

Public Document Pack

Gareth Owens LL.B Barrister/Bargyfreithiwr
Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol a Democraidaidd



To: Cllr Aaron Shotton (Leader)

CS/NG

Councillors: Bernie Attridge, Chris Bithell,
Helen Brown, Derek Butler, Christine Jones,
Kevin Jones and Billy Mullin

15 January 2014

Nicola Gittins 01352 702345
nicola.gittins@flintshire.gov.uk

Dear Sir / Madam

A meeting of the **CABINET** will be held in the **CLWYD COMMITTEE ROOM, COUNTY HALL, MOLD CH7 6NA** on **TUESDAY, 21ST JANUARY, 2014** at **9.00 AM** to consider the following items.

Yours faithfully

Democracy & Governance Manager

AGENDA

1 **APOLOGIES**

2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

3 **MINUTES** (Pages 1 - 10)

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the last meeting.

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

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

TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING REPORTS

STRATEGIC REPORTS

4 **COUNCIL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2014/15** (Pages 11 - 56)

Report of Head of Finance - Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance

5 **COUNCIL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2014/15 AND INDICATIVE TO 2017/18** (Pages 57 - 76)

Report of Head of Finance - Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance

6 **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 2014/15 & CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2014/15** (Pages 77 - 96)

Report of Head of Finance - Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance

7 **IMPROVEMENT ASSESSMENT LETTER FROM WALES AUDIT OFFICE** (Pages 97 - 106)

Report of Chief Executive - Cabinet Member for Corporate Management

8 **RURAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN LOCAL ACTION GROUPS 2014-2020** (Pages 107 - 110)

Report of Director of Environment - Cabinet Member for Economic Development

9 **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN DELIVERY AGREEMENT: FINALISING THE DELIVERY AGREEMENT FOLLOWING CONSULTATION** (Pages 111 - 116)

Report of Director of Environment - Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Environment

10 **SARTH** (Pages 117 - 154)

Report of Director of Community Services - Cabinet Member for Housing

11 **CUSTOMER SERVICES STRATEGY UPDATE** (Pages 155 - 162)

Report of Head of ICT and Customer Services - Cabinet Member for Corporate Management

12 **DOUBLE CLICK & THE CASE TO PROGRESS TO A SOCIAL ENTERPRISE** (Pages 163 - 168)

Report of Director of Community Services - Cabinet Member for Social Services

OPERATIONAL REPORTS

13 **REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2013/14 (MONTH 7)** (Pages 169 - 216)

Report of Head of Finance - Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance

14 **COUNCIL TAX AND BUSINESS RATE POLICIES 2014-15** (Pages 217 - 222)

Report of Head of Finance - Cabinet Member for Corporate Management

15 **COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME** (Pages 223 - 234)

Report of Head of Finance - Cabinet Member for Corporate Management

16 **TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID YEAR REPORT 2013/14** (Pages 235 - 250)

Report of Head of Finance - Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance

17 **CHARGING FOR RE-RATING INSPECTIONS CARRIED OUT UNDER THE FOOD HYGIENE RATING (WALES) ACT 2013** (Pages 251 - 254)

Report of Director of Environment - Cabinet Member for Waste Strategy, Public Protection and Leisure

18 **ELEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE FLINTSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM** (Pages 255 - 276)

Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services - Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance

19 **EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS** (Pages 277 - 280)

Report of the Chief Executive enclosed.

**FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME - COUNTY COUNCIL, CABINET, AUDIT
AND OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY - FOR INFORMATION**

Setting up of a Joint Committee for the Area of AONB

- Deferred to 18 March when further information on the budgetary position will have been received

Public Rights of Way Priorities

- Deferred to 17 June 2014 to receive an up to date report

Update on Collaborative Procurement Projects

- Deferred to 18 March

CABINET **17 DECEMBER 2013**

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet of Flintshire County Council held at County Hall, Mold on Tuesday, 17 December 2013

PRESENT: Councillor Aaron Shotton (Chair)

Councillors: Bernie Attridge, Chris Bithell, Helen Brown, Christine Jones and Kevin Jones

APOLOGIES: Councillors Derek Butler and Billy Mullin

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillor Dave Mackie

IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Executive, Director of Community Services, Director of Environment, Director of Lifelong Learning, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Head of Finance and Team Manager, Committee Services

128. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were received.

129. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2013 had been circulated with the agenda.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be approved as a correct record.

130. ESTABLISHING THE PROPOSED HOUSING COMPANY

The Cabinet Member for Housing introduced the report which highlighted the legal and governance issues around the establishment of the proposed housing company and sought approval of its creation.

During its early years the company would be expected to own and let its own properties, lease and sub let properties and let and manage properties on behalf of private landlords.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services explained that it was appropriate that the level of Council control should be very high, at least during the company's early years, which would mean it would be subject to a high level of regulation.

The Council would be able to exercise control over the company through ownership of shares and control of the board of directors. The right to cast the Council's vote as shareholder should be exercised by the Cabinet Member for

Housing which would ensure that key decisions would be taken in accordance with the wishes of the Cabinet. The board would be limited to five or seven positions with the majority being held by Councillors.

The company would buy any services it required from the Council with Council employees remaining employed by the Council but able to undertake functions on behalf of the company with that being built into their job descriptions.

At the recent Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the report was fully supported. Quarterly reports were requested through the regular performance monitoring mechanism, with additional reports if required.

Additional comments were that if in the future the company wanted to borrow money or may ask the Council to stand as guarantor, that Overview and Scrutiny be consulted and have full involvement throughout.

In response to a question on the company potentially borrowing money from the Council, the Head of Finance explained that research was currently being undertaken to establish the process followed by other Local Authorities.

Members welcomed the report and expressed their thanks to all of the officers and Members involved.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the housing company is established as a company limited by shares as set out in the report on the basis that the Council is assured of having a sufficient level of control of the body;
- (b) That the Chief Executive, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Head of Finance and Head of Housing in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing be given delegated authority to take all necessary steps to establish the company; and
- (c) That the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing be given delegated authority to approve the business plan.

131. ASSISTED GARDENING SERVICE

The Cabinet Member for Housing introduced the report which sought approval of the new Assisted Gardening Service.

The Assisted Gardening Service required modernising to align it with the changing needs of the population and implications of the Government's Welfare Reform proposals.

A review was necessary for the following reasons:

- Residential gardening services did not form part of Streetscene's core business and as a result they no longer wished to deliver the service

- There was no provision for ensuring the welfare of the tenant in carrying out visual checks of the building for security purposes
- The service did not allow for additional services such as garden clearance for antisocial tenants or void properties
- There were limitations on who was able to receive the service, with no option for other residents to pay for services if they required them
- Grass clippings were left in situ; a matter which had caused some dissatisfaction amongst tenants and elected Members
- The service did not provide value for money
- The cost of delivering the Service was met by all tenants whether they received it or not

Following the tender process during the summer, the cost of delivering a comparable service for grass and hedge cutting under the terms of the new contract had been calculated at £125k, enabling an annual saving of £125k. This included the cost of delivering the welfare element of the service.

Charging for the service could be fixed or variable. A fixed charge was based on how much the Council estimated it would reasonably cost to run the services in the scheme/block. The advantage of fixed charges for tenants was that they were simple to understand and easier to budget for and manage.

Variable service charges were based on the actual costs of a particular service so the tenant only paid for the service, plus any associated management fee. When operating a variable charge, the administration burden increased and this was therefore the less favoured option.

The report provided full details of examples of how much a disabled council tenant, a non disabled council tenant and a private resident would pay for grass cutting charges and hedge cutting charges.

An additional welfare element would compliment the new Community Based Accommodation Support Service (CBASS) which would ensure that the most vulnerable tenants were supported in ways to meet their needs. An example was a gardener who would check for evident signs of alarm, distress or unusual activity including a build up of post in the letter box, signs of forced entry etc. The gardener would report any signs of concern to Care Link or the Emergency Services so they could be acted upon immediately.

RESOLVED:

That the introduction of a chargeable gardening service to tenants and private Flintshire residents and the charging model set out in the report be supported.

132. MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSIONING PLAN – SERVICE UPDATE

The Cabinet Member for Social Services introduced the Mental Health Commissioning Strategy and Summary documents which described the plans for the provision of training, education and work opportunities within the context of supporting recovery for services users with a mental health.

The strategy also aimed over time to address a gap in the area of accommodation support. The focus of the commissioning strategy excluded dementia or dementia related illnesses.

RESOLVED:

That the implementation of the Mental Health Commissioning Strategy be approved.

133. DEMENTIA COMMISSIONING PLAN

The Cabinet Member for Social Services introduced the Dementia Commissioning Strategy and summary documents which described the vision for long term care services for people living with dementia in Flintshire over the next five years.

The focus of the document was primarily residential care services but it recognised that much work was needed to improve the quality of life for people living with dementia in all settings.

The strategy document described an overall direction of travel for those services and it was acknowledged it would be subject to review on an ongoing basis.

The Director of Community Services advised of four amendments to the figures outlined in 2.3.1 of the appendix to the report which were:

- a. To read 28%, not 27%
- b. To read 28%, not 27%
- c. To read 44%, not 42%
- d. To read 72%, not 68%

Members welcomed the report, commenting in particular on the success of the 15 apartments for people with dementia to live independently at Llys Jasmine Extra Care in Mold.

RESOLVED:

That the Dementia Commissioning Strategy be approved.

134. TOGETHER FOR MENTAL HEALTH

The Cabinet Member for Social Services advised Members of the response of Flintshire with partners to the Welsh Government's Strategy "Together for Mental Health".

The vision set out in "Together for Mental Health" provided the strategic context for an ambitious mental health agenda for the next 10 years. It shared responsibility and accountability between the NHS and Local Government for driving forward improvements in mental health provision in North Wales.

The strategy highlighted a range of factors in people's lives which could affect mental health and wellbeing. These built on the 'Areas of Life' used in Care and Treatment Planning to improve the mental health and wellbeing of the whole population, full details of which were outlined in the report.

A specific improvement approach identified in the strategy was for Local Authorities to identify a "Mental Health Champion" and it was proposed that the elected Member for the portfolio for Social Services was best placed to take on the role. Full details of the responsibilities were outlined in the report.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Christine Jones be noted as having the responsibilities of Mental Health Champion as Portfolio holder for Social Services.

135. THE DUBLIN DECLARATION ON AGE FRIENDLY CITIES AND COMMUNITIES IN EUROPE 2013

The Cabinet Member for Social Services provided background information on the Dublin Declaration on Age Friendly Cities and Communities in Europe 2013, and the invitation from the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) to every Council in Wales to sign the Declaration.

The Dublin Declaration reaffirmed commitment to adopt best practice, to collaborate with regional and international stakeholders, to communicate with regional and international stakeholders, and to communicate through local and regional channels to stimulate and promote equal rights and opportunities for older people living within communities.

The Dublin Declaration did not constitute a legally binding contract, however by becoming a signatory, the Council would be pledging a commitment to the aspirations and principles referred to in the Declaration.

RESOLVED:

That Flintshire County Council become a signatory to the Dublin Declaration.

136. REVIEW OF SUBSIDISED BUS SERVICES

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment provided an update on the review of subsidised bus services following the consultation exercise, and confirmed the proposed action to be taken in relation to specific bus services.

A wide consultation and subsequent review of subsidised bus services within the County had been undertaken in accordance with the Policy which was appended to the report.

Feedback to the consultation had been received, details of which were outlined in the report.

The report was presented to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 13 November 2013 who resolved that:

- (a) Members support the implementation of the changes as set out within the report and supporting appendices; and
- (b) Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee will review service performance tables annually, including the actions taken by officers to improve the performance of services

A summary of the subsidised bus services within Flintshire was attached at Appendix 3 to the report.

The Director of Environment explained the Welsh Government (WG) Concessionary Travel Scheme which was designed to leave bus operators no better and no worse off as they currently recovered approximately 73% of the cost of the journey back through the concessionary fee per passenger. In Flintshire, the level of funding was £2 million per annum. WG had reviewed its Concessionary Travel Scheme and was likely to seek changes to the level of funding support given back to bus operators in the future. Current details were unclear but amendments to the financial level of support given to operators would have further consequences for bus services within the County with the potential for commercial and subsidised services to be affected. The situation would be monitored with a view to the proposals being amended should it be deemed necessary to do so.

Members praised officers and the Cabinet Member on the consultation exercise that had been undertaken.

RESOLVED:

That delegated authority be granted to the Director of Environment following consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment to implement the changes set out in the report taking account of any impacts from the Welsh Government review of Concessionary Travel.

137. THE AMALGAMATION OF YSGOL PERTH Y TERFYN INFANT SCHOOL AND YSGOL Y FRON JUNIOR SCHOOL IN HOLYWELL

The Cabinet Member for Education introduced the report which sought formal approval for the amalgamation of Ysgol Perth y Terfyn Infants and Ysgol y Fron Junior Schools to form a new primary school from September 2016.

The statutory notice to amalgamate the two schools did not attract any objections which Members felt reflected the enthusiasm of the residents of Holywell.

The Director of Lifelong Learning said this was an important milestone in the programme for primary schools. There would be a continuity of learning experience for families which was part of a wider programme in Holywell.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed amalgamation of Ysgol Perth y Terfyn Infant and Ysgol y Fron Junior Schools be approved.

138. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2013/14 (MONTH 6)

The Head of Finance provided the most up to date revenue budget monitoring information (Month 6) for the Council Fund and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) in 2013/14.

The projected year end position on the Council Fund, as estimated at Month 6 was:

- Net in year expenditure forecast to be £1.012m less than budget (a decrease of £0.062m on the £1.074m reported at Month 5)
- Projected contingency reserve balance at 31 March 2014 of £3.653m

The projected year end position on the HRA, as estimated at Month 6 was:

- Net in year expenditure forecast to under spend the budget by £0.062m (£0.014 m under spend reported at Month 5)
- Projected HRA balances at 31 March 2014 of £1.495m

The report provided details on the projected positive variance of expenditure against budget of £1.012m, programme of efficiencies, inflation, monitoring budget assumptions and new risks, and unearmarked reserves.

On the HRA, for 2013/14 there was an overall projected under spend of £0.062m and a projected closing balance at Month 6 of £1.495m, which at 5.2% of total expenditure satisfied the prudent approach of ensuring a minimum level of 3%.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be noted;
- (b) That the projected Council Fund contingency sum as at 31 March 2014 be noted; and
- (c) That the projected final level of balances on the Housing Revenue Account be noted.

139. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2013/14 (MONTH 6)

The Head of Finance provided information on the Month 6 (end of September) capital programme information for 2013/14 which detailed the cumulative information relating to each programme as shown in appendix A to the report.

Details of how the programme had changed since the Month 4 report to Cabinet on 15 October 2013 were outlined and had resulted in a net increase of £1.267m (Council Fund - £1.267m, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) - £0.0m).

Actual expenditure at the end of September (Month 6) across the whole of the programme was £13.196m. The breakdown of expenditure was detailed in the report which showed that 28.85% of the budget had been spent across the programme (Council Fund – 35.03%, HRA 39.44%).

The report also showed that there was a projected outturn of £43.629m. On the Council Fund there was a projected underspend against budget of £3.111m and the projection for the HRA was to spend up to target. Details of the variances for individual programme areas were listed in appendix B to the report which included the reasons and the required remedial action where those variances exceeded 10% of the budget.

£3.110m of rollover had been identified which reflected reviewed spending plans across all programme areas. Those committed amounts had been identified as now required to meet the cost of the programme works in 2014/15. The potential for further rollover was monitored closely on a monthly basis as an integral part of capital programme monitoring.

At the County Council meeting on 1 March 2013 it was agreed to hold back 20% of core programme funding in the light of the continuing uncertainty over the timing of receipts. Cabinet agreed on 15 October 2013 that the 20% should continue to be held back to keep the programme within the limits of anticipated receipts. The position at Month 6 did not allow for any revision to that position which would be closely monitored and would be reported on in future monitoring reports and would become part of the capital programme considerations for 2014/15.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be noted and approved;
- (b) That the continued holding back of 20% of the core programme be approved;
and
- (c) That the rollover adjustments be approved.

140. NEW BUSINESS RATE GRANT SCHEME

The Head of Finance provided details of two new Welsh Government (WG) business rate schemes, 'Open for Business' and 'New Developments' which were designed to bring long-term empty properties back into use and stimulate construction and development in Wales.

The schemes were in response to the recommendations from the Business Rates Task and Finish Group that examined how the business rates system in Wales could be used to encourage economic development.

The first scheme, 'Open for Business', was focused on bringing long term unoccupied retail properties back into use and especially supporting new businesses in the first year of trading. It would provide 50% rate relief for all eligible retail properties for up to 12 months from the date of occupation. The retail properties would have had to have been unoccupied for a continuous period of 12 months or more and have a rateable value of no more than £45,000.

The second scheme, 'New Developments', was designed to incentivise new and speculative developments in a bid which could boost construction in Wales and which would exempt from business rates all newly built but vacant commercial property, completed on or after 1 October 2013 and before 1 October 2016 for the first 18 months following completion.

In response to a question, the Head of Finance explained that 560 empty properties had been identified and a letter would be sent to each the following day about the 'Open for Business' scheme. On the 'New Developments' scheme, Revenues and Benefits were working with Economic Development to seek to maximise the availability of information of those who could potentially benefit from it.

RESOLVED:

That the implementation of both the 'Open for Business' scheme and 'New Developments' scheme be supported by adopting the scheme resolution as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

141. EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS

An information report on the actions taken under delegated powers was submitted. The actions were as set out below:-

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| Corporate | - Business Rates – Write Offs
- Organisational Change Strategy Consultancy Support |
| Environment | - Sychdyn – Proposed Traffic Calming
- Sainsbury Supermarkets Ltd Site Redevelopment, Mold
- Granting of Lease of Former Youth Service Premises, Mostyn (Community Asset Transfer)
- Lease of Former Bagillt Library – Community Asset Transfer |

142. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 – TO CONSIDER EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That the press and public be excluded for the remainder of the meeting for the following items by virtue of exempt information under paragraph 12 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

143. AGRICULTURAL ESTATE MANAGEMENT

That Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment introduced the report which sought approval for the disposal of part of the estate.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the sale of Wood Farm and associated land extending to approximately 14.45 acres be approved;
- (b) That, in association with this disposal, the grant of a new three year lease of 34.22 acres approximately be approved; and
- (c) That the surrender of the remaining land extending to 65 acres, and its sale on the open market, be approved.

144. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

There were two members of the press in attendance.

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Chairman

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **CABINET**

DATE: **TUESDAY, 21 JANUARY 2014**

REPORT BY: **HEAD OF FINANCE**

SUBJECT: **COUNCIL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2014/15**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.01 To present the draft revenue budget proposals for the Council Fund.
- 1.02 To advise of the ongoing work to close the currently remaining budget gap in 2014/15.
- 1.03 To propose that the draft revenue budget proposals be referred to Overview and Scrutiny for feedback to Cabinet in February.

2.00 BACKGROUND

- 2.01 The potential budget position for 2014/15 has been reported to members on an ongoing basis since the 2013/14 budget was agreed in March 2013. Successive reports have identified the increasing budget gap to be met from efficiencies, as the prospects for the level of funding from Welsh Government (WG) have worsened.
- 2.02 The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) has been updated and reported twice during 2013. The revision as at the end of May was reported to Cabinet in June and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee in July and was fully supported by members. The revision as at the end of September also contained an outline of the developing Organisational Redesign and Change Programme to meet the challenge presented by the level of reduction in WG funding. Again, the MTFP and the Organisational Redesign and Change Programme were fully supported.
- 2.03 The provisional local government financial settlement for 2014/15 was advised to Councils on 16th October 2013. Details of the provisional financial settlement were set out in a report to Cabinet on 19th November 2013, along with information on the implications for the 2014/15 budget. A copy of the Council's response to the provisional settlement based on the discussion at Cabinet is attached at Appendix 1.

- 2.04 In recognition of the scale of the challenge presented by the settlement, which doubled the budget gap from that previously forecast, members agreed to a revision to the process and timetable for consideration of the budget proposals. Original plans for budget proposals to be presented in November and scrutinised in December were changed. Member Workshops, open to all members, were held on 16th and 18th December 2013. These workshops were recognised by those members who attended to have achieved their purpose, which was to:
- Reach a shared understanding of the financial challenge
 - Build support and ownership for the strategy as set out in the MTFP which balances more typical efficiencies (value for money) with newer and large scale structural change and workforce review
 - Agree how best to run the budget setting process from December to February
 - Look ahead to managing the financial challenge in future years
 - Involve all members and to share views and solutions
- 2.05 The final local government settlement was received on 11th December 2013. This had a further minor negative impact, with the Council's funding being further reduced by £0.132m.
- 2.06 Following consideration by Cabinet at this meeting, the budget proposals will be subject to a series of Overview and Scrutiny meetings which take place between 28th January and 3rd February, preceded by a further member workshop of the budget overview on 27th January. Feedback from overview and scrutiny will be provided to Cabinet. Final budget proposals will be proposed at Cabinet on 18th February for adoption by Council on the same day.

3.00 NATIONAL AND LOCAL FINANCIAL CONTEXT

National Context and Local Impact

- 3.01 Local authority funding from WG in 2014/15 has been reduced considerably from the levels indicated for 2014/15 in late 2012. This is significant as WG funding provides 80% of the funding for local authority services met from base budgets, with the remaining 20% being raised from Council Tax.
- 3.02 The indicative settlement showed a small increase in Revenue Support Grant (RSG) for 2014/15, giving a then budget gap of £7.6m.
- 3.03 The actual year on year cut from 2013/14 to 2014/15 is 4% in cash terms, which increased the gap to £16.5m. Whilst the cut is 4% in cash terms, it is fact higher than that (6%+) when inflation and demographic growth are taken into account, with no recognition in the settlement of service pressures, national pay awards or local investment needs to meet shared WG and Council priorities.

- 3.04 The reduction comes from two main sources:
- cuts in funding to WG by UK Treasury announced in the 2012 Autumn Statement and the 2013 Budget.
 - policy decisions by WG to prioritise funding to Health and to support WG policy choices for universal services
- 3.05 Full details of the national context and local impact are contained within the MTFP revisions at 30th May and 30th September 2013 and the report on the provisional local government settlement as set out in Section 2.00 above.

Adapting Locally to the National Context

- 3.06 The scale of the financial challenge and the likelihood of a prolonged period of fiscal constraint means that the Council needs to adapt its approach to service and budget planning. The strategy to develop longer term plans and move away from a more traditional annual approach is made much more prominent.
- 3.07 From 2014/15 onwards, the effort must be on the level of resources estimated to be available at the end of the MTFP period, with plans being put into place to make the financial efficiencies through an ongoing organisational change programme. Annual budgets need to be set within this context and available resources utilised to recognise the lead in times required to achieve change and realise efficiencies.
- 3.08 Sustained levels of reducing funding requires much more challenging forms of prioritising, aligning resources and questioning the achievement of value for money in order to:
- deliver on priorities and make improvements, as set out in the Improvement Plan.
 - meet changing need and demand
 - be able to live within reduced resources
- 3.09 Critical to the success of this approach is taking decisive action locally and not waiting for future collaboration or structural reform to provide answers. They are not solutions for the challenges which face the Council in the here and now or in the medium term.

4.00 ORGANISATIONAL REDESIGN AND CHANGE PROGRAMME

- 4.01 The Council has set out in its second version of the Medium Term Financial Plan, published mid-year, a developing approach to organisational change and redesign. This mid-year change in approach was a direct response to the emerging national decisions on reductions in direct funding support for local government. The change was based on a recognition that the previous successful programmes of annualised organisational and operational efficiencies and service reviews was inadequate to meet the scale of the new financial challenge; that a broader based and more ambitious change programme was required; that the Council would need to return to the

fundamentals of organisational structure and the total costs of employment; that the Council would need to reduce further its civic estate operational costs.

- 4.02 The commission of the Cabinet for this programme set out the following expectations:-
- the protection of local services as a first priority
 - the more challenging reduction of operating costs and overheads
 - the reorganisation of the Council with a marked reduction in management costs
 - the reduction of overall workforce costs
 - the remodelling of some functions
 - building a longer-term financial plan based on optimal efficiency
- 4.03 The Organisational Change and Redesign Programme will continue over a period of years and ambitiously 'front ends' reductions on organisational costs in the first year of 2014/15 with the intent of protecting services as far as possible.
- 4.04 The Programme has four sub-programmes, as set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan:-
1. Corporate Value for Money
 2. Functional Value for Money
 3. Organisational Design: Structure and Operating Model
 4. Operational Design: Workforce

The definitions, working targets and statements of progress for each of the four sub-programmes are set out below.

The Corporate Value for Money and Functional Value for Money Sub-Programmes

- 4.05 The newly adopted Value for Money Model has replaced the previous programmes of targeted service reviews and annualised efficiency approaches previously followed under the Flintshire Futures and general budgeting programmes.
- 4.06 The corporate programme includes cross-organisational areas of spend such as procurement, assets, administration support services and spend on goods and supplies. The functional programme concentrates on individual functional (or service) areas and explores how to contain pressures which drive costs, how to reduce resource needs by operating more efficiently, how to re-prioritise activities and services, and how to remodel the function for example in the way it is structured or through merger with another function.

- 4.07 A combined efficiency target of £10M has been set for the two Value for Money Sub-Programmes for 2014/15. The accumulated efficiencies recommended thus far stand at £8.1M through Procurement (£1.2M) and all other (£6.9M). The detail of these efficiencies is itemised in Appendices 2 and 3. The Procurement work-stream is on-going and will continue to generate further efficiencies throughout the year through procurement practices, the use of national and regional procurement frameworks and the renegotiation of contracts and rates with existing suppliers.

The Organisational Design: Structure and Operating Model Sub-Programme

- 4.08 This sub-programme involves a two phased review of the way the Council is structured and operates with the dual aim of (1) improving the way the Council works and (2) making significant reductions in senior management costs.
- 4.09 The first phase is a review of the structure and organisation of senior management in the first two tiers (director and head of service). This review, which began in November and is supported by expert independent advice, will produce a recommended and streamlined model for consultation throughout February, and adoption by Council by the end of March. The second phase, which will overlap with the first, and be implemented in sequence, is a review of supporting management in the grades M1-M9.
- 4.10 The combined efficiency target for these two phases is set at £2.0M in a full financial year with a proportionate target for 2014/15 of £1.45M based on the timing of the current implementation plan.

The Organisational Design: Workforce Sub-Programme

- 4.11 This sub-programme involves a review of overall workforce numbers beyond the senior management grades referred to above. A planned approach is being designed to assess the scope for a reduction in workforce numbers, function by function, before inviting individual expressions of interest for voluntary redundancy or voluntary early retirement. There is no entitlement for employees to leave the employment of the Council through these routes and the objective is to match as far as possible the requests of individual employees with the capacity of a service to reduce its workforce complement without an unmanageable impact on service continuity and performance. This sub-programme needs to be managed with care and forethought given that the scope for further workforce reduction is limited by the impacts of preceding service reviews which have streamlined structures and workforce complements and taken them nearer to an optimum model of efficiency; a rigorous vacancy management policy has had the effect of requiring some services to run under capacity; a number of posts, both unoccupied and occupied, have already been identified for change or withdrawal in the Value for Money sub-programmes summarised above. An overall efficiency target of £1.5M has been set for this sub-programme for 2014/15.

- 4.12 The costs of employment not covered by the proposals for the Part 3 Terms and Conditions under the Single Status Agreement are also under review to supplement the reduction of the workforce establishment.
- 4.13 The third and fourth sub-programmes on workforce have targets set which must be achieved with both work-streams being well advanced. The precise impacts of the work-streams cannot be gauged at the outset and will be evaluated as they are implemented. There has to be a degree of confidentiality as, in implementation, the Council will be dealing with confidential requests of employees, and sensitivities where employees are placed at the risk of redundancy, for example through structural change, without having expressed an interest to leave the employment of the Council voluntarily.
- 4.14 The Council has set policies for the limits of discretionary payments for redundancy. The investment needs to meet the cumulative costs of payments for the numbers of employees who will be expected to leave our employment have been calculated and are referred to in Section 9.00.

5.00 FINANCIAL STRATEGY

- 5.01 The financial strategy adopted to support the Organisational Redesign and Change Programme is summarised as follows:
- a thorough and challenging review of:
 - assumptions for 2014/15 arising from decisions made in prior years to ensure that the forecasts included reflect the current position
 - price inflation to include provision only where deemed absolutely essential
 - taking a risk based approach to the assessment of all potential items of additional cost as to their likelihood and the level required
 - ensuring that any revenue implications from the capital programme are fully integrated
 - setting clear targets for the achievement of efficiencies to meet the budget gap in 2014/15 through the Organisational Change and Redesign Plan.
 - taking a risk based approach to the broad quantum targets set out in the September MTFP revision and adjusting the balance of individual targets within the overall quantum required, based on progress achieved and up to date assessment of the timing of the delivery of savings
 - undertaking a review of all reserves and balances
 - having in place an affordable Investment Strategy to provide the level of one-off monies needed to:
 - deliver change e.g. the cost of reducing workforce numbers, and investment in technology and temporary capacity

- recognise the timing of implementation of aspects of the organisational change and re-design plan which may not always be possible to achieve from the beginning of a financial year, as the Council moves through an ongoing period of transition and change
- setting the 2014/15 budget within the context of the Medium Term Financial Plan, through identifying the impacts of decisions for 2014/15 and reflecting these in the Medium Term Financial Plan

6.00 TOTAL REVENUE BUDGET AND BUDGET REQUIREMENT

Proposed Budget

- 6.01 At this point in the budget planning there is a remaining budget gap on the recurring base budget of £0.915m.
- 6.02 Work continues on eliminating the budget gap prior to the presentation of the final budget proposals. This will include seeking to identify further corporate and functional efficiencies, particularly procurement through the implementation of cost control measures; ongoing review of pressures and income opportunities; and through the work to review reserves and balances as part of the investment strategy for 2014/15 as described in Section 9.00.
- 6.03 Details of the current budget proposals are summarised below. Sections 6.04 – 6.18 below set out further details and assumptions made.

Funding		£m
Aggregate External Funding (RSG & NDR)		192.942
Council Tax		60.776
Budget Requirement		<u>253.718</u>
Unhypothecated Grants		
Outcome Agreement Grant		1.458
Use of Reserves - Investment Strategy		6.250
Specific Grants (Estimated)		35.519
Total Funding		<u>296.945</u>
Expenditure		
Total Budget 2013/14		293.346
Previous Year's Growth / Items Dropping Out	Appendix 4	1.138
Pay & Price Inflation	Appendix 5	2.425
New Responsibilities and Transfers into the Settlement	Appendix 6	0.092
Pressures and Investments - Ongoing	Appendix 7	4.697
Pressures and Investments - One-off and Time Limited		4.800
Efficiencies	Appendices 2 & 3	(11.030)
Less Specific Grants 2013/14	Appendix 8	(33.127)
Plus Specific Grants 2014/15 (Estimated)	Appendix 8	35.519
Total Expenditure		<u>297.860</u>
Shortfall		<u>0.915</u>

Details of The Budget Build Up

Resources

- 6.04 Total resources of £296.945m include funding from Revenue Support Grant (RSG), Non Domestic Rates (NDR), Council Tax, Unhypothecated and Specific Grants and the use of Reserves.
- 6.05 Currently, the amount to be raised from Council Tax is assumed as an increase in the Band D Council Rate of 3.0% (excluding Police and Town/Community Councils' precepts) and a 99% collection rate. This equates to an increase of £28.78 on 2013/14 and a Band D Rate of £988.21. A 3.0% increase has been used for planning purposes in the two MTFP revisions in 2013 based on the pattern of past Council decisions. At 3%, this assumption is at the lower end based on the Council's local taxation policy set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy and, as such, could be one of the factors to be reviewed in closing the remaining budget gap.
- A Council Tax collection rate of 99% for 2014/15 was agreed by Cabinet in November 2013.
- 6.06 A 3.0% increase in the Band D Rate results in a Budget Requirement of £253.718m.

- 6.07 As the Council's proposed increase in the Band D rate differs from that assumed by the WG when calculating Flintshire's Standard Spending Assessment (SSA), the budget requirement is £1.423m below its calculated SSA of £255.141m as notified in the Final Settlement.
- 6.08 The amount of Outcome Agreement Grant of £1.458m has been advised by the WG as part of the final settlement. As always this will be subject to assessment against agreed performance criteria. For budget purposes it has been assumed that all of the grant will be received.
- 6.09 The specific grants figure of £35.519m is provisional, with the WG yet to advise of the 2014/15 level for a number of grants. However, in line with the Council's MTFs, expenditure levels need to be managed within the final figures announced by the WG. Appendix 8 details the information received from the WG to date.

Expenditure

Previous Year Growth / Items Dropping Out

- 6.10 Each year indicative amounts for previous year's pressures and investments and efficiencies are included in the budget for the following two years. In the current budget the net effects of the changes agreed in the 2012/13 and 2013/14 budget total £1.138m, rising to £2.745m in 2015/16 and are detailed in Appendix 4. These amounts have been reviewed as part of the 2014/15 budget and where appropriate an adjustment made to reflect the current position. The most significant change relates to the removal of the Investment in Organisational Change allocation of £1.580m. The investment strategy detailed in section 9 identifies that the estimated investment costs needed to deliver the efficiencies in this budget can be met from available reserves and balances without the need for this additional contribution. Accordingly, the allocation has been taken out for 2014/15, but remains in the MTFP for future years.

Pay and Price Inflation

- 6.11 Inflation of £2.425m is shown in detail in Appendix 5. The proposals at this stage assume a 1% increase from April 2014, although the outcome of national negotiations is not likely to be known until in the new year.
- 6.12 Price inflation of £0.589m has only been included for some targeted service areas at a rate of 1% - 3%, where this has been deemed essential. A significant amount of detailed work has been undertaken to assess the need for an inflationary increase and wherever possible increases have been omitted with agreement of the relevant Head of Service.
- 6.13 In addition to the standard level of inflation outlined above, non-standard inflation of £0.681m has been included as detailed in Appendix 5 to reflect those items for which inflation is anticipated to be at higher levels based on national intelligence. This sum will be held centrally until it is demonstrated

that there is a requirement for the funding to be released, as has been the case in prior years.

- 6.14 Inflation of 3% amounting to £0.151m has generally been assumed on the yield from existing fees and charges. This excludes areas whereby the charge applicable for 2014/15 has already been approved e.g. Increases for leisure have been introduced from January 2014.
- 6.15 The inflation figures referred to above exclude inflation on specific grant income and related expenditure as the specific grant figures are indicative only at this stage. Adjustments will be applied when the figures are confirmed by the WG but this will be cost neutral to the Council.
- 6.16 The final settlement included one transfer into the settlement relating to Administration Subsidy for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and, following an assessment of the level of need for Flintshire, the amount of funding 'passported' to the service concerned is detailed in Appendix 6.
- 6.17 Appendix 7 sets out the recurring pressures and investment included in the budget and include:

Leisure Centres

The proposed budget includes an amount of £0.962m to address the in-year overspend in relation to leisure, related in part to capital payment. This has been reported to members throughout the current financial year. This will provide budget to manage the risk of an ongoing overspend in the new financial year, pending any review of leisure provision as part of the future review of service models referred to in Section 11.00.

Actuarial Valuation

The Clwyd Pension Fund has been subject to an actuarial valuation as at 31st March 2013, as required under the triennial review of pension funds. The valuation identifies the amounts which employers in the Fund (of which Flintshire is one), need to make into the Fund over the coming three years to cover past and future service liabilities. An amount of £0.991m has been included in the 2014/15 budget for planning purposes. Following discussions with the Pension Fund and the Actuary this level of budget is required and is reflected in these proposals, with the impacts for future years built into the MTFP.

Pensioners Grant Scheme

Funding for this scheme to provide assistance to Pensioners with Council Tax (beyond support provided by Council Tax Support), has previously been provided from WG by specific grant. The Final Settlement advised that funding had been included for 2014/15 in the RSG to enable Councils to continue with the scheme. The budget proposals assume the continuation of this scheme at a cost of £0.201m.

