms and conditions of employment under a Single Status Agreement'. This work is continuing, as the date for the full implementation of Single Status remains under review, having again been deferred. In this respect, the Council has been unable to meet its intended timetable, as recommended in my last Annual Improvement Report.

80   The work of reaching a Single Status agreement is complex and the Council has understandably engaged external support for this work. The Council understands and accepts that there are financial risks associated with the implementation of Single Status and the settlement of existing and potential equal pay claims. It has set aside financial reserves to mitigate these risks. However, our audit of the Council's financial statements for 2011-12 concluded that the Council had been too willing to rely, without sufficient review or challenge, on externally produced estimates for equal pay claims. As a result, the Council amended the figure included in the accounts to better reflect the liability for accounting purposes. The Council acknowledges that further work is required to estimate the actual liability. The size of this liability will emerge from the Single Status agreement and through negotiations with the Trades Unions.

81   We recommended in January 2012 that the Council should complete its work in quantifying the financial benefits of its programme of efficiencies and organisational change by mid-2012-13. A key part of this programme, known as 'Flintshire Futures', represents an important strand in the Council's medium-term financial planning. Flintshire Futures also forms part of the Council's Improvement priority 'to be a modern, efficient and cost effective public organisation.' Flintshire Futures supports the Council's ability to continue to maintain and invest in services in the context of reduced external funding. The Flintshire Futures programme is ambitious and comprises five major workstreams. Senior officers acknowledge that progress is variable across the workstreams, and slower than planned in several areas. The Council has established a Programme Board to maintain and, where necessary, to increase momentum and to improve overall governance of the programme. The Council acknowledges that further focused work is required to determine the full impacts of the financial savings that could be archived through Flintshire Futures.

82 Proposals for improvement and then a formal recommendation had been made to improve the HR Strategy delivery and reporting arrangements. This Strategy also forms part of the Council's Improvement priority 'to be a modern, efficient and cost effective public organisation. The Council has made good progress on improving the delivery of the HR Strategy and there is now clearer reporting to Members on progress on the delivery. The time taken to deliver a Single Status agreement and to complete the HR service reorganisation, has led to further reprioritisation of several HR projects. These projects will be included in the Council's next People Management Strategy.

83 Members receive regular progress reports on the 10 Improvement Priorities. The reports identify the officer who is accountable for the work but do not name the responsible Cabinet member. Including the named political lead alongside the named officer lead would help reinforce the joint responsibilities of officers and councillors for delivering the Council's priorities.

Work on the medium-term financial plan has continued but the Council did not succeed in completing the plan by the end of September 2012, as intended

84 Officers reported to Cabinet in June 2012 that they planned to complete the Council's medium-term financial plan and to refresh the financial strategy by the end of September 2012. At the time of writing our second update letter to the Council in January 2013, the production of the medium-term financial plan continued but remained incomplete.

85 All councils face considerable financial uncertainty in the medium term. The level of revenue support they are likely to receive from the Welsh Government may change and increased demand for council services may well drive up costs. The Council's medium-term financial plan does not yet recognise the full extent of the pressures on the budget, particularly the financial implications of the single status agreement. This undermines the Council's understanding of the scale of the financial challenge. Nonetheless the Council has identified the potential for substantial efficiencies from the Flintshire Futures programme, but the sums are not sufficient to bridge the funding gap. The Council has consequently identified a number of other areas of investigation to potentially yield further savings, but these need to be quantified.

86   However, at present, the Council's financial planning takes insufficient account of longer-term projects, particularly those that require services to be reconfigured, and whose financial benefits may not be realised for some time. It is important that the intended financial benefits arising from such work are established from the outset so that the Council is better placed to achieve a balanced budget in future years. Some of these projects, planned for two or three years ahead, also require early decisions to ensure that the intended savings become available in the year in which they are planned.

87   The Council has developed processes to allow Members to agree to redirect resources to priorities. This was demonstrated in the recent budget for 2013-14, where the Cabinet clearly articulated that funding was being directed towards seven of the 10 Improvement Priorities, including education and social care. The Council needs to ensure the medium-term financial planning matures effectively over the next year to allow Members to make informed decisions on funding for priorities for 2014-15 and beyond, and the emerging Flintshire Futures projects.

The Council's arrangements for the use of technology are likely to support continuous improvement

88   The effective use of technology is essential for transforming the delivery of public services, improving outcomes for citizens and delivering efficiency savings. Technology can support different ways of working, delivering services and engaging with citizens, enabling councils to deliver more for less. The way in which technology is delivered and managed has a direct impact on the efficiency, effectiveness and quality of work undertaken across the Council and affects almost every council worker.

89   In 2010, we identified that many local authorities were grappling with ensuring that technology was used effectively to support service transformation and achieve efficiency savings. As a result, we undertook reviews of technology at all councils during 2011-12.

90   In Flintshire, we found that the Council's arrangements for developing, using and supporting technology are likely to support continuous improvement. The delivery of the Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) Strategy also forms part of the Council's Improvement priority 'to be a modern, efficient and cost effective public organisation. The Council has established a sound technology infrastructure, and is starting to use technology effectively to transform services and achieve efficiencies. In particular, we found that:

- arrangements for developing, using and supporting technology are sound with examples of good practice but a more corporate approach to funding technology would maximise improvement opportunities; and

- performance in the use of technology is sound and improving, but there is scope for further improvement through the better use of performance information.

The Council is continuing to try to increase the use of the Welsh Language within its business

91   The role of the Welsh Language Commissioner was created by the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. Over time, new powers to impose standards on organisations will come into force through legislation. Until that time, the Commissioner will continue to review Welsh language schemes by virtue of powers inherited under the Welsh Language Act 1993. The Commissioner works with all councils in Wales to inspect and advise on the implementation of language schemes. It is the responsibility of councils to provide services to the public in Welsh in accordance with the commitments in their language schemes. Every council is committed to providing an annual monitoring report to the Commissioner outlining its performance in implementing the language scheme. The Commissioner analyses every monitoring report; provides a formal response and collects further information as required.

92   The Welsh Language Commissioner has found that:

- The Council amended its tendering documents to include the requirements of the language scheme and questions about Welsh language provision, and noted that it was necessary to further strengthen the procedure of monitoring compliance with the procurement process.

- A good variety of Welsh language courses are provided on different levels for staff, and a high number of staff have registered to learn Welsh.

- There are weaknesses in terms of appointing Welsh speakers to jobs with Welsh as an essential skill, and ensuring that non-Welsh-speaking staff fulfil the requirements of their jobs in terms of learning Welsh.

- The Council acknowledges that it is necessary to introduce a more formal procedure for monitoring and assessing non-Welsh-speaking staff to ensure that they fulfil the relevant requirements. No language awareness training was held during the last year, and the Council agreed to give this urgent attention and to prioritise training for members of staff who have regular contact with the public.

- The Council has also agreed to establish a procedure for measuring the quality of the Welsh language service offered.

The Council is starting to streamline its complex governance arrangements as the systems are developing

93   As part of their follow-up visit, Estyn looked at the Council's approach to leadership and improvement planning for education. In their letter to the Council in early 2013, Estyn said:

94   'Since the Estyn inspection in 2011, the new administration has prioritised the need for change and improvement in the directorate of Lifelong Learning. The chief executive and director of education accept the need for swift action in order to remove hurdles to improvement and, already, arrangements for the new single plan aim to streamline planning arrangements. Members and senior officers are committed to taking difficult decisions to improve provision and make effective use of resources. They have taken useful steps to bring about service level improvements although a few important areas for development remain in leadership and management.

95   The Children and Young People Partnership's plan is outside the main corporate planning arrangements of the council. These two planning systems make it difficult for partners to work effectively with core education services. It leads to duplication and missed opportunities to dovetail resources and interventions to support the most vulnerable learners.'

96   These findings are similar to the results of our work at the Council during 2012-13. We have found that the senior leadership of the Council is actively working to improve the internal governance and planning arrangements. Officers recognise that, while the current arrangements are adequate, there are opportunities to streamline processes, and gain further benefits from combining a range of corporate governance documents into a cohesive core improvement plan. This streamlining will have the added benefits of:

• simplifying and reducing the amount of reporting, thus saving officer and member time;

• a more joined-up approach to risk management and improvement planning;

• an enhanced focus on outcomes and achievement of the improvement objectives; and

• re-energising the Council's planning process.

The Council is now well placed to take forward work on these areas.

Appendices

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (the Measure) requires the Auditor General to undertake an annual improvement assessment, and to publish an annual improvement report, for each improvement authority in Wales. This requirement covers local councils, national parks, and fire and rescue authorities.

This report has been produced by the Wales Audit Office on behalf of the Auditor General to discharge his duties under section 24 of the Measure. The report also discharges his duties under section 19 to issue a report certifying that he has carried out an improvement assessment under section 18 and stating whether, as a result of his improvement plan audit under section 17, he believes that the authority has discharged its improvement planning duties under section 15.

Improvement authorities are under a general duty to 'make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of [their] functions'. Improvement authorities are defined as local councils, national parks, and fire and rescue authorities.

The annual improvement assessment is the main piece of work that enables the Auditor General to fulfil his duties. The improvement assessment is informed by a forward-looking assessment of an authority's likelihood to comply with its duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement. It also includes a retrospective assessment of whether an authority has achieved its planned improvements in order to inform a view as to the authority's track record of improvement. This report also summarises the Auditor General's conclusions on the authority's self-assessment of its performance.

The Auditor General may also in some circumstances carry out special inspections (under section 21), which will be reported to the relevant authorities and Ministers, and which he may publish (under section 22). This published Annual Improvement Report summarises audit and assessment reports including any special inspections (under section 24).

An important ancillary activity for the Wales Audit Office is the co-ordination of assessment and regulatory work (required by section 23), which takes into consideration the overall programme of work of all relevant regulators at an improvement authority. The Auditor General may also take account of information shared by relevant regulators (under section 33) in his assessments.

Appendix 2
Useful information about Flintshire

The Council

The Council spends approximately £317 million per year (2012-13 budget), including specific Welsh Government grants. This equates to about £2,076 per resident. In the same year, the Council also planned to spend £33.6 million on capital items.

The average band D council tax in 2011-12 for Flintshire was £1,151 per year. This has increased by 2.9 per cent to £1,184 per year for 2012-13. 68.4 per cent of Flintshire's housing is in council tax bands A to D.

The Council is made up of 70 elected members who represent the community and make decisions about priorities and use of resources. The political make-up of the Council is as follows:

30 Labour

19 Independent

8 Conservatives

7 Welsh Liberal Democrats

1 Plaid Cymru

5 Not affiliated

The Leader is Councillor Aaron Shotton

The Council's Chief Executive is Colin Everett. He is supported by:

Ian Budd, Director of Lifelong Learning;

Neil Ayling, Director of Community Services;

Carl Longland, Director of Environment.

Other information

The Assembly Members for Flintshire are:

Sandy Mewies, Delyn, Labour Party

Carl Sargeant, Alyn and Deeside, Labour Party

Llyr Huws Gruffydd, North Wales Region, Plaid Cymru

Mark Allen Isherwood, North Wales Region, Welsh Conservative Party

Aled Roberts, North Wales Region, Welsh Liberal Democrat

Antoinette Geraldine Sandbach, North Wales Region, Welsh Conservative Party

The Members of Parliament for Flintshire are:

David Hanson, Delyn, Labour Party

Mark Tami, Alyn and Deeside, Labour Party

For more information see the Council's own website at www.flintshire.gov.uk or contact the Council at Flintshire County Council, County Hall, Mold, Flintshire, CH7 6NB. Telephone Number: 01352 752121

Appendix 3
Appointed Auditor's Annual Audit Letter

The auditor appointed by the Auditor General issued the following auditor's report on 29 November 2012.

The Council complied with its responsibilities relating to financial reporting and use of resources but there is still scope to improve financial controls in a number of areas and the Council needs to further develop its financial planning to help it meet the financial challenges ahead

It is the Council's responsibility to:

- put systems of internal control in place to ensure the regularity and lawfulness of transactions and to ensure that its assets are secure;

- maintain proper accounting records;

- prepare a Statement of Accounts in accordance with relevant requirements; and

- establish and keep under review appropriate arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

The Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 requires me to:

- provide an audit opinion on the accounting statements;

- review the Council's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources; and

- issue a certificate confirming that I have completed the audit of the accounts.

Local authorities in Wales prepare their accounting statements in accordance with the requirements of the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom. This Code is based on International Financial Reporting Standards. On 26 September 2012 I issued an unqualified audit opinion on the accounting statements stating that they present a true and fair view of the Council's and the Pension Fund's financial position and transactions. My report is contained within the Statement of Accounts. The key matters arising from the accounts audit were reported to members of the Audit Committee and Council in my Audit of Financial Statements reports on 25 September 2012.

The following issues were identified regarding Flintshire County Council's accounts:

- The accounts contained two uncorrected misstatements, although they were not material. The first related to the charge for depreciation on fixed assets, which was understated by £628,000 (and as a result non-current assets were overstated by the same amount) and the second related to the misclassification of £4.710 million of grants received in advance, which were incorrectly disclosed as short-term creditors on the balance sheet. However, the Council provided management representations to explain the reasons for not amending and confirmed that the issues will be resolved in the 2012-2013 accounting statements.

- Non-current (fixed) assets and related accounts were subject to extensive restatement for a number of reasons, but in particular, because the draft set of accounts had not been reconciled to the new fixed asset software system. This hampered progress with the audit as the Council did not provide the final reconciliation and resulting amendments to the accounts until late in the audit window.

- There were a number of general issues relating to the quality of the accounts and supporting records, some of which we had reported previously, including: the need to address balancing items within the accounts, ensure full compliance with disclosure requirements and ensure all information is available to correctly value Council Houses.

- There were three other matter which were significant to the oversight of the financial reporting process:

  – The Council needs to ensure that it does not over rely on external advice when preparing its financial estimates. The Council used estimates prepared by an independent expert as the basis for its accounting provision for equal pay liabilities without carrying out any review. In the final statements the figure was amended to better reflect the potential liability.

  – Based on legal advice, the Council did not recognise a liability for pension contributions on its equal pay liabilities. This is contrary to legal advice received by the Appointed Auditor which suggests that pension contributions should be paid on payments to resolve equal pay claims. Given the diverging legal views and uncertainty regarding the need to recognise a provision, the Appointed Auditor concluded that he would not take any further action as part of the 2011-2012 audit of accounts.

  – A number of members failed to return related party declarations which were required to comply with disclosure requirements.

Since the financial statements were approved, I'm advised that the Council has made good progress in terms of both reviewing and clearly determining the financial implications of single status and equal pay, as it works with relevant parties, to put in place its single status agreement.

The following issue was identified regarding the Clwyd Pension Fund accounts:

• The accounts contained an uncorrected misstatement, although it was not material. Investments were recorded in the accounts based on valuation reports available at the time of preparation. Prior to the conclusion of the audit, more up to date valuation reports became available which showed that investments at 31 March 2012 had been understated by £2.297 million. However, as this was a timing issue, the Council provided management representations, which we accepted, to explain the reason for not amending.

My consideration of the Council's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness has been based on the audit work undertaken on the accounts as well as placing reliance on the work completed as part of the Improvement Assessment under the Local Government (Wales) Measure (2009). Overall, I am satisfied that the Council has appropriate arrangements in place. The Auditor General will highlight areas where the effectiveness of these arrangements has yet to be demonstrated or where improvements could be made when he publishes his Annual Improvement Report.

As referred to in the Auditor General for Wales' recent Improvement Assessment letter to the Council (dated October 2012), the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) still requires further development and this is acknowledged by the Council. In its response to the Improvement Letter, the Council identified that the plan is not static but rather, is under continual review as the Council responds to the volatility in public finances, the economy and the range of challenges being faced by local government and public services.

In a Cabinet report (16 October 2012), the Head of Finance outlined how the MTFP has been developed in accordance with the key objectives of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. The report identified a potential budget gap, at that stage of £8.4 million, against which efficiencies need to be identified to balance the budget for 2013-14. Using similar planning assumptions this would be a gap of £35 million over the MTFP period to 2017-18. It was also reported that the MTFP would be updated with any revenue implications from the:

• development of the capital programme taking place during October; and

• outcome of the negotiations on single status on agreement being reached by the Council.

I understand from the Council that work is ongoing with 2013-14 budget planning and that budget gap proposals for the 2013-14 budget, including efficiency measures, will be reported to Cabinet in December, alongside an update of the implications for future years.

I am concerned that the implementation of efficiency measures, particularly those that impact on service delivery, often need significant lead in time from the decision to the saving realisation. Whilst elements of the Flintshire Futures programme take a medium-term view, this is not consistently the case across the wider programme, where some plans continue to primarily focus on the shorter term. It is essential that, for all projects within the programme, there is clarity on the timing of and the benefits to be realised and,

where they result in cash savings, how and when it impacts on the MTFP. The Council acknowledges this and has recently reviewed its internal arrangements through the establishment of a Flintshire Futures Board comprising members and officers to oversee the delivery of its efficiency programme.

I have not yet issued a certificate confirming that the audit of the accounts has been completed as there is an outstanding matter raised by a member of the public into which I need to make enquiries.

The financial audit fees for 2011-12 are currently expected to be in line with the agreed fees set out in the Annual Audit Outlines.

Yours sincerely

John Herniman
Group Director

For and on behalf of the Appointed Auditor
29 November 2012

Local electors and others have a right to look at the Council's accounts. When the Council has finalised its accounts for the previous financial year, usually around June or July, it must advertise that they are available for people to look at. You can get copies of the accounts from the Council; you can also inspect all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers and receipts relating to them for 20 working days after they are made available. You can ask the auditor questions about the accounts for the year that they are auditing. For example, you can simply tell the auditor if you think that something is wrong with the accounts or about waste and inefficiency in the way the Council runs its services. For more information see the Wales Audit Office leaflet, *Council accounts: your rights*, on our website at www.wao.gov.uk or by writing to us at the address on the back of this report.

Appendix 4
Flintshire Council's improvement objectives and self-assessment

The Council's improvement objectives

The Council is required by the Welsh Government to make plans to improve its functions and the services it provides. Each year, it must publish these plans along with specific 'improvement objectives' that set out the key things that the Council intends to do to improve. The Council must do this as soon as possible after 1 April each year.

The Council published its improvement objectives for 2012-13 in its Improvement Plan 2012-2017 which can be found on the Council website at www.flintshire.gov.uk. They are:

2011-12 and 2012-17 Improvement Ojectives
To be a modern, efficient and cost effective public organisation through our four resources strategies - the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, the People Strategy, the Asset Management Strategy and the ICT Strategy - whilst ensuring our local taxes and fees and charges are fair and affordable.
To achieve the greatest possible cost efficiencies through regional and sub-regional collaboration to reinvest in local public services.
To be a modern, caring and flexible employer with fair and equal pay and terms and conditions of employment under a Single Status Agreement.
To achieve the highest standards of customer service and care through our Customer Services Strategy.
To make our communities safe and to safeguard the vulnerable with children and older people being priority groups.
To protect and grow the local and regional economy, to be a prosperous County and to provide help and support for those vulnerable to poverty.
To promote independent, healthy and fulfilled living in the community with the highest quality personalised and supportive social and health care services.
To meet housing need in the County and to work with partners to ensure a sufficient supply of quality and affordable homes and housing services in the social, mixed tenure and private sector housing markets.
To secure a modern and high performing range of learning, cultural, play and leisure opportunities for all ages with our schools, colleges and other partners.
To protect, plan and develop sustainable natural and built environments.

The Council's self-assessment of performance

The Council's self-assessment of its performance during 2011-12 can be found in its Annual Performance Report. This can be found on the Council's website at www.flintshire.gov.uk.

Appendix 5
Previous proposals or recommendations for improvement made to the Council

Over the course of our work since 2010, we have made proposals or recommendations for improvement. These have previously been reported to the Council and are set out below for information. The Council has made progress in addressing many of these, and this is included below. We will continue to monitor and report on the progress made by the Council in implementing the remaining proposals or recommendations under our future programme of work.

Preliminary corporate assessment 2010		
P1	Review arrangements to ensure that appropriate behaviour standards of councillors are maintained.	Progress has been made. This is now complete.
P2	Complete work on the Council (Governance) Plan Framework.	Progress has been made. This is now complete.
P3	Develop the process to enable the allocation of resources to priorities.	Progress has been made. This is now complete.
P4	Complete the People Strategy 2009-2012 and action plan.	Progress has been made. This is now complete.
Annual Improvement Report 2011 As above plus the Council should:		
P1	Complete the review of the Priorities of the Administration, formally adopt these as the priorities of the Council, and publish them widely.	Progress has been made. This is now complete.
P2	Establish that there are clear leadership and accountability arrangements, success measures, and reporting processes for progress against all of its priorities.	Progress has been made. This is now complete, as more recent recommendations have superseded this.
Corporate assessment update letter 2011		
P1	By the end of 2011, the Council should complete the development of its medium-term financial plan so as to allow informed decisions on how funding pressures will be addressed and resources allocated to achieve improvement objectives.	Progress has been made. This is now complete, as more recent recommendations have superseded this.
P2	By the end of October 2011, the Council should complete a review of overall progress with the People Strategy 2009-12, prioritise the outstanding actions and resources necessary to achieve them, and report on this to elected members.	Progress has been made. This is now complete.

P3	Develop an improved corporate approach to engagement with communities and users of services including arrangements to enhance the contribution of elected members.	While some progress has been made, this remains an on-going area for improvement, and the proposal remains in place.

Annual Improvement Report 2012
These recommendations follow from proposals for improvement made in August 2010 and August 2011.

Recommendations:

R1	The Council should report more fully and regularly to the Executive Board on progress in delivering the Human Resources (HR) strategy and Single Status Agreement and ensure capacity and capability are available to achieve intended outcomes and timetables.	Progress has been made. This is now complete.
R2	The Council needs to complete its work in quantifying the financial benefits of its programme of efficiencies and organisational change by mid 2012-13, to determine the remaining funding gap (shortfall or surplus) and then establish clear plans to identify further savings and/or redirect resources to priorities.	Progress has been made, although the Council did not fully meet the planned timescale. The Council's work continues and we shall review progress and report on this during 2013.

Proposals for improvement:

P1	Complete the work in progress to set clear success measures for all improvement objectives and ensure regular, clear reporting.	This proposal for improvement was first made to the Council in January 2011. Good progress has been made, although this remains on-going work for the Council in 2013.
P2	Develop and agree a detailed business plan for improving customer access showing how success measures will be achieved and offer value for money.	Progress has been made. We will review this work in 2013, and report on this during 2013.
P3	Ensure its Annual Performance Report is published by 31 October in line with statutory requirements and more fully reflects Welsh Government guidance.	Reporting requirements were met in 2012, but a further proposal on improving the quality of the report was made in 2013. Therefore this proposal is now complete.
P4	Improve quality assurance arrangements to ensure that data used to support performance management and monitoring is accurate and robust.	Progress has been made. This is now complete.

Letter 1 2013: No new proposals or recommendations for improvement	
Letter 2 2013:	
Improvement Planning	
P1	Within the context of its medium-term corporate planning, the Council should define a set of annual Improvement Objectives that encapsulates its ambitions for the year and communicate them in a form that enables the public to hold the Council to account for its performance.	Current.
P2	Ensure that the Improvement Plan available to the public on the Council's website reflects any changes resulting from reviews during the year, and that any revised Plan includes a record of any such changes.	Current.
Improvement Reporting	
P3	Increase the use of relevant data to support the Council's evaluation of outcomes in relation to its Improvement Objectives	Current.
P4	Improve the balance of the narrative supporting each assessment, drawing out the lessons learned from particularly successful work and from work that has not gone as well as intended.	Current.

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Wales Audit Office Annual Improvement Report 2012

Executive Response

This Annual Improvement Report (AIR) is broadly a fair, evidenced and agreeable summary of the position of the Council. The report is a further positive endorsement of another year of achieving continuous improvement in Flintshire.

There are no new statutory recommendations or proposals for Improvement.

Listed below are the principal topics within the AIR. The number in brackets refers to the paragraph in the AIR where the issue can be found

Topic	Issue	Response
Carbon Reduction (11)	Performance	Greater organisational commitment and action on energy usage reduction required
Domestic Waste (15)	Performance	Organisation confident of meeting collection and recycling targets post service changes
Vulnerable Residents (17)	Performance	Council has a full action plan in response to CSSIW recommendations
Education (21)	Performance	Council has a full action plan in response to 2011 Estyn inspection and 2013 monitoring visit
Housing (31)	Achieving the Wales Housing Quality Standard (WHQS)	Council has a revised and updated Housing Business Plan showing achievement of the WHQS by 2022. Negotiations are advanced with the Welsh Housing Task Force on options to achieve WHQS by 2020
Housing Benefits (38)	Performance	The Housing Benefits Services is a priority service for continued local improvement
Economy (41)	Strategic impact	Economic Development continues to be a top Council priority
Performance Systems and Information (46, 64 and 70)	Further improving and simplifying performance systems	- The Improvement Plan and Annual Performance Report formats and contents have been reviewed to improve the impact of the documents - The reviewed and streamlined outcome-based Council Priorities/Improvement Objectives are to be reported in June with a new style Improvement Plan to be published in June 2013 - The Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges will be incorporated in the Improvement Plan - The organisation is improving the consistency of its self-evaluation methods
Governance (63)	Improving Governance systems	The Council has strengthened its arrangements for reviewing and reporting on Governance. A recent Wales Audit Office national study has made positive conclusions on the arrangements in Flintshire
Information Management (66)	Performance	The Council has an adopted ICT and Customer Services Strategy and is reviewing the structure and priorities of the ICT Division

Single Status (80)	Achieving a Single Status Agreement	- All work-streams in the 'recovery plan' from 2009 have been completed - A provisional agreement on Part 3 Terms and Conditions has been agreed - Final options on a future Pay and Grading Model are being reviewed against affordability - There is a parallel strategy to settle against potential Equal Pay liabilities
Flintshire Futures (81)	Clear planning for and achievement of efficiency targets through organisational change	- The governance and management of the Flintshire Futures five work-streams has been improved - Overall achievement of efficiency targets runs at around 85% - Further efficiency target planning is running as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan and Council Priorities review
Human Resources Strategy (82)	Progress with the Strategy	The strategy has been reprioritised and performance of the strategy and the individual work-streams are reported regularly to both Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny
Financial Planning (84)	Publication of the second Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)	- The second MTFP will be published in June 2013 alongside the Improvement Plan - The MTFP will be far more advanced in planning the costs of Council Priorities and investments and in setting new efficiency targets for the period to 2018 - The changing financial national picture and it's impact on Council financial planning is important context
Welsh Language (91)	Performance	The Council has an adopted Welsh Language Plan which is under continuous review

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
                         COMMITTEE
DATE: THURSDAY, 13 JUNE 2013

REPORT BY: HEAD OF FINANCE

SUBJECT: REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2012/13
                         (MONTH 12)

1.00   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01   To provide Members with the Revenue Budget Monitoring 2012/13
        (Month 12) report.

2.00   BACKGROUND

2.01   The Revenue Budget Monitoring 2012/13 (Month 12) report will be
        presented to Cabinet on 18th June 2013. A copy of the report is
        attached as Appendix A to this report.

3.00   RECOMMENDATIONS

3.01   As set out in the report.

4.00   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.01   None.

5.00   ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

5.01   None.

6.00   ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

6.01   None.

7.00   EQUALITIES IMPACT

7.01   None.

8.00   PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

8.01   None.

9.00   CONSULTATION REQUIRED

9.01   None.

10.00   CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

10.01   None.

11.00   APPENDICES

11.01   Appendix A - Revenue Budget Monitoring 2012/13 (Month 12) report.

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

**Contact Officer: Sara Dulson
Telephone: 01352 702287
Email: sara.dulson@flintshire.gov.uk**

Appendix A

REPORT TO: **CABINET**

DATE: **TUESDAY, 18 JUNE 2013**

REPORT BY: **HEAD OF FINANCE**

SUBJECT: **REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2012/13 (MONTH 12)**

1.00   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01   To provide members with the most up to date revenue budget monitoring information (Month 12) for the Council Fund and the Housing Revenue Account in 2012/13.