Children's Out of County Placements

Members will be aware of the volatile nature of this service and the difficulty in predicting future numbers and costs of clients. However, due to an increasing trend in this area as reported in the budget monitoring report, an additional £0.250m has been included at this stage. Further detailed work is being undertaken to risk assess future need and will be considered again in the final budget proposals, based on the most up to date information available.

- 6.18 Information regarding the efficiency proposals are summarised in section 4.00 and detailed in appendices 2 and 3 which in total contribute £11.030m to the overall budget position.

Risk Assessment and Assurance

- 6.19 In line with the financial strategy, a risk based approach has been taken to the assessment of all potential items of additional cost as to their likelihood and the level required. The basis of calculation for pressures and efficiencies is recorded and has been subject to internal challenge to ensure a robust approach and to give assurance to the estimates included. Assessments have been taken of the areas of financial pressure in the current financial year e.g. leisure and out of county placements and assessments made of the provision to be included for 2014/15, taking a balance between the challenge of the overall budget position and the potential for variations in demand.

The achievement of planned efficiencies is a priority with the Improvement Plan and the Council has a good record of making efficiencies year on year. For 2014/15, the scale of the challenge is greater than in previous years which is recognised through the broader based and more ambitious change programme. Decisive action is required to ensure delivery of the plans.

Schools Budget

- 6.20 Under the School Funding (Wales) Regulations 2010 local authorities are required to notify Welsh Government of the proposed budget for schools for the forthcoming year by 14 February each year.
- 6.21 The Final Settlement advised of a continuation of the First Minister's commitment to protect schools funding by 1% above the change in the overall Welsh Government budget.
- 6.22 For 2014/15 this equates to 0.9% with the resources to meet this commitment being included in equal shares through an increase in the pupil deprivation grant and an additional element within the revenue support grant. It should be noted that the protection expectation is relative to WG's funding from the UK Treasury and not the level of Individual Council settlements from WG.
- 6.23 The current budget proposals meet the First Minister's expectation of protecting schools, although the council will continue to review it's investment in schools, particularly in relation to inflationary pressures.

- 6.24 The Council is also committed to increasing the amount of the school budget delegated to schools which we have been doing progressively over a number of years. This is within the strategic framework which embraces the school modernisation programme, numbers of children in school (demographic change) and investment through the 21st Century Schools Programme.
- 6.25 Throughout 2013/14 a significant project has been undertaken to review the funding formula which is used to allocate resources to schools. This project is working towards completion with the aim being to introduce the new formula for the 2014/15 school budgets subject to final consultations with the Schools Budget Forum and cabinet approval.
- 6.26 In 2014/15 a new funding methodology has been introduced by Welsh Government for Post 16. The Post 16 allocation for 2014/15 in Flintshire will be 2.46% less than 2013/14. Work is ongoing with schools to agree an appropriate formula and consultation will be through the Schools Budget Forum.

Relationship to the Capital Programme

- 6.27 The Council Fund Capital Programme 2014/15 and Indicative Funding to 2017/18 report is also reported to Cabinet on 21st January.
- 6.28 The capital report sets out the work undertaken in 2013 to review capital assets for detailed member consideration and public engagement in the spring.
- 6.29 Any revenue costs from schemes in the capital programme in 2014/15 are reflected in this revenue budget and for future years in the Medium Term Financial Plan.
- 6.30 Any future capital schemes not already included in the programme and potentially arising from the assets review will be considered in-year with any additional revenue or capital funding being considered on the basis of the business case and affordability within overall council resources.

7.00 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS (EIAs)

- 7.01 The Council has an obligation to assess the potential equalities impacts of its budget proposals and it is important that all aspects of the Organisational Redesign and Change Programme are subject to an appropriate Equalities Impact Assessment, to ensure that there is no potential for discrimination or disadvantaging either service users or employees.

Corporate and Functional Efficiencies

- 7.02 The initial efficiency proposals for establishing the Value for Money Reviews have been equality impact assessed as part of a higher level filtering exercise undertaken by Directorate Management Team's and supported by both Policy and Finance team members. A fuller and proportionate equality impact

assessment will be conducted where any risks have been identified and appropriate adjustments made in the implementation of these reviews accordingly.

Workforce Efficiencies

- 7.03 For the Workforce Programme, the Council have commissioned some independent support, similar to that commissioned for the Single Status EIA work but less complicated. This will ensure that the proposals, including any entitlement policies that might apply, do not have any adverse consequences for any groups of employees. The independence of this work is helpful to ensure that the Council can evidence that a fair and equitable approach has been adopted.

8.00 EARMARKED AND UNEARMARKED RESERVES

Base Level of Unearmarked Reserves

- 8.01 The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy confirms the Council's commitment to maintaining a base level of reserves of 2% of turnover. The current base level of reserves is £5.834m as reported in the monthly budget monitoring reports. Despite the fact that funding has reduced in 2014/15 over 2013/14 it is proposed that unearmarked reserves are maintained at the same level for 2014/15 which will provide an additional safeguard in the current uncertain financial climate.

Contingency Reserve

- 8.02 When the 2013/14 budget was set the Contingency Reserve was estimated to be £0.200m at 31 March 2013. As a result of the net underspend reported in the final outturn for 2012/13 the actual amount in the Contingency Reserve at the year end was £3.159m after taking into account commitments in 2013/14 :

- Use of £0.297m to meet one-off / time limited costs
- Replenishing the winter maintenance reserve by £0.250m

Cabinet approved in the final outturn report that the amount held in the contingency reserve of £3.159m be held and considered within the context of the Medium Term Financial Plan and 2014/15 budget strategy.

- 8.03 The 2013/14 Month 7 Budget Monitoring report which is also on this agenda, shows an estimated balance of £3.585m in the contingency reserve as at 31 March 2014, which after the setting aside of £0.518m to provide funding for the severe weather costs incurred early on in the financial year.

- 8.04 Whilst the base level of reserves is a known sum which is set aside, the level of Contingency reserve is based on the current estimate and is subject to change at the end of the financial year.

Council Fund Earmarked Reserves

- 8.05 Council Fund Earmarked Reserves include service balances, corporate balances and schools balances.
- 8.06 Service balances are made up of those balances held by departments which Cabinet has agreed can be carried forward. Corporate Balances are held to meet commitments which fall in future years on specific items of expenditure.
- 8.07 The Council also holds Specific Reserves which are set aside for a specific future purpose.
- 8.08 Appendix 9 details the estimated closing balances for 2013/14 and 2014/15 in respect of all reserves and balances. The Head of Finance is satisfied that the level of these reserves is appropriate.

9.00 INVESTMENT STRATEGY

- 9.01 The scale and ambition of the Organisational Change and Redesign Programme will require significant initial investment to make the change happen. As set out in Section 5.00, a significant strand of the financial strategy for 2014/15 is to have in place an affordable Investment Strategy to provide the level of one-off monies needed to achieve change and recognise the timing of the implementation of change.
- 9.02 Work is ongoing to assess the costs which will be needed in order to achieve the change. At this stage, an estimate of £4.8m has been made of the costs needed to support both 'up-front' invest to save costs (e.g. software improvement) and the costs of employees leaving the authority as a result of the Workforce Programmes. Workforce costs are assessed on average costs at this point as precise costs vary from position to position e.g. salary level, length of service etc. These estimates will be finalised as the workforce programmes progress. This one-off investment will deliver £12.5m of ongoing savings in a full year.
- 9.03 In any large scale change programme the delivery of some efficiencies will take time to implement and will therefore not provide a full year saving in the first year. In these cases it is reasonable to meet the difference from transitional funding due to the fact that the full year effect of these efficiencies will ensure that the budget is sustainable over this period. The full year effect of efficiencies which have a part year effect in 2014/15 is £1.4m
- 9.04 The currently estimated amount to be met from one-off resources in 2014/15 through the investment strategy is therefore £6.2m.
- 9.05 To meet the significant investment required in 2014/15 the following funding streams are available which can be utilised in any combination:-

Contingency Reserve

- 9.06 The month 7 budget monitoring report also on this agenda advises of an estimated contingency reserve available as at the end of March 2014 of £3.585m. However, this will be subject to change in line with the final outturn position and the final figure will not be confirmed until the 2013/14 accounts are closed.

Use of Single Status/Equal Pay Reserve

- 9.07 The Single Status report to Council in October 2013 advised of an option to capitalise up to £3.7m of costs for Equal Pay should it be necessary as part of the total workforce strategy. If an application was approved, noting that the Council has a provisional application listed with WG, this would release £3.7m of the Single Status / Equal Pay Reserve that could be used to contribute to the 2014/15 budget strategy.
- 9.08 A capitalisation direction is subject to Ministerial approval and an application must be made to Welsh Government (WG) in the year that expenditure is to be incurred, with so approval is not now likely be known prior to 2014/15.

Review of Reserves and Balances

- 9.09 In addition to the above a review of all reserves and balances currently held is currently being undertaken with the intention of making funds available wherever possible. These will be available for contributing to the overall investment strategy as necessary. This work is ongoing and will be reported on further alongside the final budget proposals

Affordability

- 9.10 Whilst the release of further reserves and balances will add to the amounts to be included in the Investment Strategy, it can be seen that the combination of the utilisation of the Single Status / Equal Pay Reserve and the Contingency reserves will provide a total of £7.2m to fund the estimated one-off costs for 2014/15 of £6.2m that are required to ensure that the efficiencies to reduce the base budget on an ongoing basis are delivered.

10.00 CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER REPORT ON ESTIMATES AND RESERVES

- 10.01 Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 includes a specific duty on the Chief Finance Officer to report to the Authority, when it is considering its Budget and Council Tax, on the robustness of the estimates and the adequacy of reserves. The Act requires the Council to have regard to this report in making its decisions. (The reference to the first person which follows is to the Head of Finance in this role).
- 10.02 My formal statement on the robustness of the estimates and the adequacy of reserves will be made on the final budget proposals recommended to Council. However, at this initial proposal stage, I confirm the reasonableness of the

estimates in these proposals, having regard to the Council's spending needs in 2014/15 and the financial context in which the budget is being set and that the investment strategy as set out in this report is affordable. The financial strategy on which the budget is based is set out in Section 5.00 and the assumptions behind the detailed budget build up is in Section 6.00.

- 10.03 Sections 8.00 and 9.00 set out the position in relation to reserves and the investment strategy being adopted to deliver the Council's Change programme. I am satisfied that this strategy is reasonable and supports the Council's ability to deliver an ongoing programme of change which will deliver efficiencies in the base budget. As work on this is continuing, final comments on affordability and the adequacy of the level of reserves will follow in the report in February.

11.00 2015/16 AND THE MEDIUM TERM

- 11.01 The Council has adopted a Medium Term Financial Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan which sets out a developing approach to the most effective use of its resources in pursuit of its priorities and statutory services. The stability of these plans depends heavily on the predictability of future local government settlements as set by Welsh Government. Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and nationally controlled specific grants combined provide the majority share of total Council annual resources. The Welsh Government has given an indicative guide for the settlement for 2015-16, however, this cannot be presumed and there has been no guide yet given for 2016-17 onwards.
- 11.02 Local government has experienced a significant reduction in RSG for 2014/15 which was not pre-announced as part of its medium term strategy for the macro public sector in Wales, and the Council will have to guard against repeat fluctuations in national resource planning in future years. The ability of Welsh Government to plan ahead with certainty and confidence is limited by its reliance on UK Government public sector fiscal policy. In turn, the ability of local authorities and the rest of the public sector in Wales to plan ahead is limited. The Wales Audit Office has commented on the need for improvement in medium term financial planning in this and other councils; the reality is that planning ahead with confidence is compromised by this fiscal environment and the restrictions placed on councils to be flexible in the use of their resources e.g. the number and value of specific grants where revenue has to be allocated to specific services under funding criteria.
- 11.03 Given this uncertainty in planning ahead, and given the expert analysis of the ongoing impacts of UK fiscal policy in pursuit of the objective of the control and reduction of national debt by the Institute of Financial Studies (IFS) and others, sizeable annual reductions in resource availability have to be assumed. Even if RSG is reduced by a smaller percentage than the known reduction for 2014/15, or stabilised in later years, the lack of provision in the settlement for pay and price inflation, new legislative and policy impacts, and growing and changing demands in key services such as adults and children's services, means that councils face a significant real cost negative impact year on year which will necessitate continued annual overhead and service cost reductions and efficiencies.

- 11.04 The developing organisational change programme will remove a significant proportion of operating and employment overhead costs from the Council Fund base budget. Whilst there is further scope for overhead reductions as an on-going organisational change objective within the Medium Term Financial Plan, this scope will reduce year on year. As set out in previous statements on the Cabinet strategy for the medium term 2014/15 is planned as a year for reducing operating costs and protecting local services giving time and opportunity for more fundamental reviews of the models for future services.
- 11.05 During 2014 the Council plans to review and consult on a number of service models and their future shape from 2015/16 onwards. Future year cost reductions and efficiencies will need to be a combination of on-going internal changes and cost reductions and changes to service models. This programme will include reviews of alternative models of delivery for selected services; reviews of locality assets based services; 'channel shift' and electronic delivery of services; local community ownership of services including community asset transfer; the roles and responsibilities of the community council and third sectors; controlling and reducing demand for services; income policy and fees and charges. This programme will need public and partner organisation consultation and engagement.

12.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.01 Members are asked to endorse the initial budget proposals and ongoing work to close the budget gap, and refer them to overview and scrutiny committees for consideration.

13.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 13.01 The financial implications are set out in the report.

14.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 14.01 Individual growth and efficiency items may have specific anti poverty implications.

15.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 15.01 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the report.

16.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 16.01 As detailed in section 7 of the report.

17.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

17.01 The Discretionary Compensation provisions are currently under review to make sure that redundancy entitlements offered are fair, are likely to incentivise employees to express an interest in Voluntary Redundancy or Early Voluntary Retirement, and are affordable for the Council.

Employees who are either displaced, or who leave the Council voluntarily, will receive outplacement advice to support their transition into alternative employment or a new career, or into retirement, which may include opportunities to up-skill or retrain, business 'start up' advice, career counselling and retirement planning guidance, depending on the circumstances.

The Council will ensure that appropriate consultation arrangements are in place for all affected employees in line with statutory requirements and the Council's Organisational Change policy.

18.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

18.01 Formal consultation is required with Overview and Scrutiny. Meetings of Overview and Scrutiny Committees have been arranged as follows:

- 28th January: Joint Housing (GF only) and Social & Healthcare
- 28th January: Environment
- 28th January: Corporate Resources (for Corporate Departments)
- 30th January: Lifelong Learning
- 3rd February: Corporate Resources - Open to all members (to take an overview of budget based on feedback from other scrutiny meetings).

The round of scrutiny meetings is to be preceded by a further Member Workshop (open to all members) on the afternoon of 28th January to consider the budget overview.

18.02 Formal consultation is required with the School Budget Forum. The next meeting of the School Budget Forum is arranged for 23rd January.

18.03 Statutory consultation is required with Business Ratepayers. This will be undertaken in writing after the Cabinet meeting with the largest businesses within Flintshire and the representative trade and business organisations.

18.04 The budget proposals will be discussed at a meeting with the Flintshire Joint Trades Unions on 23rd January, as part of ongoing dialogue and information sharing.

18.05 Formal consultation on workforce proposals will be in accordance with the detailed plans and timescales of the workforce programme taking account of statutory requirements and local policy.

19.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

- 19.01 Prior to the formal consultation processes set out in 16.01 above, the developing financial position and the strategy to meet it have been discussed with members throughout the current financial year. This has been achieved through reports on the Medium Term Financial Plan updates as at May 2013 and September 2013 and at the Member Workshops held on 16th and 18th December 2013.
- 19.02 Updates to meetings of the School Budget Forum have been made on an ongoing basis over the same period.
- 19.03 Copies of the Medium Term Financial Plan updates have been provided to partner organisations in the Local Service Board and to local AM's MP's for information.
- 19.04 Dialogue and information sharing is part of an ongoing process with Trade Unions through FJTUC.

20.00 APPENDICES

- 20.01 As set out in the report.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Contact Officer: Gary Ferguson
Telephone: 01352 702271
Email: gary.ferguson@flintshire.gov.uk

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Mr Robert Hay
Local Government Finance Division
Revenue Branch
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

Your Ref/Eich Cyf

Our Ref/Em Cyf

Date/Dyddiad 20th November 2013

Ask for/Gofynnwr am Cllr Aaron Shotton

Direct Dial/Rhif Unig

Fax/Ffôn

01352 702102

Dear Mr Hay,

Provisional Local Government Settlement 2014/15

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the provisional local government settlement for 2014/15. Our Cabinet discussed the detail of the provisional settlement at its formal meeting on 19th November and make the following response.

Recognising the Financial Challenges

The Council fully recognises the financial challenges affecting public finances and that the resources available to Welsh Government have reduced from previously anticipated levels.

The Council also recognises the challenge faced by Welsh Government in balancing the resource needs of public services and delivering on policy commitments in the context of reduced resources for the coming financial year and the medium term.

It is accepted that the settlement is not going to change in any significant way at the final stage and it is the Council's intention is to work with the settlement that it has, rather than against it. That said, it must be recognised that the financial plans for local government have been changed drastically in a short period of time. The indications from the Minister in the summer are acknowledged, but the reality of the impact of the scale of the change from the indicative allocations which were welcomed last year as a positive support to medium term planning, cannot be underestimated. The change in position has been made at limited notice and has seriously compromised forward planning as has been recognised within the National Assembly for Wales Finance Committee recently published review of the budget and budget process.

For Flintshire, the impact of the change for 2014/15 is a reduction of £7m in previously anticipated funding levels. The Council is developing and progressing an expansive organisational change programme to reduce costs over the medium term. However the challenge is now much greater than before and has much greater immediacy for the financial year ahead.

County Hall, Mold, CH7 6NB
Tel 01352 702105

www.flintshire.gov.uk

Neuadd y Sir, Yr Wyddgrug, CH7 6NB

Ffôn 01352 702105

www.siryfflint.gov.uk

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



Proactive and realistic national public relations are needed on the gravity of the budget position and impacts. The Council urges Welsh Government to share responsibility for the public relations on the local impacts which will follow across Wales to help make the public receptive to changes to services. In addition to the main settlement, there are major concerns over pressures on specific grants. For Flintshire, specific revenue grants provide funding for services of £30m, some 10% of the Council's net revenue spend. Limited transparency, expectations that core services underpinned by specific grants will be continued locally and the lack of information at this provisional stage make financial planning and the planning of services to often vulnerable client groups very difficult. Changing grants in year, such as the reduction in the current year to the sustainable waste management grant, provides no basis for planning, service delivery or financial management.

Planning for the longer term

Longer-term budget planning is needed at a national level. Unlike Health who have three year plans, Local Government has only one year of actual budget certainty and one further year with a broad outline only. Whilst recognising that changes to funding at UK Government level are outside of the control of Welsh Government, policy decisions within Welsh Government are not. We would urge that Welsh Government gives serious consideration to providing three year plans which will enable realistic planning and the formulation of sustainable strategies for the mid to long term. Our requirements in Wales to enable us to plan ahead are mirrored in England and the stance of the Local Government Association in England on pressing for longer-term indicative budgets is a useful guide to a solution for Wales.

A rounded and collective review of the sustainability of the Welsh budget as whole (including the affordability and benefits of the universal services) is required. The current approach of review at individual sub-sector level makes thinking for the public services as a whole disjointed and can bring unintended consequences. The use of Welsh Government funds for new programmes, without prior consultation, has to be questioned when core services are at risk through budget pressures.

For future years, the Council would urge that changes to the settlement are fully transparent and communicated from the outset so that, working together, we all have a collective understanding of the position and are working positively on solutions rather than clarifying points of detail as we have this year where some of the detail has not met expectations e.g. CTRS, prudential borrowing for highways expenditure.

Solutions for the future

There is a need for Local Government to be liberated to be creative over income generation, charging and new models of working with the best practice advocated by UK national organisations being imported into Wales more freely.

The proposed review of specific grants has to be ambitious and concluded quicker than proposed. There should be a presumption that all specific grants are withdrawn and included in the Settlement unless there is a proven case for their retention as an exemption. Local government should be judged on its performance outcomes and not constrained through tight financial controls. The WLGA has commented on the draft terms of reference for this review and we support their views and position.

The financial challenges already facing councils bring a chronic need for the availability of capitalisation to meet the costs of easing workforce reductions which are an inevitable consequence of reduced funding. With the impending publication of the Public Services Commission and the likelihood of re-organisation, this need is greatly intensified. There is a need for realism and support for the costs which will ensue.

Yours sincerely,



Aaron Shotton
Leader of the Council

cc Jon Rae, Welsh Local Government Association
Colin Everett, Chief Executive
Kerry Feather, Head of Finance

Organisational Change Corporate Value for Money Programme			
Directorate	2014/15 £m	2015/16 £m	2016/17 £m
Procurement			
Community Services	0.106	0.106	0.136
Environment	0.441	0.441	0.441
Lifelong Learning	0.290	0.288	0.288
Corporate Services	0.200	0.200	0.200
Back to Basics			
Community Services	0.040	0.040	0.040
Environment	0.035	0.035	0.035
Lifelong Learning	0.039	0.039	0.039
Corporate Services	0.026	0.026	0.026
Total Efficiencies	1.177	1.175	1.205

Organisational Change Functional Value for Money Programme						
Ref	Lead Directorate	Service	Proposal Summary	2014/15 £m	2015/16 £m	2016/17 £m
1	Community Services	Learning Disabilities – Short Term Care	Eliminate on call costs from Home Managers utilising the supported living on call facility already in Adults, reduce Home Manager posts from three to one. Estimated efficiency of 9% of total budget cost. With the assumption that on call costs can be absorbed within the new service provision at no additional cost.	0.045	0.057	0.070
2	Community Services	Learning Disabilities – Short Term Care	Rightsizing project worker staffing levels based on service need and capacity.	0.023	0.023	0.023
3	Community Services	Learning Disabilities – Enhanced Community Residential Services	Rightsizing or re-tender of 4 supported living houses provided externally.	0.031	0.037	0.037
4	Community Services	Childrens Services – structure realignment	Reconfigure the 3 rd tier officer cohort following the retirement of a service manager.	0.053	0.053	0.053
5	Community Services	Childrens Services - Accommodation Efficiencies	Vacation of Connahs Quay Offices – staffing efficiencies	0.019	0.037	0.037
6	Community Services	Childrens Services - Youth Justice Service	A review of the Youth Justice Service to maximise grant funding and review services.	0.050	0.050	0.050

Organisational Change Functional Value for Money Programme						
Ref	Lead Directorate	Service	Proposal Summary	2014/15 £m	2015/16 £m	2016/17 £m
7	Community Services	Social Services for Adults – Direct Payments	Increase the update of direct payment services rather than traditional services for PDSI, older people and disability services	0.048	0.072	0.096
8	Community Services	Social Services for Adults – structural realignment	Reduction in management posts	0.032	0.064	0.064
9	Community Services	Learning Disabilities – Day Opportunities	Efficiencies	0.013	0.013	0.013
10	Community Services	Development and Resources - income	Charging as part of the QCF qualification process	0.044	0.044	0.044
11	Community Services	Development and Resources - income	Explore the potential of charging for financial management for appointeeship clients.	0.030	0.060	0.060
12	Community Services	Social Services for Adults – Assets	Relocation of Estuary Crafts to Tri Ffordd	0.024	0.047	0.047
13	Community Services	Housing - Administration	Service Review	0.022	0.022	0.022
14	Community Services	Housing – Community Support Services	Restructure	0.019	0.037	0.037
	Community Services		Total	0.453	0.616	0.653
15	Environment	Streetscene –	Review staff employment	0.050	0.050	0.050

Organisational Change Functional Value for Money Programme						
Ref	Lead Directorate	Service	Proposal Summary	2014/15 £m	2015/16 £m	2016/17 £m
		Employment Contracts	contracts to increase service flexibility and reduce costs			
16	Environment	Streetscene - NWTRA	Financial benefit from involvement with the NE Wales Trunk Rd Hub The ongoing review of service delivery will reduce the staff requirement and increase the efficiency of the Trunk Road service delivery	0.050	0.050	0.050
17	Environment	Streetscene - Fleet	Balance of efficiencies from Fleet review (2014-15)	0.350	0.350	0.350
18	Environment	Streetscene & Assets Transportation – Highways Related Services	Service scoping review of Highways related services currently within Streetscene and Assets & Transportation - the ongoing diagnostic of the two service areas will make recommendations on synergies, required staffing levels and the optimised operating model.	0.225	0.300	0.0300
19	Environment	Streetscene - Assets	Closure of Halkyn Depot and centralisation at Alltami	0.090	0.090	0.090
20	Environment	Streetscene - Waste	Optimise procurement methods for waste transport	0.030	0.030	0.030

Organisational Change Functional Value for Money Programme						
Ref	Lead Directorate	Service	Proposal Summary	2014/15 £m	2015/16 £m	2016/17 £m
21	Environment	Streetscene - Waste	Rationalise HRC site provision through closing Saltney after opening the new Sandycroft site and reviewing opening hours to match footfall	0.180	0.180	0.180
22	Environment	Streetscene - Waste	Review of clinical waste collection recharges	0.030	0.030	0.030
23	Environment	Streetscene – Employment Contracts	Review operational employment contracts to increase service flexibility and reduce costs	0.450	0.450	0.450
24	Environment	Public Protection and Planning	A review of the operating processes, income potential and management and staffing arrangements across both services.	0.408	0.450	0.450
25	Environment	Regeneration - Communities First	Continuation of current year. Management fee for Communities First programme	.020	.020	.020
	Environment		Total	1.883	2.000	2.000
26	Lifelong Learning	Services to Schools	Securing Value for Money, increasing locality working and school autonomy within a streamlined but robust approach to accountability for	0.290	0.240	0.240

Organisational Change Functional Value for Money Programme						
Ref	Lead Directorate	Service	Proposal Summary	2014/15 £m	2015/16 £m	2016/17 £m
			positive student outcomes. Early entitlement, Music Service, ICT, Insurance and Mobile Classrooms.			
27	Lifelong Learning	Youth and Community services	Increasing front line youth service delivery through agile working, reducing building and management overheads to maximise front line delivery. Glanrafon, Gronant and Hawarden	0.018	0.064	0.064
28	Lifelong Learning	Inclusion Services	Securing early, local and effective intervention for vulnerable children and young people through increasing locality working and school autonomy.	0.381	0.599	0.599
29	Lifelong Learning	Library Service	Review of contribution to North East Wales School Library Service	0.131	0.130	0.130
30	Lifelong Learning	Leisure	Changes to rotas and cover arrangements	0.270	0.270	0.270
31	Lifelong Learning	Development and Resources	School transport efficiencies	0.004	0.004	0.004
32	Lifelong Learning	Development and Resources	Pupil support efficiencies	0.003	0.003	0.003

Organisational Change Functional Value for Money Programme						
Ref	Lead Directorate	Service	Proposal Summary	2014/15 £m	2015/16 £m	2016/17 £m
33	Lifelong Learning	Development and Resources	Youth theatre	0.015	0.015	0.015
34	Lifelong Learning	Development and Resources	Business support	0.010	0.010	0.010
35	Lifelong Learning	Leisure	Recreational grounds and amenities efficiencies	0.025	0.025	0.025
	Lifelong Learning		Total	1.147	1.360	1.360
36	Corporate Services	ICT & Customer Services - registrars	Review of working arrangements	0.010	0.010	0.010
37	Corporate Services	Chief Executive	Review of events/marketing and communications activities across the organisation.	0.034	0.034	0.034
38	Corporate Service	Chief Executive	Reduced production of Your Community Your Council	0.040	0.040	0.040
39	Corporate Services	Chief Executive and Democratic Services	Review provision of support to Leadership and Senior Management, Scrutiny, support and information to councillors, report writing and democratic process	0.031	0.141	0.141
40	Corporate Services	Chief Executive – Policy, Partnerships and Performance	Review efficiencies in process, co-ordination and resources involved in supporting	0.075	0.075	0.075

Organisational Change Functional Value for Money Programme						
Ref	Lead Directorate	Service	Proposal Summary	2014/15 £m	2015/16 £m	2016/17 £m
			'Performance' work.			
41	Corporate Services	Administration support across the organisation	Review of all Administration roles / processes as a result of improved technology across the Council	1.000	1.000	1.000
42	Corporate Services	ICT & Customer Services	Service Efficiencies related to equipment lease termination and contract renegotiations	0.192	0.192	0.192
43	Corporate Services	Chief Executive	Clwyd Theatr Cymru subsidy reduction	0.055	0.055	0.055
44	Corporate Services	Legal and Democratic Services	Shared conveyancing service	0.060	0.060	0.060
45	Corporate Services	HR & OD	Increase income from Occupational Health business	0.010	0.010	0.010
46	Corporate Services	HR & OD	Workforce development efficiencies	0.021	0.021	0.021
	Corporate Services		Total	1.528	1.638	1.638
47	Community Services		Review of final out-turn for 2012/13	1.892	2.195	2.195
	Total Functional VFM			6.903	7.809	7.846

Budget 2014/15
Council Fund - Revenue

Previous Years' Growth / Items Dropping Out

	2014/15 £m	2014/15 £m	2015/16 £m
<u>APPROVED 2012/13 BUDGET</u>			
<u>Community Services</u>			
Homecare - Increased complexity of care	0.100		
Transition to Adulthood	0.975		
Housing Renewal Agency - income	0.104		
Management Efficiencies Through Collaborative Working	(0.025)		
	<hr/> 1.154		
<u>Environment</u>			
Rental Income Shortfalls and NNDR charges for vacant properties	0.050		
Environmental Waste Management - reduction in grant funding	0.047		
Revenue Lost due to phased disposal of Agricultural Estates	0.026		
Ground Water monitoring at former Castle Landfill site	(0.005)		
Continuation of 2011/12 Landfill Tax efficiency	0.000		
Food Waste - increased diversion from landfill	0.004		
	<hr/> 0.122		
<u>Lifelong Learning</u>			
Transport Policy Review - rationalisation of non statutory entitlement	0.000		
Saltney Library - Lease	(0.010)		
	<hr/> (0.010)		
<u>Corporate Services</u>			
Business Systems - Software Maintenance Costs	0.021		
Prudential Borrowing Requirement for Capital Investment	0.169		
Procurement Review	0.000		
HR Management Information System (Phase 2)	(0.003)		
	<hr/> 0.187		
	<hr/> 0.000		
		<hr/> 1.453	
<u>APPROVED 2013/14 BUDGET</u>			
<u>Community Services</u>			
Mental Health - Additional Social Work support	0.010		0.000
Transition to Adulthood	0.129		1.239
Disabled Facility Grants / Aids and Adaptations	0.016		0.000
Homelessness - timing of presentations	0.106		0.000
Children's Services - Removal of one team manager post	(0.013)		0.000
Development and Resources - Rationalisation of Management Team	(0.050)		0.000
	<hr/> 0.198		
<u>Environment</u>			
Loss of Car Park Income	0.068		(0.002)
Highways Asset Management Plan (HAMP) -rephasing of full implementation	0.000		0.225
Review Management Recharge to the Communities First Programme	0.000		0.000
Agricultural Estates - balance not required	0.025		0.000
Licensing / Health & Safety - balance not required	0.025		0.000
	<hr/> 0.118		
<u>Lifelong Learning</u>			
Staffing Budget Shortfall following restructure	(0.017)		0.000
Free School Meals - increased demand	0.003		0.003
Review of post 16 distance limit	0.000		0.000
Review of Denominational transport provision	(0.070)		(0.030)
Youth Service - Building rationalisation	(0.005)		0.000
Reduction of Postage within the Library Service	(0.001)		0.000

Budget 2014/15
Council Fund - Revenue

Previous Years' Growth / Items Dropping Out

	2014/15 £m	2014/15 £m	2015/16 £m
School Transport Service - Operational efficiencies	(0.040)		0.000
	(0.130)		
<u>Council Wide</u>			
Revised Effect of Prudential Borrowing costs for agreed Capital Projects (change due to revised interest rates and receipt of grant funding)	0.017		0.916
	0.017		
<u>Corporate Services</u>			
Emergency Planning - collaborative working	(0.025)		0.000
Information & Business services - use of LLPG	(0.014)		0.000
Supplies and Services	0.010		0.000
Joint Working - costs reduction	0.002		0.000
Alterations / Improvements reductions - future agile working	0.002		0.000
Employee Safety Measures - reduced demand on budget	(0.005)		0.000
Community Strategy / LSB partnership - reduction in planned requirements	(0.005)		0.000
	(0.035)		
<u>Flintshire Futures Programme</u>			
E-Procurement and Improved Processes	(0.109)		(0.056)
Assets Workstream - Office Rationalisation	(0.077)		0.000
Customer Workstream - Channel Shift	0.000		(0.050)
	(0.186)		
<u>Council-Wide</u>			
Income reduction - Vacation of former Council Offices , Ewloe	0.000		0.500
	0.000	(0.018)	
ONE OFF AND TIME-LIMITED PRESSURES			
<u>Lifelong Learning</u>			
School Modernisation Programme	(0.025)		
Schools Service Level Agreements (SLA's)	(0.172)		
Play Areas - Match Funding	(0.035)		
	(0.232)		
<u>Corporate Services</u>			
Base Level of Reserves - 2% of Turnover	(0.065)		
	(0.065)	(0.297)	
Total Previous years items		1.138	2.745

Budget 2014/15
Council Fund - Revenue

Inflation

	£m	£m
<u>Pay</u>		
Pay Inflation from April 2014 (1%)	<u>1.306</u>	1.306
<u>Price</u>		
Targeted General Price Inflation (1.5% - 3%)	<u>0.589</u>	0.589
<u>Non Standard</u>		
Energy - Street Lighting (8%)	0.093	
Energy - Other (8%)	0.163	
Fuel - (11.2%)	0.178	
Food (5.8%)	0.182	
Non Domestic Rates (2%)	<u>0.065</u>	0.681
		(0.151)
Total Inflation		<u><u>2.425</u></u>

Budget 2014/15
Council Fund - Revenue

Transfers Into the Settlement

	£m	£m
<u>Transfers In to the Settlement</u>		
Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) Administration Subsidy	0.092	
	<hr/>	0.092
Transfers Into the Settlement		<u><u>0.092</u></u>

Budget 2014/15
Council Fund - Revenue
Pressures & Investments

	2014/15 £m	2015/16 £m	2016/17 £m
<u>Community Services</u>			
Increase in Foster Care Placements	0.250	0.250	0.250
Children's Out of County Placements	0.250	0.250	0.250
Increase in Direct Payments for Social Services for Children	0.060	0.060	0.060
Well Check Increased contribution to service	0.040	0.040	0.040
Independent Living Fund (ILF) estimate of impact of transfer into RSG	0.000	0.450	0.450
Transition to Adulthood	0.000	0.000	0.700
Total Community Services	0.600	1.050	1.750
<u>Environment</u>			
Reduction of Sustainable Waste Management Grant	0.308	0.308	0.308
Landfill Tax - increase cost per tonnage	0.256	0.309	0.362
Total Environment	0.564	0.617	0.670
<u>Lifelong Learning</u>			
Free Swimming Initiative replacing reduction in grant	0.036	0.036	0.036
Investment in Youth Service Provision	0.046	0.046	0.046
Remission Payments for School meals, trips & uniform	0.000	0.025	0.050
Leisure Centres	0.962	0.962	0.962
Total Lifelong Learning	1.044	1.069	1.094
<u>Corporate Services</u>			
Additional cost of Child Protection cases	0.044	0.044	0.044
Total Corporate Services	0.044	0.044	0.044
<u>Central & Corporate</u>			
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	0.633	0.633	0.633
Impact of Actuarial Valuation	0.991	2.738	4.242
Pensioners Grant	0.201	0.201	0.201
Carbon Reduction Scheme	0.120	0.120	0.120
Fire Levy increase in contribution	0.063	0.063	0.063
Highways Agency Programme (Year 3)	0.192	0.192	0.192
Single Status Agreement	0.000	0.000	5.801
Investment in Organisational Change	0.000	1.580	1.580
Local Government Pension Scheme Reform	0.245	0.245	0.245
Total Organisational Pressures	2.445	5.772	13.077
Total	4.697	8.552	16.635

Budget 2014/15
Council Fund - Revenue

Specific Grants

		<i>Budget 2013-14</i>	<i>Revised Budget 2013-14</i>	<i>Projection 2014-15</i>	<i>Variance to 2013-14</i>	<i>Confirmed (C) or Estimated (E)</i>
		£	£	£	£	
Lifelong Learning	Basic Skills	316,000	137,526	137,526	0	E
Non Delegated	Community Learning	3,311	3,311	3,311	0	E
	Community Focussed Schools	0	97,877	97,877	0	E
	Welsh Baccalureate	0	61,740	61,740	0	E
	Families First	1,735,118	1,735,285	1,735,285	0	E
	Education of Travellers	89,687	70,673	70,673	0	E
	Foundation Phase	5,060,777	5,019,976	4,949,746	(70,230)	C
	Free School Milk	179,773	179,773	179,773	0	E
	Free Swimming	164,807	164,807	156,567	(8,240)	E
	Funding for Youth Work Training in Wales	22,000	22,000	22,000	0	E
	Learning Pathways 14-19	664,080	636,937	360,000	(276,937)	E
	Minority Ethnic Achievement	106,913	134,434	128,032	(6,402)	C
	National Exercise Referral	125,000	125,000	118,750	(6,250)	E
	NE Wales Play Forum	61,660	340,086	340,086	0	E
	School Effectiveness Grant	1,078,580	1,403,508	1,403,508	0	E
	Pupil Deprivation Grant	0	1,251,450	2,295,918	1,044,468	C
	Active Young People	0	463,018	439,867	(23,151)	E
	School Uniform Financial Assistance Scheme	30,080	30,080	30,487	407	C
	Unlocking the Potential of Special Schools	45,572	45,572	0	(45,572)	C
	Youth Service Revenue Grant	90,330	114,877	126,756	11,879	C
	Welsh Language (Athrowen Bro & WEG)	226,611	0	0	0	C
	Welsh Medium Bilingual Grant	46,940	0	0	0	C
	Welsh in Education	0	224,638	215,374	(9,264)	E
	Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes	87,320	87,320	87,320	0	E
	National Literacy Tests	0	35,450	35,450	0	E
		10,134,559	12,385,338	12,996,046	610,708	
Delegated	DCELLS (Post 16 provision in schools)	6,025,131	6,085,382	5,935,481	(149,901)	E
		6,025,131	6,085,382	5,935,481	(149,901)	
Community	Social Care Workforce Development Programme	346,969	346,969	356,833	9,864	C
	Supporting People	6,824,935	6,824,935	6,483,688	(341,247)	C
	Well Being Activity	10,000	10,000	10,000	0	E
	Flying Start	1,652,623	1,652,623	2,722,790	1,070,167	C
	YOT / Youth Justice Board	327,280	327,280	327,280	0	E
		9,161,807	9,161,807	9,900,591	738,784	
Environment	Communities First	708,911	708,911	708,911	0	E
	Concessionary Travel	1,970,427	1,970,427	1,991,843	21,416	E
	Crime Reduction and Anti Social Behaviour	144,461	144,461	121,203	(23,258)	E
	Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator Funding	27,500	27,500	27,500	0	C
	Local Transport Services	399,062	399,062	399,062	0	E
	Planning - Delivering for Wales	70,000	70,000	20,000	(50,000)	E
	Safer Communities Fund	221,882	221,882	76,868	(145,014)	E
	Food Hygiene Rating	0	0	5,969	5,969	C
	Animal Health & Welfare Enforcement	0	0	15,646	15,646	C
	Substance Misuse	926,141	926,141	293,353	(632,788)	E
	Sustainable Waste Management	3,287,189	3,287,189	2,976,172	(311,017)	E
		7,755,573	7,755,573	6,636,527	(1,119,046)	
Corporate Services	LSB Development Support Grant	50,000	50,000	50,000	0	E
		50,000	50,000	50,000	0	
Total		33,127,070	35,438,100	35,518,645	80,545	

Budget 2014/15 Council Fund - Revenue

Summary of Council Fund Earmarked Reserves

	Estimated Balance 01/04/14 £m	Estimated Balance 31/03/15 £m
<u>Service Balances</u>		
Community Services	0.029	0.000
Environment	1.140	0.413
Lifelong Learning	0.000	0.000
Corporate Services	1.319	0.000
Total	2.488	0.413
<u>Corporate Balances</u>		
Equal Pay / Single Status	27.618	10.767
Total	27.618	10.767
<u>Specific Reserves</u>		
Insurance Fund - Asbestos	0.160	0.160
Benefits Equalisation	1.200	1.200
Supporting People	1.493	1.493
Building Control	0.200	0.150
Milk Quotas	0.077	0.081
Waste Disposal	0.518	0.418
Flint Castle Landfill Site	0.030	0.030
Flintshire Business Services	0.089	0.039
Winter Maintenance	0.250	0.250
Design Fees	0.120	0.120
County Elections	0.092	0.092
Third Party Insurance Claims	0.087	0.087
Flintshire Insurance	0.600	0.600
Minor Reserves under £0.050m	0.038	0.028
Total	4.954	4.748

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **CABINET**

DATE: **TUESDAY, 21 JANUARY 2014**

REPORT BY: **HEAD OF FINANCE, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT**

SUBJECT: **COUNCIL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2014/15 AND INDICATIVE FUNDING TO 2017/18**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 The purpose of the report is to –

- (a) Propose the allocation of funding to the core capital programme in 2014/15 (with indicative funding estimates for future years), including the allocation of minor amounts to two schemes to meet contractual and essential health and safety works.
- (b) Provide information on the estimated total capital programme, based on current available information, including schemes financed from other sources such as Government grants, Prudential and other borrowing.
- (c) Propose that the capital proposals be referred to Overview and Scrutiny for feedback to Cabinet in February.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Council plans on a 4 year capital programme timescale. Each year, the Council sets its capital programme for the coming year and provides an indication of the estimated level of resources available and has historically shown the potential allocation to service areas in future years.

2.02 Indicative amounts for 2014/15 were shown in the Capital programme 2013/14 report which was agreed by Council on 1st March 2013.

- 2.03 Capital programme and capital monitoring reports over recent years have highlighted the growing pressure being experienced by all councils in relation to capital. The specific background to the setting of the Council's 2014/15 capital programme was discussed with Members at the Budget Workshops on December 16th and 18th 2013, who supported the proposed approach to the capital programme for 2014/15.
- 2.04 A meeting led by Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been arranged for 3rd February to enable all Members to take part in the scrutiny of the 2014/15 capital programme.
- 2.05 This report covers the Council Fund only. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital programme is being considered alongside the HRA revenue budget proposals for 2014/15 by Cabinet and the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee also during January and February.

3.00 CAPITAL STRATEGY

- 3.01 Flintshire, along with all Councils, has experienced significant pressure on the capital programme in recent years. This results from reduced funding available through the annual financial settlement from the Welsh government (WG) and the impact the economy has had on the generation of capital receipts. Furthermore, as WG seeks to manage its own budgets, the specific grants available to Councils for capital investment in particular services has become more limited; with WG switching its support for Highways Maintenance and 21st Century Schools to revenue support for Council borrowing in place of capital grant.
- 3.02 The pressure on capital resources comes at the same time as significant financial pressure on revenue budgets and is a situation which is set to continue until at least the end of the decade. The combination of the two means that it is more important than ever that the Council's revenue and capital service delivery and financial planning are fully integrated.

3.03 Against this backdrop, it was recognised, during the lead into the setting of the capital programme for 2013/14, that there was a need to review:-

- The approach to the management of assets to ensure that they meet Council priorities in terms of service delivery, community development, income generation and capital receipts; and
- The development and management of the capital programme to ensure it most effectively meets the Council's aspirations, with a Capital Financing Strategy as an integral part of the overall Medium Term Financial Strategy.

3.04 Significant work has been undertaken by officers in 2013 to review capital assets and how and where services are delivered from. The information from this review is being brought together for detailed Member consideration and public engagement in the spring of 2014.

3.05 The availability of this review information is crucial to decisions on future service delivery, prioritising investment, aligning resources and achieving value for money in the longer term.

3.06 Whilst this work on planning for the longer term is developing, it is important that the Council sets its core capital programme and puts in place funding to meet urgent needs for 2014/15 to enable the resources to be in place to:-

- Support key services e.g. schools maintenance;
- Support investment which enables change e.g. ICT networks;
- Provide funding for property related costs e.g. DDA, Health & Safety; and
- Meet essential contractual commitments and health & safety issues.

4.00 FUNDING THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME

4.01 The capital programme includes the following elements which are funded as shown below:-

(a) A core capital programme resourced by:-

- The funding mechanisms within the WG financial settlement (general capital grant and supported borrowing where WG recognise the cost of repaying the borrowing in the revenue financial settlement); and
- Capital receipts from the sale of Council assets in accordance with the disposal programme.

The Council has discretion to allocate both of these resources as it determines to meet local priorities and needs.

(b) Capital schemes funded from specific grants which are for specific purposes as directed by WG or other grant providers;

(c) WG supported borrowing through the Local Government Borrowing Initiative (LGBI) for highways and 21st Century schools (WG element); and

(c) Locally determined unsupported (prudential) borrowing which is met from the Council's revenue budget without support from WG.

5.00 CORE CAPITAL PROGRAMME

5.01 The total projected core funding available over the 4 year period 2014/15 to 2017/18, by way of the sources in 4.01 (a) above, is shown in the table below and amounts to £31.898m.

ESTIMATED AVAILABLE CORE FUNDING 2014/15 - 2017/18					
	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Funding (Excluding Specific Items)					
Unhypothecated Supported Borrowing (USB) ¹	4.299	4.299	4.299	4.299	17.196
General Capital Grant (GCG) ¹	2.616	2.616	2.616	2.616	10.464
Capital Receipts	1.250	1.250	1.250	1.250	5.000
(Shortfall) / Surplus from 2013/14	(0.762)				(0.762)
Total	7.403	8.165	8.165	8.165	31.898
1 As per 14/15 Final Settlement.					

- 5.01.1 This shows that the total resources available in 2014/15 to fund the core capital programme are £7.403m.

Funding

- 5.02 The basis for the estimates of funding levels are as follows:-

USB and GCG

- 5.02.1 The final financial settlement received from WG in December 2013 provided a total of £6.915m, £4.299m through USB and £2.616m via GCG. This has been assumed to be consistent throughout the reporting period.

Capital Receipts

- 5.02.2 The issue of capital receipts continues to be a problematic one for the Council. In the current economic climate it is difficult to predict with certainty when disposals will be effected and the funds therefore realised to support the capital programme. This led to the Council's decision to withhold 20% of the core programme in the current financial year. The Month 6 report to Cabinet on 17th December recommended that this 20% continue to be held back in 2013/14.
- 5.02.3 As a consequence of this continued position it is considered to be imprudent to set capital budgets where the funding may not be realised. It is therefore recommended that the 2014/15 core capital programme budget be set based on a minimal capital receipts target of £1.250m, which the Council is confident can be achieved. This will have the effect of reducing the overall core programme by c30% (£3.083m) in 2014/15 from that indicated last year.

5.02.4 Any receipts generated over and above the target figure of £1.250m could either be:-

- Released in year to supplement the programme; or
- Allocated in 2015/16 by adding them to WG funding to fund the core capital programme or utilised to fund capital works arising from the asset review.

It is further recommended that any such additional receipts in 2014/15 be kept until the 2015/16 financial year, so that going forward each subsequent year's budget is based on actual receipts from the previous year, placing the Capital Programme on a more secure footing during difficult economic times.

5.02.5 As a result of the uncertainty about receipt levels, the forecast of receipts in this report is limited to four years rather than the 10 years which has been provided in reports in previous years and is forecast at a consistent level over the period.

5.02.6 Whilst it is appreciated that this approach may cause short term operational challenges, this process will allow future core capital programmes to be set based on known levels of funding and will remove the uncertainty over capital planning that has been inherent in previous years.

Shortfall from 2013/14

5.02.7 As previously reported in capital monitoring reports, the final shortfall carried into 2013/14 was £3.028m as a result of receipts in previous years not reaching anticipated levels. This was mitigated by the 20% holdback in year and the capital receipt received on the liquidation of AD Waste and increased by a shortfall in in-year capital receipts and new budget pressures, resulting in a revised shortfall of £0.762m carried into 2014/15 (Section 3.05.5 of the Month 6 monitoring report to Cabinet on 17th December 2013 refers).

Allocation of the available funding

5.03 As indicated in 5.01.1, the total amount available to fund the core capital programme in 2014/15 is £7.403m.

5.04 In taking a broadly one year approach to the capital programme, pending the longer term planning described in 3.04, it is important to adopt a risk based approach to identify any urgent capital needs which need to be addressed in 2014/15 to avoid known and unavoidable pressures arising and causing pressure on the programme in year. This has been restricted to contractual and health & safety matters only.

- 5.05 As a result, two items for inclusion have been identified and it is recommended that these be met from the core programme resources before allocating the remainder to core schemes:-

<u>CAPITAL BUDGET 14/15 - ADDITIONAL ITEMS</u>		
SCHEME	DESCRIPTION	VALUE £m
Glanrafon Centre, Queensferry	Health and safety works to roof and internal facilities	0.060
A548 Highways Works	Contractual claim re additional works	0.085
		0.145

- 5.06 This leaves £7.258m to be allocated to the remaining core schemes. Heads of Service from all three operational Directorates and Corporate Services carried out an in-depth review of the core schemes to recognise any statutory/contractual obligations and inherent risks in reducing funding from previously indicated levels. In addition, consideration has been given to the timing of programmes, client groups, links with external funding partners, the level of funding in prior years and specific funding needs for 2014/15.

- 5.07 The resulting recommended allocations for 2014/15 can be found in Appendix 1. Detailed programmes for future years will be drawn up in the light of actual levels of receipts becoming known.

6.00 ESTIMATED TOTAL COUNCIL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME

- 6.01 The total projected funding available (including the core programme) over the 4 year period 2014/15 to 2017/18, by way of the sources in 4.01 (a) to (d) above, is shown in the table below and amounts to £101.361m.

ESTIMATED AVAILABLE TOTAL FUNDING 2014/15 - 2017/18					
	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Funding (Total)					
<u>General Funding</u>					
Unhypothecated Supported Borrowing (USB) ¹	4.299	4.299	4.299	4.299	17.196
General Capital Grant (GCG) ¹	2.616	2.616	2.616	2.616	10.464
Capital Receipts	1.250	1.250	1.250	1.250	5.000
(Shortfall) / Surplus from 2013/14	(0.762)				(0.762)
Sub Total	7.403	8.165	8.165	8.165	31.898
<u>Specific Funding</u>					
Specific Capital Grants	5.275	0.747	0.576		6.598
Unsupported (Prudential) Borrowing	1.960	21.558	4.043	0.504	28.065
Local Govt Borrowing Initiative - Highways	2.700				2.700
Local Govt Borrowing Initiative - 21st C Schools	3.635	22.698	5.263	0.504	32.100
Sub Total	13.570	45.003	9.882	1.008	69.463
Total Funding Available	20.973	53.168	18.047	9.173	101.361
1 As per 14/15 Final Settlement.					

- 6.02 This shows that the total resources available in 2014/15 to fund the capital programme are £20.973m.
- 6.03 Appendix 2 sets out the estimated total capital programme for 2014/15, taking account of all funding sources referred to in Section 4. These are detailed below.
- 6.04 The core allocations, as funded by those sources referred to in Section 5, can be found in the column 'General'.
- 6.05 Specific allocations can be found in the column 'Specific'. In 2014/15 this adds further investment of £13.570m (See 6.06 to 6.09 below).

- 6.06 Specific grants amount to £5.275m and include £1.7m Regional Transport Grant, £1.542m Transition to 21C Schools and £0.950m for Land Drainage. The amounts included are based on historical allocations and information available at the time of writing the report, any subsequent variation in the level of individual grants will be dealt with by amending the budget as necessary in year. These allocations are for specific time durations hence the variation in amount year on year.
- 6.07 Unsupported (prudential) borrowing of £1.960m relates to funding for schemes approved in previous years.
- 6.08 A further £4m is to be made available across Wales by WG in 2014/15 under the Local Government Borrowing Initiative (on top of the £4m provided in 2012/13 and 2013/14) to support the borrowing charges (revenue) of highways capital works. This equates to £2.7m for Flintshire in 2014/15.
- 6.09 In addition to the above, WG has recently announced an extension of the LGBI to include schools; this will bring forward funding (between 2014/15 and 2016/17) of £200m across Wales, which will be used to support the borrowing charges (revenue) that fund the WG element of the 21st Century Schools Programme. This equates to £3.635m for Flintshire in 2014/15.
- 6.10 It can be seen that the indicative funding for 2015/16 includes £44.176m related to 21st C schools. Whilst preliminary expenditure on the 21st C schools programme has taken place in 2013/14, the programme is for significant expenditure to commence from 2015/16 to deliver on the £64m of investment in Flintshire schools under the 21st C programme which is funded equally by Flintshire and WG.

7.00 CONSULTATION

- 7.01 A meeting of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee will be held on 3rd February 2014, at which the capital programme proposals as set out in this paper will be considered. The scrutiny meeting is open to all Members of the Council and the feedback from the meeting will be incorporated into the final Report to Cabinet on 18th February 2014.
- 7.02 Cabinet will make final recommendations for consideration at Council, also on 18th February.

8.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.01 Members are recommended to:

- (a) Note the report.
- (b) Approve the allocation of funding to the core capital programme in 2014/15, as shown in Appendix 1, including the additional items referred to in Section 5.05, and note the indicative funding available for future years.
- (c) Approve the setting of a minimal capital receipts target for 2014/15 and the process whereby receipts generated in one financial year are used to fund expenditure in the next (See Section 5.02.3 and 5.02.4).

9.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 As set out in the report.

10.00 ANTI-POVERTY IMPACT

10.01 Individual Capital Programme Schemes may have specific anti-poverty impacts.

11.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

11.01 Individual Capital Programme Schemes may have specific environmental impacts.

12.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

12.01 Individual Capital Programme Schemes may have specific equality impacts.

13.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

13.01 None directly as a result of this report.

14.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

14.01 All Members through Overview & Scrutiny.

15.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

15.01 Initial discussion took place at the Member workshops on 16th and 18th December, 2013.

16.00 APPENDICES

16.01 Appendix 1 – Core Capital Programme Schemes 2014/15

Appendix 2 – Total Capital Programme 2014/15

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Contact Officer: Gary Ferguson
Telephone: 01352 702271
Email: gary.ferguson@flintshire.gov.uk

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CORE CAPITAL PROGRAMME SCHEMES

APPENDIX 1

	2014/15 Estimate £m
SUMMARY	
COUNCIL FUND	
COMMUNITY SERVICES	1.885
ENVIRONMENT	2.345
LIFELONG LEARNING	2.035
CORPORATE SERVICES	1.135
TOTAL - COUNCIL FUND	7.400

FINANCING	
Unhypothecated Supported Borrowing (USB)	4.299
General Capital Grant	2.616
Capital Receipts	0.488
(Unallocated - Headroom)) / Under Financing	(0.003)
TOTAL - FINANCING	7.400

CORE CAPITAL PROGRAMME SCHEMES APPENDIX 1 (Cont.)

		2014/15 Estimate
		£m
COMMUNITY SERVICES		
Grants		
Various	Private Sector Renewal and Improvements	1.730
Shotton	Housing Renewal Area Support	0.155
TOTAL - COMMUNITY SERVICES		1.885

ENVIRONMENT		
Administrative Buildings		
Various	Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Works	0.175
Various	Energy Efficiency Measures	0.100
Various	Renewable Energy Installations	0.100
Various	Asbestos Removal	0.070
Various	Legionella Monitoring	0.070
Various	Upgrading Fire and Intruder Alarms	0.055
Various	Fire Safety Order Works	0.100
Various	Corporate Property Maintenance	0.350
Queensferry	Glanrafon - Health & Safety Works	0.060
Engineering		
Various	Land Drainage Works - General	0.045
Various	Coast Protection Works - General	0.070
Highways		
Various	Highways Infrastructure	0.520
Various	Bridge Assessments and Replacement	0.100
Various	Street Lighting Replacement	0.120
Various	Structural Maintenance	0.120
Gronant	A548 Contractual Claim	0.085
Regeneration		
Various	Town Centre Regeneration	0.130
Flint	Townscape Heritage Initiative	0.075
TOTAL - ENVIRONMENT		2.345

CORE CAPITAL PROGRAMME SCHEMES APPENDIX 1 (Cont.)

		2014/15 Estimate
		£m
LIFELONG LEARNING		
Education - General		
Various	School Buildings Repairs and Maintenance	1.700
Various	Disability Discrimination Act - Individual Pupils	0.250
Various	Furniture and Equipment	0.045
Primary Schools		
Various	Learning Environments (Foundation Phase)	0.040
TOTAL - LIFELONG LEARNING		2.035

CORPORATE SERVICES		
ICT and Customer Services		
General	ICT Infrastructure	0.170
General	Agile Working Investment	0.070
General	EDRMS Implementation	0.065
General	ICT Infrastructure	0.140
General	Microsoft Enterprise Agreement	0.350
Flintshire Connects		
Various	Flintshire Connects	0.250
Corporate Finance		
General	Minor Capital Works - Health & Safety	0.075
General	Corporate Provision - Feasibility Studies	
Clwyd Theatr Cymru		
General	Provision	0.015
TOTAL - CORPORATE SERVICES		1.135

TOTAL - COUNCIL FUND		7.400
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TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME SCHEMES

APPENDIX 2

	Estimate 2014/15		
	Estimated Payments	Financing	
		General	Specific
£m	£m	£m	
SUMMARY			
COUNCIL FUND			
COMMUNITY SERVICES	2.461	1.885	0.576
ENVIRONMENT	8.146	2.345	5.801
LIFELONG LEARNING	9.228	2.035	7.193
CORPORATE SERVICES	1.135	1.135	0.000
TOTAL - COUNCIL FUND	20.970	7.400	13.570

FINANCING			
Unhypothecated Supported Borrowing (USB)	4.299	4.299	
General Capital Grant	2.616	2.616	
Capital Receipts	0.488	0.488	
Specific Capital Grants	5.275		5.275
Unsupported (Prudential) Borrowing	1.960		1.960
Local Government Borrowing Initiative (LGBI) - Highways	2.700		2.700
Local Government Borrowing Initiative (LGBI) - 21C Schools	3.635		3.635
(Unallocated - Headroom) / Under Financing	(0.003)	(0.003)	0.000
TOTAL - FINANCING	20.970	7.400	13.570

TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME SCHEMES

APPENDIX 2 (Cont.)

		Estimate 2014/15		
		Estimated Payments £m	Financing	
			General £m	Specific £m
COMMUNITY SERVICES				
Grants				
Various	Private Sector Renewal and Improvements	1.878	1.730	0.148
Shotton	Housing Renewal Area Support	0.433	0.155	0.278
Travellers' Sites				
Queensferry	Riverside Caravan Site	0.150		0.150
TOTAL - COMMUNITY SERVICES		2.461	1.885	0.576

ENVIRONMENT				
Administrative Buildings				
Various	Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Works	0.175	0.175	
Various	Energy Efficiency Measures	0.100	0.100	
Various	Renewable Energy Installations	0.100	0.100	
Various	Asbestos Removal	0.070	0.070	
Various	Legionella Monitoring	0.070	0.070	
Various	Upgrading Fire and Intruder Alarms	0.055	0.055	
Various	Fire Safety Order Works	0.100	0.100	
Various	Corporate Property Maintenance	0.350	0.350	
Alltami	Depot Rationalisation	0.075		0.075
Queensferry	Glanrafon - Health & Safety Works	0.060	0.060	
Engineering				
Various	Land Drainage Works - General	0.995	0.045	0.950
Various	Coast Protection Works - General	0.070	0.070	
Highways				
Various	Highways Infrastructure	2.220	0.520	1.700
Various	Bridge Assessments and Replacement	0.100	0.100	
Various	Street Lighting Replacement	0.120	0.120	
Various	Structural Maintenance	0.120	0.120	
Various	Local Government Borrowing Initiative (LGBI)	2.700		2.700
Gronant	A548 Contractual Claim	0.085	0.085	
Regeneration				
Various	Town Centre Regeneration	0.137	0.130	0.007
Flint	Townscape Heritage Initiative	0.309	0.075	0.234
Ranger Services				
Connahs Quay	Wepre Park Development	0.135		0.135
TOTAL - ENVIRONMENT		8.146	2.345	5.801

TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME SCHEMES

APPENDIX 2 (Cont.)

		Estimate 2014/15		
		Estimated Payments	Financing	
			General	Specific
		£m	£m	£m
LIFELONG LEARNING				
Education - General				
Various	School Buildings Repairs and Maintenance	1.700	1.700	
Various	Disability Discrimination Act - Individual Pupils	0.250	0.250	
Various	Furniture and Equipment	0.045	0.045	
School Modernisation				
Various	21st Century Schools	5.268		5.268
Shotton	Taliesin Junior/Shotton Infant	1.794		1.794
Primary Schools				
Various	Learning Environments (Foundation Phase)	0.040	0.040	
Various	Flying Start Capital Expansion Programme	0.131		0.131
TOTAL - LIFELONG LEARNING		9.228	2.035	7.193

CORPORATE SERVICES				
ICT and Customer Services				
General	ICT Infrastructure	0.170	0.170	
General	Agile Working Investment	0.070	0.070	
General	EDRMS Implementation	0.065	0.065	
General	ICT Infrastructure	0.140	0.140	
General	Microsoft Enterprise Agreement	0.350	0.350	
Flintshire Connects				
Various	Flintshire Connects	0.250	0.250	
Corporate Finance				
General	Minor Capital Works - Health & Safety	0.075	0.075	
General	Corporate Provision - Feasibility Studies			
Clwyd Theatr Cymru				
General	Provision	0.015	0.015	
TOTAL - CORPORATE SERVICES		1.135	1.135	0.000
TOTAL - COUNCIL FUND		20.970	7.400	13.570

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **CABINET**

DATE: **21ST JANUARY 2014**

REPORT BY: **HEAD OF FINANCE, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES AND HEAD OF HOUSING**

SUBJECT: **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 2014/15 & CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2014/15**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.01 To consider the Housing Revenue Accounts (HRA) budget as set out in 1.02 and 1.03.
- 1.02 Revenue budget proposals for the 2014/15 financial year, including proposed rent and service charge changes, key areas of income and expenditure, and the level of closing balance at the year end.
- 1.03 Budget proposals for the HRA Capital programme 2014/15, which is year three of a six year improvement programme.
- 1.04 To note the impact of the proposed revenue budget and capital programme on the HRA 30 year Business Plan.
- 1.05 To propose that the HRA revenue and capital proposals be referred to Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 21st January for feedback to Cabinet in February.

2.00 BACKGROUND

- 2.01 As the Council has a stock of Council housing, it is required by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to keep a HRA in accordance with proper accounting practices, and to budget to avoid an end of year deficit.
- 2.02 The HRA is a “ring-fenced” account of certain defined transactions relating to Local Authority Housing. The ring-fenced nature of the account means that funding cannot be transferred between the Council Fund and HRA or vice versa, other than in certain prescribed circumstances.
- 2.03 Although there is a legal requirement to avoid an end of year deficit, it is also considered to be good practice to budget for a closing balance of at least 3% of total expenditure of the HRA.

- 2.04 Prior to the start of each financial year, the Welsh Government (WG) consults with Local Authorities on the draft HRA subsidy and Item 8 determinations. These are the key financial determinations set each year by WG which influence Local Authority rent increases, and also the amount of HRA subsidy payable by the council. The two main elements of the consultation are the “guideline rent increase” and the Management and Maintenance (M&M) element of the HRA subsidy.
- 2.05 The management and maintenance allowance element of HRA subsidy is the amount which WG considers each Local Authority requires per HRA dwelling to manage and maintain the housing stock held within the HRA.

New Rent Policy for Wales and exit from the HRA subsidy system

- 2.06 2014/15 is anticipated to be the final year under the current rent and subsidy system in Wales. A new Welsh rent policy has been developed by WG and will be introduced in April 2015 in line with the exit from the subsidy system of all Councils who continue to have a housing stock and so maintain a Housing Revenue Account.
- 2.07 The current rent policy in Wales has developed in varying ways over a long period, producing markedly different levels and profiles of rents across the country and between the local authority and housing association sectors.
- 2.08 Following consultation with social landlords, WG have developed a consistent rent policy framework that will apply to all social landlords providing for a more equal distribution of rents for social sector tenants across Wales.
- 2.09 The new rent policy will be introduced in April 2015 and will allow for the convergence of rents for both local authority and registered social landlords. The rent policy sets a target rent band for each landlord and landlords will be required to operate with average weekly rent levels that fall within the scope of those bands. The banding is 5% above or below the target rent.
- 2.10 Where a landlord’s weekly rent is higher than the target rent band, the landlord will be expected to increase its rents more slowly e.g. at 0.5% less than the rate of rent increases for the sector as a whole until the average weekly rent falls within the target rent band.
- 2.11 Where a landlord’s weekly rent is lower than the target rent band, transitional protection will apply to tenants. In any year a landlord will not be permitted to increase the rent for any individual tenant by more than £2 per week in addition to the agreed average annual rate of rent increases for the sector as a whole.

- 2.13 The introduction of the new rents policy will also mark the end of the current subsidy system where the HRA returns an element of its rents back to WG (Currently £6.0m for Flintshire) each year. Stock owning local authorities will 'buy out' of the system via a one off payment to HM Treasury funded from HRA prudential borrowing. It is anticipated that the change will be advantageous for Councils. WG agreed the principle of the exit from the subsidy system in June 2013 and the details of how this will be brought into place across Wales are being developed. Further reports will be brought to Members, when the details are known.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

REVENUE BUDGET 2014/15

- 3.01 The WG consultation letter on the Draft Housing Revenue Accounts Subsidy and Item 8 determinations was received on 20th December 2013. The budget proposals below are based on the draft determinations where applicable. The final determinations are due at the end of January 2014 and it is proposed that the final budget will be adjusted to reflect any change to the final determinations received.

3.02 Guideline Rent Increase

As part of the 2013 spending review the UK Government announced that rents would rise by CPI + 1% each year for 10 years rather than RPI as a measure of rent inflation.

- 3.03 If rents in Wales continued to be uplifted on the basis of RPI, whereas UK benefits are linked to the CPI index and CPI remains below RPI, there is a risk that over time the rent levels in Wales would not be covered by benefits. As a consequence tenants would have to fund the shortfall from their own resources.

- 3.04 WG have therefore agreed that from April 2014 both RSL and Local Authority Sectors in Wales will move to using CPI as the basis of rent inflation.

- 3.05 WG have proposed to increase the all-Wales average weekly guideline rent by 4.2%.

- using the previous September CPI inflation figure of 2.7% and
- and apply a 1.5% real increase to the average local authority guideline rent for 2014-15.

The guideline rent increase is the amount by which WG considers each Authority should increase weekly rents in order to make progress towards achievement of the key WG objective of "benchmark" rents, where Local Authority and Registered Social Landlords (RSL) rents for similar properties in similar areas are broadly the same.

- 3.06 The proposed guideline weekly rent increase for Flintshire 2014/15 is £3.29 per week, (on a 52 week collection basis). This is a percentage increase of 4.6% to rents compared to the all Wales average of 4.2%. The difference mainly due to a factor that is applied to all councils for economic value of the stock, this is however a reduced increase compared to the 2013/14 budget which saw an increase in rents of 5.0%. Currently 9% of Flintshire social rents are at the benchmark level.
- 3.07 The current levels of benefit claimants amongst Flintshire housing tenants are illustrated in the table below :-

Flintshire Tenants - Housing Benefit Claimants		
Benefit Status	Tenants	
	Number	%
Full/Partial Benefit	4985	67.1%
Full Rent	2441	32.9%
Total	7426	100.0%

- 3.08 As illustrated above, approximately 67.1% of the Councils 7,426 tenants would face no additional hardship as a consequence of the proposed rent increase. This will be met by housing benefit subject to claimants personal circumstances remaining the same and their households being unaffected by Welfare Reform. Those tenants who are not currently in receipt of benefit will naturally have to meet the full increase in rent, unless they become eligible for housing benefit.
- 3.09 It is proposed to reduce the bad debt provision which will create savings of £0.208m. Welfare reform has not impacted on arrears as severely as anticipated in 2013/14 and this has been reflected in the 2014/15 budget proposals.
- 3.10 **Management and Maintenance allowance**
The Management and Maintenance allowance element of Housing Revenue Account Subsidy is proposed to increase to £2,769 per dwelling for each local authority, reflecting an increase of £159 per dwelling (6.1%) on 2013/14.
- 3.11 **Rent Increase – Garages**
The 2014/15 proposed rent level for all HRA garages is £5.75 per week, an increase of £0.25 per week (4.6%) compared to 2013/14 (and in line with rent increases for homes).

- 3.12 **General Income**
The HRA budget has been realigned for 2014 to follow the same format of the 30 year business plan which is submitted to WG. This includes showing all areas of income under one heading.
- 3.13 £0.734m general income has been included in the plan reflecting £0.531m for water bill collection and other smaller items of general income. It also includes increased income of £0.126m following a new charging policy for the tenants gardening service.
- 3.14 **HRA – Key areas of expenditure**
Appendix 1 sets out a summary of the proposed HRA budget for 2014/15 and compares it to the 2013/14 budget.
Appendix 2 shows the assumptions which have been made in calculating the figures.
Appendix 3 shows the detail of proposed savings and efficiencies, and investment for service improvements.
- 3.15 The approach to developing the draft budget has been to maximise the efficiencies which could be made and to invest in service improvements as set out in the Choices document. Overall the proposed budget provides £0.536m of additional investment in services and £0.789m of additional funding for the capital programme over the levels in 2013/14 and makes savings of £1.144m. The total savings figure equates to 6.9% of total operating costs.
- 3.16 **Estate Management**
Estate management has identified efficiencies of £0.021m against the 2013/14 budget following VFM and back to basic reviews.
- The funding for 2 full year Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) posts is proposed as agreed in the Choices Document and also opening of the ASB out of hours service to direct referrals is proposed. This will be at a cost of £0.017m.
- Service improvements totalling £0.038m are proposed to introduce a Handy Person Service in Flintshire which is designed to aid tenants with minor property repairs.
- The funding for 2 posts to support tenants at risk of financial exclusion is proposed at a cost of £0.052m as agreed in the Choices Document.
- 3.17 **Landlord Services**
The Landlord service is reflecting an increased spend of £0.336m compared to 2013/14.
- £0.324m is a realignment of the garden service including communal land which is now reflected under landlord services rather than Estate management. The gardening service has also created a saving of £0.125m on 2013/14 costs following a review of the contract.

WG expects landlords to introduce charging for services that are only available to specific tenants to maximise income through the HRA and enable improvements to stock. As agreed at Cabinet, on 17th December 2013, it is the intention to provide a chargeable service for grass and hedge cutting from 1st April 2014. The new contract costs of £0.126m will be recovered via a chargeable service to the tenant creating additional income in the HRA.

3.18 **Repairs and Maintenance**

The housing repairs service is continuing its drive to develop into a modern and efficient customer focused service. Repairs and Maintenance is the largest element of expenditure within the HRA at £8.467m. It is proposed to spend an additional £0.074m compared to 2013/14 a unit cost of £1,170 per property in 2014/15, compared to £1,138 in 2013/14.

Repairs and maintenance have created savings of £0.070m following value for money reviews on fleet and back to basics. The budget on subcontractors has also been reduced by £0.050m.