1.02   **INDEX OF CONTENTS**

2.00   EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.01   Members are requested to note the projected year end position as estimated at Month 12 which is :

- Council Fund - Net underspend of £4.313m (£2.334m underspend at Month 11)

- Housing Revenue Account - Net underspend of £1.047m (£0.574m underspend at Month 11) :- however £0.329m of this underspend is committed for specific items in 2013/14

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The table below shows a projected in-year underspend of £4.313m :-

TOTAL EXPENDITURE AND INCOME	Original Budget	Revised Budget	In-Year Over / (Under) spend		Non Ring-fenced		Ring-fenced	
			Month 11	Month 12	Month 11	Month 12	Month 11	Month 12
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Directorates								
Community Services	58.437	58.614	(2.564)	(3.432)	(1.683)	(2.446)	(0.881)	(0.986)
Environment	31.794	31.811	(0.001)	(0.053)	(0.001)	(0.053)	-	-
Lifelong Learning	109.219	110.993	0.590	0.006	1.099	0.935	(0.509)	(0.929)
Corporate Services	17.469	18.079	(0.023)	(0.271)	(0.023)	(0.271)	-	-
Total Directorates	216.919	219.497	(1.998)	(3.750)	(0.608)	(1.835)	(1.390)	(1.915)
Central and Corporate Finance	25.759	23.181	(0.336)	(0.563)	(0.336)	(0.563)	-	-
Total	242.678	242.678	(2.334)	(4.313)	(0.944)	(2.398)	(1.390)	(1.915)

3.02 The Original Budget column reflects the budget approved by Council on the 1st March 2012. The Revised Budget column reflects in-year virements which have been approved in compliance with Financial Procedure Rules.

3.03 The significant in-year projected variances to date are detailed in Appendices 2 - 6 (Council Fund) and Appendix 8 (HRA), and in addition to giving the reasons for the variances, the actions required to address each variance is provided. The significant changes for the Council Fund from Month 11 are detailed in Appendix 1.

3.04 There is a total improvement of £1.979m on the projected underspend reported within the Month 11 report to Cabinet on 21st May 2013. There are four major influences on this total movement which amounts to £1.497m (75.6%) of the total increase of £1.979m, which are detailed in paragraphs 3.06 - 3.09 below.

3.05 The further improvement in the projection reflects the outcome of planned activities and positive budget management and the utilisation of external funding where possible. It does illustrate the need for more discipline and for a detailed review of the interaction between service managers and early identification and reporting of variances. To allow in-year budget review and realignment Heads of Service have been commissioned to provide fuller explanations, and an assessment of predicted budget needs in 2013/14, 2014/15 and beyond. This will be critical information for the Medium Term Financial Plan (reported earlier on this agenda) and for management of the 2013/14 budget and the level of resource required to deliver services in that year. The final outturn for 2012/13 and the first budget monitoring report for 2013/14 will be reported in July.

3.06 Lifelong Learning - Out of County placements (£0.420m)
A number of grant funded expenditure items have previously been incorrectly

coded to this area which have now been correctly reclassified as Post 16 to utilise the Post 16 grant. Procedures have been introduced to prevent any incorrect coding of invoices in future. This accounted for £0.347m of the total £0.420m improvement. The remaining £0.073m relates to additional income on a number of placements funded by Health. Costs were recorded in the 2011/12 accounts and we were not anticipating recovering the full costs.

3.07 Community Services - Locality Teams and Disability Services (£0.602m)
Within Locality Teams, expenditure on purchased residential and domiciliary care has reduced which reflects current client costs, the positive impact of Transforming Social Services for Adults (TSSA), and increased income from clients. Whilst within Disability Services, a commitment in relation to the funding of care for individuals with Health has been removed due to the delay in the resolution of the outcome in 2012/13.

3.08 Corporate Services (£0.248m)
This movement was due to a number of underspends across all Corporate Services departments including printing and postage (£0.122m), and a reduction in the previously projected overspend for ICT & Customer Services (£0.068m).

3.09 Central and Corporate Finance (£0.227m)
Most of this improvement (£0.145m) is within the Central Loans & Investment Account and is due to the impact of grant income in respect of the Local Government Borrowing Initiative (LGBI). Most of the remainder (£0.072m) is due to unallocated central budget provision for non-standard inflation.

3.10 As part of ongoing work on the Medium Term Financial Plan, work is underway to assess the potential impacts of all variances on the budget for 2013/14 and beyond.

RISKS / ASSUMPTIONS

3.11 The monthly budget monitoring reports submitted to Cabinet throughout the 2012/13 financial year have reflected details of risks and assumptions in respect of the projected outturn reported. As we are now nearing the end of the financial year this section has been removed due to the reduced risk of significant changes occurring. However, the final outturn will not be known until the accounts have been closed down and reported in July.

3.12 **REQUEST FOR CARRY FORWARD - CORPORATE SERVICES**

ICT - An underspend of £0.115m has occurred in respect of a budget provision for enterprise server projects which could not be delivered in 2012/13 due to lack of resource. The related hardware and software has been procured in 2012/13. It is requested that the sum of £0.115m be carried forward to 2013/14 to enable these projects to be delivered at the earliest opportunity.

3.13 **REQUEST FOR CARRY FORWARD - CENTRAL & CORPORATE FINANCE**

Flintshire Futures - An allocation of £0.177m for 2012/13 capacity requirements was made from within the £1.500m sum within the contingency reserve which has been earmarked for investment in change. This was approved by Cabinet on 22nd January 2013 within a Flintshire Futures update report. A total underspend of £0.155m against this allocation is expected, the majority of which (£0.129m) relates to the Procurement workstream. There was a delay to the commencement of the e-procurement project which has now commenced in the early part of 2013/14. The capacity will still therefore be required in 2013/14. It is requested therefore that the sum of £0.155m be carried forward to 2013/14.

4.00 **NON STANDARD INFLATION**

4.01 Included in the budget are amounts for non-standard inflation. These budgets are monitored closely and the current position for each element is outlined below:

- o £0.078m in respect of Energy for Street Lighting of which £0.055m has not been allocated
- o £0.300m in respect of Energy - of which £0.017m has not been allocated
- o £0.196m in respect of Fuel - which has been fully allocated
- o £0.133m in respect of Food - which has been fully allocated

The unallocated amounts relating to energy has resulted in an underspend of £0.072m within the Central and Corporate Finance budget.

5.00 **UNEARMARKED RESERVES**

5.01 The 2011/12 final outturn reported to Cabinet on 10th July showed unearmarked reserves at 31st March 2012 (above the base level of £5.476m) of £0.992m, after taking into account commitments in 2012/13 :

- Use of £0.973m to meet one-off / time limited costs
- Ringfencing of £1.500m to support Organisational Change costs

5.02 Appendix 7 details the movements to date on unearmarked reserves and the level of contingency sum available. As a result of the movements the current projected level of the contingency reserve at the end of March 2013 is an amount of £3.493m.

6.00 **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT**

6.01 On 21st February 2012, the Council approved a Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for 2012/13 of £26.671m. The budget provided for a closing balance of £0.867m, which at 3.25 % of total expenditure satisfies the prudent approach of ensuring a minimum level of 3 %.

6.02   The 2011/12 final outturn reported to Cabinet on 10th July 2012 showed a closing balance at the end of 2011/12 of £1.857m, which was £0.753m more than when the 2012/13 budget was set. This had the effect of increasing the closing balance for 2011/12 by the same amount.

6.03   There is an overall projected underspend of £1.047m and a projected closing balance at Month 12 of £1.902m, which at 6.9 % of total expenditure satisfies the prudent approach of ensuring a minimum level of 3 %. However, £0.329m of expenditure which had been budgeted for in 2012/13 will now take place in 2013/14, for which budget provision will now need to be made from within the higher than budgeted closing 2012/13 balance position. This expenditure is in respect of delayed employee voluntary redundancy payments (£0.150m) and an underspend of £0.049m on the Flint maisonettes due to the need to determine the level and type of security measures required, and £0.130m in respect of void works completed in 2012/13 but not charged to the accounts.

6.04   Appendix 8 details the reasons for significant variances occurring to date and the actions planned to deal with them.

7.00   RECOMMENDATIONS

7.01   Members are recommended to :-

   a)   Note the overall report

   b)   Note the Council Fund contingency sum as at 31st March 2013 (paragraph 5.03)

   c)   Note the projected final level of balances on the Housing Revenue Account (paragraph 6.03)

   d)   Approve the requests for carry forward of underspends to 2013/14 as detailed within paragraphs 3.12 to 3.13

8.00   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.01   The financial implications are as set out in Sections 3.00 - 6.00 of the report.

9.00   ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

9.01   None.

10.00   ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

10.01   None.

11.00   EQUALITIES IMPACT

11.01   None.

12.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

12.01 None.

13.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

13.01 None.

14.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

14.01 None.

15.00 APPENDICES

15.01 Council Fund - Movement in Variances from Month 11 - Appendix 1
Council Fund Variances - Appendices 2 - 6
Council Fund - Movements on unearmarked reserves - Appendix 7
Housing Revenue Account Variances - Appendix 8

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

Contact Officer: Sara Dulson
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COUNCIL FUND - REVENUE BUDGET 2012/13
FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Budget Monitoring (Month 12)
Summary of Movement from Month 11

	£m	£m
Month 11		
Out of County Ringfenced Budget	(1.287)	
Service Directorates	(0.711)	
Central and Corporate Finance	(0.336)	
Variance as per Executive Report		**(2.334)**
Month 12		
Out of County Ringfenced Budget	(1.753)	
Service Directorates	(1.984)	
Central and Corporate Finance	(0.576)	
Variance as per Directorate Returns		**(4.313)**
Change Requiring Explanation		**(1.979)**

Community Services

- Support Services (Mental Health Service) - the movement from month 11 is mainly due to the delayed start of a project with MIND (-£0.029m). The balance is made up of small variances across a number of services totalling £0.001m. (0.028)

- Resource and Regulated Service (Disability Service) - the movement from month 11 has changed the position from an overspend (£0.032m) to an underspend (-£0.078m). This is due to a reduction of client transport costs (-£0.048m) within Work Opportunities and, within Supported Living, reduced staff pay costs (-£0.019m) and additional income (-£0.025m). The balance (-£0.018m) is made up of a number of smaller variances. (0.110)

- Vulnerable Adults and Disability Service (Disability Service) - the movement from month 11 is mostly due to a delayed spend on advocacy services (-£0.009m) and lower than expected final costs for some care packages (-£0.019m). The balance (-£0.010m) is made up of a number of smaller variances within the Service. (0.038)

- Locality Teams (Localities) - the movement from month 11 is mostly due to a reduction in the expected level of demand for purchased residential care (-£0.115), purchased domiciliary care (-£0.111m), purchased OT support (-£0.040m) and purchased day care (-£0.020m) offset by an increase in minor adaptations (£0.016m). The balance (-£0.015m) is made up of a number of smaller variances. (0.285)

- Homelessness Ring-fenced Budget (Customer & Housing Services) - the movement from month 11 reflects the actual demand for bed and breakfast placements. (0.045)

- Homelessness (Customer & Housing Services) - the movement from month 11 reflects the actual costs incurred to meet demand. (0.033)

- Housing Renewals (Customer & Housing Services) - the movement from month 11 is mostly due to additional revenue generated as a result of additional capital funding being levered into the programme from external sources including Welsh Government. (0.031)

- Resident Wardens (Supporting PeopleServices) - the movement from month 11 reflects a reduction in staff pay costs reflecting vacancies carried within the service until the new structure is implemented. (0.043)

- Youth Offending team (Children Services) - the movement from month 11 is due to lower than projected income (£0.035m) together with additional unanticipated spend (£0.010m). The balance (£0.001m) is due to other small variances. 0.046

- Out of County Pooled Budget (Children Services) - the movement from month 11 reflects additional grant income of £0.073m less the final costs of the various care packages. (0.046)

- Prevention & Support (Children Services) - the movement from month 11 is due to a previously reflected recharge for client transportation not being applied (-£0.040m).   (0.040)

- Good Health (Development & Resources) - the movement from month 11 is mostly due to the impact of additional redundancy costs (£0.018m)   0.039

- Business Systems (Development & Resources) - the movement from month 11 is due to delayed spend on software and hardware (-£0.074m) and lower than expected spend on postage (-£0.034m). The balance (£0.004m) is due to other small variances.   (0.104)

- Resources and Regulated Services (Intake and Reablement) - the movement from month 11 reflects the impact on this year of the transport contract re-tendering exercise   (-£0.013m), an increase in the underspend on the Mold Extra Care scheme (-£0.039m) following a reduction in the expected in-year spend and reduced in-house residential care costs mostly due to additional income from clients (-£0.065m). The balancing amount (-£0.006m) is made up of a number of smaller variances.   (0.123)

- Administrative Support (Disability Services) - the movement from month 11 is due to the removal of a commitment of £0.215m. This relates to the review, which is being undertaken with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, around a process to determine how to apportion costs of care plans that are jointly funded. This review is not now expected to be completed until mid 2013.   (0.199)

- Transition and Disability Services (Disability Services) - the movement from month 11 is mostly due to income from Supporting People grant being lower than was expected (£0.029m). The balance (£0.001m) is the net impact of ther variances.   0.030

- Other minor changes of less than £0.025m   0.142

    (0.868)

Environment

- Winter Maintenance - There was a sustained period of winter weather throughout January, including snow and sub zero temperatures continuing through February. However following the major snow event on the 22nd March, extensive costs in relation to salt provision, contractors, overtime and fuel have been incurred.   0.031

- Transportation - reallocation of costs to the Schools transport budget and additional costs on bus stops and shelters which was intended to be funded from base budget was able to be funded from grant. Concessionary travel expenditure incurred under demand responsive transport was deemed eligible for claiming from WG under the free concessionary travel scheme.   (0.087)

- Management Support & Performance - anticipated commitments in respect of Data Protection training not utilised as on-line training provision was used which reduced   (0.027)

- Other minor changes of less than £0.025m   0.031

	(0.052)

Lifelong Learning

Out of County Pooled Budget - LL

- A number of placements have previously been reported as Lifelong Learning expenditure but have now been correctly reclassified as Post 16 to utilise the Post 16 grant. Procedures have been introduced to prevent any incorrect coding of invoices in future.   (0.347)

- £0.073m relates to income received as a result of negotiations with Health over the funding of a number of placements. Costs were recorded in 2011/12 and we were not anticipating recovering the full costs.   (0.073)

Libraries, Culture & Heritage

- Additional budget of £0.006m has been awarded for non standard inflation on energy as electricity costs have increased more than initially estimated. The remaining £0.004m relates to other minor variances   (0.010)

Leisure

- Minor Variances   0.004

School Improvement

- Early Years - The reduction occurs as a result of maximising utilisation of the Foundation Phase Grant.   (0.150)

- Minor variances   0.018

- School Improvement - a number of minor variances on administration vacancy savings and additional grant income have contributed to an increased underspend of £0.031m.   (0.031)

- Music Service - there has been an increase in the projected overspend of £0.030m. This relates to a reduction in the anticipated number of pupils currently taking music tuition.   0.030

- Other Minor Variances   0.014

Development & Resources

- Transport - there has been an increase of £0.041m on Pupil Transport. This relates to minor year end adjustments.   0.041

- Pupil Benefits - there has been a reduction of £0.020m on the projected expenditure for Pupil Benefits. £0.011m relates to reduced claims for Music Service Remissions. The remaining £0.009m relates to a reduction in the number of anticipated Free School Meals   (0.020)

- Mobile Classrooms - there has been a reduction of £0.024m on the projected expenditure for Mobile Classrooms. £0.015m relates to a reduction in the anticipated prudential borrowing charge for 2012/13. The remaining £0.009m relates to other minor variances.   (0.024)

- Facilities - the projected outturn on Facilities has increased by £0.018m. This relates to minor variances.   0.018

- Corporate Strategy - there has been a reduction in anticipated costs of £0.029m relating to expected use of savings linked to the former Head of School Improvement. (0.029)

- Minor Variances (0.025)

(0.584)

Corporate Services
- Legal and Democratic Services - Printing and postage underspends (£0.040m)as a result of year end recharges being lower than anticipated, reduction in Members Special Responsibility Allowances efficiency £0.050m, reduction in legal fees/advice (£0.030m), other variances £0.002m. (0.018)

- HR and Organisational Development - reduced pressure on CRB (£0.003m), reduced pressure corporate training (£0.004m), reduced Occupational Health efficiency £0.003m, increased vacancy savings (£0.009m), minor variances (£0.020m). (0.033)

- ICT and Customer Services - increased vacancy savings (£0.014m), increased registrars income (£0.007m), procurement efficiency (£0.009m), reduction in admin support overspend (£0.068m), other variances (£0.003m). (0.101)

- Finance - printing and postage underspend (£0.057m) as a result of year end recharges being lower than anticipated, other variances (£0.009m). (0.066)

- Chief Executives Department - staffing recharge to LL grant (£0.006m), printing and postage efficiency (£0.025m), other variances £0.001m. (0.030)

(0.248)

Central and Corporate Finance
- Central Loans & Investment Account (CLIA) - impact of LGBI grant (-£0.162m) (0.145)
- Corporate - Other - non-standard inflation (-£0.072m), other minor changes (£0.008m) (0.064)
- Other Minor Variances (0.018)

(0.227)

Total changes **(1.979)**

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Resources and Regulated Services (Intake and Reablement)	6.236	5.366	(0.870)	(0.747)	Extra Care projected underspend on new scheme of £0.281m due to timeframe for completion; increased by £0.039m from month 11 due to delayed spend. In-house Domiciliary Care underspend of £0.377m due to reduced pay costs from changes to service delivery and greater use of reablement and independent sector care providers. An underspend of £0.211m relates to work to be undertaken in 2013/14 to realign the budgets following the transport review and re-tendering; the increase of £0.013m from month 11 is due to the impact of the re-tendering exercise on 2012/13. Day Services is underspending by £0.069m, mostly due to vacancies within the Service, and Living Well is underspent £0.043m due to a vacant post. These underspends are offset by a projected overspend within Professional Support of £0.150m which will be addressed as part of TSSA realignment. The balance of £0.039m is the net total of various smaller variances.	The underspend against Extra Care is one-off and non recurring and has arisen due to delays in building works encountered by our partner. Keep under review pending completion of Transforming Social Services for Adults (TSSA) programme and realign budgets as appropriate.

Budget Monitoring 2012/13 (Month 12)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Reablement Service (Intake and Reablement)	0.370	0.299	(0.071)	(0.070)	Pay costs have reduced (£0.076m) due to the use of Homecare staff, vacant post and part year appointments together with additional Health income of £0.029m and a reduction in comitted spend on other equipment of £0.019m. These underspends have been offset by an additional contribution to the NE Wales Community Equipment Service (NEWCES) of £0.060m for essential equipment purchases due to increased activity. The balance of £0.007m is made up of a variety of small variances.	Keep under review pending completion of Transforming Social Services for Adults (TSSA) programme.

Due to increasing demand for equipment from the NEWCES it is acknowledged that there will be an ongoing requirement for increased funding. This will be addressed during 2013/14. |

Budget Monitoring 2012/13 (Month 12)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Locality Teams (Localities) *Continued overleaf*	16.490	15.979	(0.511)	(0.226)	<u>Physical Disability Services</u> > Purchased Home Care - overspend of £0.021m due to the impact of current care packages. This is a reduction of £0.085m on month 11 due to an overestimation of the impact of increasing monthly payments on the final position. > Purchased Residential Care - underspend of £0.409m. This is an increase of £0.100m on month 11 and is due to an underestimation of the continued and ongoing reduction in the demand for the service. > Minor Adaptations - overspend of £0.150m reflecting continuing demand. > Occupational Therapy - underspent by £0.077m (£0.046m staffing costs and £0.040m on purchased support offset by other small variances) <u>Older People Services</u> > Purchased Day Care - underspent by £0.100m due to a change in emphasis in service delivery. > Reablement Service - overspent by £0.071m due to changes in service delivery from TSSA.	Keep under review. Following phase 1 of TSSA and during the detailed reorganisation of services, it has been decided that most of the PDSI elements included as part of the locality team budgets at the early stages of TSSA will form a separate line under the Disability Services Heading, with only the Occupational Therapy service remaining as part of the locality teams. This will undertaken for 2013/14. A particular difficulty projecting outturns within this service this year is quantifying the impact of the changes in service delivery introduced with TSSA the impact of which is yet to stabilise and which have had greater impact than expected.

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Budget Monitoring 2012/13 (Month 12)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Locality Teams (Localities) *Continued from previous page*					Older People Services - continued > Purchased Home Care - overspent by £0.078m reflecting current care packages. > Purchased Residential Care - underspent by £0.163m which reflects current care packages. > Intermediate Care Beds - underspend of £0.029m due to reduced service provision of £0.019m and unbudgeted client contribution of £0.010m. > Professional Support - underspend of £0.052m mostly due to staff vacancies. The net balance of £0.001m is made up of a number of smaller variances.	

Budget Monitoring 2012/13 (Month 12)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Vulnerable Adults and Disability Services (Disability Services)	1.689	1.095	(0.594)	(0.557)	A significant exercise has been undertaken to confirm the actual placement of individuals within services which has identified savings due to in-house services being used instead of external placements, together with individuals with revised needs translating as a reduction on the financial impact, and also a number of individuals who have not yet engaged in a service. The movement from month 11 of £0.038m is mostly due to delayed spend on advocacy services (£0.009m) and some final bills being lower than expected for purchased care (£0.019m); the balance of £0.010m is made up of smaller movements.	Work is underway to identify any potential impact on 13/14. Revised arrangements are in place for the review of information regarding individuals with the Transition Team.

Budget Monitoring 2012/13 (Month 12)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Resource and Regulated Services (Disability Services)	12.979	12.901	(0.078)	0.032	The underspend is mostly due to an underspend of £0.057m within Work Opportunities which is an increase of £0.050m on month 11 underspend due to the final client transport costs being £0.048m lower than expected following the retendering of contracts. Supported Living (In-house and Independant Sector) is underspending in total by £0.027m. This is an improvement of £0.049m in the position reported at month 11 which is mostly due to a reduction in staff costs (£0.019m) and an increase in income (£0.025m).	

Budget Monitoring 2012/13 (Month 12)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Administrative Support (Disability Services)	(1.506)	(1.685)	(0.179)	0.020	Within this area is a budget of £0.215m that is for meeting shortfalls in Health funding of particular care plans e.g. following a review of respective responsibilities for funding the care plan. A review of the process around this is being undertaken and which is not now expected to be completed until mid 2013/14. Consequently, the commitment against having to meet these potential costs in the current year have been removed resulting in most of the movement from month 11. The balance is made up of various small amounts.	Keep under review.

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Support Services (Mental Health)	1.933	1.757	(0.176)	(0.148)	The underspend shown is the cummulative total of: > Residential and Domiciliary Care Service: underspend of £0.132m, reflecting current care packages. > Intensive Support Team: underspend of £0.027m being mostly underspends on pay £0.032m due to temporary secondments and maternity leave offset by the cost of backdated business rates £0.013m which were charged following a reassessment. > Occupation and Employment: underspend of £0.024m mostly pay (£0.055m) offset by an overspend on supplies and services of £0.030m > Professional Support: an overspend of £0.030m. > Grants: underspend of £0.032m being an increase of £0.029m on month 11 due to the delayed start of a project with MIND. The balance of £0.009 is a net overspend made up of various small variances within the service.	Keep under review due to the potential increase in client numbers.

Budget Monitoring 2012/13 (Month 12)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Ringfenced Budgets (Mental Health)	0.301	0.181	(0.120)	(0.120)	Reflects current care packages for 2012/13.	Keep under review - potential volatility due to changes in client numbers and demands at short notice from prison or courts. The possibility of re-aligning budget between the two services has been considered and dismissed for now as there are early indications of additional Mental Health clients although at this stage potential costs or start dates are unknown.
Ringfenced Budgets (Learning Disability)	0.466	0.578	0.112	0.126	This reflects the full year impact of a new service user that commenced during December 2011 together with some other changes to care packages.	

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Budget Monitoring 2012/13 (Month 12)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Good Health (Development & Resources)	0.980	1.147	0.167	0.128	The overspend of £0.167m is mainly due to one-off redundancy related costs of £0.122m for three staff falling on the service following a restructure. As these redundancies are due to the cessation of grant funding (Joint Working Special Grant), and therefore not generating an ongoing efficiency, the costs are met within the Service. The increase from month 11 of £0.039m is mostly due to additional redundancy costs of £0.018m and additional unanticipated spend on third party costs of £0.026m. The balance of £0.005m is made up of various small movements across the service.	Not recurring.
Business Services - Income (Development & Resources)	(1.511)	(1.569)	(0.058)	(0.046)	The outturn reflects the actual charging policy income received.	

Budget Monitoring 2012/13 (Month 12)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Business Systems (Development & Resources)	1.274	1.092	(0.182)	(0.078)	The underspend within this area is mostly due to vacant posts. The movement since month 11 of £0.104m is mainly due to delayed spend on software and hardware of £0.074m and lower than expected costs on postage (£0.034m). The balance of £0.004m is made up of various small movements.	
Family Placement (Children's Services)	1.832	2.193	0.361	0.340	The overspend is mainly as a result of an increase in the number of foster care placements within the service. It is also due to the increasing number of court orders for Residence and Special Guardianship orders which invariably attract an ongoing allowance for the carers.	A review of the Family Placement Team has commenced the outcome of which will inform future planning and possible efficiencies.
Other Residential (Children Services)	0.526	0.466	(0.060)	(0.065)	The underspend relates to the opening of Arosfa being later than anticipated and now reflects final bills.	Keep under review due to the potential for additional costs relating to transport charges.
Grants (Children Services)	0.115	0.087	(0.028)	(0.048)	The underspend is due to reduced activity within this area. The movement from month 11 is due to additional Child Trust Fund Payments.	

Budget Monitoring 2012/13 (Month 12)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Youth Offending Team (Children Services)	0.361	0.361	0.000	(0.046)	This service is now on budget. The movement from month 11 is due to actual income received being lower than expected (£0.035m) together with additional unanticipated expenditure (£0.010m).	

Budget Monitoring 2012/13 (Month 12)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Professional Support (Children's Services)	5.429	5.672	0.243	0.236	Professional Support is a complex area comprising of Fieldwork, Resources, Children's Integrated Disability Service (CIDS) and General. _Fieldwork:_ Overall Fieldwork is overspending by £0.348m, no change from month 11. Main contributors are > Duty and Assessment Team £0.119m overspend due to agency costs offset by underspends within staff pay. > Children and Young Adolescent Support Team (CYAST) overspend of £0.277m which is mostly due to client payments £0.199m and staff pay £0.064m. > Family Intervention Team are underspending by £0.048m which is a slightly reduced underspend to that reported at month 11. _Resources:_ Overall underspent by £0.061m which is an increase of £0.013m from month 11. The main contributors are:	Keep under review. The Head of Service (Children) has instigated a review into the specifics around these two service users. Due to the overspend within Children Services spending is kept to a minimum where possible.

continued overleaf

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Professional Support (Children's Services) *continued from previous page*					> Family Support Team underspend of £0.033m mostly due to pay £0.030m. > N Wales Adoption Service underspend £0.017m due to reduced payments. <u>CIDS:</u> Overall CIDS are overspending by £0.044m. > Children's OT underspend of £0.009m mostly due to reduced equipment purchases of £0.008m. > Disabilities Team underspending £0.030m mostly due to pay £0.023m and transfer payments £0.010m offset by other smaller variances. > Direct Payments overspend of £0.082 due to increased use. <u>General:</u> Overall projected underspend of £0.87m, a reduction of £0.018m on month 11 mostly due to additional legal and court costs of £0.015m. The main contribution of the underspend is a much reduced spend of the Children First budget £0.112m offset by an increase of £0.044m in Safeguarding and Independant Review against staff pay, wrongly charged to another Service. The balance of £0.001m is made of a number of smaller variances.	

Budget Monitoring 2012/13 (Month 12)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Out of County Pooled Budget (Children's Services)	3.711	2.887	(0.824)	(0.778)	Costs reflect existing placements up until March 2013. This reflects known reductions in payments to providers following re-negotiation of contracts.	The focus of high cost placements is now a North Wales project and will continued to be reviewed. The in house project requires sign off by the two directors at the next meeting. The impact of these changes on the Children Services Fostering and Leaving Care budgets has not yet been quantified. Further details are awaited.
Ring-fenced Budget (Housing Services)	0.377	0.223	(0.154)	(0.109)	This reflects current position of the anticipated demand on the service this financial year.	Keep under review. One off and non recurring due to anticipated rise in presentations in 13/14 due to Welfare Reform impact and projections that the full budget will be required for further temporary accomodation units in the future.
Homelessness (Housing Services)	0.488	0.345	(0.143)	(0.110)	Review of expected spend undertaken and revised in line with trend.	
Renovation Grants (Housing Services)	(0.117)	(0.178)	(0.061)	(0.030)	Income target exceeded due to additional capital being levered in to the programme from external sources.	