An increased cost of £0.300m has been anticipated on materials. This budget has been adjusted to reflect an increase of approximately 2,000 repairs per year and the requirement for subcontractors to utilise the stores to enable greater control over material costs charged via subcontractors.

3.19 **Capital Expenditure financed from Revenue Account**

Capital expenditure financed from the revenue account (CERA) enables additional investment in the HRA Capital Programme. The use of this additional source of financing for capital improvements helps to progress the work to achieve the requirements of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS). An investment of £6,581m has been included in the 2014/15 budget which is an increase of £0.789m on the 2013/14 budget.

3.20 **Finance and Support Services**

Finance and Support have identified an efficiency of £0.102m against the 2013/14 budget. These savings have been identified through the reduction of support recharges, one year temporary staff efficiencies and a review of the admin service.

3.21 **Closing Balance**

A closing balance of 3.20% is recommended for 2014/15 as per 2013/14. This enables the Council to maximise investment in WHQS.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2014/15

- 3.22 Executive approved a 6 year capital improvement programme commencing in 2012/13, on 19th July 2011.

At the end of the programme all council homes will have:-

- A WHQS standard kitchen
- A WHQS heating system
- Smoke detectors
- 1300 homes will have WHQS standard bathrooms

This is year 3 of the original 6 year programme and Appendix 4 sets out the proposed capital expenditure for 2014/15. The total proposed capital funding for 2014/15 is £12.381m which includes

- Major Repairs Allowance - £5.200m
- Proposed Revenue Contribution to Capital Expenditure (CERA) - £6.581m (An increase of £0.700m on 2013/14 provision).
- Potential HRA land receipts - £0.600m (These works will only commence when the funds are available).

A revised Asset Management strategy is under development and will be implemented from April 2015, subject to approval. This revised strategy will ensure that all stock achieves the WHQS by 2020, and will therefore involve the introduction of a number of new work streams to address all investment needs, both internal, external and estate based environmental improvements.

3.23 Home Ownership

Zero sales have been assumed for Right to Buy in 2014/15 for budget purposes.

30 YEAR BUSINESS PLAN

- 3.24 It is a requirement of WG for all stock owning local authorities to produce a robust business plan showing how they will meet WHQS by the target of 2020.
- 3.25 Appendix 5 sets out the most up to date estimate of Flintshire's 30 year HRA business plan, based on the proposed 2014/15 revenue budget and capital programme as set out in this report. The plan shows a projected funding shortfall of £7.689m to meet WHQS by 2020 a reduction of £6.816m on the funding shortfall projected in the 2013/14 business plan submitted to WG. This latest estimate was submitted to WG on the 17th January 2014 (subject to cabinet approval) as a requirement to enable the Council to access the £5.2m MRA for 2014/15
- 3.26 The Council's preference in relation to achieving WHQS is to seek to avoid borrowing for this purpose, but the Council has indicated to WG that should this be necessary in order to achieve WHQS by 2020 then

it would do so. It can be seen that the gap has reduced significantly because of the efficiencies within the HRA and additional revenue income. The shortfall could potentially be met by prudential borrowing if the gap is not closed over the next three years from savings anticipated following rent reform and the exit from the subsidy system along with driving through ongoing efficiencies to create more resources for investment.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 Members are asked to approve and recommend to Council :

- i. The proposed HRA budget for 2014/15 as set out in Appendix 1, incorporating the financial assumptions in Appendix 2 and the service Improvements and Efficiencies in Appendix 3.
- ii. The level of rent and service charges for 2014/15 as set out in paragraphs 3.01 to 3.07
- iii. The level of projected balances at 31st March 2015 at 3.20% of total expenditure.
- iv. The proposed HRA Capital Programme as set out in Appendix 4.

4.02 Members are asked to note the impact of the proposed revenue budget and capital programme on the 30 year Business Plan.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 The Council has a statutory duty to review the income and expenditure of the HRA, and to set a budget for the forthcoming financial year which avoids a deficit closing balance position. This report sets out how this can be achieved for the Council in 2014/15. The key financial assumptions on which this is proposed are set out in Appendix 2. The proposed budget estimates a closing balance of 3.20% to total expenditure.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 HRA activity helps alleviate poverty by providing safe and secure homes that are energy efficient and economical to run. The ongoing programme maintains the impetus to upgrade heating etc., to minimise fuel use and thereby boost disposable income.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 There are no direct environmental impacts arising from the HRA budget as outlined in the report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 There are no direct equalities impacts arising from this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 There are no direct personnel implications arising from the report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Consultation with all tenants over any rent increase must take place and must be at least 28 days before any rent increase is due to come into effect. Consultation with tenants on the draft budget and proposed rent increase will be undertaken at the tenants' conference on 3rd February 2014.

10.02 The Housing Scrutiny committee will consider the budget proposals at their meeting on 21st January 2014.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

12.00 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – HRA budget 2014/15 Summary

Appendix 2 – HRA financial assumptions

Appendix 3 – HRA budget pressures, savings & service improvements.

Appendix 4 – HRA capital budget 2014/15

Appendix 5 – HRA 30 year business plan summary

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Contact Officer: Nicola Spencer
Telephone: 01352 703431
Email: Nicola.Spencer@Flintshire.gov.uk

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HRA BUDGET 2014/15

	2013/14 Budget	2014/15 Budget	Variance £ to 2013/14	Variance % to 2013/14
INCOME	£	£	£	
Rents (Council Dwellings & Garages)	-26,918,901	-27,690,243	-771,342	3%
Capitalised Salaries	-1,138,661	-1,111,523	27,138	-2%
General Income	-590,756	-734,242	-143,486	24%
	-28,648,318	-29,536,009	-887,691	3%
EXPENDITURE	£	£	£	
HRA Subsidy (Negative/Deficit)	6,166,805	6,380,462	213,657	3%
Capital Financing - Loan Charges	2,044,557	1,909,344	-135,213	-7%
Estate Management	2,318,001	1,887,596	-430,405	-18.6%
Landlord Services	500,632	836,225	335,593	67%
Repairs and Maintenance	8,392,993	8,466,870	73,877	1%
Welsh Housing Quality Standard - CERA	5,792,000	6,580,997	788,997	14%
Finance and Support	2,791,460	2,689,804	-101,656	-3.6%
Capitalised Salaries	1,138,661	1,111,523	-27,138	-2%
	29,145,108	29,862,821	717,713	2%
(Surplus) / Deficit for the year	496,790	326,812	-169,978	
Opening Balance	-1,930,630	-1,283,840	646,790	
HRA Closing Balance	-1,433,840	-957,027	476,812	
% of Total Expenditure (Guideline 3%)	4.92%	3.20%		

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HRA FINANCIAL ASSUMPTIONS - Appendix 2

Ref	Description	2014/15
1	Guideline Rent av. Rent based on 50 weeks	£ 74.90
2	Guideline Rent applied, this level assumed for future years	104.6%
3	Empty Properties rent loss	1.70%
4	M and M allowance average per property	£ 2,769
5	M and M allowance	106.1%
6	Increase applied to Garage Rents. Charge per week.	£ 0.25
7	Empty Garages rent loss	21.2%
8	CERA contribution to Capital	£6.581m

2014/15 %	2015/16 %	2016/17 %	
1.000	1.000	1.000	Prices
1.000	1.000	1.000	Pay
1.030	1.030	1.030	Income
1.080	1.080	1.080	Energy
1.030	1.030	1.030	Insurance
1.046	1.042	1.042	Garage Rents
1.061	1.055	1.055	M and M Allowance
0.020	0.020	0.020	Empty Property
1.000	1.000	1.000	Bad Debt Provison
1.112	1.112	1.112	Fuel
1.000	1.000	1.000	Price non inflation
1.050	1.050	1.050	Aerial Systems
1.023	1.023	1.023	Rates

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HRA BUDGET PRESSURES, SAVINGS & INVESTMENT OPTIONS- Appendix 3				
Code	Bid Ref	ADDITIONAL CAPITAL INVESTMENT	2014/15	Notes
HRP/HRR		CERA	788,997	Increased contribution to the Capital programme
Code	Bid Ref	Increase in Rents	2014/15	Notes
HRP/HRR		4.6% Rental Increase as per Welsh Government Guidance	-342,676	
Code	Bid Ref	EFFICIENCY SAVING OPTIONS	2014/15	Notes
HRX	1S	Support Recharges	-106,702	Reduction in support recharges to the HRA following a review of costs and agile working
HRM/HRX	2S/4P	Salary savings	-14,954	Finance review implemented. Vacant posts reflected at Single Status grades.
HRE/HRM/HRX	7S/12S/2P	Consolidation of general costs	-16,015	Realignment of general costs under "Back to Basics"
HRX/HRM	13S/20S	Software review	-155,448	Review of software costs and licences, reversal of one off expenditure.
HRR/HRP	21S	Capital Financing costs	-135,213	Review of costs
HRE	8S/6P	Tenant Garden works	-129,147	Contract tendered
HRE	9S	Cleaning of Walks/Leas	-28,560	Contract cancelled due to demolition
HRE	10S	Strand House	-2,793	Property handed back to HRA
HRE	11S	Housing News printing	-7,305	Printing costs lower than previous years
HRM	16S	Subscriptions	-3,368	Review of costs
HRM	15S	Subcontractors	-50,000	Less sub contractor spend
HRM	17S	Call out monitoring	-3,000	Saving in the contract costs
HRM	25S	Fleet Review	-50,000	Savings as a result of the corporate fleet review
HRX/HRM	26S	Admin Review	-71,941	Review of Admin service
HRD/HRL	4S/5S	Void properties	-31,985	Savings due to a decrease in number of void properties.
HRL	22S	Right to Buy fees	-3,275	Reduction in RTB fees
HRD	24S	Income from Garden Service recharges	-126,000	Charging of service to tenants
HRD	18S	Bad Debt Provision - Welfare Reform	-208,216	Calculated on Pd8 arrears figures, impact not as severe as expected.
Total Savings			-1,143,922	6.8% of Total Operating Costs
Code	Bid Ref	Budget Realignment/One off pressures reversed	2014/15	Notes
HRL	6S	Adhoc aerial costs	-8,500	Reversal of 1yr budget
Total Savings			-8,500	0.1% of Total Operating Costs

Code	Bid Ref	BUDGET PRESSURES/SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS	2014/15	Notes
HRD	14P	Garage Voids	16,336	Increase in garage voids and removal of Castle Hgts
HRX	1P	Maisonette Decants	7,442	Council Tax and Utility costs
HRX	3P	Handy person service as per Choices Document	37,360	Agreement for handy person services.
HRX	4P	Total Mobile IT Support post	26,271	1 yr additional IT post to implement Total Mobile
HRX	4P	2 posts to support tenants at risk of financial exclusion - Choices Document	52,542	Currently have 2 people short term funded, this funding is ending.
HRE	10P	Court Costs	6,000	Increase in court action taken by Rents and ASB
HRE	13P	ASB posts as per Choices document	16,200	Salary 13/14 part year only
HRL	5P	Launderette Machine Rental	18,798	Contract reviewed for 5yrs
HRE	9P/11P	Agile working	17,525	Costs to implement agile working
HRM	16P	Materials	300,000	More repairs completed and more expenditure through stores
ALL		Inflation	37,648	Average %
Service Improvements			536,123	2.0% of Rental Income

Appendix 4
Draft HRA Capital Programme 2014/15

HRA Capital programme	2014/15
WHQS	£'m
Smoke Alarm Installations	0.100
Planned urgent works	0.150
Bathroom replacements	0.500
Heating Replacement - Programme and survey	2.000
Kitchen Replacements - Programme	4.000
DDA Audits	0.100
Fire Risk Assessments Work	0.400
Off Gas Programme	0.400
Environmental Works (footpaths and fences)	0.300
UPVC	0.200
Asbestos Survey and Removal (Ongoing Programme)	0.150
Envelope Works - Roofs, Fascias, Rendering	0.250
Electrical periodicals and rewires	0.150
Capitalised Salaries	0.478
Eco Funding	0.428
Welfare Reform - Remodelling	0.150
Total WHQS	9.756
Non WHQS	
Planned urgent works	0.150
Vacant Properties	0.300
Maisonettes	0.575
Disabled Facility Grants (DFG) - Mandatory/ Minor Adaps	1.000
Total Non - WHQS	2.025
RingFenced Work	
Envelope Works - Roofs, Fascias, Rendering	0.164
Vacant Properties	0.150
Eco Funding	0.201
Maisonettes	0.085
Total Ring Fenced Work	0.600
Total Spend	12.381

Funding - Base Programme	
M.R.A	5.200
CERA	6.581
Total Base funding	11.781
Capital Receipts	
RTB's 13/14	0.000
Land Receipts	0.600
Capital receipts	0.600
HRA Capital Funding 2014/15 Programme	12.381
Unallocated Funds	-

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Flintshire Housing Capital Operating Account

Year No	Year	Capital Expenditure	Funding B/fwd	Major Repairs Allowance	Usable Capital Receipts	HRAS Supported Borrowing	Prudential Borrowing	CERA	Funding C/FWD	Shortfall	Cumulative Shortfall	Shortfall Exc Inflation
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
1	2014.15	12,379	0	5,200	600	0	0	6,581	0	-2	-2	-2
2	2015.16	15,901	0	5,200	0	0	0	7,550	0	3,151	3,149	3,102
3	2016.17	15,461	0	5,200	0	0	0	8,121	0	2,139	5,288	5,133
4	2017.18	15,693	0	5,200	0	0	0	8,884	0	1,609	6,897	6,596
5	2018.19	15,928	0	5,200	0	0	0	9,674	0	1,054	7,951	7,492
6	2019.2	16,167	0	5,200	0	0	0	11,095	0	-128	7,823	7,262
7	2020.21	16,409	0	5,200	0	0	0	11,344	0	-135	7,689	7,032
8	2021.22	7,073	0	5,200	0	0	0	14,068	0	-12,195	-4,507	-4,061
9	2022.23	4,319	0	5,200	0	0	0	14,951	0	-15,832	-20,339	-18,055
10	2023.24	11,315	0	5,200	0	0	0	15,760	0	-9,644	-29,983	-26,223
11	2024.25	7,396	0	5,200	0	0	0	16,593	0	-14,397	-44,380	-38,241
12	2025.26	7,507	0	5,200	0	0	0	18,179	0	-15,873	-60,253	-51,150
13	2026.27	11,883	0	5,200	0	0	0	18,338	0	-11,654	-71,907	-60,142
14	2027.28	12,062	0	5,200	0	0	0	19,251	0	-12,390	-84,297	-69,463
15	2028.29	12,242	0	5,200	0	0	0	20,192	0	-13,150	-97,447	-79,112
16	2029.3	12,426	0	5,200	0	0	0	21,163	0	-13,937	-111,383	-89,090
17	2030.31	12,612	0	5,200	0	0	0	22,163	0	-14,751	-126,134	-99,398
18	2031.32	11,971	0	5,200	0	0	0	24,063	0	-17,291	-143,426	-111,354
19	2032.33	12,151	0	5,200	0	0	0	24,259	0	-17,308	-160,733	-122,947
20	2033.34	12,333	0	5,200	0	0	0	25,355	0	-18,222	-178,955	-134,862
21	2034.35	12,518	0	5,200	0	0	0	26,486	0	-19,168	-198,123	-147,101
22	2035.36	12,706	0	5,200	0	0	0	27,653	0	-20,147	-218,270	-159,664
23	2036.37	10,515	0	5,200	0	0	0	28,856	0	-18,222	-241,811	-174,270
24	2037.38	10,673	0	5,200	0	0	0	31,133	0	-20,147	-267,471	-189,914
25	2038.39	10,833	0	5,200	0	0	0	31,375	0	-23,541	-293,214	-205,116
26	2039.4	10,995	0	5,200	0	0	0	32,695	0	-25,660	-320,113	-220,624
27	2040.41	11,160	0	5,200	0	0	0	34,056	0	-25,743	-348,209	-236,441
28	2041.42	8,495	0	5,200	0	0	0	35,459	0	-26,900	-380,373	-254,464
29	2042.43	8,622	0	5,200	0	0	0	36,907	0	-28,095	-413,857	-272,773
30	2043.44	8,752	0	5,200	0	0	0	39,637	0	-32,164	-449,942	-292,174

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **CABINET**

DATE: **TUESDAY, 21 JANUARY 2014**

REPORT BY: **CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

SUBJECT: **IMPROVEMENT ASSESSMENT LETTER FROM THE
AUDITOR GENERAL FOR WALES**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To advise Members of the Council's recent Improvement Assessment Letter from the Auditor General for Wales for noting and to agree an Executive response.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Auditor General is required by the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (the 'Measure') to report any audit and assessment work which informs judgement as to whether a Council has discharged its duties and met the requirements of the Measure.

2.02 This is the second letter that the Council has received; the first one reported October summarised the Auditor General's views on whether the Council had discharged its duties for improvement planning; complied with requirements to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement; updated to the Wales Audit Office work plan and timetable for Improvement Assessment work. There were no further recommendations or proposals for improvement.

2.03 This second complimentary letter covers an assessment of the Council's Annual Performance Report.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The letter summarises the Auditor General's views on whether the Council has discharged its statutory duties for improvement reporting. The letter is attached at Appendix 1.

3.02 The Auditor General has made no new statutory recommendations or proposals for improvement.

3.03 As good practice the Council always makes a full response to issues raised within the letter. The response is attached at Appendix 2.

3.04 Both the letter and the Council's response have been received by the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee and both will be presented to the Audit Committee meeting later this month.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 To advise Members of the Council's Improvement Assessment letter received from the Auditor General for Wales.

4.02 Members to note the report and agree the Council's Executive response.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 None

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 None required.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Senior officers have had input into this report.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1: The Auditor General's Improvement Assessment Letter (December 2013)

Appendix 2: The Council's response to the Auditor General's Improvement Assessment Letter (January 2014)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

Contact Officer: Karen Armstrong
Telephone: 01352 702740
Email: karen_armstrong@flintshire.gov.uk

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24 Cathedral Road / Heol y Gadeiriau
Cardiff / Caerdydd
CF11 9LJ
Tel / Ffôn: 029 20 320500
Fax / Ffacs: 029 20 320600
Email / E-bost: wales@wao.gov.uk
www.wao.gov.uk

Mr Colin Everett
Chief Executive
Flintshire County Council
County Hall
Mold
CH7 6NB

Reference 681A2013
Date 20 December 2013
Pages 1 of 3

Dear Colin

Improvement Assessment

In my letter of 16 September 2013, I gave my opinion on whether Flintshire County Council (the Council) had discharged its statutory duties in respect of improvement planning.

I am also required, under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (the Measure), to give an opinion on whether the Council has discharged its duties in respect of improvement reporting and met the requirements of the Measure.

In my opinion, and based on audit work undertaken to date, the Council has discharged its improvement reporting duties under the Measure, although there is potential to strengthen its arrangements further.

I have concluded that the Council has discharged its improvement reporting duties under the Measure because:

- the Council published its Annual Performance Report (the Report) by 31 October 2013;
- the Report provides an assessment of the Council's performance in the preceding financial year (2012-13) and sets out how the Council has sought to discharge its duties under the Measure;
- the Report includes a summary evaluation of whether or not the Council believes it has been successful in achieving its improvement objectives;
- the Report includes details of the Council's performance, and compares performance against the national statutory performance indicators;
- the Report includes a brief section inviting citizens to provide feedback or make comments on the Report; and
- the Report includes a short section on the ways in which the Council has sought to collaborate.

There are areas in which the Council could improve its self-evaluation of its annual performance. In summary, the Report:

- presents too much detailed information in a style that is not engaging for citizens;
- includes, for each improvement objective, information about work that has and has not gone well during 2012-13, but further clarity in summarising this information would help readers to understand how the Council has determined its evaluation of progress and outcomes;
- lacks information on the impact of the Council's collaborative activity; and
- does not promote as well as it might the opportunity for citizens to provide feedback by, for example, including a web link for comments.

We have provided more detailed feedback to relevant staff on a draft of this year's Report. Much of the complexity of this year's Report stems from the nature of the Council's Improvement Plan for 2012-13. I reported in my September letter that the presentation and content of the Council's Improvement Plan for 2013-14 enable public engagement with the Council's priorities far more effectively than in the past. This change has the potential to support the further development of the Council's public reporting of its performance.

Further proposals for improvement/recommendations

No new proposals for improvement are being suggested in this letter. We will continue to monitor and report on the progress made by the Council in implementing the proposals set out in my previous reports and letters. I will undertake more detailed work on the arrangements that support the Council's performance management and reporting over the following months and report this, as well as summarising all of my work and that of relevant regulators during 2013-14, in an Annual Improvement Report for the Council that I will aim to publish by the end of March 2014.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Huw Vaughan Thomas'.

HUW VAUGHAN THOMAS
Auditor General for Wales

CC: Lesley Griffiths, Minister for Local Government and Government Business

Huw Lloyd Jones – Manager

Karen Lees – Performance Audit Lead

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Wales Audit Office Improvement Assessment Letter

December 2013

Executive Response

The Wales Audit Office's Improvement Assessment Letter is, overall, a fair summary of the position of the Council. The letter is a positive endorsement of this transitional year for improvement reporting with recognition of the potential for improved public reporting following the introduction of this year's Improvement Plan.

There are no new statutory recommendations or proposals for improvement.

In our response we set out how we will make improvements to ensure full compliance with the spirit and detail of the national guidance.

Listed below are the principal topics within the letter along with our response.

Issue	Response
<i>In summary the report:</i>	
Presents too much detailed information in a style that is not engaging for citizens	The report needs to be sufficiently detailed to be useful as both an internal performance review 'tool' and a review of annual performance for public consumption. The report can be further improved. The Council has introduced a new reporting model following the publication of the new style Improvement Plan. This provides a basis for a more concise, graphic and readable annual plan with selected performance information in support of the outcomes set for achievement.
Includes, for each improvement objective, information about work that has and has not gone well during 2012-13, but further clarity in summarising this information would help readers to understand how the Council has determined its evaluation of progress and outcomes	The report does identify for each improvement objective the activity which has both succeeded and failed to achieve the targets set. The overall objective evaluation of the supporting evidence is represented in the RAG (red, amber, green) status. An explanatory paragraph will be added for each improvement objective in future reports to assist the reader to more fully understand the evaluation.
Lacks information on the impact of the Council's collaborative activity	Many of the Council's collaborative projects are in planning or implementation stages, so it is premature to assess outcomes. Where collaborative projects are in delivery, examples of improved service delivery have been summarised within the narrative for each relevant improvement objective. The expectations of WAO seem to have changed based on the reporting practices of some other councils which are held up as 'good practice'. The Council will develop its reporting style accordingly noting that this does not mean that its plan is deficient.
Does not promote as well as it might the opportunity for citizens to provide	Feedback opportunities were provided by telephone, post, email and by web. Further opportunities for

feedback by, for example, including a web link for comments.

citizen feedback including an enhanced use of social media are being explored for next year. Public interest in these types of plans is low so promotional activity should be kept in proportion.

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **CABINET**

DATE: **TUESDAY, 21 JANUARY 2014**

REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT**

SUBJECT: **RURAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN LOCAL ACTION GROUPS 2014-2020**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To seek support in principle for Cadwyn Clwyd to act as the Local Action Group for Flintshire for the next Rural Development Plan (RDP) Programme.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The RDP is part of the Common Agricultural Policy and includes measures to support agriculture, conservation and forestry as well as wider rural development. Development work is underway at European and Welsh Government levels on the replacement programme for the current one.

2.02 In November 2013 applications were invited by Welsh Government from prospective partners who wished to come together to form a LEADER Local Action Group. The Local Action Groups will be the main vehicle for community led local development for the RDP for Wales 2014-2020. LEADER activity in Wales for 2014-2020 will follow the current LEADER concept focussing on innovation, piloting of new approaches, networking, and bottom-up community working.

2.03 Expressions of interest need to be submitted by 31st January 2014. Applicants approved at the initial stage would then be invited to submit a full application for Local Action Group status and develop a Local Development Strategy.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The Minister for Natural Resources and Food announced in November that Wales will receive €355m (£297.4m) for the Rural Development Plan over the period 2014-20. Within the context of declining public sector finances, the Programme should make a significant contribution to the strategic priorities of the County Council and make a measurable impact on the lives of the rural population.

3.02 The Welsh Government's open call for organisations to act as Local

Action Groups was widely disseminated and promoted and asks for one expression of interest from each area, supported by the local authority. Cadwyn Clwyd is the only organisation to have approached the Council with an expression of interest. The decision to appoint the Local Action Group rests entirely with Welsh Government, but Welsh Government wants a supporting statement from the 'host' local authority. There is in effect therefore only 1 bidder for the role and so an exemption from Contract Procedure Rules will be sought dispensing with the requirement to subject the position to further competition.

- 3.03 Cadwyn Clwyd has been delivering rural development programmes in Denbighshire since the early 1990s and in Flintshire since 2000. It has a robust track record in delivering rural projects, using Rural Development Plan and European funds and has the necessary experience and systems to manage the demanding administrative requirements posed by these funding bodies. Cadwyn Clwyd is a non-profit company limited by guarantee with Flintshire representatives on its Board of Directors.
- 3.04 Denbighshire County Council has already given approval to Cadwyn Clwyd to act as the Local Action Group for their County. Wrexham County Borough Council has also been approached. It is hoped that taking a shared approach to the management of the programme in North East Wales will reduce the scale of administration required and ensure that a greater proportion of the funds can be used to meet the needs of the area.
- 3.05 The Rural Development Plan Programme is still at an early stage of development, so many of the details for the future management and funding of the Programme are as yet unclear, including the expected role of local government. It is therefore only possible to offer “in principle” support to Cadwyn Clwyd at this stage, subject to some key areas for further discussion and agreement and to more detailed information being made available by Welsh Government.
- 3.06 There are a number of areas which it is felt would need further discussion and agreement before full support could be offered by the Council. The areas for further development are:

Strategic direction

Although development of the Programme will be heavily guided by Welsh Government, the Council will expect that the Programme will be used to make measurable and effective contributions to addressing the strategic needs of the area, as set out in the North Wales Economic Ambition Board strategy, the Single Integrated Plan for Flintshire and the Flintshire Regeneration Strategy. The Council would expect to be fully involved in the development and monitoring of any strategy for Flintshire.

Governance

Appropriate governance arrangements will need to be established to ensure that democratic oversight can be applied to the Programme and that expenditure can be robustly judged for effectiveness and value for money.

Assurance

Appropriate systems will need to be put in place to ensure that the activities supported by the Programme offer cost-effective solutions to meeting the strategic priorities of the County. The Local Action Group will be expected, in developing their proposals further, to demonstrate how they will ensure that their work dovetails with that of wider partnerships and the Council as a whole.

Financial support

At present, no financial support to the Programme as a whole or to Cadwyn Clwyd has been identified. Any calls made upon Council resources would be subject to a further report to Cabinet.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 That the nomination of Cadwyn Clwyd as the Local Action Group for Flintshire for the 2014 to 2020 Rural Development Plan Programme be approved in principle subject to satisfactory agreement being reached on the areas listed in 3.06 above.
- 4.02 That a further report is brought to Cabinet for approval of the final details of the management and delivery arrangements for the new Programme.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 The details of how the future Rural Development Programme will be managed and funded have not been made clear at this stage. No commitment will be made to support the Programme or Local Action Group beyond this “in principle” agreement without a further report to Cabinet.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 Whilst the future priorities of the Rural Development Plan are still under development, it is clear that there will be a significant focus on improving the economy of rural areas.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 Environmental sustainability is expected to be one of the cross-cutting themes for the Programme and all projects will need to integrate this into their design and delivery and their impact is monitored.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 Equal opportunities and social inclusion are expected to be cross-cutting themes for the Programme and all projects and contracts will need to integrate these into their design and delivery and their impact is monitored.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 None at this stage.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 None.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None.

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

Contact Officer: Sharon Barlow
Telephone: 01352 702135
Email: sharon.barlow@flintshire.gov.uk

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **CABINET**

DATE: **TUESDAY, 21 JANUARY 2014**

REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT**

SUBJECT: **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN DELIVERY AGREEMENT: FINALISING THE DELIVERY AGREEMENT FOLLOWING CONSULTATION**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To seek the agreement of Cabinet for revisions to the draft Local Development Plan (LDP) Delivery Agreement following consultation feedback, in order to submit the Delivery Agreement to the Welsh Government for their formal approval. Once the Welsh Government has approved the Delivery Agreement, it can be formally published and substantive work on the preparation of the LDP can begin.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The preparation of a Delivery Agreement is one of the first formal stages in the LDP process. The Delivery Agreement is a public statement that contains a timetable for LDP production (this is in effect the Council's project plan), and the Community Involvement Scheme, setting out how and when stakeholders and the community can contribute to the preparation of the LDP. The Community Involvement Scheme will be important in supporting and developing the aims, scope and priorities for the LDP, setting out appropriate forms of involvement to facilitate structured dialogue with Members, key stakeholders, and the community about the evidence and options, in order to arrive at a broad consensus.

2.02 Once agreed, the Delivery Agreement commits the Council to produce its LDP according to the stated timescales and consultation processes. Any deviation from this (not previously agreed by the Welsh Government) will potentially be examined by the Inspector appointed to scrutinise the final Plan i.e. could affect the assessment of the overall soundness of the Plan.

2.03 The draft Delivery Agreement was approved by Cabinet on 18 June 2013 to go out to public consultation. Originally the Delivery Agreement was intended to be the subject of a 6 week consultation period however potential difficulties were identified as a result of the summer recess where the majority of Town and Community Councils had no scheduled meetings. Following contact with Town &

Community Councils to identify their scheduled meeting dates, the consultation period was extended to 8 weeks and re-aligned so that each had the opportunity to submit comments on the document.

- 2.04 Copies of the Delivery Agreement were sent out to Members and 'specific consultation bodies' with the Town & Community Councils receiving 4 copies each. A mail drop was also carried out to the other consultation bodies identified in Appendix 3 of the Delivery Agreement as well as other interested parties, held on a separate LDP mailing list. A specific comments form was drawn up which, along with the Agreement itself, was made available on the Council's website. Copies of the documents were also made available at Council offices and at all libraries. Press releases were issued by the Council's press Unit.
- 2.05 The consultation feedback received in relation to the Delivery Agreement and resultant changes outlined in this report were considered by the Planning Strategy Group at its October meeting, where they resolved to endorse the revised Agreement and Timetable and to seek Cabinet approval for these.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.01 During the 8 week consultation period some 48 representations were received. Of these 19 used the specific comments form whilst 29 were submitted by letter or e-mail. Despite extending the deadline to accommodate Town & Community Council meetings only 10 out of 34 submitted representations. A number of other representations were received from people promoting individual sites for development and these have been acknowledged and advised that such sites should be submitted during the Call for Candidate Sites exercise which is likely to commence in early 2014.
- 3.02 Most of the representations consider the Delivery Agreement to be clearly presented. However, there is a split between those who consider the Delivery Agreement to be easy to understand and those who consider that the process is overly complicated and difficult for the lay person to understand. In terms of the timetable, again there is a split between those who consider the timetable to be realistic and those who consider that the length of time to get the LDP adopted is overly long and gives rise to complications. Turning to the Community Involvement Scheme there are representations that consider the stages to be well explained in terms of when, who and how people can be engaged with and consulted, whereas there are other representations which would wish to see much more detail about the actual engagement and consultation processes.
- 3.03 It must be stressed that the role of the Delivery Agreement is to provide an overview or framework of the broad process and principles of taking the Plan forward to adoption. It is not possible for the

Delivery Agreement to provide fine detail about every single stage and exactly how each engagement or consultation will take place. To do so would result in an Agreement that was overly long, complicated and unwieldy for people to follow. Therefore, the Delivery Agreement seeks to strike a balance whereby it provides sufficient detail as to what the key stages are, when they will take place, who will be involved, broadly how people will be involved and how people will be kept informed of decisions. As the Plan progresses, more detailed explanation and guidance will be given at each stage, building upon the framework set out in the Delivery Agreement.

- 3.04 The key issue arising from the consultation exercise is the timetable for progressing the Plan to adoption. A number of representations have concerns about the length of time being taken to prepare the Plan. These comments have regard to Welsh Government advice that an LDP should be able to be adopted within 4 years and also the implications for the County Council of having a long period without an up to date adopted UDP in terms of maintaining an adequate land supply and having a policy 'vacuum' which creates uncertainty. In drawing up the Delivery Agreement it was considered that, based on experience elsewhere, a more conservative timetable was appropriate as it would be less likely to warrant further amendments as slippage occurs. However, it is acknowledged that there are implications of a longer preparation period in terms of a policy 'vacuum' without an adopted development plan, a difficulty in maintaining a 5 year supply of housing land and also a delay in the possible introduction of a Community Infrastructure Levy charging schedule (the latter would be developed alongside the LDP and introduced following the adoption of the LDP).
- 3.05 On balance it is considered that a more ambitious timetable should be incorporated into a revised Delivery Agreement. Whilst this will be challenging for Officers, Members and indeed, stakeholders, an adopted LDP in place as soon as possible will bring about significant benefits to the Council. The timetable has therefore been reviewed taking into account the suggested key dates by Welsh Government (shown in bold) and the result of the changes, would be to reduce the preparation period by 12 months from 5 years and 1 month to 4 years and 1 months.

Key Stage	Draft Delivery Agreement	Revised Delivery Agreement
<i>Definitive Stages</i>		
Delivery Agreement	Dec 2013	Jan 2014
Evidence base	On going	On going
Pre- deposit participation	Jan 2014 – Apr 2015	Jan 2014 – Nov 2014
Pre-deposit Consultation Draft	May 2015 – Apr 2016	Dec 2014 – Nov 2015
Deposit Consultation	May 2016 – Jan 2017	Dec 2015 – July 2016

Indicative Stages		
Consultation on site allocations representations	Feb 2017 – Jun 2017	Aug 2016 – Nov 2016
Focused changes (optional) [can overlap with submission]	Jul 2017 – Nov 2017	Dec 2016 – Mar 2017
Submission to WG	Jul 2017	Dec 2016
Examination	Aug 2017 – Aug 2018	Jan 2017 – Nov 2017
Inspector's Report	Oct 2018	Dec 2017
Adoption	Jan 2019	Feb 2018

3.06 A further key benefit of amending the LDP timetable as proposed above is that it gives the Council the opportunity to complete all of the key decision making stages in plan preparation up to the point of plan submission in December 2016, prior to the next Local Government elections to be held in 2017.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That Cabinet approve the amendments to the Local Development Plan Delivery Agreement and Timetable for submission to the Welsh Government for formal approval.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 Current activity is met from within Base Budget of £140k. In addition specific Revenue Balances of £387k are held to facilitate the plan process. The most significant future costs envisaged will relate to the LDP Examination timetabled for 2017 which could amount to £200k, but it is difficult to predict at present as this is dependant on the length of the examination. Further work will be done to refine this estimate looking at the comparative costs incurred by neighbouring authorities.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 Strategic Environmental Assessment is an integrated part of the Plan process and will be used to assess and mitigate where appropriate, the environmental effects of the plan.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 The Community Involvement Scheme will need to encourage and make all reasonable attempts to engage with hard to reach groups.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 Taken into account in the Delivery Agreement.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Numerous consultation stages outlined in the Delivery Agreement.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 The draft Delivery Agreement has been the subject of a consultation exercise.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None

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

1. Local Development Plan Draft Delivery Agreement
2. Report to Planning Strategy Group 17th October 2013

Contact Officer: Andy Roberts
Telephone: 01352 703211
Email: andy.roberts@flintshire.gov.uk

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **CABINET**

DATE: **TUESDAY, 21 JANUARY 2014**

REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**

SUBJECT: **SARTH**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 This report seeks approval to implement the Single Access Route to Housing Project locally, to the development of a Housing solutions service; and to continue to engage with the project across the North East Wales sub region.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 SARTH (Single Access Route to Housing) is a partnership project between all the major social landlords in north east Wales, covering the local authority areas of Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham. The partners include all those councils plus Cartrefi Conwy, Clwyd Alyn, Cymdeithas Tai Clwyd, North Wales Housing and Wales and West Housing Associations.

2.02 In November 2012, Cabinet gave approval for Flintshire to put a draft sub regional common housing register and policy out to public consultation. Members were invited to attend a workshop in April 2013 as part of that consultation and an update report was circulated to members in July 2013 providing feedback on the consultation results.

The aim of the SARTH Policy and Register

2.03 There is high demand for rented homes in the region and too few vacancies to meet demand. The overall aim of SARTH is to simplify access to a range of affordable housing options which is transparent, legal, efficient and accessible to all sections of the community. The allocation of social housing must be fair, consistent, and prioritise those people within our communities according to their housing needs.

2.04 The SARTH policy not only includes a revised allocation policy but includes some changes to the way the register is currently managed such as a move toward providing advice on realistic housing options. Currently, Flintshire receives approximately 30 housing applications a week compared to circa 10 homes available for letting. All these

forms are registered and the number of points confirmed to the applicant. Many of these applicants have low points and are unlikely to be allocated housing in their chosen areas.

- 2.05 The SARTH policy aims to help customers make the most informed choice about how to find a home to meet their needs. The advice provided will cover the whole range of affordable housing options including social housing, private rented accommodation, home ownership and other alternatives. This helps to manage expectations and for customers to understand fully their realistic housing options.
- 2.06 The draft policy is simpler to understand than the current points based system. Applicants are given reasonable preference determined by a banding scheme which lists people in date order of their application within each band. Reasonable preference is given to those who fall within the statutory categories such as homelessness, overcrowding, living in unsanitary conditions, medical grounds or hardship.
- 2.07 The priority given to applicants within the banding scheme will vary according to whether the applicant has an urgent housing need, whether the applicant has a local connection and the date order of the application. Applicants who are not in the categories entitled to reasonable preference will not be given any priority in the banding scheme and will not be recorded on the housing register. However, advice and assistance will be provided to assist those applicants in finding affordable housing that meets their need. The policy allows for applicants to be dropped to a lower banding where their behaviour affects their suitability to be a tenant.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

Public Consultation

- 3.01 The public consultation on the Common Allocation Policy took place between 4th March and 30th April 2013. This included each partner sending surveys to 10% of applicants on the register and 10% of tenants in their housing stock. Each partner placed the survey and draft policy on their website. There were local consultation events, a regional stakeholder event and coverage in the local press.
- 3.02 There were 450 survey responses. Below is a summary of the findings from the main questions:-
- 90% of people responding stated they agreed with the proposal for a single register.
 - 80% of people agreed with the proposal to only put people with a recognised housing need on the register.
 - 82% of people agreed with the proposed banding scheme
 - 89% of people agreed that people with a local connection be given priority over those with no local connection.

- 92% agreed that an applicant's past behaviour should count against them when applying for a new home.
- 79% of people agreed with the proposal to remove people from the register if they turn down two suitable offers.
- 95% of people agreed with having a separate accessible housing register which would match people with a disability with appropriate properties.

3.03 Following the consultation there were some amendments to the policy in line with feedback received. The regional steering group has now agreed that this final version be submitted for approval by all the partner organisations. The policy will remain subject to annual review.

Regional Policy and Register

3.04 Currently all the partner organisations have their own IT systems. This is not an obstacle to the implementation of a Common Allocation Policy. However, the development of a regional register to support the policy is more complex and requires an IT system to be purchased or developed.

3.05 In light of additional pressures facing Local Authorities, Flintshire council believes that there needs to be additional work to identify cost savings and the benefits of a regional register before investment in a new IT system could be proposed. However, the regional policy meets Flintshire's current requirements and can be implemented locally with the Local Authority hosting the system for the Housing Associations operating in the County. This in itself will bring significant benefit and simplicity for those seeking social housing; as there will only be one application to make which will be assessed against a single allocation policy.

Local Development

3.06 Flintshire County Council is committed to continuing to work positively with the regional project where it can be shown that there is a direct benefit for local people, and at this stage is seeking approval to move ahead locally with the implementation of the new policy in Flintshire. A County wide register would support local service delivery which is closely aligned to the existing housing options service. The feedback results detailed in this report demonstrate support for the new policy and support for the changes to the current approach to managing applications including the option for enhanced housing options to be provided to applicants and only those with an identified housing need to be added to the register.

3.07 Housing Solutions

Flintshire County Council has taken a step towards delivering the enhanced service by piloting a central housing register team. This

provides a central point for application processing and queries about access to social housing. The team is located in Housing Options so early support and advice can be provided where it is identified there is a threat of homelessness.

- 3.08 The Central Housing Register Team and the Housing Options Team will join to form a 'Housing Solutions Model' dealing with all requests for housing. The proposal would see applicants seeking housing and/or housing advice being referred to the Housing Solutions Team for an initial assessment rather than applications being sent out automatically by other teams or departments. This will provide an opportunity for applicants to be advised on their housing options and for better matching of applicants to available housing. The team will not input applications with no identified housing need but will advise and assist on other options. The proposal will reduce the number of applications processed where the applicant has little chance of being allocated housing either due to the chosen areas or the level of housing need.
- 3.09 This reconfiguration of the service will ensure that Flintshire County Council is prepared for the changes to Homelessness Legislation in 2015. From that time, the Local Authority will have a duty to provide full advice and assistance to all those who approach the Local Authority in housing need. This need can be met by staff spending less time inputting data and more time giving advice and assistance and better matching applicants to areas. This will enable Flintshire County Council to manage the additional burden without needing additional staff resources.
- 3.10 The outcomes will include:-
- A significant improvement in customer service
 - Reduction of duplication and unnecessary work
 - A triage system that will manage expectations by providing realistic options
 - Better matching of applicants to areas with available properties and promotion of hard to let properties

Medical Panel

- 3.11 The proposal includes implementing a leaner approach to administering the Flintshire County Council Medical Panel. The award of medical points can be perceived as a way to increase points for applicants and therefore increase the chance of being allocated a property. The panel has seen an increase in applications in the last twelve months but not an increase in cases where re-housing is urgent and necessary. This increase in forms has put a strain on the medical panel and incurred additional pressure on staff time attending and managing the panel. A lean review has been undertaken which has analysed the current process and costs and benchmarked with neighbouring Local Authorities.

- 3.12 By simplifying the forms and making better use of internal resources (such as occupational therapists) the review would realise an estimated £3,500 reduction in annual costs of medical panel. These changes would be supported by a robust appeals process.

Housing Register

- 3.13 The proposals above to adapt local management of the register can commence from January 2014. However, the full move across to a common housing register for Flintshire shared with Housing Associations will require a phased approach. This would include working with Flintshire Corporate IT colleagues to develop a test system that could run behind the existing register so that any impacts can be assessed with a full move over potentially planned for the end of 2014. The IT development will need to include options for hosting the register and providing access to Housing Associations. Corporate IT and Business Systems colleagues will be fully involved in the development and consideration of options. The IT development time would give officers in the team the opportunity to carry out cleansing work on the current register by contacting people on the register to discuss their current application, ensure all information is fully up to date and explain the changes to the register and allocations policy.
- 3.14 The proposed timescales above are outlined in a project plan attached at appendix 2. The plan details the high level activities required to implement the policy and register in Flintshire.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 To approve the new allocations policy for Flintshire County Council (appendix 1)
- 4.02 To approve the phased implementation of the new allocations policy and housing solutions service in Flintshire as detailed in the project plan (appendix 2)
- 4.03 To support continued involvement in the regional project work to the benefit of Flintshire residents.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 A £10,000 contribution to the regional development work has been identified from the 2014-15 budget.
- 5.02 Implementing the policy locally will require investment in IT development which will be carried out at no additional cost over existing budgets.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 The proactive work being undertaken by the Housing Solutions Team will assist applicants access affordable housing and mitigate the increase in homelessness at the earliest opportunity.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None specifically associated with the content of this report

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 A full project wide Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken with assistance from Tai Pawb. Further testing of a system will provide more specific impact assessments to be carried out at a local level.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None specifically associated with the content of this report

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Applicants currently on the register will be contacted about proposed changes. Nobody currently on the register will be removed unless they no longer wish to remain on the register.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 The policy has been subject to wide consultation in 2013.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1: The SARTH Policy

12.02 Appendix 2: Project Plan for Implementation

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

None

Contact Officer: Katie Davis
Telephone: 01352
Email: katie.davis@flintshire.gov.uk

Common Allocations Policy

A Single Access Route to Housing for North East Wales

All the major social landlords in the local authority areas of Conwy County Borough, Denbighshire and Flintshire have come together to design a single access route to housing. The partners in this collaboration are:

- Conwy County Borough Council
- Denbighshire County Council
- Flintshire County Council
- Cartrefi Conwy
- Clwyd Alyn Housing Association
- Cymdeithas Tai Clwyd
- North Wales Housing
- Wales & West Housing

All partners recognise that there is high demand for rented homes in the region and too few vacancies to meet demand. We must be realistic about this. It requires us to do two things:

Firstly, we will provide the best, most useful, consistent and accessible advice and information to everyone who comes to us looking for housing. We aim to help customers make the most informed choice about how to find a home to meet their needs. This advice must cover the whole range of affordable housing options, including social housing, private rented accommodation, home ownership and other alternatives.

Secondly, we will allocate our social housing stock in a transparent, fair, consistent and accessible way, which prioritises the people in our communities according to their housing needs and which meets our legal requirements.

Working together to these ends, we can share our strengths and good practice and place the customer at the heart of everything we do. We will simplify the access route to advice and to housing with one clear purpose: to help people find a home to meet their needs.

Overview of the Common Allocations Policy

This Common Allocations Policy (CAP) has been developed by all partners in collaboration and sets out how partners will achieve the following aim:

- To allocate our social housing stock in a transparent, fair, consistent and accessible way, which prioritises the people in our communities according to their housing needs and which meets our legal requirements.

Legal Context

This policy is fully compliant with the Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 which provides the legislative policy for allocations policy. The following aspects of this Act have guided the development of this policy:

- Section 167(2) of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002, requires that this policy ensures that housing is allocated so that reasonable preference is given to people who fall within certain categories (as defined in section 8 below).
- Section 167(2) also provides that additional preference may be given to people falling within these categories who have urgent housing needs.
- Section 167(2A) provides that within the group of applicants who must be given reasonable preference, priority may be given to applicants who have a local connection with the local authority area as defined in section 10 below.
- Section 167(2A) provides that within the group of applicants who must be given reasonable preference, priority may be reduced where there is evidence of any behaviour by an applicant (or a member of their household) which effects their suitability to be a tenant or because of financial resources available to the person, which it would be reasonable for them to use to meet their housing needs.

The partners to this policy have also taken into account the contents of the “Code of Guidance for Local Authorities: Allocation of Accommodation and Homelessness 2012”, published by the Welsh Assembly in August 2012.

Consistency combined with a local approach

The common allocation policy delivers a uniform assessment of housing need across the region, providing fairness and consistency to the customer, taking into account people’s individual needs and expressed preferences.

The policy has been designed so that each partner is able to target the housing stock in each county at the people in their own communities who are most in housing need.

There is a consistent application process for customers. Each partner with properties in an area chosen by an applicant will be aware of the application and able to give the applicant the appropriate priority in the allocation process.

The common approach delivers both choice and ease of access to customers and an efficient means for partners to consistently meet housing need.

The Housing Register and the Banding Scheme

The policy is founded on the principle that reasonable preference in the letting of housing accommodation will be given to those persons who fall within the statutory categories set out in section 8 below. The relative priority given to applicants within these categories is determined by the banding scheme, according to whether they have an urgent housing need, whether they have a local connection and the date order of their application.

Applicants who are not in the categories entitled to reasonable preference will generally not be given any priority in the banding scheme and will not be recorded on the housing register. This is because of the limited supply of social housing and the responsibility to prioritise those in housing need. However, the advice and information offered to all customers will allow them to seek alternatives which will give them a greater chance of finding new accommodation.

Realistic Housing Options Advice

An enhanced housing options advice service will be provided for everyone who contacts any of the partners looking for somewhere to live.

When they first contact us, all customers will be asked where they would like to live and what their needs and preferences are. They will be advised of the full range of options open to them in their chosen areas and can then decide where their best options lie, whether via social housing or another alternative, taking into account supply and demand.

Advice and information on how to make an application and how houses are allocated will be available free of charge. Any assistance that a person may need to apply for housing will also be free of charge.

An applicant shall also be entitled, upon request, to such general information as will enable them to assess:

- How their application is likely to be treated under this policy (including in particular whether they are likely to be regarded as a member of a group of people who are to be given preference).
- Whether housing accommodation appropriate to their needs is likely to be made available to them and, if so, how long it is likely to be before such accommodation becomes available for allocation to them.

Fair and Equal Access

All partners are committed to providing equality of opportunity to all applicants who apply for housing and this policy has been subject to an equality impact assessment. This policy does not discriminate against any person on the grounds of race, gender, sexuality, age, disability, class, appearance, religion or

religious beliefs, responsibility for dependents, unrelated criminal activity, being HIV positive or having AIDS, or any other matter which might cause a person to be treated with injustice.

All partners will comply with the statutory requirements relating to equal opportunities and all relevant codes of practice. The monitoring of allocations under the policy will take place to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and equitably. All applicants applying for social housing across the authorities will have their housing need assessed in a uniform way. Whenever we communicate with customers we will do so in the most appropriate language for the customer and will employ alternative forms where appropriate.

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all allocations of social housing made by partner landlords in the local authority areas stated in the introduction. However, this policy does not cover exchanges arranged between existing council and RSL tenants.

DRAFT

Part One: Introduction

1. Guiding Principles

The policy is based on the following guiding principles:

- To ensure that preference for social housing is given to those in housing need and that those in greatest need are given the highest priority.
- To give higher priority to applicants with a local connection to the area for which they are making an application than to those who have no such connection
- To ensure that the system is fair, confidential and accessible to all potential applicants.
- To make the best use of all the available housing stock
- To ensure consistency in the way in which applicants are treated by all the partner organisations
- To provide a responsive service that treats everyone as an individual
- To empower applicants and support them to make informed and realistic choices about where they want to live
- To provide appropriate, accurate and realistic advice relating to the availability of affordable housing at the point of application
- To maximise applicant satisfaction and improve the applicant service

2. Choice

Applicants can exercise choice in relation to social housing. They will be asked to indicate the types of property they wish to be considered for in terms of location, property type and floor level. The property type they are eligible for will be determined not only by their preference but also by their household, as described in section 13 below.

3. Applications from people with support needs

Partners are committed to ensuring that applicants with support needs are provided with the correct level of support to enable them to access housing and to maintain their tenancy. To this end partners will be working with the relevant statutory and voluntary partners in order to agree an appropriate model for ensuring that support needs are addressed.

4. Confidentiality

- 4.1 Members operating the policy will take reasonable steps to verify information provided by applicants in support of their applications. This

may include undertaking a home visit and making enquiries of third parties such as health professionals or previous landlords.

- 4.2 Information provided by applicants will be retained securely and confidentially by all partner organisations.
- 4.3 Applicants may request a copy of information held by partners about their application, which will include information provided by third parties unless there are exceptional circumstances where it is necessary to protect the identity of the third party concerned. In such exceptional circumstances, every effort will be made to convey to the applicant the information that has been obtained from the third party in a reduced form.
- 4.4 Partners will share relevant information with other partners prior to an offer of housing.

5. False Information

Applicants who give false or misleading information may have their application rejected or their tenancy terminated. In some cases this may also result in criminal prosecution, substantial fines and even imprisonment.

Part Two: Eligibility

6. Eligibility for allocation of social housing

- 6.1 Unless an applicant falls within one of the specified ineligible groups referred to below, applications for social housing will be considered from any person or persons over the age of 16, including existing tenants.
- 6.2 In compliance with the provisions of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) the following categories of applicant are ineligible for the allocation of social housing:
 - Applicants subject to immigration control, unless they have been granted a status which renders them eligible, e.g. persons with refugee status, persons who have been granted Humanitarian Protection, persons who have been granted Discretionary Leave to Remain and persons who have been granted Exceptional Leave to Remain.
 - Applicants from abroad who are not subject to immigration control and who are not habitually resident in the Common Travel Area (i.e. the UK, Channel Islands, Isle of Man and the Republic of Ireland). Exceptions to this are outlined in Regulation 5 of the Allocation of Housing (Wales) Regulations 2003.

6.3 As provided by section 160A(7) of the 1996 Housing Act (as amended by the 2002 Homelessness Act), the following category of person may be deemed to be ineligible for the allocation of housing accommodation:

- Applicants, or members of their household, who have been guilty of unacceptable behaviour serious enough to render them unsuitable to be a tenant of a partner landlord. The only behaviour that can be regarded as unacceptable is behaviour by the person that would have entitled a local authority to an outright possession order, if the person had been a secure tenant of the local authority at the time.

In assessing whether an applicant is ineligible due to unacceptable behaviour, the partner landlord will consider:

1. Where there is evidence of unacceptable behaviour, was it serious enough for a possession order to have been granted (which includes consideration of the statutory discretionary grounds for possession and questions of reasonableness)?
2. Was the behaviour serious enough to render the applicant or household member unsuitable to be a tenant (which involves consideration as to whether an immediate possession order was made or might have been made as opposed to a suspended order)?
3. Does the behaviour continue to be unacceptable at the time of application?

Partner organisations will act reasonably and consider each application on its merits. We will take into account the applicant's personal circumstances (and those of the applicant's household), including his or her health and medical needs, dependents and any other factors relevant to the application. In particular, the partners will consider any mitigating circumstances relating to mental or physical disability, or mental health. Previous unacceptable behaviour may not justify a decision to treat the applicant as ineligible where the applicant can show that the behaviour has improved.

6.4 Applicants deemed ineligible for housing will be provided with advice and guidance regarding their housing options from the Housing Options team when they contact the service.

6.5 Applicants deemed ineligible for housing will be notified of the decision and grounds of this in writing. They will also be informed of their right to request a review and their further right to appeal any decision upon review.

- 6.6 Where the assessing partner has reason to believe that the applicant may have difficulty in understanding the decision, arrangements will be made for the information to be explained in person, with appropriate support or translation where necessary. Furthermore, in cases where the partner has reason to believe that the applicant cannot be sent written notification or has not received it, the partner will make available at their offices a written statement of the decision and the reasons for it, so that the applicant or someone who represents the applicant may collect it within a reasonable time.

Part Three: The Allocations Scheme

This policy uses a banding scheme in order to prioritise applicants. The scheme is described in this section. It follows housing law regarding reasonable preference, additional preference and local connection. It also makes provision for reducing priority under certain circumstances. These concepts are explained in the following sections.

7 The Shared Housing Register

- 7.1 As set out in the introduction, each customer contacting a partner organisation will be given housing options advice to enable them to consider their best options for finding accommodation. The advice will be tailored to individual circumstances, including whether the customer is in housing need. All customers may make an application for social housing.
- 7.2 The banding scheme is designed to give priority to applicants in housing need. The categories of housing need in the scheme are based on the reasonable preference categories set out in section 167 of the 1996 Housing Act, which are stated in section 9 below. Applicants who are given a banding will be recorded on the housing register, whose purpose is to manage applications from people in housing need.
- 7.3 Applicants who do not fall into any of the categories in the banding scheme will be given no preference for housing and will not be recorded on the housing register. Other housing options available to them will be made clear.
- 7.4 Customers who are eligible for the allocation of social housing but not given any priority in the scheme and not recorded on the register are still eligible to apply for social housing in situations where a vacancy occurs which cannot be let to anyone in any of the bands. In such situations, partner landlords may seek to let the property via other means, for example by advertising. In this case, any customer eligible for the allocation of social housing (including those not on the register), would be able to apply to live in the property and have their application considered.

8. Reasonable Preference

The banding scheme ensures that reasonable preference is given to those applicants who fall within on or more of the following categories:

1. those who are homeless within the meaning of Part 7 of the 1996 Act; this includes people who are intentionally homeless, and those who are not in priority need;
2. those who are owed a duty by any housing authority under section 190(2), 193(2), or 195(2) of the 1996 Act (or under section 65(2) or 68(2) of the Housing Act 1985) or who are occupying accommodation secured by any housing authority under section 192(3);
3. those occupying unsanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions;
4. those who need to move on medical or welfare grounds including grounds relating to a disability; and
5. those who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the housing authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship to themselves or to others.

9. Additional Preference

The allocation policy gives additional preference to people who fall within the reasonable preference categories and who are deemed to have urgent housing needs.

10. Local Connection

- 10.1 For determining priorities in allocating housing accommodation to people who fall within the five reasonable preference categories, any local connection (within the meaning of section 199 of the 1996 Act, as amended by section 315 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008) that an applicant has with a relevant local authority area, or in rural areas with a community council area, will be taken into account, in the manner set out in this section.
- 10.2 In this policy, by the phrase “local connection” is meant a connection between a person and a local authority area, i.e. Conwy, Denbighshire or Flintshire.
- 10.3 An applicant may have a local connection to a local authority area if the applicant or a member of their household has a connection for any of the following reasons:
 - They have been resident in the local authority area for the previous 12 months.
 - They were resident in the local authority area for 3 out of the previous 5 years.

- They have family associations in the area. Family associations normally arise when someone has a parent, adult child, brother or sister who has resided in the area for a period of at least 5 years at the date of application and both the person and the locally residing relative in question indicate a wish for them to be near them.
- They either provide support for or receive support from some person or organisation resident in the local authority area.
- They have been in employment in the local authority area for the last 12 months.
- They have been offered a job in the local authority area but have a disability and are unable to take up the job offer because of the difficulty of finding adequate accessible housing in the area
- They need to move to the local authority area so that a member of their household with a disability can attend a school or receive specialist support, but are unable to do so because of the difficulty in finding adequate accessible housing in the area. The need must be as a consequence of the disability and the need to move to that local authority area must be evidenced.
- They are serving in the Armed Forces and are either employed or resident in the local authority area.
- They are serving in the Armed Forces or are former members of the Armed Forces who are not currently employed or resident in the local authority area but have previously been resident in the local authority area, including residency as a result of a former posting in the area while serving in the Armed Forces.

- 10.4 In the situation where a local authority partner has accepted a duty towards an applicant under homelessness legislation, the applicant will be deemed as having a local connection to the relevant local authority area for the purposes of this allocation policy.
- 10.5 An applicant may have a local connection to one local authority area within the north east Wales region but not to another. As a result, if an applicant applies to more than one county, they may be placed in different bands with respect to different local authority areas.
- 10.6 Partners will retain the capacity to refine local connection criteria in particular circumstances via the use of local lettings policies, as per section 17 below.

11. The Banding Scheme

- 11.1 The banding scheme consists of four bands, from one to four in descending order of priority.
- 11.2 The band which an applicant can be placed in depends on whether they fall within one or more of the reasonable preference categories (as defined in section 8), whether they have an urgent housing need (as

defined in section 9) and whether they have a local connection (as defined in section 10). When a property becomes available for letting, all applicants for whom the property is suitable (see section 13 below on the allocation of vacant properties) will be ranked in order of priority as follows. Applicants in band one will be given highest priority and then applicants in band two and so on. Within each band, applicants will be ranked by order of the date of their application for housing or the date of their application to transfer, with the applicant waiting the longest given highest priority.

11.3 The banding scheme is described in the appendix to this policy. The bands are summarised as follows:

- Band 1 is for applicants who fall within one or more of the reasonable preference categories, have an urgent housing need and have a local connection
- Band 2 is for applicants who fall within one or more of the reasonable preference categories, do not have an urgent housing need and have a local connection. The only exception is that applicants who are intentionally homeless and entitled to reasonable preference will not be placed in band two even if they have a local connection, unless they fall within one of the other reasonable preference categories (i.e. categories 3, 4 or 5 in section 8).
- Band 3 is for applicants who fall within one or more of the reasonable preference categories, have an urgent housing need but do not have a local connection.
- Band 4 is for:
 - a. applicants who fall within one or more of the reasonable preference categories but do not have an urgent housing need and do not have a local connection and;
 - b. applicants who are intentionally homeless and have a local connection, but do not have an urgent housing need and, aside from being intentionally homeless, do not fall within any other reasonable preference category.

11.4 Exceptional circumstances may arise in which a partner landlord determines that a management move is necessary for one of their tenants. This may only be done when the circumstances or the urgency of the circumstances are not adequately covered by the banding scheme. In this situation, the partner landlord may allocate a property to the particular resident in preference to applicants on the common register, irrespective of the banding scheme or date of application. Such management moves must be authorised and will be audited.

12. Reduced Priority

12.1 In compliance with provisions set out in the 1996 Housing Act, section 167 (2A), this policy allows that certain applicants who are entitled to reasonable preference may have their priority within the allocations

scheme reduced because of any behaviour of the applicant (or a member of their household) which effects their suitability to be a tenant. This definition is distinct from that which entitles landlords to deem an applicant ineligible for social housing, as set out in section 6 above.

12.2 Categories of behaviour which may result in applicants being given reduced priority are as follows (in each case the behaviour may be on the part of any member of the household):

- Applicants who have engaged in anti-social behaviour and who have not maintained a satisfactory undertaking to address that behaviour.
- Applicants who have been convicted of using their home for immoral or illegal purposes.
- Current tenants who have been subject to action for breach of tenancy.
- Tenants wishing to transfer where their current property is in such poor condition that it cannot be re-let within a reasonable timescale.
- Applicants who have rent arrears owing to a current or previous landlord and who have not made and maintained a satisfactory arrangement to repay the debt.
- Applicants who have deliberately provided false or misleading information or failed to disclose information relevant to their application. In these cases applicants will be asked to complete a new application. The date of this new application will be taken and they may be given reduced preference for the new application.
- Applicants who have refused two reasonable offers. In this case applicants will be removed from the register and if they re-apply may be given reduced priority.
- Applicants who are deemed to have deliberately worsened their housing circumstances. For example, this may apply where an applicant gives up settled accommodation in order to move into less settled or overcrowded accommodation.
- Applicants who have behaved in a way which affects their suitability to be a tenant (or whose household contains a member who has done this).

12.3 In compliance with provision set out in the 1996 Housing Act, section 167 (2A), this policy also allows that certain applicants who are entitled to reasonable preference may have their priority within the allocations scheme reduced because of financial resources available to the person, which it would be reasonable for them to use to meet their housing needs. This may apply for example when the person has legal or financial interests in a property and/or sufficient income or savings.

12.4 In deciding whether to reduce priority, the administering organisation will act reasonably and consider each application on its merits. It must

have regard to the applicant's personal circumstances (and those of the applicant's household), including his or her health and medical needs, dependents and any other factors relevant to the application. In particular, it must consider any mitigating circumstances relating to mental or physical disability, or mental health.

- 12.5 When considering cases of behaviour, previous behaviour may not justify a decision to reduce preference where that behaviour can be shown by the applicant to have improved.
- 12.6 All decisions regarding reducing priority must be approved by a senior officer of the administering organisation. Cases of reduced priority will be monitored and the process reviewed as part of the annual review.
- 12.7 The sanction imposed on an applicant if a decision is taken to reduce priority will be to reduce priority to band 4. Applicants who are already in the lowest band cannot have their priority reduced.
- 12.8 In circumstances where an applicant has their priority reduced they will be provided with appropriate advice and guidance and support.
- 12.9 Applicants who are given reduced priority will be notified of the decision and the grounds of this in writing. They will have the right to appeal and to ask for the decision to be reviewed. If a decision is reviewed, the applicant will be informed of the decision of the review and the grounds for it.
- 12.10 Applicants who have their priority reduced because of unacceptable behaviour will be informed that if they change their behaviour and present satisfactory evidence of this, they will have the sanction removed. In this situation, the date of application for the purposes of ranking of applicants in any shortlist will be the date when the reduction of preference was removed.
- 12.11 Rehousing of some applicants with an offending background may be subject to Multi Agency Public Protection Agreements (MAPPA). In such circumstances housing allocation arrangements will be based on the appropriate risk assessment criteria with the relevant agencies concerned.

13. Allocation of Vacant Properties

- 13.1 At the point of application, applicants are asked about their choice of area and property type. However, each property type is usually only let to particular categories of household. The guidelines for this matching are given below.
- 13.2 Some types of property are designated for specific categories of applicant. The main examples of this are:

- Designated sheltered housing schemes have age restrictions which apply to tenants and members of their households.
- Homes that have been purpose built, adapted or are considered accessible by people with mobility needs will be offered first to people whose physical needs are suited to the property.
- Houses will normally only be let to families with children, where this is the children's principal home.
- Some flats and maisonettes will have restrictions regarding pets

13.3 Applicants will normally be registered for property types on the basis of the table below. Note that a household would be eligible for an additional bedroom for each child or other member of the household over 16, where they are not members of a couple. Couples are expected to share a bedroom.

Household make up	Number of bedrooms
Single person	1 bedroom or bedsit
Pregnant women (in couple or single)	1 or 2 bedroom
Couple	1 bedroom
Couple or single parent with one child under 16	2 bedrooms
Two person household not in couple	2 bedrooms
Couple or single parent with two children under 16 of same sex, or with two children of opposite sex, both under 10	2 bedrooms
Couple or single parent with two children under 16 of opposite sex, with at least one child over 10	3 bedrooms
Couple or single parent with three children under 16	3 bedrooms
Couple or single parent with four children under 16, in any of the following cases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - all of same sex; - 2 boys and 2 girls - 3 of one sex and 1 of the other sex, where at least 2 children of different sex are under 10 	3 bedrooms
Couple or single parent with four children under 16, 3 of one sex and 1 of the other sex, where either the 3 of one sex are all over 10 or the child of the other sex is over 10	4 bedrooms
Couple or single parent with five children under 16	4 bedrooms
Couple or single parent with more than five children under 16	4 or more bedrooms

The table above is a general guide only and procedure may vary in areas due to local demand, supply, special circumstances or any local letting policies. Situations which may require a variation from the table include:

- Where there is a limited supply of properties with a small number of bedrooms relative to demand and there is a reasonable supply of properties with a large number of bedrooms relative to demand, applicants may be considered for and offered properties with more bedrooms than they require;
- Where an applicant is in urgent need, but the supply of suitable properties is limited, they may be considered for and offered properties with more bedrooms than they require;

- Where an applicant is homeless, but the supply of suitable properties is limited, they may be considered for and offered properties with more bedrooms than they require.
- Where pregnancy or the age of household members mean that the household would qualify for a larger property within a reasonable period of time, applicants may be allowed to register for properties which they would currently under-occupy.
In each case an affordability assessment will be made and the applicant's ability to afford the rent would be taken into account in determining whether to offer the property.

13.4 Applicants who require an additional bedroom for a non-resident carer will normally be registered for properties with an additional bedroom.

14. Who Can Be Considered As Part of The Household

14.1 When assessing an application the partners will consider the circumstances of the household. A household is considered to be:

- Persons who are part of the household at the date of registration, or at the start of the tenancy in the case of existing tenants, and are still in occupation
- Partners who are living together in a relationship
- Children born since the registration date, or the start of the tenancy, or other dependent children joining the household where the applicant or tenant is the principal carer of the child. Evidence will need to be produced to confirm dependent relationship(s). Tenants must inform the organisation of any change to their household
- An adult relative who has become a member of the household because they are in need of support and cannot live independently. (this also applies to transfer applications)
- Housing applications from partners who are not living together due to lack of space in either of their accommodations will be considered as a household with both accommodations being taken into account when assessing the application

15. Offers and Refusals

15.1 Applicants have a choice as to whether to accept an offer of a property. If a property is refused without good reason, housing options will contact the applicant to discuss their reasons. If as a result of two unreasonable refusals, it is considered that the applicant's requirements are unlikely to be met, the applicant will be removed from the register, subject to right to review. They will be notified of this decision and the grounds in writing and of their right to review. Where necessary, this notification will be done in an alternative language or form. Any re-application may be given reduced priority.

15.2 Applicants owed a duty under homelessness legislation may be offered a property which falls outside their preferred options. Such offers will be made in line with the relevant statutory procedures. If such a reasonable offer is refused, then the applicant may have their priority within this policy reduced, in line with the section on reduced priority. In these circumstances applicants are entitled to a time limited review and if this found in their favour, they would be reinstated.

16. Removal from the Register

16.1 Under certain circumstances, applicants may be removed from the register. These are as follows:

- Applicants who have provided false or misleading information or failed to disclose information relevant to their application. In these cases applicants will be asked to complete a new application. The date of this application will be taken and they may be given reduced preference for this new application, as stated above
- Applicants who have refused two reasonable offers. In this case they will be removed from the register and if they re-apply may be given reduced priority.
- Applicants who fail to respond to correspondence including offer letters within the set response times. These applicants will be removed from the register through a formal notification and appeal process.

17. Local Lettings Policies

17.1 The policy recognises that partners may wish to include policies designed to tackle local housing issues through the use of local letting policies.

17.2 All local lettings policies will be based on a sound evidence base and will be developed after a robust assessment of this evidence base has been carried out.

17.3 Examples of local housing issues which may require local lettings policies include:

- concentrations of deprivation
- under occupation
- overcrowding
- facilitating tenant employment through job related moves
- the needs and sustainability of rural communities, for example where affordability of housing is an issue.
- allowing transfers for existing social tenants even where they do not have reasonable preference.

- Some properties, usually in defined locations, can only be let subject to additional occupation criteria as they are subject to a Planning Obligation under s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- Regeneration areas
- Large new developments

17.4 The development of local lettings policies will follow the protocol which accompanies this policy and may be modified from time to time. This protocol and local lettings policies will be reviewed and monitored via a mechanism set up by the partner organisations.

18 Monitoring and Review of Allocations Policy

18.1 The operation of the policy will be monitored on an on-going basis. It will also be subject to an annual review. Where appropriate, recommendations for alterations will be submitted for approval. These would then have to be ratified by each partner before being adopted.

19 Reviews and Appeals

19.1 An applicant has the right to be informed, upon request, of any decision about the facts of their case which is likely to be, or has been, taken into account in considering whether to allocate housing accommodation to them.

19.2 An applicant has the right to request a review of any decision made in relation to their housing application, including:

- (a) any decision about the facts of their case which is likely to be, or has been, taken into account in considering whether to allocate housing accommodation to them;
- (b) any decision as to their eligibility for the allocation of social housing;
- (c) any decision as to the assessment of their application in relation to the banding scheme;
- (d) any decision made in relation to removing an applicant from the register in accordance with section 16;
- (e) any decision in relation to reducing priority in accordance with section 12;
- (f) any decision made by one of the local authority partners in relation to whether there is reason to believe that they are homeless or threatened with homelessness and, if so, any consequent decisions relating to eligibility for assistance, to any duties owed, to notifying or referring to another authority, to the suitability of accommodation offered or any other matter relevant to their housing application.

- 19.3 On a request for a review being duly made, the partners shall review the decision.
- 19.4 Applicants will be informed of the decision of the review and the grounds for it.

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Appendix: The Banding Scheme

The criteria for determining which band an applicant is placed in are set out below. All decisions taken will be consistent with this scheme.