Budget Monitoring 2012/13 (Month 12)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Resident Wardens (Housing Services)	1.236	1.056	(0.180)	(0.137)	Budget based on restructure. Salaries carry vacancies for the new structure yet to be implemented.	Restructure approval required.
Other variances (aggregate)	4.955	4.929	(0.026)	(0.131)	Various minor variances.	Continue to review but not expected to be recurrent.
Total :	**58.614**	**55.182**	**(3.432)**	**(2.564)**		

Budget Monitoring 2012/13 (Month 12)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Period 11 (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Agricultural Estates	(0.158)	(0.200)	(0.042)	(0.032)	Following the appointment of the Land Agent, this has led to the successful follow up of outstanding rent arrears. Period 12 figures show the additional income and reprofiled expenditure commitments.	
Industrial Units	(1.479)	(1.398)	0.081	0.091	Shortfall of Industrial Unit Rental Income, due in the main to Gaz de France decommisioning the Shotton Power Station site. Income shortfalls are partly mitigated by savings in vacant posts at Deeside Enterprise Centre. At period 12 additional budget was provided from Non Standard Inflation for Electricity	Keep Unit rental income closely monitored throughout 2013/14.
Property Holdings	0.090	0.067	(0.023)	(0.038)	Budget provision at the former Ty'r Binwydden site has been utilised to finance additional R&M at Custom House CP, dilapidation works at Glanrafon and legal fees for the Bailey Hill site.	Review of site budgets necessary in line with asset management programme
Property Asset & Development	0.530	0.449	(0.081)	(0.082)	Net Vacancy Savings plus £20k professional fees received from National Grid in relation to the sale of Site C at Period 11.	

Budget Monitoring 2012/13 (Month 12)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Period 11 (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Car Parks	0.025	0.082	0.057	0.059	Car Park income shortfalls at Holywell and Mold are partially offset by a reduced maintenance programme. The figures also include anticipated back pay for Car Park Attendants regarding overtime payable at an enhanced rate for Saturday working.	
Transportation	1.646	1.538	(0.108)	(0.021)	Reallocation of costs to the School Transport budget and additional expenditure on Bus Stops and Shelters that was intended to be financed from base budget was claimed from TAITH. In addition, Concessionary Travel expenditure incurred under Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) was eligible for claiming from WG under the Free Concessionary Travel Scheme	

Budget Monitoring 2012/13 (Month 12)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Period 11 (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Winter Maintenance	1.276	1.385	0.109	0.078	There was a sustained period of winter weather through January, including snow, together with sub zero tempertures continuing through February. However, following the major snow event on the 22nd March, extensive costs in relation to salt provision, contractors, overtime and fuel have been incurred. This is likely to result in total winter maintenance costs of £1.630m. The total salt usage is expected to be 13,000 tonnes, with 3,270 used since the 22nd March. In addition the projected repair bill for the clear up and impact on the road network into 2013/14 for pothole repairs, patching, tree clearance and fencing repairs is currently being evaluated	The Council is currently compiling a bid to Welsh Government for assistance under the Emergency Financial Assistance Scheme (EFAS). The outturn figures now reflect use of £277k of Contingency Reserves and £245k of the Winter Maintenance Reserve as approved by Cabinet in May.
Highways Maintenance	2.712	2.785	0.073	0.070	Increasing cost associated with attending flooding events following substantial rainfall throughout the financial year.	

Budget Monitoring 2012/13 (Month 12)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Period 11 (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Waste Disposal & Waste Collection	9.139	9.389	0.250	0.250	Delivery of the new Streetscene Service resulted in unexpected additional operational costs which have been mitigated by increased recycling levels, which not only reduce landfill and tipping charges but increases the level of recycling income received. One off Agency and staff backfilling costs as a result of the on-going investigation within Waste have been incurred and in addition, the energy generation from Gas at the landfill sites has been affected by problems with the performance of the Gas Engines at both landfill sites. This has resulted in a £145k shortfall against the income target. Work to realign budgets across the service is on-going and will be in place for 2013/14 onwards.	
Fleet Services	(0.026)	(0.053)	(0.027)	(0.033)	Minor over recovery of Fleet Recharge costs which will be reflected in service area budgets.	
Planning Control	0.367	0.412	0.045	0.036	The costs associated with Planning appeals i.e. specialist advice and legal fees have been offset by Planning fee income in excess of target.	

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Budget Monitoring 2012/13 (Month 12)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Period 11 (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Service Development & Support	0.236	0.216	(0.020)	(0.020)	Part time salary savings	
Management Support & Performance	1.164	1.021	(0.143)	(0.116)	Vacancy Savings relating to 5 posts (2 x Sc4, Sc6, SO1 & M6) ahead of Service Review implementation offset by the cost of Modern Apprentices from September 2012. Anticipated Period 12 commitments did not get incurred for Data Protection Training (online training provision used) and subscriptions that were reviewed and determined not to be required.	Provision will be made within Service budgets for the Modern Apprentice costs in 2013/14.
Public Protection	3.543	3.320	(0.223)	(0.228)	Net Vacancy Savings ahead of the Service Review being implemented, offset by income shortfalls in Pollution Control.	
Markets	(0.099)	(0.085)	0.014	0.014	Rental income shortfalls from outdoor pitches & car boot events due to poor weather conditions.	
Other variances (aggregate)	12.845	12.831	(0.014)	(0.029)	A number of variances of no more than £0.042m individually.	
Total :	**31.811**	**31.758**	**(0.053)**	**(0.001)**		

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Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Out of County	2.659	1.730	(0.929)	(0.509)	Following a request from the Out of County Management Board, several high cost placements have reduced with the continued involvement of Commercial and Clinical Solutions.	
Libraries, Culture and Heritage	2.895	2.866	(0.029)	(0.019)	There has been an in year adjustment to the book fund to address the Directorate budget overspend.	

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Leisure Services	4.194	5.176	0.982	0.978	**Leisure (pressure of £0.982m) There are a number of historic budget issues which also adversely effected the Leisure outturn position in 11/12.** In line with the national picture, income from ice skating at Deeside Leisure Centre has reduced by £0.173m over the last 4 years, this is despite inflationary increases in admission prices and promotions. Three posts within Leisure Services are unbudgeted due to timing delays caused between the Leisure Services Restructure and the JEQ results, this amounts to £0.120m including on-costs. **The following pressures have been identified during 2012/13:**	A tariff review is being undertaken across the whole of Leisure Services. Work is being conducted to review operational efficiency and performance at all facilities. Following receipt of JEQ results: Analysis of affordability of proposed new staffing structures. Revisit organisational design principles.

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
					The relocation of Leisure Services Staff to Deeside has assisted in making a significant saving from relocation (vacating Connah's Quay offices). However, this has increased occupancy costs for Leisure Services for cleaning, maintenance, mileage, telephones etc by £0.025m which is unfunded.	The in year recharges for these services are to be revisited and recharged accordingly.
					A review of music licensing has identified additional liabilities resulting in a cost increase of £0.037m.	A budget pressure bid for this has been submitted for 2013/14.
					Leisure centre income figures have not met those anticipated by the Alliance Business Plan. Future income projections are now based on actual income to date allowing for continued increases each month as facilities become more popular.	New processes for authorising expenditure have been implemented. Income figures will continue to be monitored closely. We are also hoping to implement P2P earlier than anticipated to introduce more controls on expenditure for 2013/14.
Delegated Schools Budgets	78.018	78.018	0.000	0.000		

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
School Improvement Service	11.134	11.077	(0.057)	0.062	**Early Years** Efficiencies of **£0.216m** have been secured to assist the overall in year position including photocopying, travel and catering. The realignment of sustainability funding has resulted in fewer requests for emergency funding from nurseries and playgroups. **SLAs (pressure of £0.167m)** Following an agreement at DMT, budget holders have taken a number of measures to reduce expenditure in areas where schools have not taken up SLAs. **School Improvement Service** A number of minor efficiences equating to **£0.121m** in total are projected. These relate to influencable expenditure on supplies and ICT and to recharges for staff seconded to the Welsh Government and RSEIS.	Work is currently being undertaken to re-draft SLAs.

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
					Schools Related (£0.126m) Music Services are forecasting an overspend of **£0.143m** relating to staffing costs and loss of income. Minor other schools relating savings equate to **£0.017m.**	The Music Services project group has produced a report proposing an operational model for the service moving forward into 2013/14.
					ICT Unit/Strategy Performance and Improvement Unit The Directorate has reduced IT and Systems related expenditure on a one-off basis by **£0.039m** to assist in reducing the Directorate overspend.	
					Non Delegated School Budgets A small overspend of £0.008m has arisen relating to non delegated budgets.	
					Inclusion Service A minor overspend on the inclusion service of £0.018m has arisen at year end.	A significant review of Inclusion budgets is continuing.

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Development & Resources	12.093	12.132	0.039	0.078	**Service Units (pressure of £0.002m)** A pressure of **£0.200m** is currently anticipated on pupil benefits (free school meals and remissions) because of changes in the economic climate. A saving of **£0.138m** has been made on the Mobile Classroom budget. Minor reductions in other projected expenditure equating to **£0.062m** have also been made. **Cymorth/Flying Start - efficiency of £0.106m** A saving of £0.106m against Cymorth/Flying Start relates to some corrections to accounting arrangements and a small saving on the Childcare in Wales budget (£0.070m) and to vacancy savings made in the Children & Young People's Partnership Team (£0.020m). These savings have arisen because we've recharged an element of management and admin time to the Families First grant to utilise grant funding where there has been slippage on other projects. There are other minor savings of £0.016m	Both elements of the budget are being carefully monitored and pressure bids have been submitted as part of the 2013/14 budget process.

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
					Student Transport - efficiency of £0.160m An efficiency of £0.160m is anticipated on Student Transport. The underspend relates to procurement/contract savings and local bus service reallocation. A review of Student Transport budgets is ongoing to analyse which elements of the savings relate to specific contracts negotiated by the procurement unit so that budgets can be adjusted accordingly. £0.180m has been carried forward to 2013/14 as reported at period 11. **Facility Services - pressure of £0.445m** The Catering Service is developing radical proposals to modernise via projects such as on-line payments for parents, rebranding, targeting increased take-up strategies, improved/themed menu's, cost reduction/procurement. The draft APSE review has be used to form the basis of this strategy.	Service needs to continue to implement the agreed strategy for efficiencies.

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Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
					The Cleaning Service is unable to recover the surplus generated from the Law Courts contract and some other smaller sites. A large income target still exists which is unattainable with a lower level of cleaning activity taking place. **Youth Service** The Youth Service has reduced projected expenditure across all areas by **£0.037m.** **Management & General Admin - efficiencies of £0.105m** The majority of the projected underspend on Management & General Admin relates to the insurance claims budget as claims have been lower than anticipated towards year end. The remainder relates to minor variances.	This is the subject of management action and service redesign and a budget pressure bid for 2013/14.
Total :	110.993	110.999	0.006	0.590		

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Chief Executive	2.346	2.257	(0.089)	(0.059)	**(£0.016m)** vacancy savings. **£0.014m** pressure relating to a voluntary sector contribution towards Dangerpoint. **(£0.012m)** salaries superannuation corrections. **(£0.006m)** staffing recharge to LL grant. **(£0.019m)** employee safety measures underspend. **(£0.025m)** reduced printing and postage costs - Corp Comms. **(£0.025m)** other minor variances.	

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Finance	4.351	4.544	0.193	0.259	**£0.341m** pressure relating to workforce costs in Revenues & Benefits because of additional work in preparation for Welfare Reform and the new Council Tax Support Scheme. **£0.035m** pressure relating to a benefits system software upgrade. **£0.042m** pressure relating to additional audit days. **(£0.057m)** efficiency printing/postage. **(£0.112m)** additional income for Council Tax Reduction Scheme Transition Grant. **(£0.084m)** vacancy savings relating to the Corporate Finance Review. **£0.028m** Other minor variances.	Workforce costs relating to welfare reform (including CTRS) to be kept under review as both are introduced and the impacts can be fully assessed.
Legal & Democratic Services	3.341	3.157	(0.184)	(0.166)	**(£0.068m)** Members Special Responsibility Allowances. **£0.062m** Salary changes. **(£0.035m)** Printing/Postage **(£0.076m)** Legal Fees charged. **(£0.67m)** other minor variances.	

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Human Resources & Organisational Development	2.628	2.557	(0.071)	(0.038)	**£0.027m** pressure CRB checks. **£0.025m** loss of income from external organisations. **(£0.128m)** Occupational Health underspend. **£0.085m** provision for HR Service Review transition in 13/14. **(£0.085m)** Vacancy Savings. **£0.005m** other minor variances. Risk of pressures will arise if funding is not made available for OD and iTrent implementation costs.	A budget pressure for CRB checks has been submitted as part of the 2013/14 budget process.

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
ICT & Customer Services	5.413	5.293	(0.120)	(0.019)	**£0.007m** pressure relating to the final Design & Print costs. **(£0.081m)** vacancy savings relating to ongoing service reviews. **(£0.021m)** efficiency in relation to additional registars income. **(£0.009m)** Procurement efficiency. **(£0.016m)** other efficiencies. Risk of reduced underspend if funding is not made available for the Holywell Flinshire Connects operational costs.	Request to carry forward £0.115m for enterprise server projects which have not been delivered due to lack of resource. Related Hardware and software has been procured in 12/13.
Total :	**18.079**	**17.808**	**(0.271)**	**(0.023)**		

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Financing & Funding (insurance, banking etc.)	2.370	2.338	(0.032)	(0.014)	There is additional windfall income of £0.081m, which takes account of the recent settlement by Welsh Government of the Council's claim for additional costs for staff time incurred on the Housing stock transfer consultation/ballot project. Windfall income levels will be monitored closely and reported on in future monitoring reports.	Levels of unbudgeted income will continue to be monitored closely and reported on in future monitoring reports.
					A saving of £0.061m has been identified due to a budget provision within an insurance fund (relating to a potential liability for historic asbestos issues) which is now not required	Keep under review
					Additional windfall income of £0.090m had previously been anticipated in respect of settlement of an outstanding claim re. overpayment of VAT due to the impact of legal challenges to custom and practice elsewhere. A recent Tribunal decision found in favour of HMRC in respect of one of the outstanding cases, although it is considered that there are grounds for appeal. This remains one of several ongoing cases which may bring additional "windfall" income to the Council in the future, although it is now considered less likely that it will be in the current financial year.	A number of outstanding VAT claims which may result in "windfall" income will be kept under review pending legal deteminations and possible appeals.

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Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
					The base budget provides for additional windfall income of £0.152m. The amount received to date suggests that we there will be a shortfall of £0.100m against this sum. One of the reasons for this is the levels of successful appeals against NDR valuations has reduced sharply in the current year with a consequent impact on the retrospective rebates of NDR in respect of Council properties.	
					An overspend on additional superannuation costs of £0.036m in respect of added years granted to fomer employees early retirements prior to the 1996 Local Government reorganisation.	All significant overspends will be monitored monthly. Opportunities for budget realignment within the Central & Corporate Finance budgets will be explored and actioned where possible.
					A decrease in other miscellaneous Expenditure of £0.026m.	
Corporate - other	2.079	1.781	(0.298)	(0.234)	An overspend of £0.079m against the regional transformation fund following external audit requirements of the lead authority (Conwy CBC) on accounting treatment of balances.	This is a one-off budget pressure in 12/13. Notification by Conwy of the change in treatment was not received until after the 12/13 budget was approved.
					A small surplus of £0.046m from the phased funding strategy to address the Council's share of the Clwyd Pension Fund deficit following the 2010 actuarial valuation.	
					An underspend of £0.240m resulting from salary budget efficiencies previously achieved following historic service reviews	

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
					A reduced surplus of £0.015m on the rebates recovered from use of the Matrix framework for procurement of agency employees.	
					An underspend of £0.021m resulting from salary budget provision for incremental pay awards for Directors and second tier officers which will not now be utilised this year.	
					An increase of £0.025m in Carbon reduction commitment costs.	
					A surplus of £0.072m in the allocation of Non Standard Inflation which was not required to be allocated out to Departments.	
					Other minor variances amounting to a net underspend of £0.008m.	
Central Loans & Investment Account	14.200	13.724	(0.476)	(0.331)	Unbudgeted LGBI grant income (£0.162m), reduced interest received on temporary investments £0.032m, increased internal interest received on prudential borrowing £0.043m, increase in other internal interest £0.013m	
					Reduction in interest payable on variable rate market loans and internal interest payable £0.169m, reduction in Minimum Revenue provision (MRP) £0.013m, reduction in prudential borrowing costs £0.165m, reduction in debt management charges / internal interest £0.009m, Impact of Landsbanki loans impairment provision	

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Central Service Recharges	(2.054)	(1.776)	0.278	0.278	Shortfall of £0.192m of internal income recovered from trading accounts and the HRA, plus £0.086m impact of review of internal recharges from Service Level Agreements.	Support Service basis and allocations are currently being reviewed as part of the Finance Workstream of Flintshire Futures.
Central Service Coroners	0.187	0.163	(0.024)	(0.024)	Reduced recharge from WCBC due to a lower number of post mortems being carried out.	
Other variances - aggregate	6.399	6.388	(0.011)	(0.011)		
Total :	**23.181**	**22.618**	**(0.563)**	**(0.336)**		

Movements on Council Fund Unearmarked Reserves

	£m	£m
Total Reserves as at 1 April 2012	9.029	
Less - Base Level (inclusive of increase of £0.088m agreed as part of the 2012/13 budget)	(5.564)	
Total Reserves above base level		3.465
2011/12 approvals		
Less amount approved in 2011/12 as being ringfenced for Investment in Change	(1.500)	
Less allocation from contingency reserve to meet one-off / time limited costs in 2012/13 (approved in 2012/13 budget and allowed for in calculation of 2011/12 final outturn on contingency reserve)	(0.973)	
		(2.473)
2012/13 approvals		
Less - allocation from contingency reserve as a one-off investment to support the new Leisure facilities in their first year of operation (approved in Month 3 report)	(0.361)	
Less - Impact of provision for MMI scheme of arrangement - as approved by Cabinet on 19th February	(0.770)	
Less - allocation from contingency reserve towards costs of late March severe weather	(0.384)	
		(1.515)
Add Projected underspend as at 31st March 2013		4.313
Amount available for delegation to Cabinet		3.790
Less - Amount approved by Council on 1st March for funding of one-off costs in the 2013/14 budget proposals		(0.297)
Projected Level of Total Contingency Reserve as at 31st March 2013		**3.493**

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HRA Budget Monitoring 2012/13 (Month 12)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Finance and Support	2,506	2,054	-452	-219	Support recharges revised downwards (-£0.191m) to reflect 2011/12 costs. Vacancy savings (-£0.077m), Carry forwards of (-£0.049m) for Maisonette costs (there was a delay in getting security measures in place) and (-£0.150m) for Voluntary Redundancy costs not materialised in 2012/13	Work is ongoing to progress accuracy and timeliness of the HRA support recharges.
HRA Subsidy	6,110	6,170	60	27	Capital Subsidy Support charges recalulated	
Estate Management	1,710	1,614	-96	-12	Garden contract completed at £0.066m under anticipated costs, due to time taken to complete schedule.	
Repairs and Maintenance	8,778	8,268	-510	-306	Materials revised downwards due to lower than anticipated spend through the cold weather. The projection for transport costs have been reduced following a more update picture of actual costs in ledger. £0.130m carry forward for Void works completed but costs not materialised in 2012/13.	
Other variances (aggregate)	-18,102	-18,151	-49	-65		
Total :	1,002	-45	-1,047	-574		

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
              COMMITTEE

DATE: THURSDAY, 13 JUNE 2013

REPORT BY: HEAD OF FINANCE

SUBJECT: FINANCE AS A FLINTSHIRE FUTURES
              WORKSTREAM

1.00   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01   To provide an update on the Finance Workstream within the Flintshire
        Futures Programme.

2.00   BACKGROUND

2.01   The Council has developed the Flintshire Futures Programme as its
        leading corporate programme for modernising and transforming the
        organisation and to make best use of its resources and secure
        efficiencies. Within this programme there are number of workstreams
        of which Finance is one.

2.02   The report provides information on progress made on the various
        projects within the Finance workstream. As will be seen within the
        report, several aspects within this workstream have developed and
        are being built into the wider organisational change programme which
        is being scoped to achieve a more ambitious level of efficiencies
        alongside the Medium Term Financial Plan.

2.03   As part of its ongoing work programme, this Committee has
        committed to receiving half yearly updates on the Flintshire Futures
        programme. The previous update on the Finance workstream was
        provided in October 2012 in a composite report from the Head of ICT
        and Customer Services. The next update is scheduled for December
        2013.

3.00   CONSIDERATIONS

3.01   The Finance Workstream encompasses a range of work items which
        are grouped into the following four areas:

        1. Identifying new ways of funding key capital priorities
        2. Efficiency and Cost Effectiveness of Internal Process
        3. Stretching Existing Finance Programmes
        4. Developing a Value for Money (VFM) Strategy

3.02 The nature of the items in this workstream is that they are largely of a corporate nature, extending beyond managing the council's finances and / or the work of the Finance Division. Whilst being led my Finance, they do require wide input from across the whole organisation.

Identifying New Ways of funding key capital priorities

3.03 The objective of this work is to identify ways in which capital investment can be achieved by the use of new and innovative approaches. This recognises:

- the reduced level of capital funding available to the Council from Welsh Government and other external funding sources both currently and for the foreseeable future, and

- that the Council requires capital funding to invest in assets and infrastructure to deliver on its priorities.

3.04 Initial research has been carried out by officers into what options might be available to fund Council Fund Schemes e.g. Prudential Borrowing, Local Asset Backed Vehicles, joint ventures, leaseback schemes. The research has involved looking at what Councils in Wales and in parts of England have done and the types of capital works or projects that the funding options have been used to finance. A specific piece of work to look at possible ways to fund affordable housing is due to be reported to Cabinet in July.

3.05 The Council Fund research work will now feed into the Assets and Capital Programme review which has recently commenced and will inform the development of a capital strategy. The major review, referred to at the setting of the annual budget for 2013-14, is intended to be wide-ranging and governed by a member-officer board. It is planned that the first meeting of the Board in June/July will be recommended to review the whole buildings and land estate against the objectives of maintaining a scale of estate which both meets service needs and is sustainable with reduced resources for maintenance and investment; reducing the specific estate where a modern business model for a given service can operate from less premises; balancing income with cost in competitive environments (e.g. industrial estates) and making reductions in the estate according to market conditions and potential; targeted disposal of estate to achieve forward capital receipt targets. Possible priorities for early review include the civic office, community buildings and industrial unit estate.

Efficiency and Cost Effectiveness of Internal Processes

3.06 The objective of this work is to review areas of internal administration with the aim of ensuring that they are as simple and straightforward as possible and keep overhead cost to a minimum so that resources can be directed to front line service delivery.

3.07 **Internal Market** – this work is yet to be planned and, in doing so, will need to support future organisational design. The aim is to ensure that internal charging processes between departments (where these are required) are as simple as possible and that the support services cost allocations are more accurate and that there is accountability for costs.

3.08 **Finance, Governance and HR Processes** – significant progress has and continues to be made to simplify and automate (where possible) a range of process which have the effect of enabling and supporting change. This assists in the modernisation of the organisation, speeding up the decision making processes, standardisation of approach and reducing administrative costs. These have been achieved through a variety of workstreams e.g.

Workforce – the implementation of ITrent has brought in significant changes to the processing of HR and payroll data and the provision of management information for both corporate and individual managers use.

Procurement – the introduction of the P2P system across the Council is bringing significant administrative savings as well as reductions in the cost of purchases.

Council Constitution – a three year review began in 2012/13 and will look at all aspects of the constitution in a rolling programme. This will provide opportunity to review and streamline governance arrangements

Financial Procedure Rules and Contract Procedure Rules – both of these are currently the subject of review and will be coming forward for Member approval in July. The updated sets will reflect the new and modernised ways in which the Council wants to work.

For the future, reporting on these initiatives will be through the specific Flintshire Futures Workstream rather than globally through Finance.

Stretching Existing Finance Programmes

3.09 This group of work items builds on review areas which had had earlier phases developed through the Flintshire Futures Programme. Again, the objective is to streamline processes and maximise resources for front line service delivery.

3.10   **Invest to Save** – the inclusion of resources to be utilised for invest to save in order to make organisational change happen and realised financial efficiencies is built into the Medium Term Financial Plan.

3.11   **Income Maximisation** – the Council has begun to introduce new fees and charges in areas where it did not previously do so and increase fees and charges to be more in line with market rates. This has been the case in the 2012/13 and 2013/14 budgets but has been quite limited. This now needs to be taken forward into a much more business focused approach which is consistent across the Council and encompassed within a Fees and Charges Policy. This is identified within the Improvement Plan which is being published in June.

3.12   **Corporate Debt** – significant progress has been made through the adoption by the Council in the last 6 months of the Corporate Debt Policy followed by the Fair Debt policy. These documents set out very clearly the Council's approach to collecting monies which are due and how we will work with those who are experiencing difficulty in paying. Revised policies and procedures are now being rolled out across the Council and we are tackling areas of aged debt to bring outstanding issues to a close.

3.13   It has been recognised that the software system currently in use for sundry debt is not suitable for modern day debt management and debt recovery. The procurement options for a new system which will support improved recovery processes and widen the options available to customers to make payment through modern methods are currently being considered. Implementation is likely to be in April 2014.

Developing a Value for Money (VFM) Strategy

3.14   The objective is to develop a strategic programme which will enable the Council to be clear about the relative cost and performance of its range of services. This will allow the Council to make informed choices in support of maintaining investment in Council priorities during a challenging period of reduced resources.

3.15   The VFM strategy is being developed as a major change programme in its own right – to replace the current approach to service reviews which has had mixed results, and the annual approach to budget and efficiency reviews, with a challenging review of base budgets and the better alignment of budgets to priorities underpinning the strategy. This strategy will frame our approach to the review of functions, their budgets and their performance, and will support the achievement of efficiency targets to bridge the budget gap over the period of the Medium Term Financial Plan.

4.00   RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01   Members are asked to note the report

5.00   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01   None arising directly from this report

6.00   ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01   None arising directly from this report

7.00   ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01   None arising directly from this report

8.00   EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01   None arising directly from this report

9.00   PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01   None arising directly from this report

10.00   CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01   None arising directly from this report

11.00   CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01   None

12.00   APPENDICES

12.01   None

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

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **THURSDAY, 13TH JUNE 2013**

REPORT BY: **HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

SUBJECT: **WORKFORCE INFORMATION QUARTER 4 - JANUARY - MARCH 2013**

1.00   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01   To provide Members with an update for the fourth quarter / whole year 2012/13. This report provides details of the following:

Establishment
Headcount
Agency
Early Retirements (First and third quarter reports only)
Turnover
Diversity
Absence

2.00   BACKGROUND

2.01   The format of the detailed Workforce Information report was approved by Scrutiny on 9 March 2009 and agreed by Corporate Management Team on 26 March 2009.

2.02   This report now includes additional details on agency workers, including number of placements, level of spend and the savings which have been achieved through the Matrix contract and information on Early Retirements, the latter being reported bi-annually (first and third quarter reports).

2.03   The format of this accompanying report has been adapted to provide commentary on changes and trends that have occurred during the quarter on an exceptional basis.

3.00   CONSIDERATIONS

Establishment
3.01   Following the changes report during the third quarter there has been a drop in the number of positions to 9,400. This report reflects the Establishment without relief or School Supply workers. If these workers were still included within the report the number of positions would be showing as 14,905.

Headcount

3.02 The only changes to report within the Headcount report are as a result of the removal of relief and school supply workers. The headcount figure is now showing as 7,535. For comparison purposes if these workers were still included within the report the headcount would be showing as 8,500.

Agency

3.03 The statistics below provide a breakdown of spend and net savings per month during the 4th quarter.

Month	Spend £	Net Savings £	Net Savings %
January	£280,365.25	£34,050.30	12.14%
February	£274,967.35	£34,259.37	12.46%
March	£228,187.46	£26,849.00	11.77%

3.04 The table below shows a comparison of the number of placements for the whole year, 2011/12 and 2012/13. As expected, the number of placements has steadily decreased throughout this period.

			2011/12	2012/13
Quarter 1		April	269	191
		May	268	163
		June	271	178
Quarter 2		July	281	192
		August	294	224
		September	325	234
Quarter 3		October	278	240
		November	252	222
		December	237	194
Quarter 4		January	221	159
		February	211	141
		March	201	120

Figures taken from Matrix on 31st March indicate 120 placements were active, a decrease of 40% when compared to figures for the same date in the previous financial year.

3.05 In line with the AWR (Agency Workers Regulations), temporary workers are entitled to equal treatment after 12 weeks in the job, this relates to basic employment and working conditions. The Council monitors the number of placements exceeding 12 weeks and where appropriate have taken steps to reduce those that exceed this duration. Figures taken from the Matrix placement report at the end of March 2013 indicate that the number of placements over 12 weeks has dropped by 33% in comparison with figures for March 2012.

3.06 A total saving of £307,110.64 was made for the financial year 2012/13. The Agency net savings for the fourth quarter for the financial year 2012/13 are £78,757.53, compared to £104,770.36 savings for the same quarter in the

financial year 2011/12. This is mainly due to reduction in spending of over 29% this quarter, when compared to the same period in the previous year.

3.07   A review of the quarterly audit procedure performed by Matrix has resulted in a new approach being implemented. All new candidate files are now checked on a daily basis by the Account Manager at Matrix. Where an instance of non-compliance is detected, this is raised immediately with the hiring manager at Flintshire County Council, in order to take remedial action where necessary. This new process ensures all bookings meet criteria, mitigating possible risk relating to safeguarding obligations.

Early Retirements
3.08   Not reported this quarter

Turnover
3.09   The turnover report has been amended to remove the relief and school supply workers in line with the changes in the Establishment report. This change has resulted in a significant drop in the turnover rate (2.66%) compared to the last year. For comparison this rate would be showing as 10.29% if these workers had not been removed. This is still a significant drop from 12.56% at the same point last year.

Diversity
3.10   Following through on our commitment given in the Strategic Equalities Objective this quarter shows an extension in the number of protected characteristics reported in the Diversity section.

        Following the Equalities Act 2010 coming into effect nine protected characteristics were introduced. These being:

        Age
        Gender
        Disability
        Ethnicity
        Religion or belief
        Sexual orientation
        Transgender
        Marital status
        and
        Pregnancy and maternity

Absence
3.11   With regards to the 4th quarter's absence the number of days lost has remained constant when comparing it to the same period last year. Overall the increase in absence has come in the 1st and 3rd quarters.

Average FTE Days Lost

	2008/ 09 Actual FCC	All Wales Avg Whole Year 2008/09	2009/ 10 Actual FCC	All Wales Avg Whole Year 2009/10	2010/ 11 Actual FCC	All Wales Avg Whole Year 2010/11	2011/ 12 Actual FCC	All Wales Avg Whole Year 2011/12	2012/ 13 Actual FCC	2012/ 13 Target FCC
Qtr 1	2.63		2.42		2.27		2.27		2.52	2.30
Qtr 2	2.37		2.33		2.19		2.17		2.13	2.00
Qtr 3	3.28		3.03		2.87		2.89		3.17	2.50
Qtr 4	3.32		3.04		3.03		3.21		3.2	3.00
Whole Year	11.61	11.5	10.83	10.9	10.36	10.34	10.54	10.9	11.03	9.80

3.12 An additional absence report is included that shows the breakdown of absence reasons by long and short term periods. This report has been extended to show the breakdown by Directorate.

This report aligns to the breakdown developed as part of our benchmarking work across Wales. This means that each service area can now compare its long and short term absence at each level of the Organisation, throughout Wales.

There is a continued programme of attendance management reporting and action planning across each Directorate. Absences reporting, containing trigger reports, produced on a monthly basis are issued to managers. With the support of the HR team focus is made on frequent, short term absences, long term absences and return to work interviews, with employees, to understand any underlying issues affecting attendance at work.

Where necessary, capability measures are taken to address poor attendance. This includes first stage disciplinary through to dismissal.

The review of the Attendance Management Strategy has been completed and focused work is being undertaken between HR / Occupational Health and Directorate Management Teams to implement early interventions to reduce levels of sickness absence, e.g. Environment and Community Services. The Physiotherapy pilot in Streetscene has commenced and is being evaluated.

100% Attendance - Flintshire

3.13 When looking at the 4th quarter 70% of all employees have had 100% attendance. This represents an increase when compared with the same quarter last year. Overall for the year 41% of the workforce had 100% attendance.

	2010/11 Actual	2011/12 Actual	2012/13 Actual
Quarter 1	78	77	75
Quarter 2	78	84	80
Quarter 3	65	75	67
Quarter 4	69	67	70
Whole Year	40	42	41

100% Attendance by Directorate

3.14 When looking at each Directorate, Corporate Services, Lifelong Learning and Schools have the highest rates of 100% attendance at 45 and 44% respectively. These figures are between 3% and 4% higher than the rate for the Council.

	2011/12					2012/13				
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Whole Year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Whole Year
Community Services	74	78	70	65	34	69	71	63	65	30
Corporate Services	79	86	80	73	44	81	83	74	76	45
Environment	76	78	77	70	45	76	74	66	68	37
Lifelong Learning	76	82	77	70	43	78	79	72	71	44
Schools	77	89	74	65	45	76	85	65	70	44

Community Services

3.15 The Community Services Directorate Management Team continues to carry out the actions within the Attendance Management Strategy. The end of year report shows improvements in the attendance rates in Housing and the Development & Resources Services which is encouraging. However both Social Services for Adults and Social Services for Children have seen an increase in absence levels at the end of the financial year. The Directorate's absence rates remain above the corporate target.

Long term absence continues to have the greatest impact on attendance rates across all services and although managers have been working hard to keep absences to a minimum, clearly there remains more work to be done to ensure that there is a greater focus on the importance of managing attendance. A Return to Work pathway has been developed for Community Services to assist managers to facilitate early returns to work. This pathway involves early intervention by managers to identify alternative work opportunities where employees are temporarily unable to return to their substantive role for health reasons. These supportive measures should result in employees returning to work much sooner and should have a positive impact on absence rates this coming financial year as we start to embed this new approach. Directorates are being asked to set service and team targets which will provide better management information on which areas are improving and which areas require further support and intervention.

Average FTE Days Lost by Service

	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Whole Year
Development and Resources	3.73	2.31	2.84	2.35	**11.24**
Housing Services	3.03	3.14	4.02	3.06	**13.25**
Social Services for Adults	4.67	4.34	5.56	6.35	**20.92**
Social Services for Children	2.57	3.24	3.98	5.11	**14.91**
	0.42	0.19	0.41	0	**1.02**
Community Services Total	**3.9**	**3.75**	**4.78**	**5.16**	**17.57**

Corporate Services

3.16   In line with the Attendance Management policy, short term and long term absence continues to be actively managed by DMT's across Corporate Services and remains high on respective agenda's. Process requirements are reiterated from time to time and a check maintained corporately on long term absentees and persistent short term absences to ensure triggers are being adhered to. Any concerns are raised with Heads of Service for immediate remedial action.

Average FTE Days Lost by Service

	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Whole Year
Chief Executive's Dept	1.94	4.16	2.44	2.71	**11.25**
Clwyd Theatr Cymru	0.68	0.08	0.80	0.95	**2.51**
Finance	1.70	1.42	1.62	6.01	**10.75**
HR & OD	0.72	1.61	2.26	2.71	**7.29**
ICT & Customer Serv	0.78	0.95	1.17	1.06	**3.97**
Legal and Democratic Serv	4.51	2.8	2.45	1.04	**10.8**
Corporate Services Total	**1.49**	**1.52**	**1.65**	**1.75**	**6.44**

Environment

3,17   Managing attendance at work is still a priority for the Directorate with the main focus for the Directorate continuing to be Streetscene. A new method of recording absence has been introduced in Streetscene to support Supervisors and Managers on a daily basis. This involves employees calling a dedicated number and leaving a recorded message which the Administration team retrieve and pass onto the relevant Manager/Supervisor. In addition, refresher training has been scheduled to offer additional support/coaching for those responsible for managing attendance at work.

We are pleased to report that three out of the six service areas in the Environment Directorate have achieved figures which are better than the Corporate target for 2012/13. Long-term absences have increased in some of the service areas and SMTs are working with HR & OH colleagues to establish the long-term prognosis of those cases in order to expedite ill-health dismissals, where appropriate.

Average FTE Days Lost by Service

	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Whole Year
Assets and Trans	2.02	1.6	2.5	2.23	8.35
Mgt, Supp and Perf	1.92	1.37	1.26	4.37	8.92
Planning Serv	2.38	0.91	2.97	4.02	10.27
Public Protection	2.35	1.36	1.83	1.3	6.83
Regeneration Div	4.56	1.6	2.38	4.9	13.44
Streetscene Serv	3.54	3.33	4.39	4.34	15.61
	1.33	1.33	0	0	2.67
Environment Total	**2.95**	**2.42**	**3.4**	**3.55**	**12.34**

Lifelong Learning

3.18   The 4th quarter absence figures for Lifelong Learning show a very slight increase when compared to the 3rd quarter. Development and Resources continues to have the highest absences with a disappointing increase from the 3rd quarter to the 4th. Whilst the figures for School Services have fallen very slightly over the same period, there has been a significant increase over the year. Monthly trigger reports and long term sickness reports continue to be distributed to managers. There have been no first or second stage capability meetings held during the 4th quarter; however arrangements are in place for meetings to take place over the forthcoming weeks.

Average FTE Days Lost by Service

	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Whole Year
Culture and Leisure	1.58	2	2.39	2.34	8.3
Resources and Dev	3.58	2.95	3.34	3.9	13.77
Lib, Culture and Heritage	1.62	3	3.4	2.98	10.99
School Services	2.33	1.55	3.54	3.44	10.86
	7.14	0	0	0	7.14
Lifelong Learning Total	**2.56**	**2.37**	**3.11**	**3.13**	**11.12**

Schools

3.19   Within Schools, the levels of absence have decreased significantly by approximately two and a half days when compared with the same period last year. Overall Schools have the second lowest level of sickness absence when compared to the other Directorates.

4.00 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 Members note Workforce Information Report for the fourth quarter / whole year 2012/13.

5.00 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 Increased accuracy of reporting of the employed workforce and agency workers will allow the Council to better understand and therefore both plan and manage the largest single cost of service delivery.

6.00 **ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 None.

7.00 **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 None.

8.00 **EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 This increased reporting and monitoring within this area will result in more informed analysis of the impact our policies and procedures have across these groups.

9.00 **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 None.

10.00 **CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 None.

11.00 **CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 Already undertaken with Corporate Management Team and Equalities Unit.

12.00 **APPENDICES**

12.01 Available in Members' Services.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **THURSDAY 13TH JUNE 2013**

REPORT BY: **MEMBER ENGAGEMENT MANAGER**

SUBJECT: **QUARTER 4 AND YEAR END SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORTS**

1.00   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01   To note and consider the 2012/13 Quarter 4/Year End service performance reports produced at the Head of Service / Divisional level under the adopted business model of the Council. The reports cover the Quarter 4 period (January to March 2013).

1.02   To note the draft year end position of the Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges (SARC) contained within the performance reports.

1.03   To note the progress made against the Improvement Targets contained within the performance reports.

2.00   BACKGROUND

2.01   The quarterly performance/year end reports seek to provide the reader with the 'narrative' of quarterly performance which gives the context for overall performance. These reports are a quarterly review of service plans.

3.00   CONSIDERATIONS

3.01   Copies of the detailed Quarter 4/Year End performance report are attached at Appendix 1.1 – Finance, Appendix 1.2 – HR & OD, Appendix 1.3 – ICT & Customer Services and Appendix 1.4 – Legal & Democratic Services.

3.02   **Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges**
Each quarterly performance report contains an update of each of the relevant strategic risks and challenges. This update has been provided by each of the lead responsible officers and is available for comment and review.

3.03   A draft revised SARC summary position of the present Red (high risk), Amber (medium risk) and Green (low risk) status for all of the reported strategic risks and challenges is provided at Appendix 4.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That the Committee considers the 2012/13 Quarter 4 Year End performance reports produced by the Heads of Service, highlight and monitor poor performance and feedback details of any challenge to the Policy, Performance & Partnerships Team who are responsible for the overview and monitoring of improvement targets, for inclusion in the report to the Cabinet.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 None as a result of this report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None as a result of this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None as a result of this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None as a result of this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None as a result of this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Not applicable

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Not applicable

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1.1 – Finance, Appendix 1.2 – HR & OD, Appendix 1.3 – ICT and Customer Services, Appendix 1.4 – Legal and Democratic Services

Appendix 2 – Overall Summary Assessment of the Improvement Priorities
Appendix 3 – Schedule of Improvement Target Performance Data
Appendix 4 – SARC Summary

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.

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Quarterly Performance Report – Finance

Report Author   Head of Finance
Report Date   May 2013
Report Period   Quarter 4 / Year End 2012/13

Introduction

The report is produced on a quarterly basis and provided to Cabinet members for review and assurance and will be available for Overview and Scrutiny Committees as part of their Forward Work Programmes.

The report consists of an overview of the key messages to highlight across all work streams in Finance, which is followed by highlights from each service area. Parts 2 and 3 of the report include an assessment of performance over the year from the following sources:

- Improvement Plan Monitoring
- Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges
- Performance Indicators and Outcome Measures
- Improvement Target Action Plan Monitoring

- Key Actions from Service Plan Monitoring
- Internal and external regulatory reports
- Customer satisfaction and feedback
- Awards and accreditations
- Resource Management (HR, ICT, Finance, Assets)

1. Foreword

Report highlights for this quarter are the following items:

Performance	The three key performance indicators over which Finance has complete control of are on target.
Flintshire Futures	In the year the Finance work stream of Flintshire Futures was set up with four goals / milestones: • New ways of funding key capital priorities • Improving the efficiency and cost effectiveness of internal processes • Stretching the existing finance programmes, Invest to save, Income maximisation, Corporate Debt • Developing a Value For Money approach During the last quarter work begun in assessing and planning the work that needs to be done to achieve these goals / milestones.
Finance Function Review	• The Implementation of the review was from 1/1/13. • Recruitment has taken place in Q4 of 2012/13 to fill vacant posts and will be finalised in Q1 of the new financial year. • Recruitment is enabling a number of temporary and interim arrangements to come to a close. • A permanent R&B Manager will commence on 24 June which will bring the long term senior interim arrangement in R&B to an end. • A further minor revision to the R&B structure (at Team Leader and below) is being progressed to respond to the changing needs of the service. • Resource is now in place to take forward Divisional planning and monitoring co-ordination and financial strategy / research for which there has been a long term gap.

Other highlights by service area are as follows: -

Corporate Finance	• The 2013/14 Budget and Capital Programme approved on 1 March by the Council • The Treasury Management Policy and Strategy for 2013/14 was approved on 1 March • Ongoing work is being carried out on financial/affordability modelling for Single Status/Equal Pay to support the corporate project. • Preparation for the 2012/13 final accounts is planned and in progress • The Accounts and AGS for the NWRWTP have been agreed and reported to the Joint Committee • Corporate Finance are leading work across North Wales Councils on the approach to the MMI scheme of arrangement and the accounting requirements for Joint Committees • Work is underway on MTFP development and its linkages to Council Priorities
Revenues & Benefits	• The Revenues Service is maintaining sound performance but for the growing problem of a number of commercial rate avoidance schemes. In the public interest we continue to challenge the lawfulness of such

schemes through the courts and have adopted a leading role in Wales to combat this growing problem. The High Courts of Justice are set to make a judgement on the lawfulness of one such scheme in Q1 of 2013-14.

- The 'in-year' collection rate for Council Tax saw 97.8% of all balances being collected by 31st March and work continues to collect remaining balances over the coming years. The collection of 97.8% was achieved despite many customers facing payment difficulties and was 0.2% ahead of target.

- During the year the Revenues Service has been successfully piloting Agile and Home working which has proved to be very effective in helping to improve work productivity and the level of service we provide to customers. 100% of the Council Tax and Business Rate team now participate in this way of working and during the latter part of the year the team moved to desk sharing arrangements, which will now help the service to reduce the level of office accommodation. A comprehensive staff questionnaire was also completed during the year to assess the impact and benefits to date of the agile working pilot. A snapshot of the survey results is as follows :-

Thinking about your new ways of working, to what extent have they had a positive or negative effect on the following?
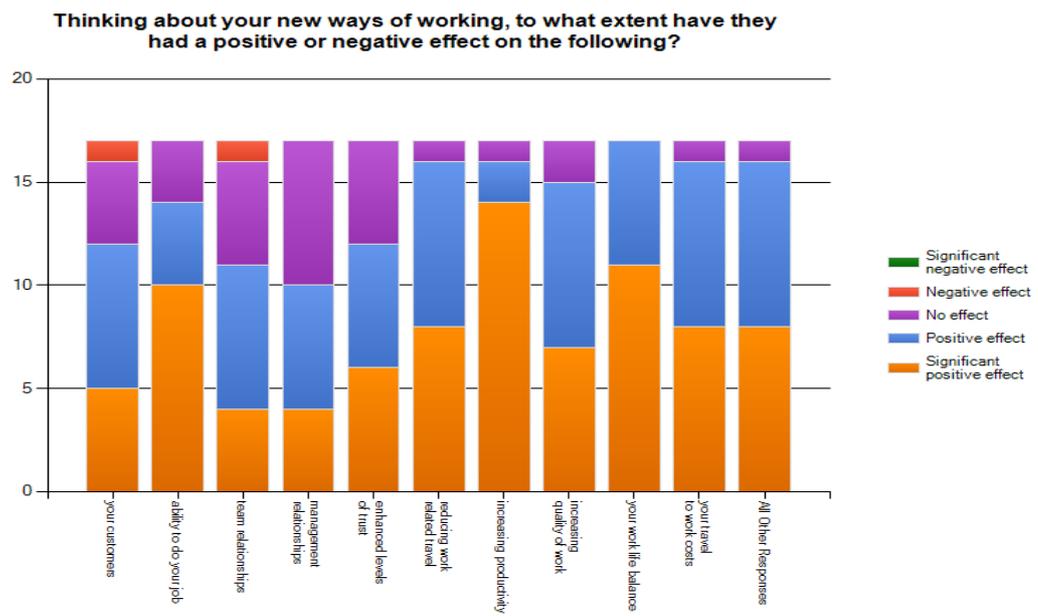
- During the year, the Revenues service led on the migration and move to a hosted software solution for cash/payment receipting which is deployed across the Council. The move to a hosted solution allows the Council to comply with the increasing level of the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards (PCIDSS), widely accepted as the standards that are required to optimise the security of credit, debit and cash card transactions and protect cardholders against misuse of their personal information.

- The software upgrade also allows the Council, for the first time, to take payment up front for many services that have relied upon providing the service first then invoiced later. Going forward, this is seen as a more

	effective way of paying for services and should reduce the need and cost of sending out invoices and then collecting. The new system should, in time, also reduce level of unpaid corporate debt.
	• The Revenues and Benefits service successfully completed the annual billing process to 67,000 households in Flintshire; this included the implementation of the new Council Tax Reduction Scheme. All cases for Council Tax Benefit were successfully migrated to the new scheme and the bills were issued with the reduction on them.
	• The Benefits service has had a challenging year dealing with the many changes and preparations required for Welfare Reform; in spite of this the performance has stayed within target.
Internal Audit	The performance of Internal Audit is reported to the Audit Committee on a quarterly basis
Clwyd Pension Fund	The performance of the Clwyd Pension Fund is reported to the Pension Panel, consisting of elected members from Flintshire CC, Denbighshire CC and Wrexham CBC and staff/union observers, on a quarterly basis and can be found at www.clwydpensionfund.org.uk

2. Performance Summary

2.1 Improvement Plan Monitoring

The following table summarises the progress made to date and progress against the desired outcome of the Council Improvement Priorities on which the Finance Division lead.

KEYS
Progress RAG

R	**Limited Progress** - delay in scheduled activity; not on track
A	**Satisfactory Progress** - some delay in scheduled activity, but broadly on track
G	**Good Progress** - activities completed on schedule, on track

Outcome RAG

R	**Low** - lower level of confidence in the achievement of outcome(s)
A	**Medium** - uncertain level of confidence in the achievement of the outcome(s)
G	**High** - full confidence in the achievement of the outcome(s)

Council Priority	Target Date	Progress RAG	Outcome RAG	Commentary
1. To be a modern, efficient and cost effective public organisation through our four resource strategies - the Medium Term Financial Strategy, the People Strategy, the Asset Management Strategy and the ICT Strategy - whilst ensuring our local taxes and fees and charges are fair and affordable				
1.2 To adopt an accurate forecasting model for finances and costs for the medium term.	Sept 2011	G	G	Completed but subject to on-going

				refinement and development
1.3 To reduce asset costs and maximise income and receipts	Dec 2016	A	G	On track, for a more general overview of progress please see the Assets and Transportation Q3 Performance Report
1.4 To adopt a corporate fees and charges / income maximisation policy and undertake a review of fees and charges and maximise income	Mar 2013	A	A	See section 3.1
6. To protect and grow the local and regional economy, to be a prosperous County and to provide help and support for those vulnerable to poverty.				
6.11 Develop a strategy to manage the impacts of Welfare Reform	October 2013	A	A	See section 3.2

2.2 Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges (SARC)

The table below summarises the position of SARCs at the end of the reporting period.

KEY

R	**High Risk**
A	**Medium Risk**
G	**Low Risk**

Commentary is included in section 3 for those SARCS: -
- that are showing a Red RAG status
- where the RAG status has changed since the last reporting period
- where the Green Predictive Date has changed since the last reporting period
- where there has been considerable change or additions of secondary risks and activity

SARC	Previous RAG Status	Current RAG Status	Green Predictive	Commentary
CG06 Medium Term Financial Strategy	A	A ↔	TBC	
CG07 Financial Management & Control	A	A ↔	TBC	
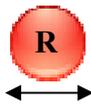
| CD38
Welfare Reform | R | R ⟷ | 2016/17 | See section 3.2 |

2.3.1 Performance Indicators and Outcome Measures

Key

R	**Target missed**
A	**Target missed but within an acceptable level**
G	**Target achieved or exceeded**

The status of the indicators are summarised for this quarter below:

R 1   **A** 1   **G** 3

Graphs and commentary are included section 3 for those indicators shown with a RAG status of either Amber or Red. An asterisk (*) indicates that the indicator is an *improvement* target.

Indicator	Annual Target	Previous Year End Outturn	Current Quarter Outturn	Current Year End Outturn	RAG (Year End)	Change e.g. Improved / Downturned (since previous year end)
DWP1L* Time taken to process new housing / council tax benefit claims	18 days	17.30 days	16.72 days	**16.47 days**	G	Improved from previous quarter
DWP2L* Time taken to process housing / council tax benefit changes of circs	9 days	6.44 days	4.89 days	**6.78 days**	G	Improved from previous quarter
CFH/007 Percentage of 2012/13 Council Tax collected in year (cumulative)	97.6%	97.81%	97.6%	**97.8%**	G	Collection was higher than the annual target and consistent with collection during the previous year
CFH/008 Percentage of 2012/13 Business Rates collected in year (cumulative)	99.0%	98.27%	99.0%	**98.45%**	A	Collection was lower than the annual target (see Section 3.2)

						but an improvement of 0.2% was achieved compared to the previous year
CFH/006* Percentage of undisputed invoices paid on time (30 days)	95.0%	87.93%	86.32%	**85.80%**	R	See Section 3.1

2.3.2 Improvement Target Action Plan Monitoring

Key - ✓ on track, ✗ behind schedule, **C** completed

Ref	Action & Planned Completion date	Progress
DWP1L*	Turnaround times are monitored weekly and resources allocated to achieve the annual target	✓
DWPL2*	Turnaround times are monitored weekly and resources allocated to achieve the annual target	✓
CFH/006*	See section 3.1	✓

2.4 Key Actions from Service Plan Monitoring

Key - ✓ on track, ✗ behind schedule, **C** completed

Improvement Area	On-track?	Commentary
Corporate Finance:		
Technology Forge	✓	See Section 3.1
Review usage and functionality of corporate grants register	✓	See Section 3.1
Revenues & Benefits:		
Universal Credit and Council Tax Replacement Scheme	✓	See section 3.2
Corporate Debt Review including Corporate Debt Policy	✓	See section 3.2
Develop and implement technologies to deliver efficiencies and to support the Corporate Web Development Programme.	✓	See section 3.2

2.5 Internal & External Regulatory Reports

No internal or external audit/regulatory work was completed during the quarter. Below is an update of the work undertaken in the last quarter?
.

Undertaken By	Title & Date Report Received	Overall Report Status
Wales Audit Office	Audit of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit claim for the year ended March 2012 30 November 2012	Work directed by DWP is now complete and has been resubmitted for action/resolution

3. Exception Reporting

3.1   Corporate Finance

Improvement Plan Monitoring

Adopt a corporate fees and charges / income maximisation policy and review fees and charges and maximise income

Deloittes were commissioned to assist with this work, building on a Pan Wales study of income generation opportunities. Members agreed not to pursue this work immediately as part of the 2012/13 budget strategy.

As part of the 2013/14 budget strategy the Deloittes work has been revisited and a number of proposals included in the 2013/14 budget. Work on a corporate charging policy is scheduled to be progressed in the early part of 2013/14.

Performance Indicator and Outcome Measures

CFH/006 – Undisputed invoices paid on time

The processing of invoices is a devolved function that is reported on by the central Accounts Payable team who continue to work with directorates to drive up performance. However, Quarter 4 shows a disappointing result to that of Quarter 3 and overall significantly less invoices were paid on time than the target of 95%. This is a reflection on how efficiently invoices are dealt with when they come in and prior to being forwarded onto finance sections for processing. P2P is now being rolled out throughout all directorates except Lifelong Learning therefore we would hope to see improvements during 2013.14.

Service Plan Monitoring

Technology Forge

The move to the Technology Forge Asset Management system from the spreadsheet based summary asset register was completed during the year. The on-going benefits from the implementation of the new system will be demonstrated in future final accounts activity.

Review of Corporate Grants Register
A review of the Corporate Grants Register was completed in the year. Work is on target to update and maintain the register.

3.2 Revenues & Benefits

Improvement Monitoring and Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges (SARC)

Welfare Reform

Board meetings have continued to take place which involve elected members and representatives from a wide range of partner organisations to ensure
that there is a collaborative approach locally to this work. The AMB continues to underpin key areas such as the development of Flintshire Money, Advice & Financial Capability Strategy, and the development and roll out of a county wide case management system. The AMB is critical to partnership and collaborative working operationally.

The SARC has been revised to reflect emerging risks in the project.

There is an aim is to recruit 3 officers whose roles will involve making contact with individuals affected by the changes in the benefit system. There have been 2 successful appointments and WG has provided continued S180 funding from April for an additional post; recruitment for this is taking place. This will greatly assist the proactive and reactive work needed to support those residents who will be affected by the changes introduced by Welfare Reform.

Performance Indicator and Outcome Measures

Business Rates

Collection of Business Rates is generally sound but for the growing problem of a number of commercial rate avoidance/evasion scheme. These schemes are operated by a small number of commercial landlords who enter into arrangements with third parties in an attempt to claim Charitable Rate Relief to avoid payment. The Council, along with other Councils, continue to challenge the lawfulness of such schemes in an effort to bring these schemes to an end. The High Courts of Justice are set to make a judgement on the lawfulness of one such scheme in Q1 of 2013-14.

The 'in-year' collection rate for Business Rates saw 98.5% of all balances being collected by 31st March and work continues to collect remaining balances over the coming years. The collection of 98.5% (0.2% up on the previous year) was achieved despite the growing number of rate avoidance/evasion schemes. The loss of 'in-year' collection whilst the courts adjudicate on these matters is calculated at 0.4% and therefore collection would have been 98.9% but for the existence of these schemes.

Service Action Plan Monitoring

Council Tax Support scheme

Despite various hurdles and challenges in previous quarters, the service successfully implemented the new Council Tax Reduction Scheme and delivered a successful annual billing cycle on time. All cases for the former Council Tax Benefit were successfully migrated to the new scheme and the reduction posted onto the bills. Systems and

processes are now in place to enable effective processing of new scheme cases for the new year. This area, however, does still contain an element of risk the budget is still finite and the funding does not take account of fluctuations in caseload and the wider Welfare Reform changes could still affect the ability of people to pay their Council Tax.

Corporate Debt Review

Following extensive consultation, the Corporate Debt Policy was finally approved by Cabinet in December 2012 and is ready now being embedded across the Council. A Fair Debt Policy has now been finalised to determine our process of working with individuals with debt problems and was approved by cabinet in April 2013.

Work continues on the Corporate Debt project and it is pleasing to report positive results are now being achieved in chasing outstanding debts. A number of cases are also progressing through the County Court to follow up on non payment of invoices.

Funding has also been approved to procure a new Corporate Debt System for implementation during 2014-15. This is a positive step because the introduction of a new and efficient system will ensure that debt is collected in the most efficient way.