<p>BAND 1 This band applies to those applicants who meet the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. They fall within one or more of the 5 reasonable preference categories set out in section 8 of this policy; AND2. They have an urgent housing need (as in the examples below); AND3. They have a local connection as defined in section 10 of this policy
<p>Examples of Urgent Housing Need:</p> <p>1. Urgent medical, welfare or disability related need</p> <p>Applicants whose household includes someone who:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">has a medical condition which is life-threatening or likely to become so, and which is directly linked to their housing conditions and likely to improve with rehousinghas been assessed by the relevant practitioner as having a need to move urgently to an accessible property.Has a serious physical or mental illness, disability or medical condition or behavioural disorder, which is causing serious dysfunction to themselves or the family unit such that they are completely unable to cope in their present accommodation and re-housing would alleviate the problem. For example, terminal illness or advanced progressive condition.Is hospitalised and is unable to return to their home as it is totally unsuitable for their long term needs by way of design, location and/or is unsuitable for disabled adaptations.is disabled and unable to access essential facilities within the property e.g. bathing or WC, or access to the property itself is totally unsuitable. The property cannot be economically adapted to meet their needs.needs to move to provide support to a relative or person with serious illness, disability or medical condition and that person can only cope in their present accommodation with the applicant's support.is living in overcrowded accommodation which leaves the person vulnerable to serious infection, for example where they are suffering from late stage HIV. <p>Evidence will be required in these cases to support the validity of the claim</p> <p>2. Loss of home as result of a disaster: Awarded to applicants with a reasonable prospect of an accommodation offer within a relatively short period who suddenly and permanently lose their existing home as a result of a disaster.</p>

3. Leaving armed forces or serious injury whilst serving in armed forces:

- (a) Any applicant who needs to move to suitable adapted accommodation because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability which he or she, or a member of their household, has sustained as a result of service in the Armed Forces.
- (b) People needing accommodation because of leaving the armed forces and the loss of military accommodation. People who have left the armed forces under Discharge as of Right (DAOR) are excluded from this provision and will not be given band one status under this category.

4. People accommodated by the local authority in care or approved supported housing who are deemed ready to move on

5. Urgent cases where the household needs access to social housing to prevent a child from being taken into/remaining in care

Examples include:

- (a) Foster parents who urgently need accommodation to take a child..
- (b) Cases where a child care plan has identified the need for accommodation to prevent the child being looked after by the authority (e.g. for child in need/looked after child/child protection).

6. Existing tenants who are either under-occupying by one or more bedroom and wish to transfer to a smaller property or who are occupying an adapted property which they do not need, provided that one of the following applies:

- They are suffering financial hardship because of welfare reform;
- Their moving would release a property for someone in urgent need who would otherwise probably have to wait an unreasonably long time to be re-housed.

7. Homeless due to violence or threat of violence :

Those owed a full homelessness duty as a result of violence or threats of violence likely to be carried out and who as a result require urgent re-housing including:

- (a) Victims of domestic or other violence;
- (b) Victims of hate incidents (including crimes and non-crimes in policing terms and this will cover victims of hate violence, threats of violence and hate harassment of any kind;

Witnesses of crime, or victims of crime, who would be at risk of intimidation amounting to violence or threats of violence if they remained in their current homes.

8. Exceptional case of urgent need where the circumstances or the urgency of the circumstances are not dealt with elsewhere in this scheme.

Such cases may or may not be transfer tenants. Each case will be judged, authorised and recorded according to the agreed procedure and regularly monitored.

BAND 2

This band applies to those applicants who meet the following criteria:

- 1. They fall within one or more of the 5 reasonable preference categories set out in section 8 of this policy; AND**
- 2. They have a local connection as defined in section 10 of this policy; AND**
- 3. They do not have an urgent housing need**

The only exception is that applicants who are intentionally homeless and entitled to reasonable preference will not be placed in band two even if they have a local connection, unless they fall within one of the other reasonable preference categories (i.e. categories 3, 4 or 5 in section 8)

Examples of those who will fall within this band are as follows:

- 1. Applicants who are homeless within the meaning of Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996, with the exception of applicants who have become homeless intentionally under the definition of intentionality contained in section 191 of the 1996 Act.**

This category includes homeless applicants both in priority need and not in priority need, provided they have not become homeless intentionally.

The definition of homelessness used is contained in sections 175-177 of the Housing Act 1996 Part 7. Under this definition a person who does not have accommodation which is legally and physically available to them to occupy and which is reasonable for them to occupy would be classed as homeless.

This includes the following:

- Applicants who have no accommodation available to them where they can live with other people who normally live with them as a member of their family or other people who might reasonably be expected to live with them.
- Applicants who have accommodation available to them but the partners agree that it would not be reasonable for them to continue to occupy it.
- Applicants who have accommodation but they cannot secure access to it or, in the case of a moveable structure such as a caravan, there is no lawful place they can live in it.

People will be accorded this status depending on an assessment by the relevant local authority's homelessness team or the team of a contracted out service as applicable. Applicants who refuse a reasonable offer made to them under homelessness legislation may have their priority reduced.

2. Applicants who are owed a duty by a local housing authority under section 193(2) or 195(2) of the Housing Act 1996, who are occupying accommodation secured by any such authority under section 192(3) of the 1996 Act, or who are unintentionally threatened with homelessness within 56 days and are in priority need.

This category includes applicants who are:

- (a) unintentionally homeless and in priority need and who have been accepted as being owed a full duty under section 193(2);
- (b) unintentionally homeless and not in priority need but for whom accommodation has been made available by the authority under section 192(3);
- (c) unintentionally threatened with homelessness in the next 56 days and are in priority need (this includes those unintentionally threatened within 28 days, in priority need and owed a duty under section 195(2) of the 1996 Act).

This category does not include applicants who have become homeless, or are threatened with homelessness, intentionally.

People will be accorded this status depending on an assessment by the relevant local authority's homelessness team or the team of a contracted out service as applicable. Applicants who refuse a reasonable offer made to them under homelessness legislation may have their preference reduced.

3. Applicants suffering from unsatisfactory housing conditions

This category includes the following:

- (a) Applicants whose current property:
 - (a) lacks a bathroom with facilities or the facilities are located in an insanitary location e.g. within kitchen;
 - (b) lacks a kitchen and/or appropriate facilities;
 - (c) lacks an inside W/C;
 - (d) lacks a hot or cold water supply to the property due to defect with the property;
 - (e) lacks an electrical supply due to defect with property;
 - (f) lacks a gas supply due to defect with property where such a supply is required to operate existing or necessary services such as heating.
- (b) Applicants who share facilities with occupiers who are not part of the applicant's household on a permanent basis. This applies to the sharing of a kitchen, bathroom/shower or toilet.

- (c) Applicants living in overcrowded housing. A housing situation is deemed to be overcrowded if it lacks at least one bedroom. This must be on a permanent basis. The following are taken to be minimum bedroom requirements:
- a. A married couple or couple living together need one bedroom.
 - b. A married couple or couple living together with a child under 12 months need one bedroom.
 - c. A single person over the age of 16 or a single parent needs one bedroom (applicable to a single parent with a child under 12 months).
 - d. A child 10-16 can only share a bedroom with a child of the same sex.
- (d) Applicants who have been referred by environmental health for re-housing because they are living in accommodation where category 1 hazards exist.

Note that all customers residing in insanitary or hazardous housing will be referred to environmental health in order to resolve the problem and enable the customer to remain in their home. The person would only be referred for re-housing if, despite their best efforts, it is the opinion of environmental health that the problem cannot be resolved within a reasonable period of time.

4. People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds (including grounds relating to disability)

The following categories of applicant would qualify:

- a) Applicants whose household includes someone with a medical condition which is directly linked to unsuitable housing and where re-housing is necessary to significantly improve their health.
- b) Current accommodation presents access problems to a member of the household which have a detrimental impact on their welfare, which cannot be resolved in the current property and would be significantly alleviated if they were suitably re-housed. Such cases would be assessed by the relevant practitioner as requiring a move to an accessible property.
- c) Applicants whose household includes someone who has social care needs which are not being met and re-housing is necessary to significantly improve their care.

5. People who need to move to a particular locality, where a failure to do so would cause hardship

Cases include:

- a) It is unreasonable for the applicant to stay in their current property due to exceptional financial hardship.
- b) The applicant or member of their household is at risk of being admitted to residential care or hospital if re-housing is not made.
- c) The applicant needs to move due to relationship breakdown and

there is a need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children associated.

- d) The applicant is a care leaver, vulnerable and has a high housing need that is best met by the provision of long term settled housing. Applicants must be a former 'relevant child' as defined by the Children Leaving Care Act 2000.
- e) The applicant or member of their household has permanent employment which cannot continue unless they live in a specific locality within the area and are otherwise adequately housed.
- f) The applicant is giving or receiving essential support, which can only be delivered if they live in a specific locality within the area.

6. Exceptional case of housing need where the circumstances are not dealt with elsewhere in this scheme.

Such cases may or may not be transfer tenants. Each case will be judged, authorised and recorded according to the agreed procedure and regularly monitored.

BAND 3

This band applies to those applicants who meet the following criteria:

- 1. They fall within one or more of the 5 reasonable preference categories set out in section 8 of this policy; AND**
- 2. They have an urgent housing need; AND**
- 3. They do not have a local connection as defined in section 10 of this policy**

Examples of urgent housing need are as follows:

1. Urgent medical, welfare or disability related need

Applicants whose household includes someone who:

- (a) has a medical condition which is life-threatening or likely to become so, and which is directly linked to their housing conditions and likely to improve with rehousing
- (b) has been assessed by the relevant practitioner as having a need to move urgently to an accessible property.
- (c) Has a serious physical or mental illness, disability or medical condition or behavioural disorder, which is causing serious dysfunction to themselves or the family unit such that they are completely unable to cope in their present accommodation and re-housing would alleviate the problem. For example, terminal illness or advanced progressive condition.
- (d) Is hospitalised and is unable to return to their home as it is totally unsuitable for their long term needs by way of design, location and/or is unsuitable for disabled adaptations.

- (e) is disabled and unable to access essential facilities within the property e.g. bathing or WC, or access to the property itself is totally unsuitable. The property cannot be adapted to meet their needs.
- (f) is living in overcrowded accommodation which leaves the person vulnerable to serious infection, for example where they are suffering from late stage HIV.

Evidence will be required in these cases, in line with the agreed procedures, to support the validity of the claim.

2. Loss of home as result of a disaster

Awarded to applicants with a reasonable prospect of an accommodation offer within a relatively short period who suddenly lose their existing home as a result of a disaster.

3. Leaving armed forces or serious injury whilst serving in armed forces

- (a) Any applicant who needs to move to suitable adapted accommodation because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability which he or she, or a member of their household, has sustained as a result of service in the Armed Forces.
- (b) People needing accommodation because of leaving the armed forces and the loss of military accommodation. People who have left the armed forces under Discharge as of Right (DAOR) are excluded from this provision and will not be given band one status under this category.

4. People accommodated by the local authority in care or approved supported housing who are deemed ready to move on

5. Urgent cases where the household needs access to social housing to prevent a child from being taken into/remaining in care

Examples include:

- (a) Foster parents who urgently need accommodation to take a child.
- (b) Cases where a child care plan has identified the need for accommodation to prevent the child being looked after by the authority (e.g. for child in need/looked after child/child protection).

6. Exceptional case of urgent need where the circumstances or the urgency of the circumstances are not dealt with elsewhere in this scheme

Such cases may or may not be transfer tenants. Each case will be judged, authorised and recorded according to the agreed procedure and regularly monitored.

BAND 4

This band applies to those applicants in either of the following cases:

- a. They fall within one or more of the 5 reasonable preference categories set out in section 8 of this policy AND they do not have a local connection as defined in section 10 of this policy AND they do not have an urgent housing need;**
- b. They are intentionally homeless and have a local connection, but do not have an urgent housing need and, aside from being intentionally homeless, do not fall within any other reasonable preference category.**

Examples of those who will fall within this band are as follows:

1. Applicants who are homeless within the meaning of Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996.

This category includes homeless applicants both in priority need and not in priority need, and who are homeless either unintentionally or intentionally.

The definition of homelessness used is contained in sections 175-177 of the Housing Act 1996 Part 7. Under this definition a person who does not have accommodation which is legally and physically available to them to occupy and which is reasonable for them to occupy would be classed as homeless. This includes the following:

- Applicants who have no accommodation available to them where they can live with other people who normally live with them as a member of their family or other people who might reasonably be expected to live with them.
- Applicants who have accommodation available to them but the partners agree that it would not be reasonable for them to continue to occupy it.
- Applicants who have accommodation but they cannot secure access to it or, in the case of a moveable structure such as a caravan, there is no lawful place they can live in it.

People will be accorded this status depending on an assessment by the relevant local authority's homelessness team or the team of a contracted out service as applicable.

2. Applicants who are owed a duty by a local housing authority under section 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2) of the Housing Act 1996 (or under section 65(2) or 68(2) of the housing Act 1985) or who are occupying accommodation secured by any such authority under section 192(3) of the 1996 Act.

This category includes applicants who are:

- (a) unintentionally homeless and in priority need and who have been accepted as being owed a full duty under section 193(2);
- (b) unintentionally homeless and not in priority need but for whom accommodation has been made available by the authority under section 192(3);
- (c) threatened with homelessness in the next 28 days and owed a duty under section 195(2) of the 1996 act (i.e. have not intentionally become so threatened and are in priority need);
- (d) are owed a section 190(2) duty, have been assessed as being in priority need, but are intentionally homeless and have been provided with accommodation for a period of time to enable them to secure their own accommodation.

People will be accorded this status depending on an assessment by the relevant local authority's homelessness team or the team of a contracted out service as applicable.

3. Applicants suffering from unsatisfactory housing conditions

This category includes the following:

- (a) Applicants whose current property:
 - i. lacks a bathroom with facilities or the facilities are located in an insanitary location e.g. within kitchen;
 - ii. lacks a kitchen and/or appropriate facilities;
 - iii. lacks an inside W/C;
 - iv. lacks a hot or cold water supply to the property due to defect with the property;
 - v. lacks an electrical supply due to defect with property;
 - vi. lacks a gas supply due to defect with property where such a supply is required to operate existing or necessary services such as heating.
- (b) Applicants who share facilities with occupiers who are not part of the applicant's household on a permanent basis. This applies to the sharing of a kitchen, bathroom/shower or toilet.
- (c) A housing situation is deemed to be overcrowded if it lacks at least one bedroom. This must be on a permanent basis. The following are taken to be minimum bedroom requirements:
 - i. A married couple or couple living together need one bedroom.
 - ii. A married couple or couple living together with a child under 12 months need one bedroom.
 - iii. A single person over the age of 16 or a single parent needs one bedroom. (applicable to a single parent with a child under 12 months).
 - iv. A child 10-16 can only share a bedroom with a child of the same sex.
 - v. Applicants who have been referred by environmental health

as residing in insanitary or hazardous housing posing a category 1 hazard, where it has been impossible for the environmental health department to satisfactorily resolve the issue.

Note that all customers residing in insanitary or hazardous housing will be referred to environmental health in order to resolve the problem and enable the customer to remain in their home. The person would only be referred for re-housing if, despite their best efforts, it is the opinion of environmental health that the problem cannot be resolved within a reasonable period of time.

4. People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds (including grounds relating to disability)

The following categories of applicant would qualify:

- a) Applicants whose household includes someone with a medical condition which is directly linked to unsuitable housing and where re-housing is necessary to significantly improve their health.
- b) Current accommodation presents access problems to a member of the household which have a detrimental impact on their welfare, which cannot be resolved in the current property and would be significantly alleviated if they were suitably re-housed. Such cases would be assessed by occupational therapy as requiring a move to an accessible property. These cases will be managed through an accessible housing register.
- c) Applicants whose household includes someone who has social care needs which are not being met and re-housing is necessary to significantly improve their care.

5. People who need to move to a particular locality, where a failure to do so would cause hardship

Cases include:

- a) It is unreasonable for the applicant to stay in their current property due to exceptional financial hardship.
- b) Applicants who need to downsize because they are unable to afford their current property due to welfare reform.
- c) The applicant or member of their household is at risk of being admitted to residential care or hospital if re-housing is not made.
- d) The applicant needs to move due to relationship breakdown and there is a need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children associated.
- e) The applicant is a care leaver, vulnerable and has a high housing need that is best met by the provision of long term settled housing. Applicants must be a former 'relevant child' as defined by the Children Leaving Care Act 2000.

6. Exceptional case of housing need where the circumstances are not dealt with elsewhere in this scheme.

Such cases may or may not be transfer tenants. Each case will be judged, authorised and recorded according to the agreed procedure and regularly monitored.

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **CABINET**

DATE: **TUESDAY, 21 JANUARY 2014**

REPORT BY: **HEAD OF ICT AND CUSTOMER SERVICES**

SUBJECT: **CUSTOMER SERVICES STRATEGY UPDATE**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To update Members on the progress made with the implementation of the Customer Services Strategy.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Customer Services Strategy sets out the vision for improved customer service and access across the Council and a plan for implementation.

2.02 The Strategy was published in 2009 and included a four year plan which is now due for review. This report sets out what has been achieved over the previous four years and includes an overview of the future proposed direction for customer services that will be included in the next version of the strategy.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 Face to Face contact and Flintshire Connects

During 2014, the Flintshire Connects Programme will see the establishment of new Connects Centres at Flint, Connah's Quay and Buckley. These will complement the first Connects Centre which opened at Holywell in November 2012. The projected opening of each Connects Centre is as follows:

- County Offices, Flint – March 2014
- Connah's Quay Library – June 2014
- Town Council Building, Buckley – July 2014

3.02 Overall good progress is being made on the Flintshire Connects programme. The construction works at County Offices, Flint are progressing according to the timetable, with scheduled completion at the end of February, 2014. Considerable work has taken place with colleagues at JobCentre Plus and North Wales Police with the view of developing an integrated reception delivering modern, public services. This will include a shared reception post with JobCentre Plus.

Work is planned to begin at Connah's Quay in January 2014 with the view that the new Flintshire Connects Centre will open in June 2014.

- 3.03 Following the allocation of additional funding within the 2013/14 Capital Programme we have been able bring forward plans for a fourth Flintshire Connects Centre in Buckley. The Buckley Town Council building has been identified for this purpose, with detailed drawings being developed, with a planning application being submitted in December 2013. It is proposed that Flintshire Connects Centre – Buckley will open in July 2014.
- 3.04 Flintshire Connects – Holywell opened in November 2012 and has proved to be a success with over 350 visits from customers each week. Customer feedback shows that customers are very satisfied with the service they receive at the centre. The Customer Services Advisers are able to deal with most enquiries at the first point of contact or where this is not possible customers are signposted as appropriate. Good working relationships have been established with the partner organisations and these have been further enhanced through involvement with the voluntary sector to help improve access to council services for those who have difficulty speaking English or Welsh. There has been an increase in the use of the agile working area by council staff making full use of the technology and facilities available.
- 3.05 **Channel Shift - Website and Digital Access**
The Council's new website went live on 1 October; new Content Management System (CMS) technology will enable the Channel Shift project to move forward with its plan to increase the number of transactional services provided online. A 'digital workshop' will be held in the new year to benchmark the Council's position against key principles set out in the Society of IT Management (Socitm) "Better with Less" report which was recently published and sets out a set of principals, action and best practice for successful digital services. The facility to apply online for school admissions is a priority and will be taken forward in the new year. We will also be launching a mobile version of the website in the new year which provides a better customer experience for those using smart phones and tablets.
- 3.06 In early 2014 we will be undertaking a post implementation review of the new website taking account of feedback received, benchmarking information and annual Better Connected report which rates all local government websites across the UK. We also intend to hold some session with user groups as part of the review process to include customers, employees and members.
- 3.07 Flintshire's mobile app was launched in September 2013 and allows customers to contact the Council on Apple, Android and Blackberry devices. Flintshire is the first council in Wales to offer a fully bilingual

mobile app available for use across a range of mobile devices. Customers now have the choice to access council services whilst on the move at a time and place convenient to them. Following an initial 'settling in period' the app is now being promoted through a range of channels. Customer Services are dealing with incoming enquiries from the app and the intention is to develop the app further in the New Year with integration to back office systems and the facility for customers to make on-line payments.

3.08 **Social Media**

The corporate Twitter account is now being used far more proactively recognising the huge increase in use of social media. RSS feeds from the website have previously counted for the majority of 'tweets' but now the account is being managed more proactively to provide information relating to current events, service status and answer tweets, the number of 'followers' has increased by over 60% since May.

3.09 To increase the awareness of social media, a live question and answer session was held in December with Streetscene around preparations for winter and it is hoped similar sessions can be arranged in the new year to promote key activities, policies etc throughout the Council.

3.10 **Contact Centre**

The Corporate Contact Centre which was originally implemented to deal with all telephone and web enquiries relating to Streetscene services has been established for 18 months. The contact centre is integral to the success of the Streetscene service and this has proved to be the case during periods of bad weather last March with the exceptionally heavy snowfall and periods of heavy rainfall and wind during the year.

3.11 Other services considering use of the Contact Centre include:

- Customer Services – Registration Appointments and general enquiries
- Environment Management - General enquiries/streetscene enquiries.
- Libraries – General enquiries, book renewals, reservations
- Leisure – initially establishing a separate contact centre using same technology to enable future integration and staff flexibility to cover extended hours
- Older People Services – First Contact Team
- Public Transport – General enquiries, reporting damage/graffiti, Deeside shuttle bookings and school contracts

- Housing Income Enquires – now being dealt with by the Contact Centre
 - Housing Asset Management – Separate Contact Centre in place but potential for greater integration
 - Public Protection
- 3.12 The next steps are to work through the actual call volumes and processes in each department to determine where the greatest customer service improvements and cost savings will be realised through transfer of services to contact centre working. Lean process reviews are to be undertaken to ensure that any service transferred to contact centre has the most efficient process possible e.g. using call recording and scripting to replace paper application forms.
- 3.13 **Customer Service Standards**
The revised Customer Services Policy and Standards has been drafted. Subject to approval this will be finalised taking into account customer feedback as part of the consultation process. The proposed implementation date is April 2014.
- 3.14 **Customer Engagement**
A county wide public engagement exercise is currently being planned.
- The aims of the exercise will be to:
- To help the public understand the financial pressures faced by the Council and the decisions it needs to make.
 - To future proof options for later consideration by officers and elected members on the future of Council services.
 - To inform decision making for the 2015/16 budget setting process.
- 3.15 Using a range of methodologies, a range of identified stakeholders will be asked to contribute their views and opinions on a range of pre determined themes.
- 3.16 It is expected that the exercise will take place early in 2014/15 in order for data analysis and feedback to be considered later in the summer.
- 3.17 **Customer Service Training**
The 'Customer Services Award' is currently being undertaken by Leisure Services; this is the third workbook produced in partnership with Coleg Cambria following a roll-out in Housing and services within Environment. The intention is to develop a fourth workbook in the New Year working alongside Adult & Children's Services. The training is a nationally recognised qualification and is accredited by OCR.

- 3.18 **Compliments, Concerns and Complaints**
 A 'Complaints Awareness' course has been developed for the workforce and the first session is due to be delivered by Coleg Cambria from January 2014. The course is designed to give an overview of the Compliments, Concerns and Complaints policy enabling employees to understand their role when receiving a compliment, concern or complaint. The course will also consider key skills needed when dealing with complaints.
- 3.19 **Refreshing the Customer Service Strategy**
 The strategy was published in 2009 and set out a vision for a four year plan for the direction of customer services. Significant progress has been achieved to meet this vision of how customers access our services.
- 3.20 We are now at the stage where we need to build on this strategy and look again to the future. A new strategy will be developed setting out our future vision and building on the successful progress made to date. We must also consider the increasing financial pressures that the organisation is facing and design a strategy that is deliverable.
- 3.21 A key focus for the new strategy will be how we can improve and expand our range of digital services via our new website. We know that this is the most cost effective method of customer access, with great potential for efficiencies; but also our customers expectations to do business with the council on-line are increasing. Obviously we mustn't forget individual needs and an understanding that many customers will prefer more traditional methods of contact such as face to face and telephone, and we need to also improve these access channels.
- 3.22 Socitm has produced the "Better with Less" report which provides valuable information to support our future vision for digital services. It does not tell us how to do it but provides examples of good practice and lessons learnt by other councils that have moved forward with this agenda.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 Members note the content of the report and the progress made in relation to the Customer Service Strategy.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 None directly from this report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 None

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 Moving our customers away from traditional methods of contact and towards digital services will have a positive impact in terms of responding to customer expectations of a 24/7 service.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 Consideration of all our customer's individual needs is integral to the customer services strategy and related projects.

8.02 The new website has been designed in full consultation with Shaw Trust which is an organisation that has been established to assess website suitability for people with a range of disabilities. The new content management system which supports the new website has improved features to ensure that we are providing a fully accessible website. These features were not previously available with the old technology.

8.03 The new mobile app and new website are fully bilingual ensuring our customers have equal choice in the English and Welsh languages.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None directly from this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Ongoing consultation will be required with our customers and partners in the implementation of the Customer Service Strategy and future customer access projects.

10.02 Further consultation will be taking place with user groups regarding the design and content of the new website early in 2014.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Consultation has taken place on the new website and feedback has been used to make improvements.

11.02 There is ongoing consultation at Flintshire Connects – Holywell through a customer satisfaction questionnaire.

11.03 Increased use of 'Twitter' has opened up opportunities to consult with our customers on a range of topics.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Contact Officer: Denise Naylor
Telephone: 01352 702421
Email: denise.naylor@flintshire.gov.uk

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **CABINET**

DATE: **21 JANUARY 2014**

REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**

SUBJECT: **DOUBLE CLICK & THE CASE TO PROGRESS TO A SOCIAL ENTERPRISE**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.01 This report has been developed to seek Cabinet approval to progress Double Click to a Social Enterprise in 2014.
- 1.02 The report aims to provide information which indicates the benefits of this proposal for Service Users supported at Double Click, and the benefits to the council in terms of short and long term efficiencies.

2.00 BACKGROUND

- 2.01 Mental Health Support services started looking at the Social Enterprise model for their work services around 3 years ago in response to a letter from a user of the service.
- 2.02 The letter asked if the service would consider providing real employment opportunities, as some people within mental health services were keen to have paid work, but were having difficulty in finding this.
- 2.03 As part of the research process that followed the management team made contact with Social Firms Wales who have been instrumental in assisting the service to look at the possibility of transforming an existing work service into a viable independent business. They also put the group in contact with Beacons Creatives, which is a successful Social Firm in Powys and which was previously a local authority work scheme. This has been looked upon as a model of good practice during this process.
- 2.04 It was decided that Double Click Design was the most feasible “business” within mental health support services to undergo this change. With improved community links and further business model development it is considered that there is significant room for growth in the business.
- 2.05 A detailed Business Plan has now been developed to support the business going forward as a social enterprise. The business plan is

logged within the members' library for information.

2.06 Social & Health Care Scrutiny Committee provided their support to the proposal in its November, 2013 meeting.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The adoption of a Social Enterprise model for Double Click would improve the quality of service and outcomes achieved by service users.

3.02 Support services as a whole provide many alternatives to people who are not yet ready to move on completely from services. As a Social Enterprise Double Click Design will provide a combination of training placements, work experience and as the business develops will aim to provide paid employment to people in a genuine business environment. Ultimately this will lead to less reliance upon statutory services as well as the benefits system.

3.03 This progression through the service leading to paid employment is currently not achievable within a social service setting with caps placed on surplus profit, and the business being bound by local authority procurement rules.

3.04 Additionally as a Social Enterprise Double Click will be able to access free training for staff and service users and will have access to grants reserved for social enterprises.

3.05 The cost of running Double Click to the council at present is £110,000, mostly made up of staffing costs. In the initial 1-2 years we do not envisage a fall in this cost. The expectation set at the outset will be that costs are contained within this envelope. Should early years trading support profits beyond those expected within the business plan, the council will reserve the right to agree a reduced contribution accordingly. Over time the council will seek to secure a reduction in contribution made to support the business whilst retaining similar or increased numbers of training placement.

3.06 The council will fund the service through a contract to provide 15 training placements and 5 volunteering placements for service users with opportunities to gain skills and qualifications in IT, graphic design, customer services, marketing, administration etc.

3.07 With the council awarding no inflationary pressures to the service, and assuming an inflation rate of approximately 1.5% this leads to a real terms saving of over £3,000 over 2 years.

3.08 In the longer term any surplus profit made will be reinvested back into the business. After its initial two years of trading the council expects to see an extension of training placements supported by the business.

A modest increase of 2-3 additional placements per year based on the current cost model would lead to a saving of approximately £15,000.

- 3.09 This increase in placements will be of benefit to statutory services as a whole as more people will potentially be supported to move to mainstream employment (paid or unpaid), and in turn become less reliant on the benefits system.
- 3.10 By supporting the transfer of Double Click to a Social Enterprise the council will not be responsible for the requirement to invest in upgrading and maintenance of equipment. Such costs can be covered through surplus profits and as a Social Enterprise the business will be able to access grants or loans as necessary.
- 3.11 As a development Double Click progressing to a social enterprise will support organisational learning for Flintshire County Council regarding such models.
- 3.12 Appendix 1 indicates Business Model and Governance Arrangements that will be in place for Double Click as a Social Enterprise.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 Cabinet are asked to approve the development of Double Click to a Social Enterprise in accordance with the business model and governance arrangements proposed.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 In the short term (1-2 years) the council does not expect to see a change in its financial contribution to this service. The newly formed business will however be expected to manage inflationary pressures on the business.
- 5.02 Over time we will seek agreement to an increase in placements supported by the business and a reduced contribution by the council.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 The business is expected to support some current service users to gain paid employment.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.01 None.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.01 An Equalities Impact Assessment of this development has been completed.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 Staff will be seconded from Flintshire County Council to the new business for 3 years.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 If the authority agrees to proceed with the externalisation process, formal consultations with staff and service users will take place.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Two informal consultations with service users have taken place at various stages since 2011 and 3 with staff and trade union/HR representatives. Both groups are regularly updated as to the progress of the project.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1 – Business Model and Governance Arrangements.

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

None

Contact Officer: Alwyn Jones
Telephone: 01352 702502
Email: Alwyn.jones@flintshire.gov.uk

Appendix 1 – Double Click Report

Business Model and Governance Arrangements

1.0 Purpose of Social enterprise

- 1.1 Produce high quality printed material to provide economic return on investment;
- 1.2 Development opportunities for staff and service users promoting independence and recovery;
- 1.3 To train people to be work ready.

2.0 State Aid

- 2.1 The position of Double Click as a social enterprise in the context of state aid will be resolved prior to change from local authority service. Legal clarification as to whether general block exemption applies is currently being sought.

3.0 Corporate Model

- 3.1 The company will be a Community Interest Company registered at Companies House and will also be a Company Limited by Guarantee.
- 3.2 In addition to the Chairman there will be 7 Director Members selected for individual knowledge and skills.
- 3.3 1 Director post will be reserved for service user representative.

4.0 Reporting and Accountability

- 4.1 Reporting will be through generic contract monitoring reviews; Flintshire County Council will take one position on the board of Directors and may contribute further advisory roles.

5.0 Council Control

- 5.1 Flintshire will contribute 2 Directors to the Board of Double Click.

6.0 Internal Controls and Governance

- 6.1 Day to day operatives managed by Enterprise and Support Business Development Manager;
- 6.2 Manager noted above will be accountable to Board of Directors responsible for overall Internal Controls and Governance.

7.0 Employment

- 7.1 Current staff will be seconded to the business in the short term; New staff will be employed directly by Double Click.

8.0 Business Planning

- 8.1 Subject to internal Board of Directors approval;
FCC will hold 2 Board member roles and will be a stakeholder consulted in the development of Double Click's yearly business plan.

9.0 Issues reserved for Council approval

- 9.1 Any unsecured borrowing above an agreed limit.
- 9.2 Any borrowing of whatever value that is secured by a legal charge against land or building owned by the company.
- 9.3 The disposal by way of sale or long lease of any building or land.
- 9.4 Any change to the memorandum and / or articles of association.
- 9.5 Changes to membership or the rights of members.
- 9.6 Power to add or change reserved issues in the light of experience.

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **CABINET**

DATE: **TUESDAY, 21 JANUARY 2014**

REPORT BY: **HEAD OF FINANCE**

SUBJECT: **REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2013/14 (MONTH 7)**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To provide Members with the most up to date revenue budget monitoring information (Month 7) for the Council Fund and the Housing Revenue Account in 2013/14.

1.02 INDEX OF CONTENTS

Section 2	Executive Summary
Paragraph 3.01	Council Fund Summary Table
Section 4	Inflation
Section 5	Monitoring Budget Assumptions & New Risks
Section 6	Unearmarked Reserves
Section 7	Housing Revenue Account
Appendix 1	Council Fund - Movement in Variances from Month 6
Appendix 2	Community Services -Variances Summary
Appendix 3	Environment -Variances Summary
Appendix 4	Lifelong Learning -Variances Summary
Appendix 5	Corporate Services -Variances Summary
Appendix 6	Central & Corporate Finance -Variances Summary
Appendix 7	Council Fund Unearmarked Reserves Summary
Appendix 8	Housing Revenue Account -Variances Summary
Appendix 9	Council Fund - Achievement of Efficiencies

2.00 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.01 The projected year end position, as estimated at Month 7, is as follows:

Council Fund

- Net in year expenditure forecast to be £0.944m less than budget. (A decrease of £0.068m on the £1.012m reported at Month 6).
- Projected contingency reserve balance at 31 March 2014 of £3.585m.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

- Net in year expenditure forecast to be less than the budget by £0.117m (£0.062m reported at Month 6)
- Projected HRA balances at 31 March 2014 of £1.551m

3.00 COUNCIL FUND LATEST IN YEAR FORECAST

3.01 The table below shows a projected positive variation of expenditure against budget of £0.944m.

TOTAL EXPENDITURE AND INCOME	Original Budget	Revised Budget	In-Year Over / (Under) spend	
			Month 6	Month 7
	£m	£m	£m	£m
<u>DIRECTORATES (Service Groups)</u>				
Services for Adults	45.642	44.328	(0.630)	(0.610)
Services for Children	11.906	12.159	0.546	0.569
Housing Services	1.800	1.803	(0.293)	(0.296)
Development & Resources	1.688	1.656	(0.057)	(0.051)
TOTAL : COMMUNITY SERVICES	61.036	59.946	(0.434)	(0.388)
Assets and Transportation	6.015	6.088	0.003	0.065
Planning	1.708	1.717	(0.018)	(0.039)
Public Protection	3.455	3.459	(0.008)	(0.056)
Regeneration	0.715	0.704	0.006	0.011
Streetscene	19.320	19.210	0.336	0.333
Management, Support & Performance	1.088	1.094	(0.066)	(0.060)
TOTAL : ENVIRONMENT	32.301	32.272	0.253	0.254
Culture & Leisure	6.876	6.386	0.388	0.384
Inclusion Services	14.058	13.254	(0.030)	(0.011)
Primary School Services	43.374	43.383	(0.045)	(0.045)
Secondary School Services	36.638	37.468	0.000	0.002
Development & Resources	12.118	12.319	(0.216)	(0.179)
TOTAL : LIFELONG LEARNING	113.064	112.810	0.097	0.151
Chief Executive	2.356	2.334	(0.051)	(0.055)
Finance	14.265	14.285	(0.517)	(0.600)
HR & OD	2.427	2.464	(0.030)	(0.032)
ICT & Customer Services	4.922	5.046	(0.013)	0.010
Legal & Democratic Services	3.145	3.156	(0.035)	(0.046)
TOTAL : CORPORATE SERVICES	27.115	27.285	(0.646)	(0.723)
TOTAL DIRECTORATES	233.516	232.313	(0.730)	(0.706)
Central and Corporate Finance	26.236	27.439	(0.282)	(0.238)
Total	259.752	259.752	(1.012)	(0.944)

3.02 The original budget column reflects the budget approved by Council on the 1st March 2013. The revised budget column reflects in-year virements which have been approved in compliance with Financial Procedure Rules.

3.03 It can be seen from the table in 3.01 that there is an overall reduction of £0.068m in the projected positive variance as reported in Month 6. The projected surplus on the Council Tax Collection Fund has increased by £0.095m over month 6, although this is offset by a reduction in the amount of windfall income anticipated to be received in the year. Within Community Services - Services for Adults, delays in recruiting to a full establishment of staff at the new Llys Jasmine extra care facility in Mold has resulted in one off savings of £0.097m over month 5 although this is offset by additional clients with long term residential packages and increased costs for long term nursing.

3.04 All of the movements from Month 6 are summarised in Appendix 1 with the detailed reasons for all variances by Directorate summarised within Appendices 2 to 8.