Collaborative Working

The Revenues service continues to work in collaboration with other Councils and is currently lead authority for the procurement of two key contracts across the region - bailiff services and cash in transit services.

There continues to be active collaboration across Wales amongst Benefit Managers to continue the work with Wales Government and Department of Work and Pensions in relation to decisions about amendments to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and other Welfare Reform changes.

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Quarterly Performance Report – Human Resources & Organisation Design

Report Author   Head of HR&OD - Helen Stappleton
Report Date   May 2013
Report Period   Quarter 4 / Year End 2012/13

Introduction

The report is produced on a quarterly basis and provided to Cabinet members for review and assurance and will be available for Overview and Scrutiny Committees as part of their Forward Work Programmes.

The report consists of an overview of the key messages to highlight across all work streams Human Resources and Organisation Design, which is followed by highlights from each service area. Parts 2 and 3 of the report include an assessment of performance in the quarter from the following sources:

- Improvement Plan Monitoring
- Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges
- Performance Indicators and Outcome Measures
- Improvement Target Action Plan Monitoring

- Key Actions from Service Plan Monitoring
- Internal and external regulatory reports
- Customer satisfaction and feedback
- Awards and accreditations
- Resource Management (HR, ICT, Finance, Assets)

1. Foreword

The People Strategy and HR and OD's Service Plan are based on five key themes (the 5 C's) as set out below. The highlights and achievements under the five themes are as follows:

Customer	**HRMIS (iTrent**) - Manager Self Service is available to all managers and all users can view basic payslips on-line. All managers now have access to their employees' data. The expenses module has been implemented for Corporate Services and the next phase of roll out commenced in March for Lifelong Learning and Environment. The Learning Administration module has been launched on iTrent. All employees with access to iTrent will be able to view and access all Corporate Training events via iTrent Employee Self Service and once they have completed an event with an associated qualification or skill such as ILM, NVQ or First Aid, this will automatically be captured on their "Personal Learning Account" in the iTrent system. Applying for courses on-line will speed up the application process and remove the need for paper forms (any employees without IT access can apply directly through Corporate Training, Support Services on ext 2340) and any authorisation will also be electronic. Automating these processes will also enable us, as an organisation, to report on take up and cost of training and in the longer term will provide a better understanding of training requirements for the organisation through detailed skills match and gap functionality and reporting. Progress continues to be made with the HR and OD review – the new service will be effective from 1st June 2013.
Change	Preparation work is continuing to take place on developing improved systems for increasing the pace of change (e.g. more recently, a new Job Evaluation process that is simplified and slicker). The next phase of organisational change, to be led by the Chief Executive, is currently being scoped with the initial phase focusing on the integration of business units across the Council.
Capacity	The current appraisal process has been reviewed by a working group of managers and team leaders and the draft is completed. The Council's Competency framework has been redesigned and the appraisal process incorporates these new competencies. The proposed framework and approach to appraisals has been reviewed by the Corporate Management and Leadership teams. The new framework will be implemented from Spring 2013.
Consolidation	Single Status is progressing and the Council is at the closing stages of drafting a Single Status Collective Agreement. The Council has achieved a provisional agreement with the Trade Unions on Part III provisions (terms and conditions of employment) and is testing the affordability of pay and grading models.
Collaboration	A North Wales coaching framework is in place and effectively delivering Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) Level 5 coaching

	programmes. The partnerships with Deeside College for delivering the Council's Leadership and Management Development Programmes and the partnership with Wrexham County Borough Council for Occupational Health services continue to operate successfully.

2. Performance Summary

2.1 Improvement Plan Monitoring

The following table summarises the progress made to date and the progress against the desired outcome of the Council Improvement Priorities on which the HR&OD Service lead.

KEYS
Progress RAG

R	**Limited Progress** - delay in scheduled activity; not on track
A	**Satisfactory Progress** - some delay in scheduled activity, but broadly on track
G	**Good Progress** - activities completed on schedule, on track

Outcome RAG

R	**Low** - lower level of confidence in the achievement of outcome(s)
A	**Medium** - uncertain level of confidence in the achievement of the outcome(s)
G	**High** - full confidence in the achievement of the outcome(s)

Council Priority	Target Date	Progress RAG	Outcome RAG	Commentary
3. To be a modern, caring and flexible employer with fair and equal terms and conditions of employment under a Single Status Agreement				
3.1 Achieve a legal, acceptable and affordable Single Status Agreement	TBA	A	A	Progress has been made on achieving Collective Agreement – Please see paragraph 3a
3.2 Negotiate an Equal Pay Settlement	TBA	A	A	Strategy for settlement links directly with the Project Plan for achieving a new Single Status Collective Agreement - Please see paragraph 3a
3.3 To complete the review of human resources policies as a modern employer	On-going	G	G	The review of HR policies is an on-going.

				Excellent progress has been made in completing key policies – e.g. Agile Working, Flexible Hours Scheme, Domestic Violence etc.

2.2 Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges (SARC)

The table below summarises the position of SARCs at the end of the reporting period.

Commentary is included in section 3 for those SARCS: -
- that are showing a Red RAG status
- where the RAG status has changed since the last reporting period
- where the Green Predictive Date has changed since the last reporting period
- where there has been considerable change or additions of secondary risks and activity

SARC	Previous RAG Status	Current RAG Status	Green Predictive
CG10 People Strategy	A	A	**March 2013 (with a further review imminent for the next phase of the strategy)**
CG11 Terms and Conditions of Employment	A	A	**TBA**
CG16 Workforce and Succession Planning	A	A	**March 2013 (as part of Service Planning process)**

2.3.1 Performance Indicators and Outcome Measures

The status of the indicators are summarised for this quarter below:

R   1   A   1   G

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Graphs and / or commentary are included in section 3 for those indicators shown with a RAG status of either Amber or Red. An asterisk (*) indicates that the indicator is an *improvement* target.

Indicator	Annual Target	Previous Year End Outturn	Current Quarter Outturn	Current Year End Outturn	RAG (Year End)	Change e.g. Improved / Downturned (since previous year end)
* CHR/002 - The number of working days/shifts per full time equivalent (FTE) local authority employee lost due to sickness absence	9.8 FTE Days Lost	10.54	3.2	**11.03**	R	Downturned (Please see Section 3)
REM3 **HR&OD** – Increase the percentage of employees receiving an annual appraisal with Individual Development Plan to 100%	100%	93%	N/A – reported annually only	**76% (for HR and OD only)**	A	Downturned (Please see Section 3)
REM3 **by Directorate** – Increase the percentage of employees receiving an annual appraisal with Individual Development Plan to 100%	100%	Not Reported	N/A – reported annually only	**Corporate Services - 38% Community Services – 70% Environment – 66% Lifelong Learning – 84%**	A	This is the first year these figures have been reported. Completion rates in some areas are low primarily because of the high number of Service Reviews that are in the process of being implemented (this applies particularly to Corporate Services). Further work will be undertaken by

					service areas to increase the completion rates.

Ref	Action & Planned Completion date	Progress
CHR/002	There is a continued programme of attendance management reporting and action planning across each Directorate. Absences reporting, containing trigger reports, produced on a monthly basis are issued to managers. With the support of the HR team focus is made on frequent, short term absences, long term absences and return to work interviews, with employees, to understand any underlying issues affecting attendance at work. Where necessary, capability measures are taken to address poor attendance. This includes first stage disciplinary through to dismissal. The review of the Attendance Management Strategy has been completed and focused work is being undertaken between HR / Occupational Health and Directorate Management Teams to implement early interventions to reduce levels of sickness absence particularly in services where sickness absence is a concern e.g. Environment and Community Services. The Physiotherapy pilot in Streetscene has commenced and its impact is currently being evaluated with a view to extending the service to other services in the Council. New initiatives such as the creation of a Pathway to support employees to return to work following long term absence are being piloted in Community Services. Specific coaching support is being provided to supervisors to ensure that attendance is being managed robustly in accordance with the Council's procedures. A further report on measures being taken to improve performance will be presented to the Cabinet Committee in June 2013.	✓

2.4 Key Actions from Service Plan Monitoring

The following table shows the progress made against key areas of improvement/actions in the HR & OD service plan. A ✖ indicates those areas which have incurred slippage or have been subject to a revised timetable and references the page number where commentary can be found to further explain the slippage/revised timescales: -

Key - ✓ on track, ✖ behind schedule, **C** completed

Improvement Area	On-track?	Commentary
Customer		
To provide the tools and development to meet the requirements of our customers, ensuring that our structures are shaped with the primary aim of delivering excellent customer services.	✔	Progress continues to be made with the HR and OD review and it is on track for implementation on 1st June 2013. iTrent Self Service modules has now been implemented for employees and managers, allowing changes to personal details and on-line access to pay information. The efficiency benefits from this project will be realised through the Cross Organisational Administration Review (e.g. automation of e-expenses, e-payslips etc) in the re-design of posts within that review and the reduction in headcount, together with evidence of improved management capability to manage teams and performance remotely, supported by clear performance and workforce data. The following has already been achieved: • All Employees (Non Schools) have IT access to Employee Self Service and can view basic payslips • All Managers (Non schools) with IT access have access to their employees' person and position data via Manager Self Service • The roll out of automated expenses to all employees within corporate Services is complete. Work has commenced in implementing this module in Environment and Lifelong Learning. • Corporate Training module fully developed and tested. Learning Events are now available through Employee Self Service to all Employees with access to iTrent. This project will carry forward into the new 2013 – 2016 People Strategy.
To develop a 'world class' HR service; supporting the facilitation of change; developing and retaining talent in the organisation	✔	See above
To support the delivery of strategic objectives and the provision of responsive transactional HR services to achieve customer excellence	✔	See above

Change		
To ensure that managers are confident and competent in being able to lead and manage change effectively	**C**	Regional 'Managing Change Effectively' programme in place with managers from Flintshire attending. Further work is required to embed improved practice.
To achieve planned organisational change and on going modernisation of service delivery	✔	Next phase of change is being scoped as part of Flintshire Futures Programme which will be more fundamental, focusing on the whole Council and reviewing service delivery models, support costs and overheads and organisational layers and spans of control. The first phase of scoping will relate to the identification and integration of Business Units across the Council. Lean review work, re-engineering of processes and implementation of agile working styles will continue to contribute to the modernisation of service delivery.
To create and design a framework for managing change effectively	✘	The timescale for the development of a new guide on Organisation Design has been re-prioritised in the People Strategy Action Plan. The timescale has been amended so that the appropriate capacity can be directed at the Single Status project. This will re-emerge as a key priority when the next phase of organisational change is scoped out (see above).
To promote a culture whereby employees and teams understand and participate in organisational change	✔	Managers developing effective skills on managing change following regional development programme. The implementation of tools and techniques such as 'lean' and greater involvement of employees in Job Design activities and through improved consultation practice demonstrates a positive shift in culture in relation to participation in Change Programmes. The implementation of a new competency framework, that defines 'desired' behaviours in relation to 'change' will also support the promotion of a culture where employees understand and participate in organisational change. This work will carry forward into the new 2013 – 2016 People Strategy.
Capacity		
To promote desired behaviours, in line with the 'Flintshire Competency Dictionary' across the organisation	✔	This project has also been integrated with the development of a new competency based Appraisal system under the Council's People Strategy / Workforce Worksteam (Flintshire Futures Programme). See 3c

		This project is progressing well with a new set of behavioural competencies having been mapped across into regional and FCC's original competency dictionary.
		The following has been achieved
		• A new set of FCC behavioural competencies have been designed.
		• Consultation has been completed with the Leadership group, Corporate Management Team, Trade Unions and employees (including those with protected characteristics)
		• The new Competency Framework will be published during April / May 2013.
		Implementation of this project will carry forward into the new 2013 – 2016 People Strategy and be completed in the early part of the plan.
To remodel the workforce as part of corporate and service planning to ensure we have the right people with the right skills, in the right place at the right time	✓	Workforce Planning framework is under development as per the revised People Strategy Action Plan. This will be incorporated into a 'People Plan' which will be built into the service planning process.
		Directorate Management Teams have incorporated workforce planning principles into their service planning process for 2013.
		Workforce planning principles will also be followed during the organisation design process as part of the next phase of organisational change.
		This work will carry forward into the new 2013 – 2016 People Strategy.
To promote succession and continuity planning; identifying the potential and nurturing talent at every level of the organisation	✓	This project has been integrated with the development of a new set of behavioural competencies.
		The following has been achieved:
		• A new competency based Appraisal process has been drafted.
		• Consultation has been completed with the Leadership Group, Corporate Management Team, Trade Unions and Employees (including those with protected characteristics)

		• A new Competency based development framework has been designed. The framework aligns to all four levels of competency and links to the Appraisal process. This will enable staff and managers to plan and nurture talent at every level • The new competency based Development Framework has been created with our partners in Deeside College and TUC Wales - incorporating nationally recognised qualifications and the Essential skills agenda. In May 2013, the following action will have been completed: • Publication and communication of a Competency based Appraisal scheme • Incorporation of the new Performance development model • Promotion and communication of the competency based development framework Implementation of this project will carry forward into the new 2013 – 2016 People Strategy.
To develop key skills, experience and knowledge for employees to support the delivery of services now and in the future	**C**	Development programmes in place - People Development Framework
Consolidation - and reward the contribution of employees and to support the organisation in recruitment and retention		
To enhance Flintshire's reputation as a 'modern employer of first choice' to attract and retain talent within a highly competitive labour market	✓	No change from last quarter. The Council is working towards Single Status which will modernise its pay and reward arrangements. The current phasing in of Flexible and agile working styles and the underpinning HR policies and procedures will further enhance the Council's reputation as a modern employer. The underpinning HR policy framework to support Agile has been developed, together with a suite of policies to support the effective implementation of Single Status, e.g. Workload Management, Annualised Hours, Working Time policies – all are positive in the promotion of

		Flintshire as a 'modern employer of first choice'.
To ensure we set and meet high standards in organisational, team and individual performance through sound people management practice, with specific priorities in applying consistent practice in attendance management, performance appraisals and recruitment	✓	The focus on improved practice in relation to attendance management, the drafting and agreement of a new Competency Framework and Appraisal system will enhance our practices across the Council. The roles and responsibilities of employees in the new HR and OD service will enable an improvement in the level of professional HR support and targeted HR service delivery and OD initiatives to be achieved.
To provide and maintain a fair and equitable reward strategy to recognise and reward the contributions of employees and to support the organisation in recruitment and retention	✓	Linked to achievement of Single Status and new pay and grading structure and the development of a Reward Strategy.
Collaboration		
To continue to develop and maintain a positive employee relations culture by promoting open and effective partnership working with trades unions	✓	Effective partnership working in place with TUs
To lead collaborative working innovative and responsive Human Resources shared solutions across the North Wales region	✓	Full participation in Collaborative working – e.g. sharing and co-development of HR policy and Outplacement services. Work has taken place to identify the policies that will be developed collaboratively. The Occupational Health partnership with Wrexham County Borough Council and partnership with Deeside College to deliver Leadership and Management Development programmes continue to operate effectively This work will carry forward into the new 2013 – 2016 People Strategy.
To develop good practice principles and capacity to lead and participate effectively in collaborative working projects	✓	Development and implementation of a Human Resources Toolkit for Collaboration and Integration Projects is near completion.
To promote mobility across the public sector to achieve workforce planning, protect recruitment and retention and develop talent	✓	Every effort is made to promote mobility where possible in relation to regional collaborative projects and joint working across local authorities and public sector.

2.5 Internal & External Regulatory Reports

The following internal or external audit/regulatory work has been completed during the quarter and the outcome of the work can be summarised as follows. Negative outcomes are discussed in more detail in section 3 and page numbers are referenced in the table below.

Undertaken By	Title & Date Report Received	Overall Report Status
Helen Rees, Internal Audit	Disciplinary Policy Review – final report yet to be received	To be confirmed

3. Exception Reporting

3a - Improvement Plan Monitoring

3.1. Achieve a legal, acceptable and affordable Single Status Agreement (Amber RAG status). Whilst the original target date for full implementation has not been achieved, the Council has made good solid progress in negotiating Part III terms and conditions of employment as part of a provisional agreement and is currently testing the affordability of pay and grading models with a view to achieving a proposed Single Status Collective Agreement in the near future. Further information on the progress of the project will be provided over the coming weeks.

3.2 Negotiate an Equal Pay Settlement (Amber RAG status – comment / position remains unchanged from end of year reporting). This project has clear inter-dependencies with the Single Status project. The Council's intention to settle Equal Pay claims (without prejudice) within a similar timeframe to Single Status will increase the complexity of both projects and requires careful consideration of the legal context with the need to protect the Council from future liabilities wherever possible. The Council will be entering into discussions with the Trade Unions once a Single Status Collective Agreement is close to being provisionally agreed.

3b - Performance Indicators and Outcome Measures (Amber RAG status).

*CHR/002 – (NI24) The number of working days/shifts per full time equivalent (FTE) local authority employee lost due to sickness absence (Amber RAG status).

There is a continued programme of attendance management reporting and action planning across each Directorate. Absences reporting, containing trigger reports, produced on a monthly basis are issued to managers. With the support of the HR team focus is made on frequent, short term absences, long term absences and return to work interviews, with employees, to understand any underlying issues affecting attendance at work.

Where necessary, capability measures are taken to address poor attendance. This includes first stage disciplinary through to dismissal. Further work is being undertaken in partnership with the Occupational Health service to proactively reduce levels of sickness

absence with the introduction of physiotherapy service pilots within key services such as Streetscene.

The downturn in performance for CHR/002 focuses on each Directorate and the actions being taken to improve performance is as follows:

Community Services

The Community Services Directorate Management Team continues to carry out the actions within the Attendance Management Strategy. The end of year report shows improvements in the attendance rates in Housing and the Development & Resources Services which is encouraging. However both Social Services for Adults and Social Services for Children have seen an increase in absence levels at the end of the financial year. The Directorate's absence rates remain above the corporate target.

Long term absence continues to have the greatest impact on attendance rates across all services and although managers have been working hard to keep absences to a minimum, clearly there remains more work to be done to ensure that there is a greater focus on the importance of managing attendance. A Return to Work pathway has been developed for Community Services to assist managers to facilitate early returns to work. This pathway involves early intervention by managers to identify alternative work opportunities where employees are temporarily unable to return to their substantive role for health reasons. These supportive measures should result in employees returning to work much sooner and should have a positive impact on absence rates this coming financial year as we start to embed this new approach. Directorates are being asked to set service and team targets which will provide better management information on which areas are improving and which areas require further support and intervention.

Corporate Services

In line with the Attendance Management policy, short term and long term absence continues to be actively managed by DMTs across Corporate Services and remains high on respective agenda's. Process requirements are reiterated from time to time and a check maintained corporately on long term absentees and persistent short term absences to ensure triggers are being adhered to. Any concerns are raised with Heads of Service for immediate remedial action.

Environment

Managing attendance at work is still a priority for the Directorate with the main focus for the Directorate continuing to be Streetscene.   A new method of recording absence has been introduced in Streetscene to support Supervisors and Managers on a daily basis. This involves employees calling a dedicated number and leaving a recorded message which the Administration team retrieve and pass onto the relevant Manager/Supervisor. In addition, refresher training has been scheduled to offer additional support/coaching for those responsible for managing attendance at work.

We are pleased to report that three out of the six service areas in the Environment Directorate have achieved figures which are better than the Corporate target for 2012/13.

Long-term absences have increased in some of the service areas and SMTs are working with HR & OH colleagues to establish the long-term prognosis of those cases in order to expedite ill-health dismissals, where appropriate.

Lifelong Learning

The Quarter 4 absence figures for Lifelong Learning show a very slight increase on Quarter 3. Development and Resources continues to have the highest absences with a disappointing increase from Quarter 3 to Quarter 4. Whilst the figures for School Services have fallen very slightly from Quarter 3 to Quarter 4, over the year there has been a significant increase. Monthly trigger reports and long term sickness reports continue to be distributed to managers. There have been no first or second stage capability meetings held this quarter; however arrangements are in place for meetings to take place over the forthcoming weeks.

REM3 - Increase the percentage of employees receiving an annual appraisal with Individual Development Plan to 100%.

The new HR and OD service is being implemented from June 2013. As a result of this, 17 performance appraisals have been placed on hold (last completed in March 2012) as a number of roles will be changing significantly from June. 7 of these appraisals are planned to be completed by the end of May 2013 and the remaining number by the end of July 2013 to achieve 100% completion.

3c - Service Plan Monitoring.

As previously reported, the People Strategy Action Plan was reviewed in September 2012 to better reflect the organisation's priorities. The timescale for the development of a new guide on Organisation Design has been re-prioritised in the People Strategy Action Plan. The timescale has been amended so that the appropriate capacity can be directed at the Single Status project. This will re-emerge as a key priority when the next phase of organisational change is scoped.

Quarterly Performance Report – ICT & Customer Services

Report Author   Head of ICT & Customer Services
Report Date   May 2013
Report Period   Quarter 4 / Year End 2012/13

Introduction

The report is produced on a quarterly basis and provided to Cabinet members for review and assurance and will be available for Overview and Scrutiny Committees as part of their Forward Work Programmes.

The report consists of an overview of the key messages to highlight across all work streams in ICT and Customer Services, which is followed by highlights from each service area. Parts 2 and 3 of the report include an assessment of performance in the quarter from the following sources:

- Improvement Plan Monitoring
- Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges
- Performance Indicators and Outcome Measures
- Improvement Target Action Plan Monitoring

- Key Actions from Service Plan Monitoring
- Internal and external regulatory reports
- Customer satisfaction and feedback
- Awards and accreditations
- Resource Management (HR, ICT, Finance, Assets)

1. Foreword

<u>ICT</u>

The fourth quarter saw considerable progress being made in implementing the 2012/13 ICT Service Plan.

- Upgrading of core infrastructure for Capita Housing and Civica Revenues and Benefits
- Progress on the ICT Service Review
- Procurement and contract award for the Microsoft Enterprise Agreement for Office productivity software, Microsoft Exchange and Core Infrastructure
- Implementation of the new "hosted cash" system which is a "Cloud" solution hosted off-site by our software provider.
- Implementation of the Housing Contact Centre
- Implementation of voice recording for the Streetscene Contact Centre
- Rollout of the Electronic Document Management system in Housing, Assets and HR
- Collaborative procurement with Denbighshire and Wrexham for Networking framework led by Flintshire, contract awarded, framework available across public sector in Wales.
- Extension of agile working facilities in County Offices, Flint

During 2012/13 there has been significant progress against the priorities of the ICT Strategy, particularly in terms of the Customer and Change themes with a particular focus in supporting the Flintshire Futures Programme including e-Procurement, Customer Relationship Management, Mobile Working, Contact Centre and Flintshire Connects.

A considerable amount of collaborative ICT work has been undertaken with other North Wales Councils with a number of key projects being led by Flintshire. Several of these projects are now being considered as potential national initiatives and we continue to work within a national framework for collaboration.

Service Performance
Performance for Quarter 4 showed an average of 93.33% for ICT Helpdesk calls resolved in agreed timescales slightly below the target of 94%. This is a slight reduction on Q3.

Calls resolved at first point of contact are up on the previous quarter at 39.33%. This continues to be a welcome improvement in this KPI and is related to work that continues to be being undertaken to move more calls from 2nd Level support to the Helpdesk as part of the Helpdesk Improvement Plan.

Call volumes were 8,472 in Q4 compared with 8,390 in Q3, an increase of 1%

In relation to customer satisfaction with the helpdesk and second level support immediately following incident resolution, we have maintained high levels of

performance with the overall service provided by the helpdesk scoring an average of 4.8 out of a maximum of 5.0, and for second level support 4.7

A review has been undertaken of the Helpdesk provision and a Helpdesk Improvement Plan is being implemented by the ICT Management Team with the intention of moving as many key 2nd level Support functions to the 1st Level Support helpdesk so that more calls are dealt with at the first point of contact with the helpdesk. This will involve the implementation of new helpdesk software jointly procured with Wrexham and Gwynedd which is underway.

Year End Performance and Service Dimensions

Indicator	Year		+/-%
	2011/2012	2012/2013	
Total Number of Helpdesk calls per year	25,975	32,238	+24%
Total Number of Helpdesk Calls resolved within agreed timescales	24,218	29,506	+22%
Total Number of Helpdesk calls resolved at 1st point of contact	7,129	10,920	+54%
Total Managed Data Storage in Terrabytes (1Tb= 1,000Gb)	120Tb	250Tb	+110%
Total Number of Users	2,896	2,962	+3%

Bad Weather Impact
The snow during January and March resulted in high demand for remote access to systems and placed considerable pressure on our web services and internet connections.
During the periods of snow the website hits increased significantly and regularly achieved 5% of a normal months entire hits in just an hour. Demand for RSA tokens increased significantly as staff found they were able to work flexibly to ensure services were delivered.

The ICT Service was delivered business as usual – no disruption or downtime to business systems or the website, though in March there were issues with Internet connections caused by major power losses and problems at the service provider end – PSBA - which caused problems accessing the website and remote access systems.

Service Review
- Service Review ongoing, delays have been experienced due to management capacity issues.
- Initial draft structural proposals are now being considered by management prior to presentation to members.
- Staff consultation is underway with mostly positive feedback so far.
- The planned review of the ICT Strategy will not now take place in 2012/13, it will now be progressed alongside the ICT Service Review implementation.

Customer Services

Progress continues to be made in relation to the implementation of the Customer Services Strategy which is due to be reviewed during 2013/14.

- The outcome of the Customer Services structural review has now been implemented.
- The Customer Services team including the Contact Centre has relocated to Alltami from County Hall, Mold. This arrangement brings the team closer to the Streetscene service enabling a joined up approach to service delivery and also releases accommodation at County Hall. Now that the Customer Services Team is established further work can commence to develop the contact centre.
- The Contact Centre proved to be a valuable during the period of bad weather at the end of March and enabled the Streetscene Service to concentrate on service delivery instead of handling such a high volume of calls at this time. Recorded messages were announced informing customers about up to date information which helped to reduce the number of callers wishing to speak to an adviser.
- Invest to Save funding has been secured for the roll out of future Flintshire Connects Centres at Connah's Quay, Flint and Buckley.
- Development of the new website is underway with a target implementation date of September 2013. The Better Connected survey 2012 awarded Flintshire's website 2 stars. This is a downturn on the previous year but demonstrates the need for investment in a new web content management system to enable improvements to be made.
- A new bilingual mobile application (App) is being developed to improve access to council services for customers choosing to use this method. This will be the first fully bilingual app available in Wales.

Procurement

National Procurement Service
- The National Procurement Service is still expected to be in place by November 2013, with a number of staff positions currently being recruited. The Council has already given commitment to join the new service which will procure on our behalf the common and repetitive spend, which represents 20% of our spend.

Regional Collaboration
- Proposals for a joint procurement service between Flintshire and Denbighshire building on existing management arrangements are being developed and will come forward for consideration later in the year. (*More details in 3.2.2*)

E-Procurement (more details in 3.2.2)
- P2P now fully implemented across Corporate Services, as well as majority of the Environment Directorate. Implementation has also commenced in Community Services and Life Long Learning Directorates.

- The Authority is also undertaking a pilot project with Value Wales in respect to E-Invoicing through scanning of paper invoices.
- Procurement of e-sourcing solution complete implementation to commence in July 2013
- Flintshire CC in conjunction with Denbighshire CC were short-listed for the inaugural Welsh Procurement Awards regarding best e-procurement project.

ICT & Customer Services Quarterly Performance Report

Report highlights in terms of performance for this quarter are as follows:-

ICT Helpdesk Performance	Call volumes were 8,472 in Q4 compared with 8,390 in Q3, an increase of 1%. Whilst we are actively trying to drive call volumes down, it is nevertheless pleasing to note that the KPI's for call resolution have improved steadily and that Customer Satisfaction with calls remains high at 4.7 (2nd Level) to 4.8 (1st Level) out of 5.0
Customer Services - Complaints Handling	Customer complaints responded to within 10 working days across the Authority as a whole shows an improvement of 11.68% (from 76.10% in Quarter 3 to 87.78% in Quarter 4) and has now exceeded the target of 80%. The number of complaints received in Quarter 4 has increased, by 12.5%, with 162 complaints received in Quarter 4 compared to 144 in Quarter 3. The number of complaints responded to within 10 working days has improved across all directorates in Q4 with the highest improvement for Corporate Services at 42.86%.
Customer Services - Telephone responses	In terms of telephone responses, Switchboard has again provided high levels of performance, continuing to maintain a performance figure of over 97% in Quarter 4, in line with both the annual and quarterly target set at 98%. Performance for direct dialled calls to the Authority across all services during Quarter 4 has improved by 3.63%, from 91.93% in Quarter 3 to 95.56% in Quarter 4.
Customer Services - Virtual Contact Centre	The number of Virtual Contact Centre (website) enquiries received has increased by 30% during Quarter 4. This increase of 1,141 enquiries is likely to be caused by an influx o Streetscene enquiries relating to snow clearing and gritting during the period of severe winter weather / snow experienced across Flintshire during the Quarter 4 period January to March 2013. Performance during this quarter in terms of response has however been maintained at 97% for Quarter 4.
Customer Services - Website	The number of visitors to the website has considerably increased during Quarter 4 by 46% to 516,262 visitors in Quarter 4 compared to 278,715 visitors during Quarter 3. Again, this high increase is likely to have been caused by an influx of visitors to the website during the period of severe winter weather / snow experienced across Flintshire during the Quarter period January to March 2013.
Customer Services – Contact Centre (Streetscene)	In order to provide meaningful data relating to the percentage of calls answered in less than 15 seconds separate figures have been calculated. Flintshire experienced exceptional weather conditions together with a high number of calls following the New

	Year bank holidays and Christmas period resulting in a significant increase in call volumes. The figure reported excludes the peaks but full details are provided below: **64.94% -** Excluding Bank Holidays and the day after a bank holiday, snow days 18/21/22/23 Jan & 24/25 Mar owing to the extreme peak in the number of calls being received. *90.16% of all calls presented were answered - total number of calls presented 24548.* (60.23% **-** This includes all dates for the quarter 4 period *88.81% of all calls presented were answered - total number of calls presented 28709)* The percentage of calls lost during the same period were also impacted and a breakdown of the details are as follows: **9.84%** - Excluding Bank Holidays and the day after a bank holiday, snow days 18/21/22/23 Jan & 24/25 Mar owing to the extreme peak in the number of calls being received. *(11.19% - This includes all dates)* Quarter 4 has seen a downturn in the number of calls to the contact centre answered in less than 15 seconds from 72.69% in quarter 3. Although this is disappointing the downturn can be explained in the points below: • The threshold has been set to 15 second as of 12 Feb, prior to this the threshold was set at 20 seconds. Therefore the performance in quarter 4 is not comparable with the previous quarters and the change in the threshold would result in a downturn in the trend. Performance reporting against the target of 15 seconds will be improved moving forward. • Message settings were also changed as of 12 Feb to ensure that messages are played before the caller is placed into the queue. Prior to this callers were placed into the queue and then listening to recorded messages, which varied from 10 to 70 seconds, this extended the time taken for the call to be answered. • A high number of calls were experienced in both mid Jan and the last week in March due to severe winter weather conditions / snow. • There were Christmas and Easter bank holidays Jan and March. The volume of calls increases at these times with enquiries regarding collection arrangements.
Customer Services – Flintshire Connects (Holywell)	This is the first full set of quarterly data available for Flintshire Connects (Holywell) as the data provided in Q2 was for 2 months only Nov & Dec. The average number of enquiries received per month has increase from 795 reported for Quarter 3 to 1,171 during Quarter 4 which is an increase of 32.11% in the average number of enquiries received per month.

2. Performance Summary

2.1 Improvement Plan Monitoring

The following table summarises the progress made to date and the progress against the desired outcome of the Council Improvement Priorities on which ICT & Customer Services lead.

KEYS

Progress RAG – Complete the RAG status using the following key: -

R	**Limited Progress** - delay in scheduled activity; not on track
A	**Satisfactory Progress** - some delay in scheduled activity, but broadly on track
G	**Good Progress** - activities completed on schedule, on track

Outcome RAG – Complete the RAG status using the following key: -

R	**Low** - lower level of confidence in the achievement of outcome(s)
A	**Medium** - uncertain level of confidence in the achievement of the outcome(s)
G	**High** - full confidence in the achievement of the outcome(s)

Council Priority	Target Date	Progress RAG	Outcome RAG	Signpost
1. To be a modern, efficient and cost effective public organisation through our four resource strategies - the Medium Term Financial Strategy, the People Strategy, the Asset Management Strategy and the ICT Strategy - whilst ensuring our local taxes and fees and charges are fair and affordable				
1.5 To extend agile working across the workforce	Mar-15	A	G	Agile working continues to be piloted in service areas, needs to be fully aligned to Assets Strategy.
1.6 To improve procurement practice and efficiency with the implementation of modern electronic systems	Mar-13	G	G	
4. To achieve the highest standards of customer services and care through our Customer Service Strategy				
4.1 To introduce the first phase of the Flintshire Connects programme	Dec-12	G	G	
4.2 To shift more customers to self service forms of doing more business using new technology (Channel Shift)	Ongoing	G	G	
4.3 To improve standards of customer service including the development and implementation of the Customer Contact Centre	Mar-13	A	G	Major progress made in third quarter but still not

				achieving agreed targets, anticipate on-going improvements
5. To make our communities safe and to safeguard the vulnerable, with children and older people being priority groups				
5.7 Introduce Customer Access Points (Flintshire Connects)	Dec-12	G	G	
5.8 Promote the new Streetscene Customer Contact Centre and develop the Streetscene Service changes	On-going	G	G	

2.2 Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges (SARC)

The table below summarises the position of SARCs at the end of the reporting period.

KEY

R	**High Risk**
A	**Medium Risk**
G	**Low Risk**

Commentary is included in section 3 for those SARCS: -
- that are showing a Red RAG status
- where the RAG status has changed since the last reporting period
- where the Green Predictive Date has changed since the last reporting period
- where there has been considerable change or additions of secondary risks and activity

SARC	Previous RAG Status	Current RAG Status	Green Predictive Date
CG08 ICT Strategy	G	G	**March 2012**
CG09 Information Governance	A	A	**TBC**
CG13 Customer Focus	G	G	**September 2011**
CG18 Procurement	A	A	**July 2013**

ICT & Customer Services Quarterly Performance Report

2.3.1 Performance Indicators and Outcome Measures

Key

R	**Target missed**
A	**Target missed but within an acceptable level**
G	**Target achieved or exceeded**

The status of the indicators are summarised for this year below:

R	0	A	4	G	1

Graphs and commentary are included section 3 for those indicators shown with a RAG status of either Amber or Red. An asterisk (*) indicates that the indicator is an *improvement* target.

ICT						
Indicator	**Annual Target**	**Previous Year End Outturn (11/12)**	**Current Quarter Outturn (Q4)**	**Current Year End Outturn (12/13)**	**RAG (Year End)**	**Change eg: Improved / Downturned (since previous year end)**
ICTM1L Helpdesk Calls fixed on time	94%	93%	93.33%	**91.53%**	A	**Downturned**
ICTM2L Helpdesk Calls resolved at first point of contact	35%	27%	39.33%	**33.87%**	A	**Improved**

Customer Services						
Indicator	**Annual Target**	**Previous Year End Outturn (11/12)**	**Current Quarter Outturn (Q4)**	**Current Year End Outturn (12/13)**	**RAG (Year End)**	**Changes eg: Improved / Downturned (since previous year end)**
Aim to answer switchboard telephone calls within 15 seconds	98%	98.2%	97.96%	**97.68%**	A	**Marginally Downturned**
Answer direct dialled telephone calls within 15 seconds	Not set	90.99%	95.56%	**92.74%**	N/A	**Improved**

Aim to respond to letters, e-mails and faxes within 10 working days (Virtual Contact Centre only)	93.0%	89.39%	97.02%	**97.09%**	G	**Improved**
Percentage of Contact Centre calls answered in under 15 seconds	75%	N/A	64.94%	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**
Percentage of Contact Centre 'lost' calls (abandoned by customer after 15 second threshold)	5%	N/A	9.84%	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**
*CUSM1L % of Complaints completed within 10 working days (all directorates)	80%	76.0%	87.78%	**75.11%**	A	**Marginally Downturned** but performance has improved from Qtr1 throughout the year

2.3.2 Improvement Target Action Plan Monitoring

Ref	Action & Planned Completion date	Progress
*CUSM1L	Identify issues for directorate managers to action in their respective areas	✓
	Undertake a review of complaints handling as part of the Lean process review to identify improvements leading to improved performance	✓
	Monitor performance against complaints providing support to service areas as necessary	✓
	Identify performance improvement areas via regular quarterly reports to directorate contact officers providing an overview for their service areas in comparison to the wider Council	✓
	Identify improvements in recording and monitoring complaints via CRM development	✓

2.4 Key Actions from Service Plan Monitoring

The following table shows which areas have incurred slippage or have been subject to a revised timetable and references the page number where commentary can be found to further explain the slippage/revised timescales: -

Improvement Area	Progress	Commentary
ICT		
1. Organisational Change 1a. Support Organisational and Service change 1b. Enable the corporate Agile Working project and implement associated technology changes 1c. Redevelopment of CRM solution with focus on Streetscene services	✓	Major focus from ICT Service on Corporate change projects and those supporting the Council's improvement priorities
2. Managing the Service 2b. Review of current Helpdesk solution 2g. Identifying Directorate ICT Issues and Aspirations	✓	New helpdesk software now procured and implementation commenced. Directorate ICT issues and aspiration documented and regular meetings with DMTs and service managers now take place.
8. **Telephony** Phased roll out of IP Telephony and Unified Communications	✓	See ICT Section 3.1.3. 60% complete, estimate completion October, 2013.
31. **Flintshire Futures** – Printers and Printing project	✓	See ICT Section 3.1.3
42. **Collaboration** Proactive engagement and involvement in regional and collaboration activities	✓	See ICT Section 3.1.3
43. **New Systems**	✓	
Customer Services		
Introduce contact centre style working starting with street scene services.	✓	Streetscene and Housing implemented. Project underway to

		identify other services to be introduced to contact centre style working.
Improve arrangements for visitors to Council offices by reviewing customer access points - engagement with the Flintshire Connects project.	✓	Flintshire Connects Holywell opened on 1st November 2012. Funding secured and plans underway for further 3 Connects Centres. Welsh Government Invest to save funding secured
Introduce Customer Service Standards across all services together with monitoring and reporting processes starting with Street Scene services.	✓	Ongoing
Revise customer care policy and standards to meet the requirements of the Cabinet Office Government Standard – Customer Service Excellence and the Welsh Assembly Government's Building Better Customer Service Principles.	✓	Work has now commenced, target completion December, 2013
Launch a Customer Relationship Management System.	✓	Went live in March alongside contact centre for Street Scene.
Increase use of the Council Website. Increase the range of electronic services and improve design and content quality with the objective of attracting more visitors to the website away from the traditional customer access channels. Ensure other methods of electronic access are given equal consideration e.g. text and social networking sites.	✓	Procurement of new Web Content Management System (CMS) in collaboration with other North Wales Councils will further extend website usage. Procurement of Mobile App will provide alternative options for customers to access council services.
Gather information relating to service specific customer satisfaction levels and introduce methods for measuring customer satisfaction where there are gaps.	✓	Being included within various projects e.g. Flintshire Connects & Channel Shift.

2.5 Internal & External Regulatory Reports

The following internal or external audit/regulatory work has been completed during the quarter and the outcome of the work can be summarised as follows. Negative outcomes are discussed in more detail in section 3 and page numbers are referenced in the table below.

Undertaken By	Title & Date Report Received	Overall Report Status
General Register Office	Annual Performance Report for the Flintshire Registration Service	The delivery of the local registration service being undertaken in line with the Good Practice Guide

3. Exception Reporting

3.1 ICT

3.1.1 Performance

Performance for Quarter 4 showed an average of 93.33% for ICT Helpdesk calls resolved in agreed timescales slightly below the target of 94%. This is a slight reduction on Q3.

Calls resolved at first point of contact are up on the previous quarter at 39.33%. This continues to be a welcome improvement in this KPI and is related to work that continues to be be undertaken to move more calls from 2nd Level support to the Helpdesk as part of the Helpdesk Improvement Plan.

A	**ICTM1** Helpdesk Calls fixed on time

A	**ICTM2**
	Helpdesk Calls resolved at first point of contact
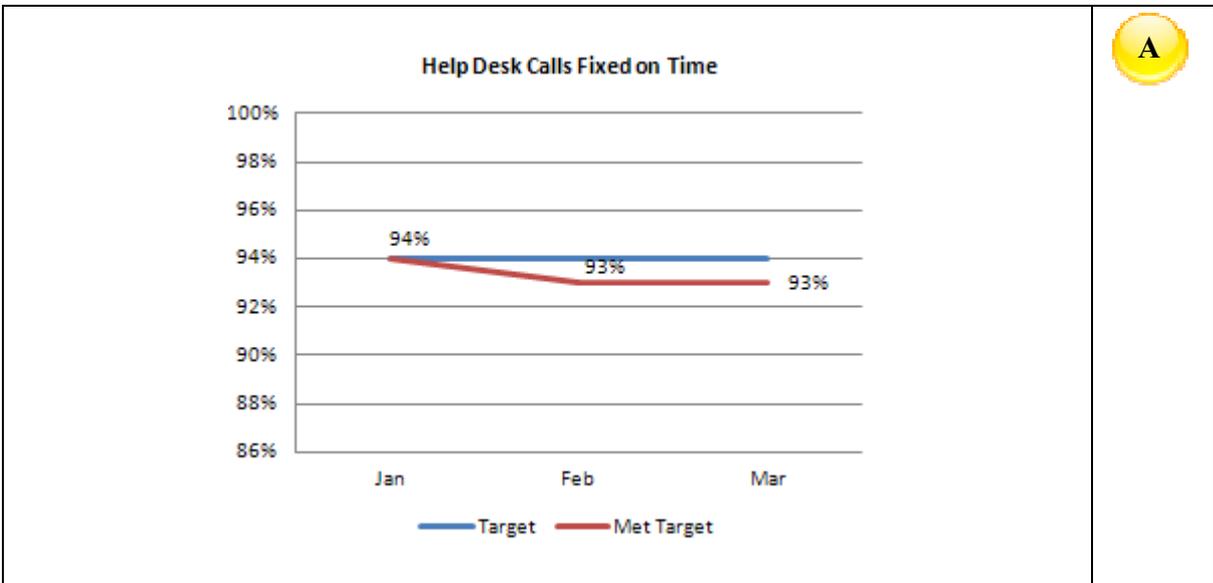
Help Desk Calls Resolved at 1st Point of Contact

Call volumes were 8,472 in Q4 compared with 8,390 in Q3, an increase of 1%
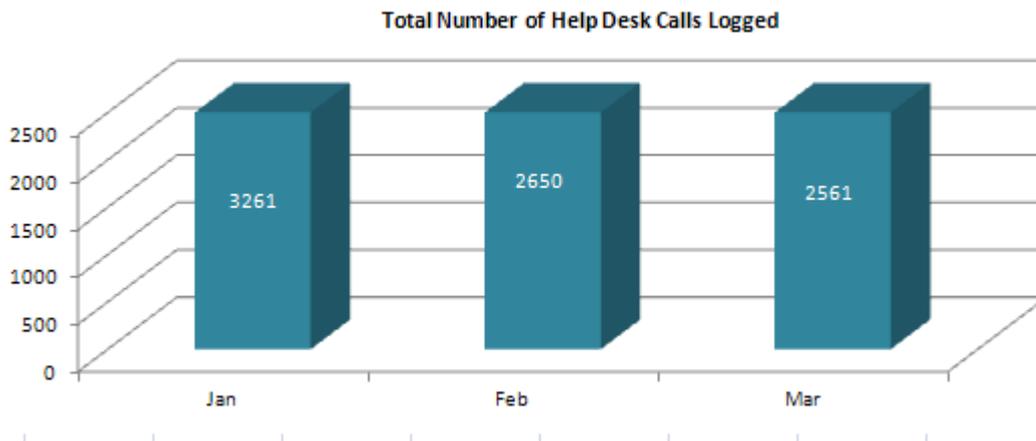
Total Number of Help Desk Calls Logged

In relation to customer satisfaction with the helpdesk and second level support immediately following incident resolution, we have maintained high levels of performance with the overall service provided by the helpdesk scoring an average of 4.8 out of a maximum of 5.0, and for second level support 4.7.

Customer satisfaction data is based upon the surveys completed by customers when helpdesk calls are signed off and all service users are asked to complete the survey. Each month there are around 100 responses or roughly 5% of total calls logged. The satisfaction scores are split so that we can see the satisfaction levels

with the Helpdesk Assistants who answer our customer's calls and also our Technical Analysts (2nd level support).

G	Helpdesk Service Satisfaction

Helpdesk Service Satisfaction

	The speed of answering your telephone call to the Help Desk	The Help Desk Analyst's understanding of your problem or request	The Help Desk Analyst's courtesy and professionalism	The time it took the Help Desk Analyst to resolve your problem or request	The overall service provided by the Help Desk on this occasion
Jan	4.4	4.9	4.9	4.8	4.8
Feb	4.5	4.8	4.8	4.9	4.8
Mar	4.6	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.9

G	2nd Level Support Satisfaction

2nd Level Support Satisfaction

	Following your telephone call to the Help Desk, the time it took for an ICT Analyst to make initial contact with you	The ICT Analyst's ability and knowledge	The ICT Analyst's courtesy and professionalism	The ICT Analyst in keeping you up to date with progress	The time it took the ICT Analyst to resolve your problem or request	The overall service we provided on this occasion
Jan	4.6	4.9	4.9	4.7	4.7	4.7
Feb	4.6	4.9	4.9	4.8	4.8	4.7
Mar	4.6	4.8	4.9	4.7	4.7	4.7

3.1.2 Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges
CG08 ICT Strategy
Priorities focused on major change projects associated with organisational redesign and Flintshire Futures as well as opportunities for collaboration. ICT Strategy Review delayed will now take place alongside the ICT Service Review in 2013/14.

CG09 Information Governance
Focus remains on Electronic Document & Records Management System (EDRMS) to support Flintshire Futures. The system is now live and there are a number of projects underway, with priority being given to Flintshire Futures projects. GCSX accreditation achieved, and improved vulnerability assessment reports.

3.1.3 Service Plan Updates
8. Phased pilot roll out of IP Telephony and Unified Communications
The IPT with Unified Communications solution is being rolled out across the council and will support the Agile Working Flintshire Futures Project. 60% complete, target completion date October, 2013.

31. Flintshire Futures – Printers and Printing Project

Xerox Multi-function devices (MFD's) have been deployed in Corporate Services, County Offices Flint, Alltami and Deeside Leisure Centre replacing standalone printers, faxes and photocopiers. Considerable rationalisation has been achieved and training and setting up of individuals is complete. Equitrack monitoring software is in place to monitor printing requirements and to enforce printing policies. Rollout to LLL, Environment and Community Services will be complete by August, 2013.

42. Proactive engagement and involvement in regional and collaboration activities

Flintshire has taken a lead role in local, regional and national ICT collaborative activities and has representation and lead roles on many groups and collaborative projects.

- Capita One schools management system regional hosting – Flintshire is Hosting the system on behalf of the 6 North Wales Authorities. All 6 were live by September as planned and concludes the early phases of the project, implemented on time and on budget which Flintshire successfully managed. The solution will become the subject of a Case Study promoting best practice for shared and collaborative projects.
- Service desk – collaborative project to standardise systems across 6 North Wales authorities. Contract signed with software provider by 3 Councils. Impementation has commmenced
- Web Content Management – implementation in progress, new Website due to be live September 2013.
- Desktop Software Project – looking at 3 areas. Office Productivity Suite, Security Products, Email. Contract signed with Microsoft March, 2013.
- Disaster Recovery – Looking at a roadmap to reciprocal arrangements across the region to improve resilience and co-operation with common processes, procedures and documentation. Sharing of documentation, processes and procedures has taken place
- Regional Directory Project – looking at integration of Directory services across the region and cross public sector where possible to provide the underpinning infrastructure to better support business led regional shared services projects and support greater collaboration. Design complete currently being assessed by external consultants prior to implementation.
- Little progress on the national ICT Collaboration front awaiting publication of Welsh Government Digital First Strategy which will focus on increased range and uptake of digital services.

3.2 Procurement

3.2.1 Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges

CG18 Procurement
Green predictive date of March 2013 reflects the anticipated completion of the P2P implementation and the outcome of the regional and national procurement studies which will inform the outcomes of the procurement review locally and arrangements going forward. Although progress on P2P has progressed well full implementation across the Council as a whole is unlikely to be completed before December, 2013. This delay has come to light from directorate implementation and the need to integrate with back end systems such as Technology Forge in Environment. Although implementation has been delayed progress against the business case in terms of volumes and values of orders processed via P2P are significantly ahead of target.

Service Plan Update

- £1.8 m of efficiencies achieved in Flintshire Futures Procurement Workstream for 2013/14 budget against a target of £1.7 m.

- Draft joint procurement work plan has been developed, which would allow a joint corporate procurement unit between Flintshire (FCC) and Denbighshire (DCC) to be implemented.

- A detailed business case was developed by external consultants commissioned by the North Wales Regional Leadership Group for the implementation of a North Wales Procurement Shared Services project. A decision has been made not to proceed with the Shared Services Project. However, an alternative model of procurement delivery has been developed by DCC & FCC, which aims to build on existing management arrangements by creating a joint service in relation to a Strategic Procurement Unit initially (phase 1) by December 2013, with the option of joint operational procurement service (phase 2) being implemented across three Councils (Denbighshire, Flintshire & Gwynedd). Project Definition Workshops have been arranged for 31st May 2013

- A request has now been received by for all North Wales Councils to sign up to the Welsh Purchasing Consortium, which is an existing Consortium of 16 Councils. Meetings have been arranged to explore this option, in order to access a greater number of collaborative framework agreements.

- The North Wales Procurement Partnership is formally coming to an end based on it's existing structure in June 2013, with Category Managers being redeployed to individual Council's. The existing collaborative work programme will continue to be delivered in a virtual environment.

- The National Procurement Service is still expected to be in place by November 2013, with a number of staff positions currently being recruited. The Council has already given commitment to join the new service which will procure on our behalf the common and repetitive spend , which represents 20% of our spend.

- A supplier classification exercise, has been undertaken across all categories of spend. This will now allow for more accurate reporting of spend. The benefits are already being realised in understanding more accurately spend on Consultancy, Interims and Agency Staff.

- P2P now fully implemented across Corporate Services, as well as majority of the Environment Directorate. Implementation has also commenced in Community Services and Life Long Learning Directorates. It's anticipated that all Directorates will be live by September 2013, excluding schools and integration with third party systems.

- The Authority is also undertaking a pilot project with Value Wales in respect to E-Invoicing through scanning of paper invoices. The pilot is coming to an end with early indications of successful outcome, with a recent test involving 800 invoices showing a 97% accuracy rate. A detailed commercial proposal will be made available for consideration by July 2013

- A e-sourcing solution has now been procured, and an e-sourcing project manager appointed.. A number of showcase and design workshops have been held including a recent project definition workshop. To date feedback from service departments, has been very positive regarding the anticipated benefits. The implementation roll-out plan is currently being finalised and should commence during July 2013 with an expected 18 months duration.

- Draft set of Contract Procedure Rules has been developed and document currently out to consultation with key stakeholders e.g. Legal, & Internal Audit, before formal consultation commences with Service Area departments. The new set is based on the Welsh national model and we have attempted to take a regional approach in its development with only slight variations to reflect local arrangements and constitution.

3.3 Customer Services

Supporting Information

A	**CUSM1L** % of Complaints completed within 10 working days (all directorates)	
N/A	**Local Indicator** Aim to answer switchboard telephone calls within 15 seconds	
G	**Local Indicator** Aim to respond to letters, e-mails and faxes within 10 working days (Virtual Contact Centre only)	
N/A	**Corporate** Answer direct dialled telephone calls within 15 seconds	
A	**Local Indicator** Contact Centre calls answered in under 15 seconds	
A	**Local Indicator** Contact Centre 'lost' calls (abandoned by customer after 15 seconds)	

Virtual Contact Centre

The number of Virtual Contact Centre (website) enquiries received during Quarter 4 has increased by 1,141; this is an increase of 30.27% compared to Quarter 3 and could be explained by an increase in enquiries relating to snow clearing / gritting during the severe winter weather experienced throughout Flintshire in mid January and at the end of March.

Even with this increase in enquiries received performance for Quarter 4 has been maintained at around 97% and continues to exceed the 93% target which has been the case for the last five consecutive quarter periods.

The 5 most popular enquiries listed by type received into the Virtual Contact Centre for Quarter 4 period:

Refuse / Recycling - Order Items	990
Kerbside Recycling	284
Food Waste	171
Missed Collection (Refuse / Recycling)	152
Street Lighting	145

% Contact Centre Enquiries Completed Within 10 Working Days

G

	2012-13 Q1	2012-13 Q2	2012-13 Q3	2012-13 Q4
% Completed within 10 working days	97.27%	96.73%	97.34%	97.02%
Target	93.00%	93.00%	93.00%	93.00%
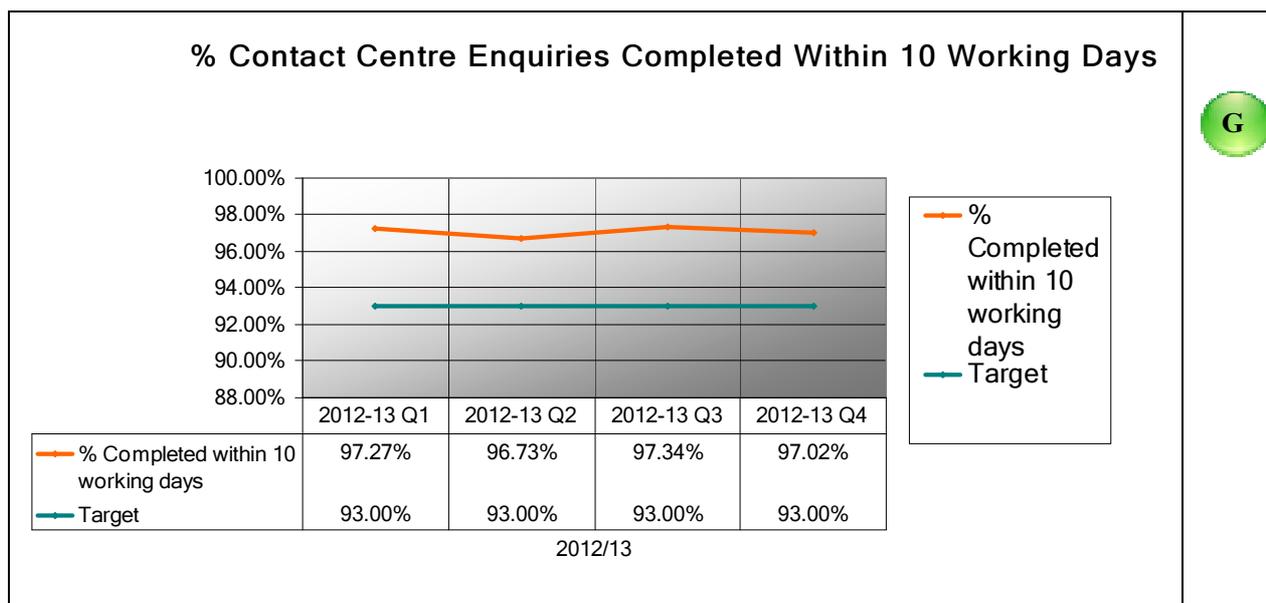
2012/13

Period	Total Virtual Contact Centre Enquiries Received	% Completed within 10 working days	Target	% Not completed within 10 working days
2012-13 Q1	3,178	97.27%	93.00%	2.73%
2012-13 Q2	2,870	96.73%	93.00%	3.27%
2012-13 Q3	2,628	97.34%	93.00%	2.66%
2012-13 Q4	3,769	97.02%	93.00%	2.75%

CUSM1L

% of Complaints responded to within 10 working days (all directorates)

Complaints

Complaints responded to within 10 working days across the Authority has increased from 76.10% in the previous quarter to 87.78% for Quarter 4 which now exceeds the 80% target.

The number of complaints received for Community Services has increased by 46.05%, however, overall performance for the Directorate has again improved from 80.68% in Quarter 3 to 91.39% in Quarter 4; this is an improvement of 10.71% compared to Quarter 3.

Corporate Services again received a low number of complaints for the quarter with only 6 received in total, 2 less than the previous quarter, however performance has considerably increased from 57.14% in Quarter 3 to 100% for Quarter 4.

Environment Directorate have maintained their performance during Quarter 4 with a slight improvement 2.10% on the previous quarter.

The number of complaints received for Lifelong Learning has remained at 12 for Quarter 4, however, performance for the Directorate has also improved from 73.33% in Quarter 3 to 88.89% for Quarter 4; this is an improvement of 15.56% on Quarter 3.