3.05 Programme of Efficiencies

The 2013/14 budget contains £5.331m of specific efficiencies and the table below summarises the current state of these items. This analysis indicates that it is currently projected that £4.506m (84.5%) will be achieved, resulting in a net underachievement of £0.825m. This is marginally lower than the agreed efficiency target of 85% as detailed in the Improvement Plan.

Status of Efficiency	Value of Budgeted Efficiency £m	Valued of Projected Efficiency £m	(Under) Over Achievement £m
ALREADY ACHIEVED	1.973	1.973	0.000
EXPECTED TO BE ACHIEVED IN FULL	2.237	2.237	0.000
ACHIEVABLE IN PART	0.631	0.296	(0.335)
NOT ACHIEVABLE	0.490	0.000	(0.490)
Total	5.331	4.506	(0.825)

3.06 Appendix 9 provides further details of the assumptions behind the efficiency projections, and where relevant the actions required to address items not currently expected to be achieved in full. It is important to note that the impact of this analysis has already been included in the overall Month 7 projected outturn position.

3.07 Initiatives commenced in the current year to reduce future expenditure levels e.g. the 'Back to Basics' programme have also been included in the overall Month 7 outturn position.

4.00 INFLATION

4.01 **Pay Inflation** of £0.734m has now been included within service budgets to reflect the national pay award agreed earlier this year.

4.02 **Non Standard price inflation** – amounts of £0.255m (energy for Street Lighting), £0.197m (energy), £0.187m (fuel) and £0.141m (food costs) were included in the budget and held centrally. The Service budgets which incur the costs affected by non standard inflation are monitored closely and funds released on a full assessment of evidenced need. In period 6, £0.141m for food costs were allocated. The current projected outturn assumes that all the amounts are required in full. The nature of the costs subject to non standard price inflation is that they are incurred primarily over the Winter months therefore it is too early to project any variations to budget at this stage.

5.00 MONITORING BUDGET ASSUMPTIONS AND NEW RISKS

5.01 Along with its strategic partners, the Council has intervened in relation to the Former chemical plant in Sandycroft (Euticals Ltd), and continues to be in discussion with the Welsh Government about solutions, roles and responsibilities. Indicative costs for six months are reflected within the current projections and the projections will be reviewed once all outstanding information has been assessed and will be included in future reports.

5.02 Out of County Placements continues to be kept under review due to the demand led nature of the service with only minor variation from period 6 to 7.

6.00 UNEARMARKED RESERVES

6.01 The 2012/13 final outturn reported to Cabinet on 16 July showed unearmarked reserves at 31 March 2013 (above the base level of £5.564m) of £3.409m after taking into account a commitment in 2013/14 for use of £0.297 to meet one-off/time limited costs. In July, Cabinet allocated £0.250m to the Winter Maintenance reserve, bringing the level in the reserve to £3.159m.

6.02 After taking account of an allocation of £0.518m for recovery costs following the March 2013 severe weather, and bringing in the impact of the projected in year budget position the current projected level of the contingency reserve at the end of March 2014 is an amount of £3.585m.

7.00 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

- 7.01 On 19 February 2013, the Council approved a Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for 2013/14 of £28.259m. The budget provided for a closing balance of £0.903m, which at 3.2% of total expenditure satisfies the prudent approach of ensuring a minimum level of 3%.
- 7.02 The 2012/13 final outturn reported to Cabinet on 16 July 2013 showed a closing balance at the end of 2012/13 of £1.931m which was £0.861m more than when the 2013/14 budget was set. This had the effect of increasing the opening balance for 2013/14 by the same amount.
- 7.03 For 2013/14 there is an overall projected under spend of £0.117m and a projected closing balance at month 7 of £1.551m, which at 5.4% of total expenditure satisfied the prudent approach of ensuring a minimum level of 3%.
- 7.04 Appendix 7 details the reasons for significant variances occurring to date and the actions planned to deal with them.

8.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.01 Members are recommended to:
- a) Note the overall report.
 - b) Note the projected Council Fund contingency sum as at 31st March 2014 (paragraph 6.02).
 - c) Note the projected final level of balances on the Housing Revenue Account (paragraph 7.03).

9.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.01 The financial implications are as set out in Sections 3.00 - 7.00 of the report.

10.00 ANTI-POVERTY IMPACT

- 10.01 None.

11.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 11.01 None.

12.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 12.01 None.

13.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

13.01 None.

14.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

14.01 None.

15.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

15.01 None.

16.00 APPENDICES

Council Fund - Movement in Variances from Month 6 - Appendix 1

Council Fund Significant Variances - Appendices 2 - 6

Council Fund - Movements on unearmarked reserves - Appendix 7

Housing Revenue Account Variances - Appendix 8

Council Fund - Achievement of Efficiencies - Appendix 9

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

Contact Officer: Sara Dulson

Telephone: 01352 702287

Email: sara.dulson@flintshire.gov.uk



**COUNCIL FUND - REVENUE BUDGET 2013/14
FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Budget Monitoring (Month 7)
Summary of Movement from Month 6**

	£m	£m
Month 6		
Service Directorates	(0.730)	
Central and Corporate Finance	(0.282)	
Variance as per Cabinet Report		(1.012)
Month 7		
Service Directorates	(0.706)	
Central and Corporate Finance	(0.238)	
Variance as per Directorate Returns		(0.944)
Change Requiring Explanation		0.068
<u>Community Services</u>		
Services For Adults		
• Resource and Regulated Service (Intake & Reablement) - delays in recruiting the full establishment of staff for the new Llys Jasmine extra care facility in Mold result in a saving of -£0.082m compared with the previous projections which had reflected a full complement of staffing through to the end of year with the balance made up of minor changes.	(0.097)	
• Residential and Domiciliary Service (Mental Health and Substance Misuse Service) - additional clients with long term residential packages (£0.064m), increased costs for long term nursing (£0.010m) with other minor variances of £0.003m.	0.077	
• Other minor changes of less than £0.025m for Services for Adults	0.039	
Development & Resources		
• Other minor changes of less than £0.025m	0.007	
Services For Childrens		
• Family Placement - mainly due to additional payment to Barnardo's in respect of counselling for adoption boarded out payments £0.018m. The remainder due to minor variance movements.	0.021	
• Other minor changes of less than £0.025m	0.002	
Housing Services		
• Other minor changes of less than £0.025m	(0.003)	
		0.046
<u>Environment</u>		
Assets & Transportation		
• Valuations & Estates - Vacant Post out to advert commitment included for expected start date ; repairs and maintenance costs on miscellaneous land / property	0.020	
• Property Design & Consultancy - Estimated net shortfall for the running costs of Flintshire Connects Holywell after taking account of income recharges	0.017	
• Highways Network & Transportation - costs awarded against the Council of 60k; income for Bus Service Operator Grant Replacement money (fuel duty rebate)	0.023	
• Other minor changes of less than £0.010m	0.002	
Planning		
• Planning Control and Land Charges = fees received over and above previously committed	(0.020)	
• Other minor changes of less than £0.010m	(0.001)	
Public Protection		
• Community Protection - Legal Fees recovered	(0.025)	
• Environmental Protection - commitments reduced on current vacant posts	(0.016)	
• Other minor changes of less than £0.010m	(0.007)	
Regeneration		
• Other minor changes of less than £0.010m	0.005	

Streetscene	
• Business & Strategy	0.009
• Waste Disposal & Waste Collection	0.004
• Transportation & Logistics - assumes fleet efficiency will be achieved and Consultant fees will be absorbed	(0.023)
• Other minor changes of less than £0.010m	0.006
Management Support & Performance	
• Other minor changes of less than £0.010m	0.007
	0.001
<u>Lifelong Learning</u>	
Culture & Leisure	
• Leisure Services - minor variances.	(0.002)
• Libraries, Culture & Heritage - minor variances.	(0.002)
Inclusion Services	
• Inclusion Services - minor variances.	0.018
• Out of County - minor variances.	0.002
Secondary School Services	
• Minor Variances	0.002
Development & Resources	
Business Units - the projected outturn on Business Units has worsened by £0.036m since month 6. £0.011m relates to the Capita One contribution. This is a regional project lead by Flintshire ICT and the estimated recharge for the year has increased. The cost of this service remains a budget flaw. £0.007m relates to increased remissions costs (school trips, uniform grants). The increased cost relates to increased demand on the	0.036
	0.054
<u>Corporate Services</u>	
• Legal and Democratic Services - Members Services savings (£0.015m), minor variances £0.004m	(0.011)
• HR and Organisational Development - minor variances (£0.002m)	(0.002)
• ICT and Customer Services - transfer of budget to Flintshire Futures as part of admin review efficiency	0.023
• Finance - additional surplus on Council Tax Collection Fund (£0.095m), increased shortfall on CTRS £0.002m, minor variances £0.010m	(0.083)
• Chief Executives Department - Voluntary Sector contributions £0.004m, vacancy savings (£0.008m)	(0.004)
	(0.077)
<u>Central & Corporate Finance</u>	
• Under recovery of Corporate Windfall income	0.046
• Other minor variances	(0.002)
	0.044
Total changes	0.068

COMMUNITY SERVICES

APPENDIX 2

Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 7)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Services for Adults						
Hospital Social Work (Intake and Reablement)	0.405	0.349	(0.056)	(0.059)	The underspend is due to a Hospital Social Worker covering in the Crisis Intervention Team. These costs (£0.038m) are recovered from Health. The balance (£0.018m) is due to a staff vacancy.	One-off.
Resources and Regulated Services (Intake and Reablement)	5.359	5.087	(0.272)	(0.190)	<p><u>Extra Care</u> Projected underspend on Llys Jasmine (£0.307m) is due to an initial delay in opening the facility.</p> <p><u>In-house Domiciliary Care</u> underspend (£0.072m) due to greater use of reablement and independent sector care providers.</p> <p><u>Client Transportation Service</u> underspend (£0.043m) relates to staff vacancies.</p> <p><u>Day Services</u> underspend (£0.037m) mostly due to vacancies (£0.026m). These underspends are offset by a projected overspend within <u>In-house Residential Service</u> (£0.196m) due to the need to ensure staff cover (£0.219m) additional premises costs (£0.047m) and additional supplies and service (£0.048) offset by client (£0.070m) and Health (£0.048m) income.</p>	<p><u>Extra Care</u>The underspend against is one-off and non recurring and has arisen due to the opening of the facility being part way through the current year.</p> <p><u>Client Transportation Service</u> Underspend adjusted in budget rationalisation.</p> <p><u>Residential Service</u> further work required to determine the most appropriate way to address the overspend.</p>

COMMUNITY SERVICES

APPENDIX 2

Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 7)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Locality Teams (Localities)	13.881	13.944	0.063	0.058	<p><u>Older People Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Locality Teams are together expected to underspend (£0.151m) mostly due to vacant posts. > Purchased domicilliary costs are projected to overspend (£0.034) due to additional service user costs. > Purchased residential costs are projected to overspend (£0.113) due to additional service user costs. > Early Onset Dementia is projected to overspend (£0.078m) due to purchased domiciliary care costs. > The balance (-£0.011m) is made up of a number of smaller variances. 	<p>Keep under review.</p> <p>Most of the PDSI elements previously included as part of the locality team budgets are now shown within the Disability Services Heading with only the Occupational Therapy service remaining as part of the locality teams.</p>
Resource and Regulated Services (Disability Services)	15.243	15.139	(0.104)	(0.099)	<p>Learning Disabilities - As previously noted this service includes a budget to help offset the expected impact of a review of joint funded packages between FCC and Health. This accounts for a saving of £0.140m within the net underspend projection, and remains unchanged from month 3. There are some other compensating variances across this large service which reflect the changes in client demand.</p>	<p>The underspend in relation to the negotiations with Health on jointly funded packages is based on current assumptions. These will be kept under review and adjusted if proven necessary.</p>

COMMUNITY SERVICES

APPENDIX 2

Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 7)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Transition and Disability Services (Disability Services)	0.658	0.738	0.080	0.064	This is mostly due to overspends against staff pay costs (£0.017m), third party payments (£0.028m), transport (£0.007m, and a shortfall of grant income of £0.028m. (Supporting People)	Keep under review.
Disability Services (Disability Services)	1.941	2.011	0.070	0.070	The overspend is due to additional transition service user costs.	Keep under review.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

APPENDIX 2

Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 7)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Administrative Support (Disability Services)	0.407	0.460	0.053	0.053	This is mostly due to an overspend against staff pay costs (£0.044m).	Keep under review.
Residential and Domiciliary Service (Mental Health & Substance Misuse Service)	0.703	0.583	(0.120)	(0.197)	This underspend is based on current care packages. An additional £0.0259m budget has been added to this area in 2013 to reflect the expectation of the transfer from Health of an individual with a high cost transition package, there has been a delay in transferring this client into the service. The current underspend would therefore be higher but reflects the cost of current care packages including some other new clients.	Keep under review.
Professional Support (Mental Health & Substance Misuse Service)	0.828	0.744	(0.084)	(0.080)	This is mostly (£0.050m) due to a one-off pay cost reduction following an agreed absence with no pay.	One-off.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

APPENDIX 2

Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 7)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Forensic Budget (Mental Health & Substance Misuse Service)	0.305	0.169	(0.136)	(0.147)	Reflects current care packages for 2013/14.	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.
Forensic Budget (Learning Disability)	0.482	0.427	(0.055)	(0.054)	Reflects current care packages for 2013/14.	
Other Services for Adults variances (aggregate)	4.116	4.067	(0.049)	(0.049)	Various minor variances.	Continue to review but not expected to be recurrent.
Subtotal:	44.328	43.718	(0.610)	(0.630)		

COMMUNITY SERVICES

APPENDIX 2

Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 7)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Development & Resources						
Business Systems (Development & Resources)	1.144	1.102	(0.042)	(0.052)	The underspend within this area is mostly due to vacant posts.	One off.
Vacancy Control	(0.100)	0.000	0.100	0.100		Realignment of vacant posts
Other Development & Resources variances (aggregate)	0.633	0.524	(0.109)	(0.105)	Various minor variances.	Continue to review but not expected to be recurrent.
Subtotal:	1.677	1.626	(0.051)	(0.057)		

COMMUNITY SERVICES

APPENDIX 2

Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 7)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Services for Children						
Family Placement (Children's Services)	1.977	2.331	0.354	0.333	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 been undertaken the outcome of which is being considered and will inform future planning and possible efficiencies.
Youth Offending Team (Children's Services)	0.308	0.256	(0.052)	(0.051)	The underspend within this area is mostly due to vacant posts.	One-off.
Out of County Pooled Budget (Children's Services)	3.178	3.427	0.249	0.248	Costs reflect existing placements up until March 2014. The increase in overspend (£0.039m) is due to additional placements (£0.080m) offset by a change in care packages (£0.020m) and a placement ending (£0.021m).	The focus of high cost placements is now a North Wales project and will continued to be reviewed.
Other Services for Children variances (aggregate)	6.709	6.727	0.018	0.016	Various minor variances.	Continue to review but not expected to be recurrent.
Subtotal:	12.172	12.741	0.569	0.546		

COMMUNITY SERVICES

APPENDIX 2

Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 7)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Housing Services						
Homelessness Accommodation (Housing Services)	0.360	0.154	(0.206)	(0.213)	Variance is due to improvements in the service where methods have been put in place to reduce the cost of temporary accommodation. Quay House project has been delayed until 2014/15.	Keep under review. Variance is due to improvements in the service where methods have been put in place to reduce the cost of temporary accommodation.
Accommodation Support Team (Housing Services)	1.213	1.161	(0.052)	(0.055)	Service undergoing restructure which is not yet in place.	Restructure to be implemented.
Other variances (aggregate)	0.262	0.224	(0.038)	(0.025)	Various minor variances.	Continue to review but not expected to be recurrent.
Subtotal:	1.835	1.539	(0.296)	(0.293)		
Total :	60.012	59.624	(0.388)	(0.434)		

Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 7)

Service		Revised Budget	Projected Outturn	Variance	Variance Period 6	Cause of Variance	Action Required
		(£m)	(£m)	(£m)	(£m)		
Assets & Transportation		6.082	6.147	0.065	0.003		
	Industrial Units	(1.256)	(1.155)	0.101	0.100	Estimated net income shortfalls across the Industrial Estate portfolio which have increased at Period 6 by a further £5k.	Keep Unit rental income closely monitored throughout 2013/14.
	Property Holdings	0.083	0.051	(0.032)	(0.036)	NNDR costs lower than anticipated	Review of site budgets necessary in line with asset management programme
	Property Asset & Development	0.528	0.428	(0.100)	(0.114)	Net Vacancy Savings	
	Highways Development Control & Regulatory Services	0.813	0.921	0.108	0.068	Lower than anticipated levels of income for FPN's (based on improving standards of repair by utility companies) & road closures. At Period 7 a commitment of £60k is included for the potential excess payment to be made to the Council's Insurers in relation to a claim.	
	Aggregate of other Variances	5.914	5.902	(0.012)	(0.015)		
Planning		1.717	1.678	(0.039)	(0.018)		
	Planning Control	0.363	0.344	(0.019)	(0.005)	Favourable move in planning fee income which is now estimated to be £15k in excess of income target	Further potential for increased planning fee income which will be closely monitored
	Aggregate of other Variances	1.354	1.333	(0.021)	(0.014)		
Public Protection		3.493	3.437	(0.056)	(0.008)		
	Community Protection	1.243	1.193	(0.050)	(0.025)	Period 7 includes a Court Costs award of £22k following the successful prosecution of Talacre Park Holiday Park by the Health & Safety Enforcement Team	
	Aggregate of other Variances	2.250	2.244	(0.006)	0.017		
Regeneration		0.704	0.715	0.011	0.006		

Service		Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Period 6 (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Streetscene		19.210	19.543	0.333	0.336		
	Waste Disposal & Waste Collection	9.266	9.600	0.334	0.326	Plastic Recycling prices reduced by £100 per tonne between July and September resulting in an estimated income reduction of £50k. Staff backfilling costs as a result of the on-going investigation within waste. The Sustainable Waste Management Grant (SWMG) has been reduced in-year by up to 5% resulting in a funding shortfall of at least £150k	Consider potential impact on MTFP going forward Consider impact on MTFP going forward
	Aggregate of other Variances	9.944	9.943	(0.001)	0.010		
Management Support & Performance		1.095	1.035	(0.060)	(0.066)		
	Management Support & Performance	1.095	1.035	(0.060)	(0.066)	Net Vacancy Savings ahead of service review implementation and reduced commitments on supplies and services budgets.	
	Total :	32.301	32.555	0.254	0.253		

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Culture & Leisure	6.386	6.770	0.384	0.387	<p>School Library Service (£0.100m saving) Following an agreement at DMT, to mitigate the Directorate overspend and to contribute towards the value for money programme, a number of measures will be taken to reduce expenditure in the School Library Service.</p> <p>Libraries, Culture & Heritage (£0.004m saving) Minor variances</p> <p>Leisure Services (£0.488m pressure) There are a number of pieces of work being completed to explore solutions to the remaining deficit. £0.023m relates to the final costs for Swim Flintshire. This programme ceased in August. £0.034m relates to employee costs. £0.301m relates to pressures on income across centres. £0.065m relates to pressures on premises budgets, £0.045m to security costs, £0.007m to credit/debit card fees and £0.013m to other minor variances.</p>	<p>Service Manager to place a hold on £0.100m of the Flintshire subsidy.</p> <p>As part of the Leisure Action Plan a number of solutions are being explored and implemented including cessation of Swim Flintshire, Leisure Service Review, Leisure Contact Centre and Asset Review.</p>
Inclusion Services & Special Schools	13.244	13.233	(0.011)	(0.029)	<p>Inclusion Services & Special Schools (£0.011m saving) Minor Variances</p>	
Primary School Services	43.382	43.337	(0.045)	(0.045)	<p>Primary School Services (£0.045m saving) Minor Variances</p>	Service Manager to review and reduce planned expenditure by £0.025m.

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Secondary School Services	37.467	37.469	0.002	0.000	Secondary School Services (£0.002m saving)	
Development & Resources	12.378	12.199	(0.179)	(0.216)	<p>Children, Youth & Community (£0.006m saving) Minor variances</p> <p>Schools ICT (£0.150m saving) In an effort to reduce the Directorate overspend and to contribute towards the value for money programme, DMT have made the decision to place a hold on all uncommitted expenditure in Schools ICT.</p> <p>Transport (£0.013m pressure) Minor Variances</p> <p>Service Units (£0.004m pressure) Pressures of £0.064m on Pupil Support (Free School Meals) and £0.028m on Regional Capita One have been offset by estimated savings on Mobile Classrooms (£0.055m), Insurance (£0.044m) and other minor variances of £0.011m.</p> <p>Facilities Services (£0.042m saving) Minor Variances</p> <p>Minor Pressures £0.002m</p>	<p>Service Manager to place a hold on £0.150m of the budget within Schools ICT.</p> <p>We are awaiting information from the Schools relating to Music remissions which is likely to affect the estimated costs.</p>

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Total :	112.857	113.008	0.151	0.097		

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Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Chief Executive	2.334	2.279	(0.055)	(0.051)	£0.018m Corporate voluntary sector contribution to Dangerpoint (£0.058m) Vacancy savings (£0.015m) minor variances	
Finance	14.287	13.687	(0.600)	(0.517)	(£0.119m) net Vacancy savings following realignment of budget (£0.894m) net surplus on the Council Tax Collection Fund after meeting the £0.305m costs allocated in 2013/14 budget (£0.115m allocated to Software will remain unspent) £0.413m CTRS shortfall in funding compared to estimated in year cost	Demand led service but subject to ongoing monitoring. Contributing to national discussion on CTRS funding for 2014/15.
Legal & Democratic Services	3.156	3.110	(0.046)	(0.035)	(£0.021m) net Vacancy savings including the use of Agency/Locums and recharges (£0.015m) Members Services underspend (£0.010m) minor variances	

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Human Resources & Organisational Development	2.517	2.485	(0.032)	(0.030)	(£0.030m) reduced DBS Check expenditure (£0.032m) Vacancy savings £0.027m loss of income from external organisations £0.003m minor variances	
ICT & Customer Services	5.045	5.055	0.010	(0.013)	(£0.026m) Vacancy savings (£0.027m) additional Registrars Income £0.060m postage costs £0.003m minor variances	Postage contract under review.
Total :	27.339	26.616	(0.723)	(0.646)		

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Central Loans & Investment Account	15.283	15.041	(0.242)	(0.242)	Unsupported (Prudential Borrowing) - Funding for Local Government Borrowing Initiative (LGBI) transferred into settlement from 2013/14 (previously specific grant) -£0.415m which isn't needed to finance any new borrowing during 2013/14. The total of -£0.415m includes the £0.385m which was transferred into the settlement plus a residual £0.030m which wasn't utilised from the 2012/13 specific grant allocation of £0.192m.	
					Reduction in net external interest payable (-£0.047m), Reduction in interest receivable on temporary investments (£0.127m), increased cost of Minimum Revenue Provision (£0.088m) increased internal interest (-£0.015m), reduction in debt management costs (-£0.010m).	
Coroners	0.193	0.248	0.055	0.055	Due to a change in the lead authority for Coroners service provision (effective from May 2013), it has been brought to our attention that Wrexham CBC are continuing to process a significant number of invoices pertaining to financial year 2012/13 (currently value circa £0.110m) for which the Flintshire share is 50%, resulting in a current year budget pressure.	

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Centrally Held Provisions	4.531	3.759	(0.772)	(0.815)	Net budget adjustments of £0.680m as approved in the Month 3 report (Community Services £1.185m, Leisure Management (-£0.505m) Surplus on recovery of FCC share of pension fund deficit - final year of three year strategy (-£0.128m), under recovery of corporate windfall income £0.046m. (other minor variances (-£0.010m).	
Central Service Recharges	(1.931)	(1.620)	0.311	0.311	Shortfall of £0.311m of internal income recovered from trading accounts and the HRA.	
Former Euticals Ltd - Sandycroft site	0.000	0.400	0.400	0.400	Potential costs for six months at £0.060m per month plus some specific one-off costs relating to site related costs in view of the public protection risk.	
Other variances - aggregate	9.167	9.176	0.010	0.009		
Total :	27.243	27.004	(0.238)	(0.282)		

APPENDIX 7

Movements on Council Fund Unearmarked Reserves

	£m	£m
Total Reserves as at 1 April 2013 (Inclusive of total increase of £0.270m agreed as part of the 2013/14 budget)	9.540	
Less - Base Level (Inclusive of total increase of £0.270m agreed as part of the 2013/14 budget)	<u>(5.834)</u>	
Total Reserves above base level		3.706
Less - Amount approved by Council on 1 st March for funding of one-off costs in the 2013/14 budget proposals		(0.297)
Less - Amount approved by Cabinet on 16 th July for reinstatement of funding within the Winter Maintenance reserve following utilisation of funding during 2012/13 (late March severe weather event)		(0.250)
Amount available for delegation to Cabinet		<u>3.159</u>
Add projected underspend as at 31 st March 2014		0.944
Less - Estimate of severe weather recovery costs		(0.518)
Projected Level of Total Contingency Reserve as at 31st March 2014		3.585

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HRA Major Variance Report - Period 7

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
HRA Subsidy	6,167	6,356	189	121	Capital Financing charges amended after budget rounds completed. Further amendments to Capital figures for inclusion in 2nd HRAS return. Under payment on 2012/13 of £31k calculated on Advance Final return.	Review timings of figures with Capital Financing team.
Rents	(26,946)	(27,169)	(223)	(230)	Bad Debt provision reviewed based on Q1 impact of "bedroom tax", resulting in a saving of £258k	Monitor impact of "Bedroom Tax" and review expected costs at H1
Repairs and Maintenance	8,393	8,670	277	276	£229k net under spend variance on salaries due to restructure not being in place and recruitment freeze in place. £403k over spend on materials and £68k overspend on equipment due to increase in the number of high cost jobs. Travis Perkins is to review pricing. Carry forward request for £70k due to hardware costs not materialising in 2013/14 but will be purchased in 2014/15.	Restructure to be implemented. Housing Asset Team is working closely with Travis Perkins to try and mitigate some of the overspend in H2.
Finance & Support	2,656	2,443	(213)	(203)	Support Recharges reflected at 2012/13 actuals, saving £106k. Information on 2013/14 has been requested. Pension Fund Strain costs £80k lower than anticipated creating saving. Carry forward request for £85k due to software costs not materialising in 2013/14 but will be purchased in 2014/15.	
Housing Estates	1,852	1,722	(130)	(43)	Procurement reimbursement for screening received in amount of £58k. Void clearance recharges generating a further £13.5k income. Water commission generated a further £34k of income due to early bird discount scheme. Cancellation of cleaning contract saving £5k on maisonette blocks.	
Other variances (aggregate)	8,375	8,358	(17)	17		
Total :	497	380	(117)	(62)		

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Month 7

Efficiency Description	Budgeted Efficiency (£m)	Current Position			Further information to support current position status or other relevant information
		EFFICIENCY ALREADY ACHIEVED	EFFICIENCY EXPECTED TO BE ACHIEVED IN FULL	EFFICIENCY ACHIEVABLE IN PART	
Fees & Charges (APPENDIX 7a)					
<i>Community Services</i>					
Residential Charging - Increased Income From Demand	0.100		✓		It will not be known for sure until the end of the financial year if this efficiency has been met.
Mental Health Service Users	0.018	✓			
TOTAL	0.118				
Service Change (APPENDIX 7b)					
<i>Community Services</i>					
Reablement in the level of extra care	0.100	✓			
Preserved Rights - reduced activity levels	0.053	✓			
External Funding for Existing Post - Children's Services	0.043	✓			
Family Placement Team - revision of existing practices	0.040	✓			
Early Retirement - Non replacement of staff - CSA	0.015	✓			
General Office Administration Review	0.021	✓			
Housing Efficiency Savings	0.028	✓			
Homelessness - Timing of presentations	0.106	✓			

Month 7

Efficiency Description	Budgeted Efficiency (£m)	Current Position				Further information to support current position status or other relevant information
		EFFICIENCY ALREADY ACHIEVED	EFFICIENCY EXPECTED TO BE ACHIEVED IN FULL	EFFICIENCY ACHIEVABLE IN PART	EFFICIENCY NOT ACHIEVABLE	
Youth Justice - Appropriate adult service	0.010	✓				
Legal Fees - Use of solicitors / barristers	0.010		✓			Due to the unpredictable nature of Legal Fees it will not be known if this efficiency has been achieved until later in the financial year.
Children's Services - Transport costs efficiency	0.015	✓				
Children's Services - FAST team budget reduction	0.010		✓			The FAST team is currently showing an overspend of £0.031.
Preventative foster care service - day care	0.005	✓				
TOTAL	0.456					
Procurement (APPENDIX 7c)						
<i>Community Services</i>						
PARIS - post implementation expenditure review	0.030	✓				
Housing Services - Supplies and Services	0.003	✓				
Social Care - Supplies and Services	0.075	✓				
Procurement Hub - regional procurement of high cost low volume placements	0.020	✓				
Children's Services - out of county placements - improved procurement practice	0.533	✓				As at month 3 this budget was showing an underspend of £(0.344). However due to change in service user circumstances this budget is now showing an overspend of £0.248

Month 7

Efficiency Description	Budgeted Efficiency (£m)	Current Position				Further information to support current position status or other relevant information
		EFFICIENCY ALREADY ACHIEVED	EFFICIENCY EXPECTED TO BE ACHIEVED IN FULL	EFFICIENCY ACHIEVABLE IN PART	EFFICIENCY NOT ACHIEVABLE	
Transport Review - revised contracts	0.025	✓				
TOTAL	0.686					
Organisational Design (APPENDIX 7d)						
<i>Community Services</i>						
Review of Supported Living Service	0.350			✓		The efficiency has been partly achieved in 2013/14 (£0.086m) and is expected to be fully achieved in 2014/15. It should be noted that the non-achievement of this efficiency is being offset with underspends elsewhere within the Directorate.
Service Review of Warden Service	0.018	✓				
Children's Services - Removal of one team manager post	0.040	✓				
Development and Resources - Rationalisation of Management Team	0.050	✓				
TOTAL	0.458					

Month 7

Efficiency Description	Budgeted Efficiency (£m)	Current Position				Further information to support current position status or other relevant information
		EFFICIENCY ALREADY ACHIEVED	EFFICIENCY EXPECTED TO BE ACHIEVED IN FULL	EFFICIENCY ACHIEVABLE IN PART	EFFICIENCY NOT ACHIEVABLE	
Fees & Charges (APPENDIX 7a)						
<i>Environment</i>						
Agricultural Estate rentals	0.008		✓			Agricultural Estates currently reporting a surplus income position.
Public Protection - increase to market rates	0.025		✓			Fees for both Licensing and Bereavement Services were increased from 1st June 2013
Markets Service - increased lettable space	0.019		✓			Markets currently reporting a surplus income position.
Traffic Regulation order Notices	0.013		✓			Budget Reduction met from within Highways Policy Budget
Streetscene - leachate processing	0.075		✓			It is anticipated that the new income target will be met in 2013/14
TOTAL	0.140					
Service Change (APPENDIX 7b)						
<i>Environment</i>						
Street Lighting - non-residential areas post midnight turn-off	0.050		✓			The new Street Lighting policy has been adopted and this efficiency will be achieved in full
Highways Asset Management Plan (HAMP) -rephasing of full implementation	0.225		✓			Previous approved pressure that was not required in 2013/14 and 2014/15 due to Local Government Borrowing Initiative (LGBI)

Month 7

Efficiency Description	Budgeted Efficiency (£m)	Current Position				Further information to support current position status or other relevant information		
		EFFICIENCY ALREADY ACHIEVED	EFFICIENCY EXPECTED TO BE ACHIEVED IN FULL	EFFICIENCY ACHIEVABLE IN PART	EFFICIENCY NOT ACHIEVABLE			
Public Conveniences - revisit of strategy	0.050			✓			Tower Gardens, Holywell didn't close until 30th April 2013 and Cilcain and Caerwys have been further delayed with ongoing consultation necessary and under achievement on the efficiency by £21k is likely.	
Streetscene - implementation of Part III agreement	0.300					✓	The achievement of this efficiency is dependant on the implementation of Single Status so is anticipated to be achieved in 2014/15. The 2013/14 shortfall is being met from the Single Status reserve.	
Waste Services - vehicle savings from full roll out of Saturday collection	0.140						✓	The achievement of this efficiency is dependant on the implementation of Single Status so is anticipated to be achieved in 2014/15. The 2013/14 shortfall is being met from the Single Status reserve.
Business Development team - agile working	0.004				✓			Budget Monitoring Position at Period 4 indicates achievement of this efficiency.
Staff travel - reduced mileage payments	0.003				✓			Budget Monitoring Position at Period 4 indicates achievement of this efficiency.
Directorate Support & Performance - Supplies and Stationery - Streamline current processes	0.008				✓			Budget Monitoring Position at Period 4 indicates achievement of this efficiency.
TOTAL	0.780							
Procurement (APPENDIX 7c)								
<i>Environment</i>								
Waste Services - Tender Transport arrangements for waste disposal	0.050				✓			New Transport arrangements have been awarded as part of a tender process and are now in place.
Transportation Services - Review of subsidised Bus Service Contracts and re-tender	0.036				✓			Efficiency absorbed within service budget

Month 7

Efficiency Description	Budgeted Efficiency (£m)	Current Position				Further information to support current position status or other relevant information
		EFFICIENCY ALREADY ACHIEVED	EFFICIENCY EXPECTED TO BE ACHIEVED IN FULL	EFFICIENCY ACHIEVABLE IN PART	EFFICIENCY NOT ACHIEVABLE	
Fees & Charges (APPENDIX 7a)						
<i>Lifelong Learning</i>						
Library Service - Fines	0.001		✓			
Library - Hire charges increase	0.001		✓			
Leisure Services - increased charges	0.175			✓		Tariffs were increased on the 1st January as agreed but as income targets are not expected to be met, the efficiency is also not likely to be fully achieved. Estimated amount achievable £0.164m.
Review of post 16 distance limit	0.030			✓		The amendment to the proposal to continue to provide transport to Colleg Cambria means that only £0.010m of the efficiency can be achieved. Work is ongoing to confirm this. However, we do not anticipate a pressure on the Transport budget at this time.
TOTAL	0.207					
Service Change (APPENDIX 7b)						
<i>Lifelong Learning</i>						
Operational efficiencies	0.025		✓			
Youth Service - reduction of senior area workers	0.032		✓			The budget for area workers had previously been reduced. This efficiency created a budget flow which has been addressed as part of the Youth Strategy by retaining part of the £0.050m below on a recurring basis. We do not anticipate a pressure on Youth S

Month 7

Efficiency Description	Budgeted Efficiency (£m)	Current Position			Further information to support current position status or other relevant information	
		EFFICIENCY ALREADY ACHIEVED	EFFICIENCY EXPECTED TO BE ACHIEVED IN FULL	EFFICIENCY ACHIEVABLE IN PART		EFFICIENCY NOT ACHIEVABLE
Youth Service - term time only contracts	0.026			✓	This change is being introduced as part of the Youth Strategy and has not yet been implemented though negotiations have started. At this stage it is anticipated that a saving of £0.007m will be made in this financial year.	
Youth Service - Service reconfiguration	0.012		✓			
Youth Service - Building costs savings	0.011		✓			
Youth Service - Building rationalisation	0.005		✓			
Youth Service - Holding back £50k (CC 1/3/13)	(0.050)	✓			This additional contribution is expected to be fully utilised.	
Facilities - Management / Central Office - structure review	0.015		✓			
Facilities - County Hall revised opening hours - reduced energy / overtime costs	0.025				✓	Although we do not expect a pressure on the Facilities budget this year, the decision to revise the County Hall opening hours has not yet been made.
LL ICT - Interim Service review - post reduction	0.025				✓	The Schools ICT Service Review has now been combined with the Corporate ICT Review. We do not anticipate a pressure on the schools ICT budget at this time.
Leisure Services - removal of swimming subsidy	0.023		✓			
Directorate Management Team Restructure	0.043	✓				
TOTAL	0.192					