Total number of complaints received by Flintshire County Council - Quarter 4 .

Period	Total Number of Complaints	No. of Complaints Responded to within 10 working days	No. of Complaints Not Responded to within 10 working days	% Responded to within 10 Working Days	% Not Responded to within 10 Working Days
Jan-13	45	37	8	82.22%	17.78%
Feb-13	58	50	8	86.21%	13.79%
Mar-13	59	56	3	94.92%	5.08%
Totals	162	143	19		

Average: **87.78%**

Total number of complaints received by Directorate - Quarter 4.

Period	Directorate	Total Number of Complaints Received by all Directorates	No. of Complaints Responded to within 10 working days	No. of Complaints Not Responded to within 10 working days	% Responded to within 10 working days	% Not Responded to within 10 working days
Jan-13	Community Services	22	22	0	100.00%	0.00%
	Corporate Services	1	1	0	100.00%	0.00%
	Environment	19	12	7	63.16%	36.84%
	Lifelong Learning	3	2	1	66.67%	33.33%
Feb-13	Community Services	30	26	4	86.67%	13.33%
	Corporate Services	4	4	0	100.00%	0.00%
	Environment	22	18	4	81.82%	18.18%
	Lifelong Learning	2	2	0	100.00%	0.00%
Mar-13	Community Services	24	21	3	87.50%	12.50%
	Corporate Services	1	1	0	100.00%	0.00%
	Environment	27	2	0	100.00%	0.00%
	Lifelong Learning	7	7	0	100.00%	0.00%

Directorate Averages - Quarter 4 (2012-13) Complaints responded to in 10 working days (Compared to Q3)				
	Number of Complaints Q3	Number of Complaints Q4	% Responded to in 10 working days Q4	Performance trend
Community Services	41	76	91.39%	10.71%
Corporate Services	8	6	100%	42.86%
Environment	83	68	81.66%	2.10%
Lifelong Learning	12	12	88.89%	15.56%

ICT & Customer Services Quarterly Performance Report

Jan-13

Legend:
- No. of Complaints Responded to within 10 working days
- No. of Complaints Not Responded to within 10 working days
- % Responded towithin 10 working days
- % Not responded towithin 10 working days
- Total Number of Complaints Received by all Directorates

G

Feb-13

Legend:
- No. of Complaints Responded to within 10 working days
- No. of Complaints Not Responded to within 10 working days
- % Responded towithin 10 working days
- % Not responded towithin 10 working days
- Total Number of Complaints Received by all Directorates

G

Mar-13

Legend:
- No. of Complaints Responded to within 10 working days
- No. of Complaints Not Responded to within 10 working days
- % Responded towithin 10 working days
- % Not responded towithin 10 working days
- Total Number of Complaints Received by all Directorates

G

Additional service data for Customer Services areas which have no performance indicators:

Website

During Quarter 4 (January – March 2013) we received a significant increase in the number of visitors to both the English and Welsh websites.

Compared to Quarter 3 the number of visitors to the:

- English website increased by 234,409 which is an increase of 46.48%.
- Welsh website increased by 3,138 which is an increase of 26.18%

The highest increase in visitors was experienced during the month of January; we received 49.74% of the total number of visitors to the English website in Quarter 4 and 40.10% of the total number of visitors to the Welsh website in Quarter 4.

Although this can be viewed as a significant increase in website traffic, compared to Quarter 3, this it likely to be as a result of severe winter weather / snow experienced throughout Flintshire in mid January.
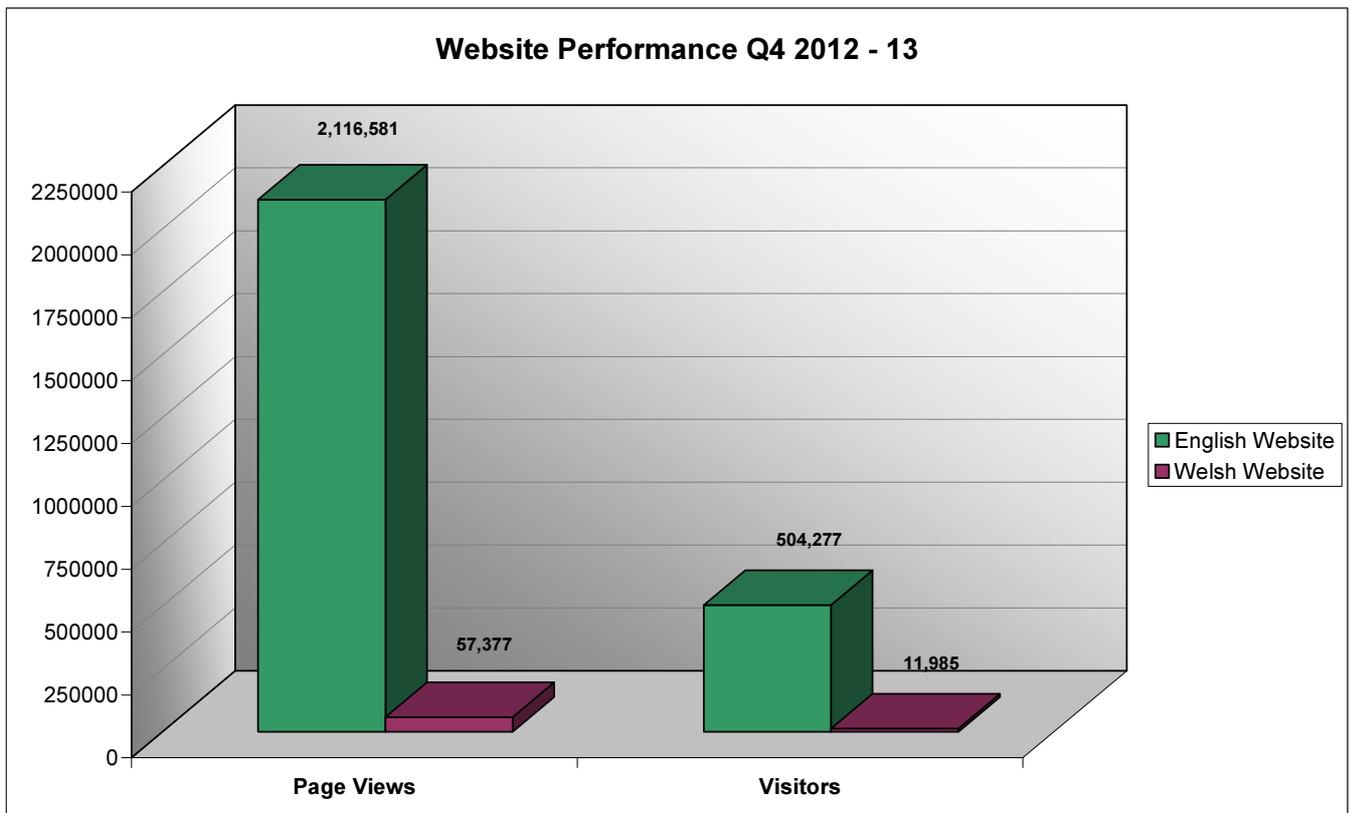
Website Statistics - Quarter 4 (2012-13)

(Compared to Q3)		
Visitors to English website	504,277	46.48%
Visitors to Welsh website	11,985	26.18%
Page Views – English website	2,116,581	44.72%
Page views – Welsh website	57,377	23.83%

Flintshire Connects (Holywell)

The graph and data for Flintshire Connects below illustrates the number of visitors to the centre for Quarter 4 period (January to March 2013) which is the first full quarter reported on for Holywell Flintshire Connects.

The average number of visitors per month reported for Quarter 4 is 1,171 whereas the average number of visitors reported for the two month period recorded for Quarter 3 was 795. This is a 32.11% increase in the number of visitors per month.

Flintshire Connects
Enquiries by department 01/01/2013 to 31/03/2013

Department	Enquiries
Adult Social Services & Children's Services	10
Housing Benefits	547
Blue Badge	71
Bulk Collection	66
Cash Office/ Genaral Invoices	14
Communities First	155
Concessionary Travel	138
Council tax & Payments	190
General Enquiries	188
Housing Applications & Enquiries	281
Housing Options	48
Housing Renewal & Energy	13
Job Centre Plus	417
Markets	16
Parking Fines	23
Planning	2
Police	351
Registrar	3
Rent Enquiries & Payments	382
Repairs	347
Streetscene Services	247
Welfare Rights	4
Youth Justice	1
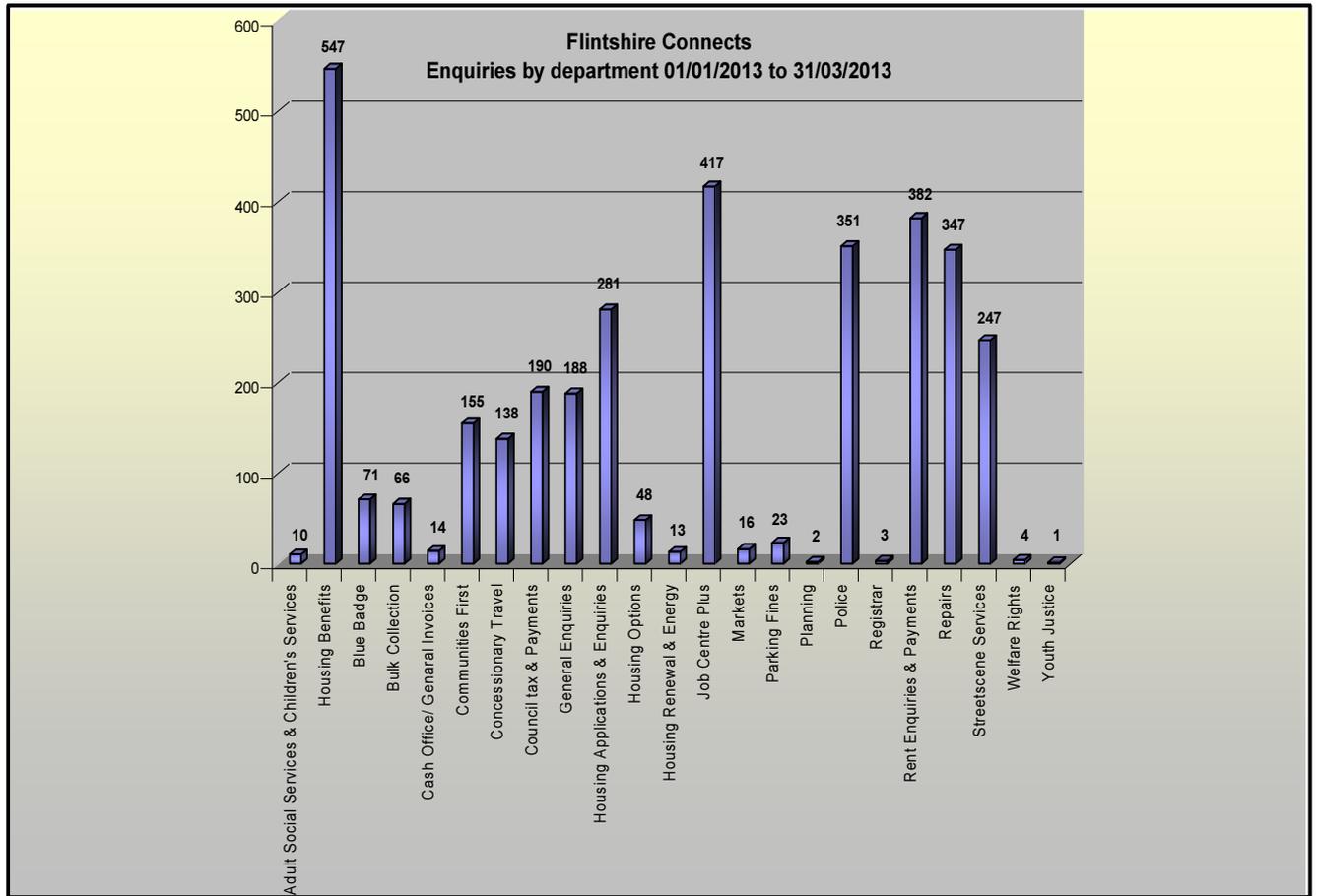
Flintshire Connects (Holywell) Visitor Enquiries	Period 01 Jan 2013 to 31 Mar 2013
Department / Service / Agency	Totals
Adult Social Services & Children's Services	10
Housing Benefits	547
Blue Badge	71
Bulk Collection	66
Cash Office/ Genaral Invoices	14
Communities First	155
Concessionary Travel	138
Council tax & Payments	190
General Enquiries	188
Housing Applications & Enquiries	281
Housing Options	48
Housing Renewal & Energy	13
Job Centre Plus	417
Markets	16
Parking Fines	23
Planning	2
Police	351
Registrar	3
Rent Enquiries & Payments	382
Repairs	347
Streetscene Services	247
Welfare Rights	4
Youth Justice	1
TOTAL	3,514

Flintshire Registration Service

The General Register Officer Annual Performance Report submitted for 2012/13 meets the requirements of the Good Practice Guide.

Activity (NS = National Standard)			
1	**Events registered within statutory timescales** (i) % births registered within 42 days (NS 98%)	Compliancy Level % 95%	Comments Birth registrations in Flintshire are very low as we have no Maternity Hospital in the county (37 in total) In statistical terms, each birth is 2.7% of total. 2 / 37 reduces compliance to 95%

(ii) % still-births registered within 42 days (NS 98%)	N/A		
(iii) % deaths registered within 5 days, excluding registrations following post mortems and inquests (NS 95%)	96%		
(iv) % deaths after post mortem registered within 7 days (NS 95%)	93%	Delays occur in receiving certificates from Coroner and making contact with informants especially after Bank Holiday weekends and during Christmas and Easter breaks	

Monitoring methodology used
RON extracts provided by Tina Bishop, Account Manager

2	**Waiting times** **A. Offices with appointment system** 1. Waiting times for appointment (NS 95%) for: (i) birth registration/declaration within 5 working days	Compliancy Level % 97.18%	Comments
	(ii) still-birth registration/declaration within 2 working days	N/A	No still births registered in 2012/13
	(iii) death registration/declaration within 2 working days	100%	
	(iv) notices for marriage and civil partnership within 5 working days	71.67%	See comments below
	2. % of customers seen within 10 minutes of appointment time (NS 90%)	91.91%	

Monitoring methodology used
Stopford electronic diary system - 1 April 2012 – 31 March 2013

Compliancy levels for notices of marriage / civil partnership within 5 working days; from April to June 2012 the Stopford diary had a default setting of "appointment offered". When offering appointments, the registration staff often wrongly left the setting as "offered" instead of changing it to "requested" when a customer requested a particular date. The diary was upgrade in June 2012, removing the default setting of "appointment offered" so that staff have to select either "appointment offered" or "appointment requested".

The compliance level for this performance indicator has improved from 29% in 2011/12 to 71.67% in 2012/13. Most Notices for marriage and civil partnership appointments are requested and they are frequently requested for more than a week later. Customers generally request appointments when they have days off work and during half term / holidays.

3	**Certificate applications** % dealt with within 7 days of receipt (from deposited registers) (NS 95%)	Compliancy Level % 100%	Comments

Monitoring methodology used
Report by exception (all applications date stamped on receipt and dated on issue to customer)

New On-line certificate application system has been introduced in March 2013. For future years, this system will report compliance level of certificates issued within 7 days of receipt.

Quarterly Performance Report – Legal & Democratic Services

Report Author   Gareth Owens
Report Date   May 2013
Report Period   Quarter 4: January – March 2013

Introduction

The report is produced on a quarterly basis and provided to Executive members for review and assurance and will be available for Overview and Scrutiny Committees as part of their Forward Work Programmes.

The report consists of an overview of the key messages to highlight across all work streams in Legal & Democratic Services, which is followed by highlights from each service area. Parts 2 and 3 of the report include an assessment of performance in the quarter from the following sources:

- Improvement Plan Monitoring
- Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges
- Performance Indicators and Outcome Measures
- Improvement Target Action Plan Monitoring

- Key Actions from Service Plan Monitoring
- Internal and external regulatory reports
- Customer satisfaction and feedback
- Awards and accreditations
- Resource Management (HR, ICT, Finance, Assets)

1. Foreword

Report highlights for this quarter:-

Corporate Governance	During this quarter the Corporate Governance Working Group has considered the responses it has received to the Corporate Governance Self-Assessment Questionnaire. Where appropriate the group has challenged some of the answers given in the self-assessment questionnaire seeking evidence to justify this assessment or for the assessment to be amended. The results of this process form part of the preparation of the draft Annual Governance Statement which the Working Group are currently pursuing.
Members	In accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 during this quarter all Members have had the opportunity to have a personal development meeting with their Group Leader or other experienced Members. This follows briefings given on the process during January. The Democratic Services Committee at its meeting on 30 January agreed updating changes to the Member Development Strategy and decided that in future the Council would meet the costs of individual notifications made by Members to the Information Commissioner's Office pursuant to the Data Protection Act.
Standards and Ethical Framework	During this quarter 1 complaint was made to the Ombudsman in relation to a Town Councillor (who is also a County Councillor) which the Ombudsman decided not to investigate. 1 outstanding complaint was resolved. Overall totals for the year are as follows: Number of complaints submitted 4* No. complaints where there was no breach/ complaint not covered by Code 2 No. complaints where there was a breach but no further action 2* No. complaints where there was a breach and referred for an investigation 0 (*2 complaints refer to the same matter)

Other highlights by service area are as follows: -

Legal Services	• 2 Employment Tribunal claims concluded, 1 successfully and 1 settled, no new claims during the quarter. • 548 existing equal pay claims made against the Council. • Ongoing cases - 3 Health and Safety (1 H&S prosecution concerning a fatality has resulted, after protracted litigation, in the defendant pleading guilty to H & S offences on terms favourable

	to the prosecution, including significant costs to be paid to FCC; sentencing hearing will take place in the summer months), 1 Private Nuisance case, 1 Planning Enforcement • 1 new Trading Standards prosecution. • Parking prosecutions – 20 brought forward from the last quarter, 37 new cases, 13 concluded, 44 carried forward • Fraud – 23 cases brought forward from the last quarter, 12 new cases, 11 concluded, 26 carried forward • 2 possession claims were determined with possession orders granted and warrants of possession successfully executed by the council. 1 Possession claim is pending with the trial of the claim to heard in May 2013. • 25 school admission appeals were arranged, 24 were heard • 4 new child protection cases on file. • Voluntary registration of Council land with HM Land Registry – 26 applications for registration were submitted during the quarter. North Wales Authorities Legal Services Collaboration: Amanda Brookes has now begun her work as the full-time Project Manager for the Project. She has attended monthly Project Team meetings; has met (together with Project Team members) all of the Chairs of the Special Interest Groups; and will be meeting the Project Board in May to discuss the overall project vision.
Democratic Services	**Committee Services:** **4th Quarter Meetings**: During the 4th quarter there were 51 meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Informal Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny Committees and other committees serviced by the Committee Team (Jan 23, Feb 13, Mar 15). **Electoral Registration and Elections**: **Absent Voter Signature Refresh Notice** During this quarter the team wrote to 8644 absent voters who were required to provide a fresh specimen of their signature because records indicated it was five years old. 7402 absent voters correctly completed and returned their notice and remain an absent voter. 1257 absent voters did not renew their details because of the following reasons - either they didn't complete the notice, cancelled their absent vote or had moved or died. **Individual Electoral Registration** Following the passage of the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 which introduces Individual Electoral Registration (IER) a fundamental change to the way we register to vote, The following two regulations have been made – **The Electoral Registration (Postponement of 2013 Annual Canvass) Order 2013** which will delay the publication of the register to 10 March 2014 for Wales and EROs will not be able to start any canvass activity until 1 October 2013.

The Electoral Registration (Disclosure of Electoral Registers) Regulations 2013 which make provision to support the transition to IER by enabling information held by the ERO, including electoral registers, to be compared against DWP data for the purposes of carrying out a dry-run of confirmation data-matching process.

Civic and Members' Services:
The team have supported the Chair and Vice-Chair in attending a number of significant events including visiting Glyndwr University for their annual (Fair Trade Breakfast) meeting, the Clwyd Community Awards evening at Ruthin, events forming parts of the Flintshire Artfest. At the invitation of the Chairman of Powys County Council touring the regimental museum of the Royal Welsh at Brecon. Meeting delegates from the Chinese Embassy visiting County Hall. Accompanying the Chief Executive on visits to local businesses and celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Walk About Flintshire scheme. On 8 March the annual charity dinner was held at Deeside College. Mr Robert Lee, the Head of the Royal British Legion's PR and Campaigns was an interesting speaker giving guests an insight into the work of the Royal British Legion, which is the Chair's chosen charity.

The team continues to provide a full range of support to the Members of the County Council.

Overview & Scrutiny:
A series of budget consultation meetings were held in January and February to give Scrutiny Members an opportunity to consider the budget proposals for 2013/14. At the Lifelong Learning Overview & Scrutiny Committee budget meeting it was decided to set up a task and finish group to look at the funding options for summer playschemes due to concerns raised.

The Wales Audit Office Scrutiny Improvement Study has been progressed with Members of the Flintshire Peer Learning Exchange Team visiting Denbighshire to observe two Overview & Scrutiny Committees in action and to meet with the Chairs & Vice Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees. Similarly the Wrexham Peer Learning Exchange Team have observed both the Lifelong Learning and Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committees in Flintshire and have met with the Chairs and Vice Chairs of Overview & Scrutiny. The next stage of the study will be a North Wales regional workshop which is being organised by the Wales Audit Office when authorities will give and receive feedback on their experiences.

Ceri Owen joined the Scrutiny Team in February on a secondment from Committee Services and is facilitating the Housing and Lifelong Learning Overview & Scrutiny Committees.

RIPA: No RIPA authorisations were issued between January and March.

Annual Appraisals	Staff appraisals were carried out in April/May 2012 with six monthly reviews during October/November. Appraisals for 2013 will begin in April.
Sickness Management	There are no concerns regarding short-term sickness absences within the department as these are very moderate. There have been 4 instances of longer term sickness during the year, however, these are due to hospital treatment and recovery times.

2. Performance Summary

2.1 Improvement Plan Monitoring

Council Priority	Target Date	Progress RAG	Outcome RAG	Commentary
There are no improvement priorities for which this service is the lead.				

2.2 Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges (SARC)
The table below summarises the position of SARCs at the end of the reporting period.

KEY

R	**High Risk**
A	**Medium Risk**
G	**Low Risk**

Commentary is included in section 3 for those SARCS: -
- that are showing a Red RAG status
- where the RAG status has changed since the last reporting period
- where the Green Predictive Date has changed since the last reporting period
- where there has been considerable change or additions of secondary risks and activity

SARC	Previous RAG Status	Current RAG Status Q4	Amber Predictive
CG23 Breach of the Data Protection Act by the Council	R	A	**Mar 2013**

2.3.1 Performance Indicators and Outcome Measures

There are no improvement targets for this service at present.

Management Information

Total number of FOIs responded to by FCC, by month Jan to March 2013

Directorate	January	February	March	Total
Chief Executive's	2		1	3
Environment	8	15	20	43
Finance	8	8	16	32
Housing	3	5	6	14
Human Resources	5	4	0	9
ICT Services	3	3	7	13
Legal & Democratic Services	10	24	4	38
Lifelong Learning	6	7	12	25
Social Services	5	14	4	23
TOTALS	50	80	70	200

Total Number of FOIs responded to by FCC between Jan-Mar 2013

Lead Directorate	Number of requests responded to in period January to March 2013	Number of requests determined within 20 day response time	Therefore % determined within the 20 day response time *
Chief Executive's	3	3	100%
Environment	43	43	100%
Finance	32	27	84%
Housing	14	10	71%
Human Resources	9	6	67%
ICT Services	13	11	85%
Legal & Democratic	38	37	97%
Lifelong Learning	25	24	96%
Social Services	23	23	100%
TOTALS	200	184	92%

FOI Requests to date:

	1.04.11 to 30.6.11	1.07.11 to 30.09.11	1.10.11 to 31.12.11	1.1.12 to 31.3.12	1.4.12 to 30.6.12	1.7.12 to 30.9.12	01.10.12 to 31.12.12	01.01.13 to 31.03.13
Number of requests received	164	168	165	189	163	174	144	184
% of requests determined within time	96%	93%	88%	90%	93%	81%	84%	92%

Total number of EIRs responded to by FCC, by month January to March 2013:

Directorate	January	February	March	Total
Chief Executive's	58	56	45	159
Environment				
Finance				
Housing				
Human Resources				
ICT Services				
Legal & Democratic Services				
Lifelong Learning				
Social Services				
TOTALS	**58**	**56**	**45**	**159**

Total Number of EIRs responded to by FCC, between January-March 2013

Lead Directorate	Number of request responded to in period January to March	Number of requests determined within 20 day response time	Therefore % determined within the 20 day response time *
Chief Executive's			
Environment	159	159	100%
Finance			
Housing			
Human Resources			
ICT Services			
Legal & Democratic			
Lifelong Learning			
Social Services			
TOTALS	**159**	**159**	**100%**

2.3.2 Improvement Target Action Plan Monitoring

Benchmarking/Improvement Targets

The Division has no improvement targets to measure against but data is being collected on an all Wales basis to compare a number of key features relating to Legal Services. This information will be analysed and published during 2012/13.

2.4 Key Actions from Service Plan Monitoring

Key - ✓ on track, ✘ behind schedule, **C** completed

Improvement Area	On-track?	Commentary
Monitor implementation of the Commons Act 2006 procedures in relation to common land	✓	Further announcement is awaited from Welsh Government as to the implementation of the 2006 Act.
Rights of Way Cases	✓	The Rights of Way Team has recently produced a 3 year work programme. These need to be reviewed with a view then to agreeing the prioritisation of cases.
Registration of all housing revenue land by the date of the ballot of tenants	✓	Good progress continues to be made and a substantial number of applications for first registration have been sent to Land Registry. However, there is a delay at the Land Registry in completing some of these applications and some areas that are yet to be registered still need to be identified.

2.5 Internal & External Regulatory Reports

Undertaken By	Title & Date Report Received	Overall Report Status
Internal Audit Report (CS0130R1)	Community Services Follow Up – Charges on Clients Properties October 2011	Overall Opinion – Good Progress Final – see 3.1 below
Internal Audit Report (LD0160S1)	Members Allowances Final Report December 2012	Green – all recommendations made have been implemented

3. Exception Reporting

3.1   Internal Audit Report (CS0130R1) – Charges on Client Properties

Recommendation	Management Comment	Implementation Date
3.1.2 Legal Services and Community Services should endeavour to recover the monies owing to FCC as a result of client's property being sold before the costs of the individual's case had been deducted from the proceeds of the sale.	Legal Department will continue to chase to recover the monies due and which is protected by the registration of a charge.	Ongoing
The Charges on Client Properties meetings that are held between the Community Services and Legal Departments should continue to be undertaken twice a year. Action Points arising from each meeting should be documented and progress against these actions should be monitored at the next meeting.	Meetings are arranged between departments and minutes will be taken accordingly.	Immediate
The Legal Service database should be kept up to date to ensure that Community Services have access to the latest developments with each case.	This is part of ongoing case management and will be relayed to all individual officers.	Immediate

3.2   Internal Audit Report (LD0220R2) – Data Protection Audit – SARC CG23

Recommendation	Management Comment	Implementation Date
Directors and Heads of Service should consider identifying posts that require DP staff training to be made mandatory and the processes in place to manage this accordingly. Develop and implement a risk based data protection programme. A consistent and comprehensive message should be delivered by Directors and Heads of Service to all staff handling personal data. Formal refresher training and follow up procedures should be introduced (on a risk basis) to ensure that mandatory training is completed.	A revised Data Protection policy and procedure has been approved by CMT incorporating audit recommendations. This has been sent to Heads of Service and is on the infonet. The Information Commissioner's Office are undertaking an audit in April 2013 and it is hoped the results will enable the RAG status to change to amber.	Sept 2012 The audit by the Information Commissioner's Office in April 2013 justified changing the risk status to amber as previously predicted.

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APPENDIX 2 – OVERALL SUMMARY ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

Council Priority	PROGRESS	Secondary Priorities			OUTCOME	Secondary Priorities		
		GREEN (GOOD)	AMBER (SATIS-FACTORY)	RED (LIMITED)		GREEN (HIGH)	AMBER (MEDIUM)	RED (LOW)
1. To be a modern, efficient and cost effective public organisation through our four resource strategies - the Medium Term Financial Strategy, the People Strategy, the Asset Management Strategy and the ICT Strategy - whilst ensuring our local taxes and fees and charges are fair and affordable	SATIS-FACTORY	2	4	0	HIGH	4	2	0
2. To achieve the greatest possible cost efficiencies through regional and sub-regional collaboration to reinvest in local public service	GOOD	2	0	0	MEDIUM	1	1	0
3. To be a modern, caring and flexible employer with fair and equal pay and terms and conditions of employment under a Single Status Agreement	SATIS-FACTORY	1	2	0	MEDIUM	1	2	0
4. To achieve the highest standards of customer services and care through our Customer Service Strategy	GOOD	2	1	0	HIGH	3	0	0
5. To make our communities safe and to safeguard the vulnerable, with children and older people being priority groups	GOOD	9	1	0	HIGH	9	1	0
6. To protect and grow the local and regional economy, to be a prosperous County and to provide help and support for those vulnerable to poverty	GOOD	10	3	0	HIGH	9	4	0
7. To promote independent, healthy and fulfilled living in the community with the highest quality personalised and supportive social and health care services	SATIS-FACTORY	6	3	0	HIGH	7	2	0
8. To meet housing need in the County and to work with partners to ensure a sufficient supply of quality and affordable homes and housing services in the social , mixed tenure and private sector housing markets	SATIS-FACTORY	1	5	0	HIGH	4	2	0
9. To secure a modern and high performing range of learning, cultural, play and leisure opportunities for all ages with our schools, colleges and other partners	SATIS-FACTORY	0	8	0	HIGH	6	2	0
10. To protect, plan and develop sustainable natural and built environments	GOOD	4	2	0	HIGH	5	1	0
TOTALS	PROGRESS	37	29	0	OUTCOME	49	17	0
%		56%	44%	0%		74%	26%	0%

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Ref:	Unit of Measure	Previous Year End Outturn	Target	Current Year End Outturn	RAG	Trend	Comment	Owner
HUMAN RESOURCES								
CHR 002 - The number of working days/shifts per full-time equivalent (FTE) local authority employee lost due to sickness absence	No. of working days/shifts per FTE	10.54	9.80	11.03	Red	Downturned	There is a continued programme of attendance management reporting and action planning across each Directorate. Absences reporting, containing trigger reports, produced on a monthly basis are issued to managers. With the support of the HR team focus is made on frequent, short term absences, long term absences and return to work interviews, with employees, to understand any underlying issues affecting attendance at work.	Helen Stappleton
REM3L - FCC - The percentage of employees receiving an annual appraisal with Individual Development Plan	%	Not reported	100.00			N/A	Data awaited from services	Helen Stappleton
CUSTOMER SERVICES								
CUSM1L Efficient Complaints Handling - The percentage of initial complaints responded to within 10 working days	%	76.00	80.00	75.11	Amber	Downturned	Improvements to the way complaints are managed have been made during 2012/13 and overall performance is improving. Work will continue to be made on complaints handling including an awareness training session for the workforce in 2013/14.	Denise Naylor
FINANCE								
DWP1L - Time taken to process Housing Benefit (HB) and Council Tax Benefit (CTB) new claims.	Days	17.30	18.00	16.47	Green	Improved	Commentary not provided	Jennifer Griffiths
DWP2L - Time taken to process Housing Benefit (HB) and Council Tax Benefit (CTB) change events.	Days	6.44	9.00	6.78	Green	Downturned	Commentary not provided	Jennifer Griffiths

Ref:	Unit of Measure	Previous Year End Outturn	Target	Current Year End Outturn	RAG	Trend	Comment	Owner
CFH 006 - The percentage of undisputed invoices which were paid in 30 days	%	87.93	95.00	**85.80**	**Red**	Downturned	The processing of invoices is a devolved function that is reported on by the central Accounts Payable team who continue to work with directorates to improve performance. P2P is now being rolled out throughout all directorates except Lifelong Learning therefore we would hope to see improvements during 2013-14.	Debbie Griffiths
ASSETS & TRANSPORTATION								
EEF 002ai - The percentage change in carbon dioxide emissions in the non domestic public building stock	%	7.19 reduction	5.00 reduction	**5.57 increase**	**Red**	Downturned	The outturn for 2012/13 is an increase of 5.57% compared with a reduction of 7.19% achieved in 2011/12. The targeted 5% reduction was not achieved. It should be noted that the decrease of 12.68% originally reported for 2011/12 was incorrect due to inaccurate utility invoicing. The figures reported for this indicator are not weather corrected to take account of particularly cold years and therefore do not allow for a more accurate comparison. Whilst the absolute increase for 2012/13 is 5.57%, weather corrected the outturn would be a 2.66% reduction. Early indications for some of the other North Wales Councils estimate absolute increases of 10%+ on 2011/12, which indicates that FCC's interventions have had a positive effect in reducing emissions. Ongoing activities are taking place to improve performance and include the installation of energy efficient equipment and systems, Maintain Energy 'Be Responsible' campaign, rollout e-learning module to staff, and bridge link and energy Champion events.	Will Pierce
IA3.1L1 - Increase average Standard Assessment Procedure rating in council housing stock	SAP Rating	66.70	68.00	**70.96**	**Green**	Improved	Funding levered in from Welsh Government, Energy Company and other sources at the end of the CESP programme allowed us to insulate a greater number of council properties than anticipated this year. The heating programme was also accelerated, contributing to the reduction in energy bills for residents	Will Pierce

Ref:	Unit of Measure	Previous Year End Outturn	Target	Current Year End Outturn	RAG	Trend	Comment	Owner
THS 007 - The percentage of adults aged 60 or over who hold a concessionary bus pass	%	76.25	78.00	81.10	Green	Improved	An influential factor for the increase in performance for this indicator may be the rising cost of fuel and people switching from private car use to using their free bus travel pass. Unfortunately, we wouldn't be able to evidence this. The Council have little control over the number of people who apply for bus passes each year. No additional advertisements other than the norm for the over 60 bus passes were published this year.	Katie Wilby
PLANNING								
PLA 004a - The percentage of major planning applications determined during the year within 13 weeks	%	29.31	39.00	40.63	Green	Improved	The numbers involved (62 applications)(21 within Q4) is less than 10% of the total applications determined. The fact that the target is set at below 50% recognises that most of the major applications are tied to the committee timetable and are often subject to Section 106 Obligations. These major applications are often also subject to extensive negotiation, often with amendments, resulting in a positive decision (49 granted, 13 refused), but out of time. The new WG indicators have dropped the 13 week period for the determination of major applications and in future these will be judged against the 8 week target which is applied to other applications. As a service, a decision will then need to be taken as to the priority to be given to speed of decision in relation to added value through negotiation and quality of development.	Glyn P Jones

Ref:	Unit of Measure	Previous Year End Outturn	Target	Current Year End Outturn	RAG	Trend	Comment	Owner
PLA 004b - The percentage of minor planning applications determined during the year within 8 weeks	%	53.15	65.00	47.38	Red	Downturned	There is increased monitoring and scrutiny on an individual officer basis being applied and providing the Cabinet Member with regular reports on the reasons why applications go beyond their decision time. Some of these reasons (e.g. long term sickness absence which began in Quarter 2 requiring re-allocation of work) are difficult to address, but other reasons are being addressed (e.g. we have established a regular liaison meeting with Legal Officers to establish the position on each Section 106 Obligation where instructions have been sent. We are also seeking to streamline the procedures involved with legal agreements, again to reduce any delays currently involved with these).	Glyn P Jones
PLA 005 - The percentage of enforcement cases resolved during the year within 12 weeks of receipt	%	73.12	75.00	63.33	Red	Downturned	Poor performance in Q3 reflected the large number of cases closed (189 cases closed in Q3 as opposed to 109 in Q4), including many long standing issues which were eventually signed off. In the context of cases subject to formal enforcement action, a liaison group has been established with Legal Officers and a shared database of these cases is regularly updated to ensure that cases are brought to a conclusion as expeditiously as possible.	Glyn P Jones
PUBLIC PROTECTION								
PPN 008i - The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment visit or returned a self-assessment questionnaire during the year for Trading Standards	%	84.83	70.00	71.93	Green	Downturned	Monthly monitoring of new businesses and allocation of work is carried out to ensure the target is met.	Ian Vaughan-Evans

Ref:	Unit of Measure	Previous Year End Outturn	Target	Current Year End Outturn	RAG	Trend	Comment	Owner
PSR 007c - Of the Houses in Multiple Occupation known to the local authority, the percentage that are subject to enforcement activity at 31st March	%	0.00	2.00	2.13	Amber	Downturned	The service is working with landlords to ensure properties have the required standards and are serving enforcement notices where necessary.	Ian Vaughan-Evans
PSR 008 - The percentage of high risk private sector dwellings improved to an acceptable level	%	96.72	75.00	77.78	Green	Downturned	Commentary not provided	Ian Vaughan-Evans
HOUSING								
HLS 006aL - The total amount of rent collected during the financial year from current and former tenants as a percentage of the total rent collectable for the financial year in:Permanent accommodation	%	95.51	97.50	98.55	Green	Improved	It is pleasing to see that despite the challenging economic climate that this area has seen much improvement this year and proves both the need and the achievements of the dedicated "Income Management Team."	Brett Sadler
HLS 010cL - The average number of calendar days taken to complete non-urgent repairs	Calendar Days	61.15	35.00	43.58	Amber	Improved	Although we have not achieved the annual target this indicator, the outturn represents a considerable improvement on the outturn for 2011/12. The quarterly outturns show that for the last two quarters the targets has been exceeded. The change of management and increased focus on performance for this service area can be credited for improvement in this service area. Maintenance of the improved performance in this area is a priority for the service area.	Clare Budden
HLS 013bL - The total amount of rent lost due to lettable units of permanent accommodation being empty as a percentage of the total rent debit for the financial year	%	2.32	2.00	2.01	Amber	Improved	Although we have narrowly missed the annual target, the outturn represents a considerable improvement on the outturn for 2011/12. The quarterly outturns show that for the last two quarters the target has been achieved. Maintenance of the improved performance in this area remains a priority for the service area.	Brett Sadler

Ref:	Unit of Measure	Previous Year End Outturn	Target	Current Year End Outturn	RAG	Trend	Comment	Owner
HLS 014L - The average number of calendar days taken to let lettable units of permanent accommodation during the financial year.	Calendar Days	69.01	42.00	47.44	Amber	Improved	The outturn represents a considerable improvement on last year but is some way from the target of 42 days. Improved performance in this area remains a major priority for the service area and is subject to weekly meetings between the voids team and the neighbourhood management teams. Senior management along with the Performance Support Manager are meeting monthly to direct a programme of changes aimed at improving performance in this area.	Brett Sadler
ADAPTATIONS								
PSR 006L - The average number of calendar days taken to deliver low cost adaptation works (under £500) in private dwellings where the disabled facilities grant is not used	Calendar Days	40.79	43.00	33.00	N/A	Improved	Official target not set for 2012/13. Performance is significantly better than that achieved last year.	Alwyn Jones
PSR 009a - The average number of calendar days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant for Children and Young People	Calendar Days	307.05	350.00	481.56	Red	Downturned	Three DFGs for children were completed in Quarter 4 in an average of 245 days. However, in the data validation process at the end of the year a number of completions were identified that had not previously been reported. This included some particularly long and complex cases, which took to overall average for the year to 482 days for childrens DFGs, due to the relatively small number of children's adaptations (18 in the year) and the fact they are more likely to require extensions	Carol Salmon

Ref:	Unit of Measure	Previous Year End Outturn	Target	Current Year End Outturn	RAG	Trend	Comment	Owner
PSR 009b - The average number of calendar days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant for adults	Calendar Days	410.23	400.00	384.85	Green	Improved	The timeliness of provision of DFGs for Adult service users has improved to the point where we have met target and exceeded last year's outturn, and we are expecting further improvement in the forthcoming twelve months, as we start to see the benefit of recent interventions. In 2013/14 we will be using new guidance for the performance indicator, which has been revised by WG with the aim of getting all authorities counting the PI in the same way to enable better benchmarking.	Alwyn Jones
SOCIAL CARE FOR ADULTS								
SCA 018c - The percentage of carers of adults who were assessed or re-assessed in their own right during the year who were provided with a service	%	78.90	60.00	72.06	Green	Downturned	Although some fluctuations in performance have been experienced throughout the year, and new arrangements with NEWCIS around the collection and recording of data have been bedding in, we are pleased that the final outturn for the year is approaching the level reported in 2011/12, and has exceeded the improvement target.	Alwyn Jones
SCA 019 - The percentage of adult protection referrals completed where the risk has been managed	%	88.72	86.00	98.96%	Green	Improved		Alwyn Jones
IA1.1L4 Number of adults receiving a personal budget for services via either a direct payment or citizen directed support	No. of adults	177.00	170.00	215.00	Green	Improved	All actions are in place to promote the use of Direct Payments. The numbers are increasing and target achieved	Alwyn Jones

Ref:	Unit of Measure	Previous Year End Outturn	Target	Current Year End Outturn	RAG	Trend	Comment	Owner
					SOCIAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN			
SCC 021 - The percentage of looked after children reviews carried out within statutory timescales during the year	%	85.88	92.00	91.30	Amber	Improved	The population of looked after children has increased by 15% in the year, with a large number in court proceedings, which has an impact on the scheduling of reviews. The Independent reviewing officers are working at full diary capacity to ensure that reviews are scheduled within statutory timescales where ever this is in the best interest of the child.	Carol Salmon
SCC 025 - The percentage of statutory visits to looked after children due in the year that took place in accordance with the regulations	%	79.90	93.00	94.22	Green	Improved	The service continues to measure the impact of increasing capacity within CYAST and the flagging system for due dates of forthcoming visits on a quarterly basis, and raise at Social Services for Children Senior Management Team if remedial action is required.	Carol Salmon
SCC 030a - The percentage of young carers known to Social Services who were assessed	%	100.00	75.00	82.86	Green	Downturned	Performance dipped towards the end of the year, as limited capacity within our commissioned services meant that six children had to wait for carers assessments.	Carol Salmon
SCC 030b - The percentage of young carers known to Social Services who were provided with a service	%	100.00	85.00	96.00	Green	Downturned	Overall performance met target but was slightly lower than last year as limited capacity within our commissioned services meant that one young person in Quarter 3 had to wait for a service.	Carol Salmon
SCC 034 - The percentage of child protection reviews carried out within statutory timescales during the year	%	98.28	97.00	97.73	Green	Downturned	Overall performance for the year dipped slightly below that of last year, due to one family of 3 siblings who failed to attend their review and subsequently left the area, and one conference which was held outside timescales to ensure that the right members were able to attend.	Carol Salmon

Ref:	Unit of Measure	Previous Year End Outturn	Target	Current Year End Outturn	RAG	Trend	Comment	Owner
SCY 001a - The percentage change in the average number of hours of suitable education, training or employment children and young people receive while within the youth justice system by: Children and young people of statutory school age	%	15.97	8.00	6.88	Amber	Downturned	The service continues to liaise closely with schools to ensure that young people within the criminal justice system maintain or improve educational opportunities.	Carol Salmon
EDUCATION								
EDU 002aiL - The number of all pupils (inc. those in local authority care), in any local authority maintained school, aged 15 as at the preceding 31st August who leave education, training or work based learning without an approved external qualification.	No. of pupils	7.00	10.00	3.00	Green	Improved	Schools are extending the opportunities for pupils to achieve external qualifications in Years 9/10. If pupils are unlikely to complete their education in full time mainstream provision the Inclusion Service, through Portfolio PRU, provide opportunities to gain formal qualifications. The range of qualifications available through the PRU provision has been increased.	Kevin Grandfield
EDU 002aiiL - The number of all pupils in local authority care in any local authority maintained school, aged 15 as at the preceding 31st August who leave education, training or work based learning without an approved external qualification.	No. of pupils	1.00	0.00	0.00	Green	Improved	More accurate recording is now possible using the ONE database to record the LAC pupil population. Pupil progress is monitored by schools and tracked by the LAC officer. Multi-agency systems are now in place aimed at preventing pupils from leaving school with no formal qualifications. SEG funding is to be targeted to enable KS4 pupils to access appropriate qualifications.	Kevin Grandfield
EDU 002i - The percentage of: All pupils (inc. those in local authority care), in any local authority maintained school, aged 15 as at the preceding 31 August that leave compulsory education, training or work based learning without an approved exter	%	0.39	0.60	0.17	Green	Improved	See EDU 002iL comment above	Kevin Grandfield

Ref:	Unit of Measure	Previous Year End Outturn	Target	Current Year End Outturn	RAG	Trend	Comment	Owner
EDU 002ii - The percentage of:Pupils in local authority care in any local authority maintained school, aged 15 as at the preceding 31 August that leave compulsory education, training or work based learning without an approved external qualification.	%	0.00	10.00	0.00	Green	Maintained	See EDU 002iiL comment above	Kate Wylde
EDU 009a - The average number of school days that permanently excluded pupils did not receive an offer of full time appropriate education provision during the academic year	School days	2.00	3.00	1.00	Green	Improved	The number of permanently excluded pupils remains low. The Inclusion Service continues to work with Primary & Secondary Heads in implementing an agreed Protocol for managed moves which is being monitored.	Jeanette Rock
EDU 011 - The average point score for pupils aged 15 at the preceding 31 Aug, in schools maintained by the local authority	Point score	413.53	459.00	509.03	Green	Improved	The service is providing support for curriculum development through the 14-19 network and annual network development plan so that all schools meet the requirements of the learning and skills measure. It is also supporting collaborative working for co-ordinating and operation of the Welsh Baccalaureate	Kevin Grandfield
EDU 015b - The percentage of final statements of special education need issued within 26 weeks excluding exceptions	%	100.00	100.00	100.00	Green	Maintained	Regular monthly monitoring and evaluation by Head of Educational Psychology Service is undertaken and results in investigation and action where timescales may not been met.	Jeanette Rock

Ref:	Unit of Measure	Previous Year End Outturn	Target	Current Year End Outturn	RAG	Trend	Comment	Owner
SCC 002 - The percentage of children looked after at 31st March who have experienced one or more changes of school, during a period or periods of being looked after, which were not due to transitional arrangements, in the 12 months	%	9.52	6.00	10.62	Amber	Downturned	Education Services whenever possible attempt to maintain young people within their own schools. Sometimes however, the distances from new foster placements make this strategy impracticable and too costly. Close working relationships with children services help to keep young people in their own schools. Individual cases sometimes require a change of residence or kinship care placements OOC.	Kate Wylde
SCC 035 - The percentage of looked after children eligible for assessment at the end of Key Stage 2 achieving the Core Subject Indicator, as determined by Teacher Assessment	%	62.50	25.00	50.00	Green	Downturned	The LAC conference took place in October 2012 to highlight the needs of LAC. The emphasis was upon those children achieving to the best of their ability. It emphasised the importance of attendance of LAC and reduction in numbers of LAC children excluded from school, through CPD and Governor training. Schools are encouraged to raise issues of underachievement of LAC with the LAC coordinator so that support can be afforded to the child through SEG.	Kate Wylde
SCC 036 - The percentage of looked after children eligible for assessment at the end of Key Stage 3 achieving the Core Subject Indicator, as determined by Teacher Assessment	%	18.75	40.00	50.00	Green	Improved		Kate Wylde
SCC 037 - The average external qualifications point score for 16 year old looked after children, in any local authority maintained learning setting	Point score	103.46	186.00	122.40	Red	Improved	Through Learning Coaches, the service ensures that early identification of underachievement is reported to LAC co-ordinator. Schools are encouraged to seek support for those LAC who it is felt may not achieve an average or above points score when they leave school. SEG support LAC to achieve their full potential. Ongoing support is provided for the after school one to one tuition, using in county home tutors working closely with the child's school.	Kate Wylde

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Strategic Assessment of Risks & Challenges' RAG Summary

Risk Ref.	Risk Title / Community Leadership	Q4 Mar 12	Q1 Jun 12	Q2 Sept 12	Q3 Dec 12	Q4 Mar 13	Predictive Green / Amber/Red
	Risk Title	**12-2013**					
CL04	Affordable Housing	A	A			A	APR 2015
CL05	Social Care For Older People	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↔	TBC
CL07	Relationship with Local Health Board & Public & Primary Health	A	R	R ↑	R	R ↔	TBC
CL08	Climate Change & Flood Risk Management	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↔	TBC
CL09	Economic Regeneration	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↔	DEC 2013
CL10	County Town Network Regeneration & Protection	G	G	G ↓	G	G ↔	FEB 2011
CL11	Integrated and Public Transport Infrastructure (External)	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↔	2015/16
CL12	Skills Needs of Employers	G	G	G ↔	G	G ↔	OCT 2011
CL14	North Wales Regional Waste Treatment Partnership	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↔	OCT 2017
CL15	Clwyd Theatr Cymru (CTC)	A	A	G ↓	G		

Risk Ref.	Council Delivery	Mar 12	Jun 12	Sept 12	Dec 12	Mar 12	Predictive Green/ Amber/Red
CD02	Streetscene	A	A	A ↑	A	A ↔	TBC
CD03	Transistion from UDP to LDP	G	G	A ↑	A	A ↔	SEP 2017
CD04	Planning Protocol	G	G	G ↓	G	G ↔	MAR 2012
CD05	Highways Infrastructure	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↔	TBC
CD06	Transport Arrangments For Service Users	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↔	2013/14
CD07	Depot Provision	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↑	2013/14
CD08	Connah's Quay, Shotton & Deeside Housing Renewal Area	A	A	R ↑	R	R ↔	MAR 2020
CD10a	Leisure - Revenue Funding	R	R	R ↔	R	R ↔	TBC
CD10b	Leisure - Capital Projects	A	A	A ↔	A	G ↓	MAR 2013
CD10c	Leisure - Play Strategy	A	A	R ↔	R	G ↓	MAR2013
CD12a	Housing Strategy	A	A				
CD12b	Housing Management	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↔	TBC
CD12c	Housing Repairs and Maintenance Services	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↔	TBC
CD12d	Homelessness - deleted superseded by CD38 Welfare Reform	A	A				
CD12e	Sheltered Housing	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↔	NOV 2013
CD19	Gypsies and Travellers	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↔	TBC
CD20	School Buildings/School modernisation	R	R	R ↔	R	R ↔	2018
CD22	School Improvement - Regional Project	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↑	SEP 2013
CD23	Procurement of Independent Sector placements for looked after childre	A	A	A ↓	A	A ↔	TBC
CD26	Disabled Facilities Grants	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↔	SEP 2013
CD27a	Waste Management Targets/Food Waste Treatment Project	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↑	2016/17
CD27c	Waste Management Operations	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↔	2016/17
CD34	Severe Winter Weather	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↔	TBC
CD37	Food Waste Treatment Project	A		A ↔	G	G ↔	APR 2014
CD38	Welfare Reform	R	R	R ↓	R	R ↔	TBC

Risk Ref.	Council Governance	Mar 12	Jun 12	Sept 12	Dec 12	Mar 12	Predictive Green/ Amber/Red
CG05a	Asset Management - Strategic	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↔	2015/16
CG05b	Asset Rationalisation	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↔	2015/16
CG06	Medium Term Financial Strategy	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↔	TBC
CG07	Financial Management and Control	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↔	TBC
CG08	ICT Strategy	G	G	G ↔	G	G ↔	
CG09	Information Governance	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↔	TBC
CG10	Human Resources and Management	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↔	TBC
CG11	Single Status and Terms and Conditions of Employment	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↔	TBC
CG13	Customer Focus	G	G	G ↔	G	G ↔	SEP 2011
CG16	Workforce and Succession Planning	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↔	TBC
CG18	Procurement	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↔	
CG19	Business Continuity (including Winter Disruption)	A	A	G ↔	G	G ↔	SEP 2012
CG22	Flintshire Futures	A	A	A ↔	A	A ↔	TBC
CG23	Data Protection	R	R	R ↔	R	A ↓	Mar-13

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
                  COMMITTEE
DATE: THURSDAY, 13 JUNE 2013

REPORT BY: MEMBER ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

SUBJECT: FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

1.00   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01   To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Corporate
        Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

2.00   BACKGROUND

2.01   Items feed into a Committee's Forward Work Programme from a
        number of sources. Members can suggest topics for review by
        Overview & Scrutiny Committees, members of the public can suggest
        topics, items can be referred by the Executive for consultation
        purposes, or by County Council, or Directors. Other possible items
        are identified from the Executive Work Programme and the Strategic
        Assessment of Risks & Challenges.

2.02   In identifying topics for future consideration, it is useful or a 'test of
        significance' to be applied. This can be achieved by asking a range of
        questions as follows:

        1. Will the review contribute to the Council's priorities and/or
            objectives?
        2. Are there issues of weak or poor performance?
        3. How, where and why were the issues identified?
        4. Do local communities think the issues are important and is there
            any evidence of this? Is there evidence of public dissatisfaction?
        5. Is there new Government guidance or legislation?
        6. Have inspections been carried out?
        7. Is this area already the subject of an ongoing review?

3.00   CONSIDERATIONS

3.01   Overview & Scrutiny presents a unique opportunity for Members to
        determine the Forward Work Programme of the Committees of which
        they are members. By reviewing and prioritising the forward work
        programme Members are able to ensure it is member-led and
        includes the right issues. A copy of the Forward Work Programme is
        attached at Appendix 1 for Members' consideration which has been
        updated following the last meeting.

4.00 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 That the Committee considers the draft Forward Work Programme attached as Appendix 1 and approve/amend as necessary.

5.00 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

None as a result of this report.

6.00 **ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

None as a result of this report.

7.00 **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

None as a result of this report.

8.00 **EQUALITIES IMPACT**

None as a result of this report.

9.00 **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

None as a result of this report.

10.00 **CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

N/A

11.00 **CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

Publication of this report constitutes consultation.

12.00 **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Forward Work Programme

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Contact Officer: **Robert Robins**
Telephone: **01352 702320**
Email: **robert_robins@flintshire.gov.uk**

Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee
FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2012/13

DATE	SUBJECT	O&S FOCUS	REPORT FROM
Thursday 11th July 2103	Revenue Budget Monitoring 2012/13 (final out turn)	Monitoring	HF
	Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Interim position)	Monitoring	HF
	Medium Term Financial Plan	Information and discussion	HF
	Welfare Reform Update	Information and discussion	HF
	Discretionary Housing Payments Update	Monitoring and Development	HF
	Assets as a Flintshire Futures workstream (6 monthly update, as per the resolution of the committee on 17/1/13)	Monitoring and development	HAT
	Procurement as a Flintshire Futures workstream	Monitoring and Development	HICT&CS
	Review of Leisure Services Budgets	Development and confirmation	MEM
	Forward Work Programme	Development and confirmation	MEM
Thursday 12th September 2013	Workforce as a Flintshire Futures workstream (6 monthly update, as per the resolution of the committee on 17/1/13)	Monitoring and development	H of HR & OD
	Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/14 Month 3	Monitoring	HF
	Q1 Performance Reporting	Monitoring and development	MEM
	Forward Work Programme	Development and confirmation	MEM

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Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee
FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2012/13

Thursday 10th October 2013	Customer Services as a Flintshire Futures workstream (6 monthly update, as per the resolution of the committee on 17/1/13)	Monitoring and development	H of ICT&CS
	Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/14 Month 4	Monitoring	HF
	Forward Work Programme	Development and confirmation	MEM
Thursday 14th November 2013	Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/14 Month 5	Monitoring	HF
	Procurement as a Flintshire Futures workstream (6 monthly update, as per the resolution of the committee on 17/1/13)	Monitoring and development	H of ICT&CS
	Forward Work Programme	Development and confirmation	MEM
Thursday 5th December-Wednesday 18th December	The 2014/15 Overview & Scrutiny budget consultation meetings will take place between these two dates. Eight meetings are shown on the schedule of meetings and following consultation during the summer, the meetings which are needed will be organised.		
Thursday 12th December 2013	Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/14 Month 6	Monitoring	HF
	Q2 Performance reporting	Monitoring and development	MEM
	Finance as a Flintshire Futures workstream (6 monthly update, as per the resolution of the committee on 17/1/13)	Monitoring and development	HF
	Forward Work Programme	Development and confirmation	MEM

Thursday 16th January 2014	Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/14 Month 7	Monitoring	HF
	Assets as a Flintshire Futures workstream (6 monthly update, as per the resolution of the committee on 17/1/13)	Monitoring and development	HAT
	Forward Work Programme	Development and confirmation	MEM

Legend: CE = Chief Executive; HF = Head of Finance; H of HR&OD = Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development; H of ICT&CS = Head of ICT & Customer Service; H of L&DS = Head of Legal & Democratic Services; HAT = Head of Assets & Transportation; MEM = Member Engagement Manager

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