Month 7

Efficiency Description	Budgeted Efficiency (£m)	Current Position				Further information to support current position status or other relevant information
		EFFICIENCY ALREADY ACHIEVED	EFFICIENCY EXPECTED TO BE ACHIEVED IN FULL	EFFICIENCY ACHIEVABLE IN PART	EFFICIENCY NOT ACHIEVABLE	
Reduction in use of consultants	0.013		✓			Efficiency absorbed within service budget
Reduction in influenceable spend	0.025		✓			Efficiency absorbed within service budget
Streamline current processes within Directorate Support	0.020		✓			Efficiency absorbed within service budget
TOTAL	0.144					
Organisational Design (APPENDIX 7d)						
<i>Environment</i>						
Review Management Recharge to the Communities First Programme	0.020		✓			It is anticipated that this will be achieved as part of the Communities First Grant Claim for 2013/14
TOTAL	0.020					
Other Efficiencies (APPENDIX 7e)						
<i>Environment</i>						
Agricultural Estates - balance not required	0.025	✓				Specific Directorate Balance in the Environment Balance Sheet
Licensing / Health & Safety - balance not required	0.025		✓			Specific Directorate Balance in the Environment Balance Sheet
TOTAL	0.050					

Month 7

Efficiency Description	Budgeted Efficiency (£m)	Current Position				Further information to support current position status or other relevant information
		EFFICIENCY ALREADY ACHIEVED	EFFICIENCY EXPECTED TO BE ACHIEVED IN FULL	EFFICIENCY ACHIEVABLE IN PART	EFFICIENCY NOT ACHIEVABLE	
Procurement (APPENDIX 7c)						
<i>Lifelong Learning</i>						
Reduction of Postage within the Library Service	0.001		✓			
Out of County - Improved procurement through framework agreements and monitoring of placements.	0.385		✓			
School Transport Service - Operational efficiencies	0.080		✓			
TOTAL	0.466					

Organisational Design (APPENDIX 7d)						
<i>Lifelong Learning</i>						
Libraries - Flexible retirement	0.015	✓				
Libraries - Library Service Review	0.037	✓				
TOTAL	0.052					

Other Efficiencies (APPENDIX 7e)						
<i>Demographic Change in Schools (pupil numbers)</i>						
Demographic Change in Schools (pupil numbers)	0.132	✓				
TOTAL	0.132					

Efficiency Description	Budgeted Efficiency (£m)	Current Position			Further information to support current position status or other relevant information
		EFFICIENCY ALREADY ACHIEVED	EFFICIENCY EXPECTED TO BE ACHIEVED IN FULL	EFFICIENCY ACHIEVABLE IN PART	
Fees & Charges (APPENDIX 7a)					
<i>FINANCE - Corporate Services</i>					
Revenues - increased number of Council Tax fines	0.027		✓		
<i>ICT & CUSTOMER SERVICES - Corporate Services</i>					
Registrars - increased fees	0.019		✓		
Network Services - income from hosting PSBA equipment	0.004	✓			
<i>LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC - Corporate Services</i>					
External Fees - conveyancing / S106 agreements	0.015		✓		
TOTAL	0.065				
Service Change (APPENDIX 7b)					
<i>Chief Executive - Corporate Services</i>					
Corporate Comms - reduced workforce bulletins	0.003		✓		
<i>HR & OD - Corporate Services</i>					
CRB checks - review of options	0.035		✓		
<i>LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC - Corporate Services</i>					
Democratic Services - reduced paper usage	0.010		✓		
Members Allowances (Basic Allowance) - no inflationary increase	0.010		✓		
Members Allowances - Special Responsibility Allowances - reduction of number allocated	0.070		✓		
Members Allowances - NI contributions reduction linked to reduced number of Special Responsibility allowances	0.010		✓		
TOTAL	0.138				

Efficiency Description	Budgeted Efficiency (£m)	Current Position			Further information to support current position status or other relevant information
		EFFICIENCY ALREADY ACHIEVED	EFFICIENCY EXPECTED TO BE ACHIEVED IN FULL	EFFICIENCY ACHIEVABLE IN PART	
Procurement (APPENDIX 7c)					
<i>Chief Executive - Corporate Services</i>					
Employee / Residents Consultations - reduction in number	0.003		✓		
Supplies and Services	0.010		✓		
Joint Working - costs reduction	0.002		✓		
Alterations / Improvements reductions - future agile working	0.002		✓		
Employee Safety Measures - reduced demand on budget	0.010		✓		
Conferences/Seminars/Lectures - reduced attendance	0.001		✓		
ICT & CUSTOMER SERVICES - Corporate Services					
Training Budget - Procurement via new solutions	0.001		✓		
Reduced maintenance costs due to new security equipment	0.025		✓		
Networking Hardware - reduced procurement	0.002		✓		
ICT Cabling - reduction enabled by IPT solution	0.002		✓		
Leasing - budget adjustment	0.006		✓		
Software Licensing - Microsoft licences procured through other agreements	0.010		✓		
Hardware Maintenance - letting of MFD contracts	0.001		✓		

Efficiency Description	Budgeted Efficiency (£m)	Current Position				Further information to support current position status or other relevant information
		EFFICIENCY ALREADY ACHIEVED	EFFICIENCY EXPECTED TO BE ACHIEVED IN FULL	EFFICIENCY ACHIEVABLE IN PART	EFFICIENCY NOT ACHIEVABLE	
Reduce influencable spend by 3%	0.004		✓			
Reduced ICT Expenditure	0.003		✓			
Rationalisation of third party software costs	0.013		✓			
Avoidance of inflationary rises - software maintenance costs	0.020		✓			
Reduced licence costs - via renegotiation	0.018		✓			
Supplies and Services	0.061		✓			
Training budget reduction - build around training solutions	0.001		✓			
Alterations & Improvements - Datacentres	0.004		✓			
Other Consumables - reduction in expenditure	0.001		✓			
Hardware Maintenance - new technology with warranty	0.015		✓			
Listing Paper - More use of electronic means	0.002		✓			
Enterprise Servers - hardware	0.003		✓			
Services work and Consultancy	0.004		✓			
Supplies & Services	0.009		✓			
FINANCE - Corporate Services						

Efficiency Description	Budgeted Efficiency (£m)	Current Position				Further information to support current position status or other relevant information
		EFFICIENCY ALREADY ACHIEVED	EFFICIENCY EXPECTED TO BE ACHIEVED IN FULL	EFFICIENCY ACHIEVABLE IN PART	EFFICIENCY NOT ACHIEVABLE	
Supplies & Services	0.012		✓			
TOTAL	0.245					
Organisational Design (APPENDIX 7d)						
<i>Chief Executive - Corporate Services</i>						
Reduction in mileage travelled - Emergency Planning	0.001		✓			
TOTAL	0.001					

Month 7

Efficiency Description	Budgeted Efficiency (£m)	Current Position				Further information to support current position status or other relevant information
		EFFICIENCY ALREADY ACHIEVED	EFFICIENCY EXPECTED TO BE ACHIEVED IN FULL	EFFICIENCY ACHIEVABLE IN PART	EFFICIENCY NOT ACHIEVABLE	
Service Change (APPENDIX 7b)						
<i>Central & Corporate Finance</i>						
Clywd Theatr Cymru - agreed reduction to contribution	0.015	✓				
TOTAL	0.015					
Procurement (APPENDIX 7c)						
<i>Central & Corporate Finance</i>						
Flintshire Futures - E-procurement and improved processes	0.102		✓			
Flintshire Futures - Internal Fleet Review	0.160	✓				
TOTAL	0.262					
Other Efficiencies (APPENDIX 7e)						
<i>Central & Corporate Finance</i>						
Reduced contingencies - one-off investment costs	0.240	✓				
Reduced contingencies - NDR	0.077	✓				
Reduction in Fire Levy due to formula changes	0.027	✓				
Flintshire Futures Assets Workstream - Facilities Management	0.060		✓			

Month 7

Efficiency Description	Budgeted Efficiency (£m)	Current Position			Further information to support current position status or other relevant information
Flintshire Futures - Customer Workstream Contact Centre	0.100		✓		
Flintshire Futures - Customer Workstream face to face customer contact	0.100		✓		
Flintshire Futures - Customer Workstream Channel Shift	0.100		✓		
TOTAL	0.704				

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **CABINET**

DATE: **TUESDAY, 21 JANUARY 2014**

REPORT BY: **HEAD OF FINANCE**

SUBJECT: **COUNCIL TAX AND BUSINESS RATE POLICIES 2014-15**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 Members are asked to approve various policies for the administration of Council Tax and Business Rates for the financial year 2014-15

1.02 The policies required by statute to be approved each year are :-

- Council Tax Discounts on second and long term empty homes (section 2)
- Council Tax Discretionary discounts (section 3)
- Business Rates Discretionary Rate Relief (section 4)
- Business Rates Discretionary Rate Relief for Small Businesses (section 5)

1.03 Some policies are detailed for information purposes only, these are :-

- Payment dates for Precepting/Levying Bodies (section 6)
- Payment dates for Council Tax and Business Rates (section 7)

2.00 COUNCIL TAX ON SECOND AND LONG TERM EMPTY HOMES

2.01 Each year the Council is required to determine what discount, if any, is awarded to second or holiday homes (known as Prescribed Classes A or B) and long term empty properties (known as Prescribed Class C). The prescribed Classes are :

Class A – A property which is unoccupied and furnished but occupation is prohibited by law for over 28 days each year.

Class B – A property which is unoccupied but furnished and occupation is not prohibited by law.

Class C - A property which is unoccupied and substantially unfurnished beyond the normal exempt period (usually 6 months)

2.02 The current policy is not to award discounts to any Prescribed Class and this applies to the whole of the County area. This is also reflected in the 2014-15 Tax Base calculation.

3.00 COUNCIL TAX DISCRETIONARY DISCOUNTS

- 3.01 In accordance with section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended by section 76 of the Local Government Act 2003), the Council has a general discretion to reduce the amount of Council Tax payable, effectively granting a local Council Tax Discretionary Discount.
- 3.02 In exercising these discretionary powers the Council must act reasonably having regard to all relevant considerations and the interests of all tax payers as the cost of awarding a Discretionary Discount would in effect be borne by other Council Tax payers.
- 3.03 The current policy is for the Head of Finance and Cabinet Member for Corporate Management to consider discretionary discounts through the use of delegated powers only in cases of civil emergencies and natural disasters.

4.00 BUSINESS RATES - DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF

- 4.01 Discretionary Rate Relief for Charitable and Non Profit Making Organisations is currently awarded on a continual basis, subject to a minimum of 12 months and full financial year notice if any ratepayer is affected by a change in policy.
- 4.02 Current policy is determined by the following categories :-
- Premises used for charitable purposes by organisations specifically registered with the Charity Commission. *(20% discretionary 'top up' relief is awarded, with the exception of shops operated by national organisations, who receive 80% Mandatory Relief only).*
 - Premises used by non-profit making organisations that are treated as charities, for the reason that they bear the same characteristics as those organisations that are registered charities. This category consists of Community Centres, Institutes and Village Hall, other than those occupied by Precepting Authorities. *(20% 'top up' relief is awarded)*
 - Premises occupied by sporting clubs, societies or other organisations used for the purpose of non profit making and used for the purpose of recreational, social welfare etc. *(100% Discretionary Relief is awarded with the exception of golf clubs, which are awarded 50% Discretionary Relief)*

- Premises not covered by any of the above categories, occupied by non-profit making organisations but are used for the benefit of the community and who are assessed on an individual basis based on their merits. (*Up to 100% Discretionary Rate Relief can be awarded*)
- 4.03 Section 69 of the Localism Act 2011 amends section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 to replace the limited circumstances in which local authorities can currently give discretionary relief with a power to grant relief in any circumstances.
- 4.04 This is subject to the condition that, except in the limited circumstances specified, the local authority may only grant relief if it would be reasonable to do so having regard to the interests of council tax payers in its area. However, unlike other specific types of discretionary rate relief as detailed in section 4.02 where the Welsh Government substantially fund the cost of rate relief, the Council will be responsible for fully funding any other discretionary discounts granted
- 4.05 In exercising these discretionary powers the Council must act reasonably having regard to all relevant considerations and the interests of all tax payers as the full cost of awarding a Discretionary Discount would in effect be borne by other Council Tax payers.
- 4.06 The Council must not have a blanket policy not to award discretionary discounts and the recommended policy is that the Head of Finance and Cabinet Member for Corporate Management consider any applications received for discretionary discounts falling outside of the scope of the policy in section 4.02 to be considered on their own merits through the use of delegated powers using the following criteria:-
- Requests for reductions will be required in writing from the ratepayer or their appointed agents with a full business case and documentary evidence in support of the request
 - The Council's finances allow for a reduction to be made.
 - It must be in the interest of Council Tax payers for the Council to grant such a reduction
 - All other eligible discounts/reliefs have been considered and/or awarded to the ratepayer

5.00 BUSINESS RATES – DISCRETIONARY RELIEF FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

- 5.01 The Welsh Government Small Business Rate Relief scheme together with the Government's recent announcement to extend rate relief on a temporary basis up to 31st March 2015 provides rate relief, financed by the Welsh Government.

5.02 The Welsh Government Small Business Rate Relief scheme contains provision to award discretionary 'top up' relief to small businesses although the Council is required to meet the costs in full of any 'top-up' awards.

5.03 The current policy is not to award additional discretionary 'top-up' discounts to small businesses.

6.00 PAYMENT DATES FOR PRECEPTING/LEVYING BODIES

6.01 The following payment dates currently apply to Precepting Authorities and Levying Bodies :-

- Sea Fisheries - 1st of April
- Police & Crime Commissioner – North Wales 12 payments on 15th day
- North Wales Fire Service - 12 payments on 15th day
- Town/Community Councils - 3 payments (April, August, December)

7.00 PAYMENT DATES FOR COUNCIL TAX AND BUSINESS RATES

7.01 Council Tax and Business Rate customers are usually required to pay their bills in line with a statutory instalment scheme over 10 months from April to January.

7.02 Amendment regulations introduced by the Welsh Government provide Council Tax customers with a statutory right to request to pay Council Tax, from the start of the financial year, in 12 monthly instalments rather than 10.

7.03 For Council Tax and Business Rate customers who choose to pay their bills by Direct Debit, the Council offers customers a choice of four dates, the 1st, 8th, 18th or 25th day of each month. Payment by weekly direct debit is also promoted for payment of Council Tax only and proves to be a useful way of helping customers who work to a weekly income.

7.04 The Council will continue to offer alternative payment dates, including payment over 12 months, to provide customers with a range of flexible dates to suit individual finances and circumstances. These are :

- 1 annual instalment – due on 30th June
- 2 half yearly instalments – due on 31st May and 30th September
- 44 weekly instalments – due from 1st April to 31st January (Council Tax only)
- 52 weekly instalments – due from 1st April to 31st March (Council Tax only)

8.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.01 Members are requested to consider continuation of the current Council Tax and Business Rate Policies for 2014-15, as follows:-

- Not to award Council Tax discounts on any prescribed class and that this applies to the whole of the County area (2.02).
- For the Head of Finance and Cabinet Member for Corporate Management to consider section 13a discretionary discounts through the use of delegated powers (3.03).
- Discretionary rate relief for as set out (4.02).
- For the Head of Finance and Cabinet Member for Corporate Management to consider any applications for Business Rate discretionary discounts not within the scope of the existing policy as set out in 4.02 through the use of delegated powers (4.06).
- Not to award discretionary 'top-up' discounts to small business (5.03).
- Members are also asked to note the payment dates for Precepting/Levying Bodies (6.01) and payment dates for Council Tax and Business Rates, (7.01 - 7.04).

9.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 On the basis of a continuation of existing policies, costs will be contained within the current budget.

10.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

10.01 None.

11.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

11.01 None.

12.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

12.01 None.

13.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

13.01 None.

14.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

14.01 None.

15.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

15.01 None.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- Local Government Finance Acts 1988 & 1992
- The Non Domestic Rating (Discretionary Relief) Regulations 1989
- The Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) (Amendment) (Wales) Regulations 2013

Contact Officer: David Barnes, Revenues Manager
Telephone: 01352 703652
Email: david.barnes@flintshire.gov.uk

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **CABINET**

DATE: **TUESDAY, 21 JANUARY 2014**

REPORT BY: **HEAD OF FINANCE**

SUBJECT: **COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.01 The report is to explain the requirement for the Council to adopt the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2014/2015 by 31st January 2014.
- 1.02 To recommend to Council to adopt the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2014/2015 subject to any input from Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

2.00 BACKGROUND

- 2.01 The current Council Tax Reduction Scheme was adopted by Flintshire County Council on 29th January 2013. The scheme regulations had what is known as a “sunset clause” in them which made them valid and legal for 2013/2014 only.
- 2.02 The Council Tax Reduction Scheme in Wales is set by Regulations made under Schedule 1B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as inserted by the Local Government Finance Act 2012). On 26th November 2013, the Welsh Government approved the following Regulations:
- The Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013
 - Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Default Scheme) (Wales) Regulations 2013
- 2.03 These Regulations have been amended to reflect changes in Benefit allowances and will be approved by Wales Government in Plenary on 14th January 2014.
- The Council Tax Reduction Scheme (prescribed requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2014

- 2.04 These Regulations prescribe the main features of the Scheme to be adopted by all Councils in Wales.
- 2.05 The Regulations for 2014/15 do not contain any significant changes from the claimant's perspective. Qualifying taxpayers may continue to receive a reduction up to 100% of their Council Tax bill (depending on the level of their income).
- 2.06 Although a National scheme has been approved, within the Prescribed Requirements Regulations, there is limited discretion given to the Council to apply additional discretionary elements that are more generous than the national scheme and which provide for additional administrative flexibility.

These are:

- a) The ability to increase the standard extended payment period of 4 weeks given to people after they return to work, when they have been in receipt of a relevant qualifying benefit for at least 26 weeks.
 - b) Discretion to disregard part or the whole amount of War Disablement pensions and War Widows Pensions when calculating income.
 - c) The ability to backdate the application of Council Tax Reduction awards for working age customers more than the standard period of 3 months prior to the claim.
- 2.07 The Prescribed Regulations require the Council to adopt the Council Tax Reduction Scheme by 31st January 2014, regardless of whether it applies any of the discretionary elements. If the Council fails to make or adopt a scheme, then a default scheme will apply under the provisions of the Default Scheme Regulations. The Council can only apply a discretion if it makes its own scheme under the Prescribed Requirements Regulations.
- 2.08 Whether or not the Council wish to adopt any of the above discretionary elements, it is obliged to carry out consultation on the adoption of the scheme, even though the provisions were set by Welsh Government.
- 2.09 Due to the tight timescales between making the Prescribed Regulations and the 31st January 2014, the consultation has been truncated in Flintshire between 27th November 2013 and 18th December 2013.
- 2.10 The results of the consultation can be found at appendix 2.

2.11 Following the arrangements for 2013/2014 the adoption of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2014/2015 is being considered by Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 16th January 2014 and any feedback will be provided verbally to Cabinet on 21st January 2014.

2.12 The recommendations of Cabinet will be reported to Council on 28th January 2014.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 In 2013/2014 the Council adopted the discretions as set out in this report and as detailed in Appendix 1 and it is recommended that these continue.

3.02 It should be noted that there are no additional monies available from Welsh Government to fund the discretionary elements. The projected cost of funding these discretionary elements during 2013/2014 and the estimated cost of funding these discretionary elements during 2014/2015 is outlined in Appendix 1 and is provided for in base budget.

3.03 The Council continues to have the powers to support hardship on an individual basis or in respect of a defined group, specifically within the Corporate Debt Policy. Such arrangements cannot, however, form part of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme itself.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 To note the making of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations (“the Prescribed Requirements Regulations”) by Wales Government on 26th November 2013. As amended by the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2014.

4.02 To recommend to Council to adopt the Council Tax Reduction Scheme discretionary elements as outlined in Appendix 1, subject to any input from Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 The Welsh Government’s estimate of the whole cost of the scheme at this time last year was £222m, this was based on the intention to fund 90% of the scheme. Later a further £22m was paid to Council’s via a specific grant, after a late decision was made by Welsh Government to fund a 100% reduction (where applicable).

- 5.02 The cost of Council Tax Reduction needs to be managed within the Council's budget. The amount identified by Welsh Government in the Financial Settlement for 2014/2015 is £9.924 million.
- 5.03 The funding arrangements for 2014/15 include funding of up to 100% of the estimated cost of the scheme based on the 2012/13 cost of the Council Tax Benefit and therefore funding does not include the 2013/14 increase in Council Tax producing an immediate additional shortfall of 3.14% including precepts. With the Council having a responsibility to meet this shortfall in order to maintain the scheme at 100% reduction (where applicable).
- 5.04 The Council must also meet the cost applied as a result of 2014/15 Council Tax increases.
- 5.05 In addition to Flintshire's initial estimates to maintaining the scheme at 100%, the Council are also liable for any fluctuations in caseload, which is dependant on the economic climate.
- 5.06 Current projection as to the cost to the Authority is:

2013/14 CTRS paid	£10.200 million
2014/15 C.Tax increase 3.5% (inc police and community councils)	£ 0.357 million
Projected Cost	£10.557million
WG Funding	£9.924 million
Shortfall / pressure	£0.633 million

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 The major reform of the welfare benefits system began to impact residents from April 2014.
- 6.02 The Welfare Reform Programme recognised the need for proactive work and support to try to mitigate, as much as possible, the effects of the changes on vulnerable residents in Flintshire and continues to successfully deliver on this basis.
- 6.03 Residents may not only be affected by the changes to Council Tax Support but may also be affected by other changes to other welfare benefits which are happening at the same time.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.01 None specifically associated with the content of this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 The Scheme proposed for 2014/2015 does not contain any significant changes from the scheme which is currently in operation, other than detailed in the recommendations above.

8.01 On this basis, following a rigorous and detailed Equalities Impact Assessment being conducted on the introduction of the Scheme in 2013, there is no requirement to conduct a further assessment.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None specifically associated with the content of this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Yes, as below:

- Members of the Public
- Flintshire County Council Elected Members
- Members of Parliament and Assembly Members
- Local Service Board Members
- Advice Management Board Members
- Office for Police and Crime Commissioner for Wales
- Royal British Legion
- Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Due to the extent of the far reaching and detailed consultation approach taken in 2012/13 in relation to the brand new Scheme it has been agreed that a more targeted consultation approach would be adopted for the Scheme for 2014/15.

11.02 The consultation period was 27th November 2013 to 18th December 2013 and a summary of the results of the consultation can be found at Appendix 2.

11.03 Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 16th January 2014.

12.00 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – The Discretionary Elements

Appendix 2 – Summary of the Public Consultation

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Schedule 1B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as inserted by the Local Government Finance Act 2012)

The Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013

Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Default Scheme) (Wales) Regulations 2013

The Council Tax Reduction Scheme (prescribed requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2014

Contact Officer: Jen Griffiths – Benefits Manager
Telephone: 01352 702929
Email: jen.griffiths@flintshire.gov.uk

Appendix 1 – Cabinet Report

The Discretionary Elements

There are three distinct areas of discretion within the Regulations and Flintshire County Council proposes to exercise these as follows:

1. Not to increase the “extended payment period” to more than four weeks when an applicant starts work. This rule currently acts as a good incentive measure under CTRS and it makes sense to maintain it in line with the Housing Benefits (HB) Extended Payment rules, which are also set at four weeks. This measure will result in approximately £20,948 of expenditure in 2013/14
2. To continue to disregard all War Disablement and War Widows Pensions as income. This measure will result in approximately £32,284 of expenditure for 2013/14. Continuation of this discretion would follow a long precedent and maintain the link with the Authority’s treatment of this income for HB purposes.
3. To maintain the standard three month backdating provisions for pensioners when a good reason for failing to claim earlier is shown. This reflects the current position with regard to CTRS and HB and payments in respect of backdating will result in approximately £29,375 of expenditure in 2013/14

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Summary of Public Consultation

The Consultation opened on 27 November and closed on 18 December 2013.

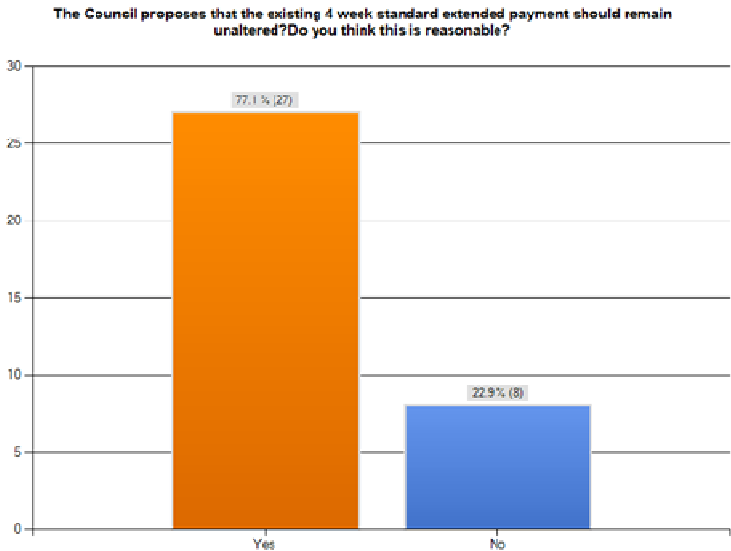
The survey was available publicly on-line via the Council’s website and was emailed to a range of identified stakeholders. It was also available in hard copy at public libraries, Flintshire Connects, Main Reception County Hall, Benefits Reception County Hall, Phase III Reception County Hall and Reception at County Offices Flint.

35 English responses were completed and 0 Welsh responses.

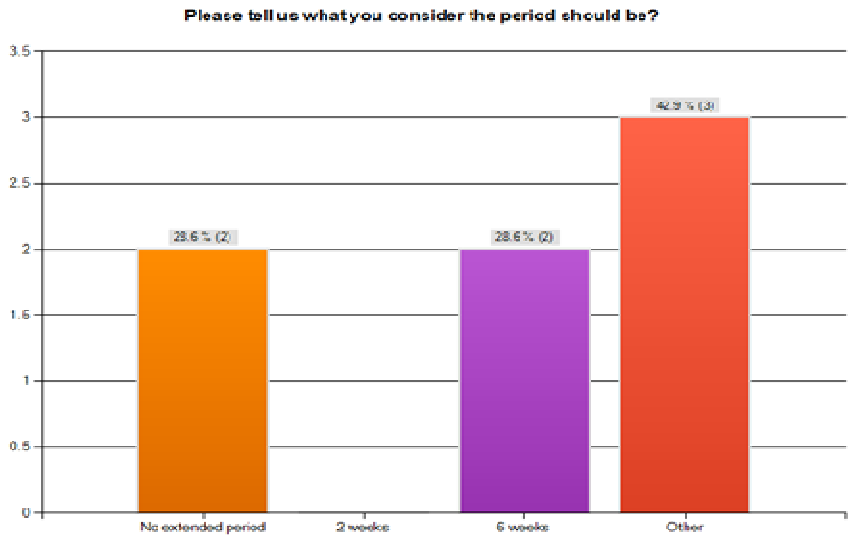
Of the 35 responses received 34 were completed on-line and 1 via hard copy.

Local discretion 1

The Council proposes that the existing 4 week standard extended payment should remain unaltered? Do you think this is reasonable?



If no, please tell us what you consider the period should be?



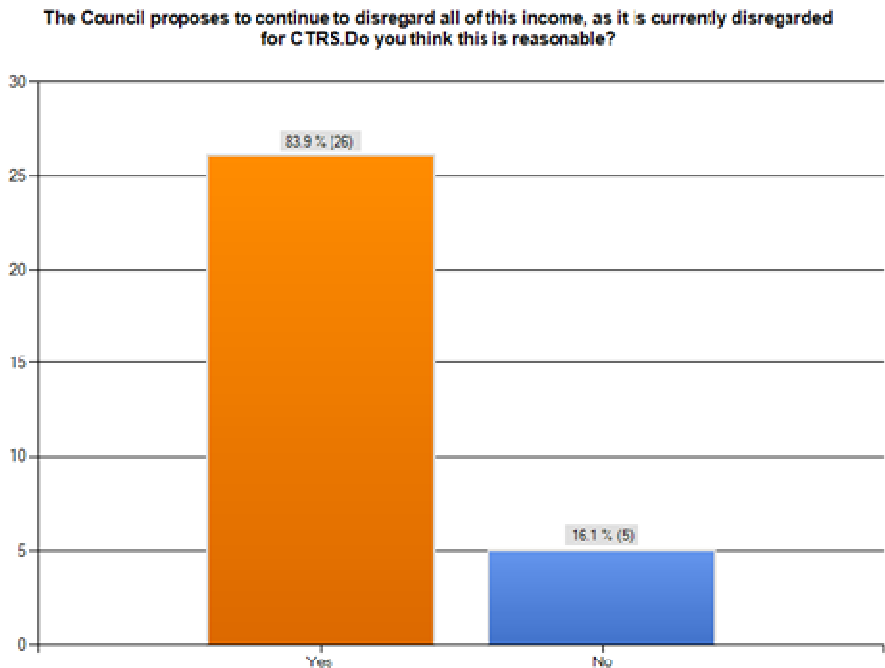
Of the three people who responded other, two respondents provided the following further information:

We feel that 4 weeks is generally sufficient time for an individual to continue to receive a Council Tax reduction after commencing paid employment. However we do feel that there should be a robust mechanism in place to proactively identify individuals who are in debt and/or facing financial difficulties despite finding employment. In these cases there should be recourse for individuals to discretionary Council Tax Reductions or other financial support for those who are facing difficulties paying their Council Tax, despite being in paid employment with earnings above the earnings threshold for Council Tax Reductions. For example some individuals will have accrued debts whilst unemployed that may result in a loss of heating or lighting to their home; homelessness; inability to feed themselves; inability to afford to travel to their workplace or other debts that cause not only distress and anguish, but also physical health and wellbeing concerns. In those situations individuals may require a longer period, in addition to independent advocacy and support, to address their financial difficulties before having to pay Council Tax. Consideration should also be given to delays in notifying the Council immediately of a change in circumstances, especially where this is due to not understanding their responsibilities due to communication barriers or disability-related barriers. In such circumstances retrospectively applying full Council Tax liability could force an individual into poverty and debt through no fault of their own.

Welfare reform changes to move benefit payments to calendar monthly payments will already push recipients into financial hardship as they will be paid a month in arrears, take 5 weeks to process (leaving them without funds) and therefore simply returning to work and waiting 4 weeks will not give them ample time to really catch up with themselves

Local Discretion 2

The Council proposes to continue to disregard all War Disablement Pension and War Widows Pension income, as it is currently disregarded for CTRS. Do you think this is reasonable?



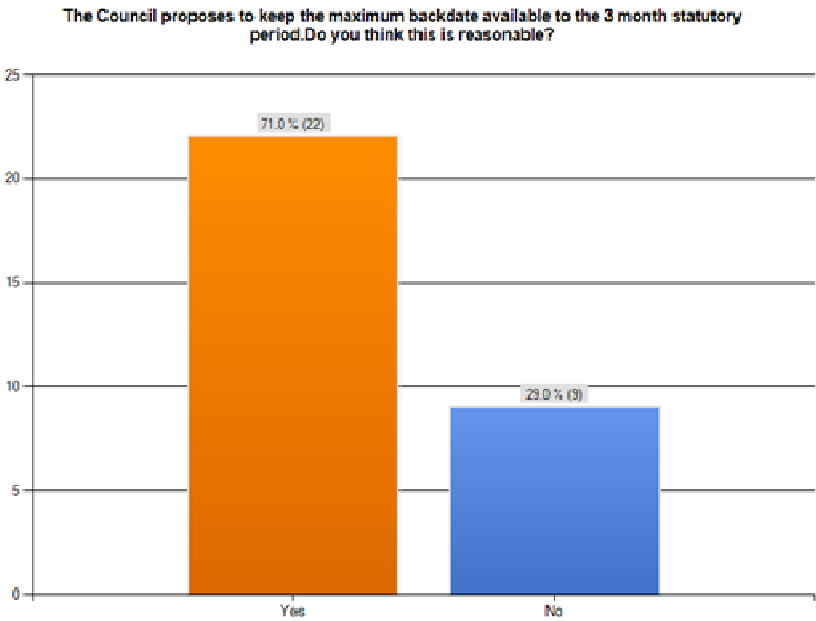
Appendix 2 – Cabinet Report

If answering no, respondents were asked; “Please tell us what you think would be reasonable?” and the following responses were received:

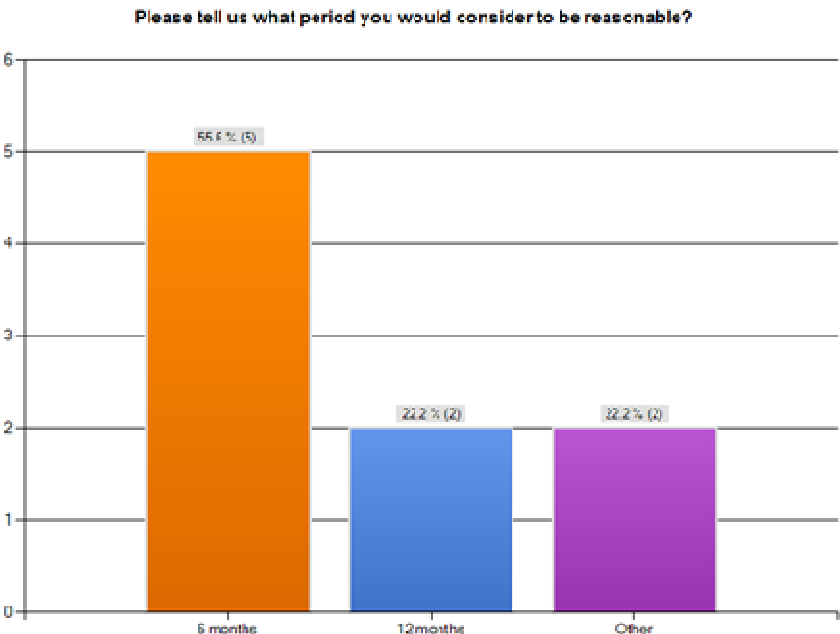
- Nothing
- To count it as part of their income
- I think a £40.00 per week disregard would be reasonable
- They have more disposable income than other households in order to meet their costs. Therefore a standard disregard could apply to the first £30 per week.

Local Discretion 3

The Council proposes to keep the maximum backdate available to the 3 month statutory period. Do you think this is reasonable?



If 'No' please tell us what you would consider to be reasonable?



Of the respondents who ticked other the following supplementary information was provided:

-
- None

 - We strongly believe Council Tax Reductions should be able to be back dated by 6 months if there are reasons for the delay, such as bereavement, mental distress, a hospital or hospice stay, caring for a family member, or disability-related barriers. The circumstances which have led an individual to claim Council Tax Reduction can often be both complex and lead to situations where an individual is struggling to access other entitlements and to continue to afford housing, utilities, water, food and other basic costs. In these situations there may be a delay in applying for Council Tax Reduction, which should be accounted for and 3 months is not sufficient time in some cases. Similarly many disabled people require additional time to complete forms either due to limited energy or time to fill in forms or due to not understanding the information or processes. Time limits can often place these individuals under extreme stress and anxiety and therefore any extension to backdating provisions, in order to account for these barriers and to prevent people falling into poverty and/or debt, is welcome. We would encourage Flintshire County Council to ensure that all individuals applying for Council Tax Reductions, any benefit, or any concern from the Council are signposted to independent professional advocacy to ensure that they are able to understand and complete forms accurately, reducing administration costs for the Council and stress and anxiety for the individuals applying. Accessible formats and community language information, documents and forms should also be proactively provided, including large print, Easy Read and audio documents. This should be in addition to providing all standard documents in Plain English and Cymraeg Clir as the usual format.

 - There are many reasons why backdating is necessary and limiting to 3 months is unfair in genuine cases

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **CABINET**

DATE: **TUESDAY, 21 JANUARY 2014**

REPORT BY: **HEAD OF FINANCE**

SUBJECT: **TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID YEAR REPORT
2013/14**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To present to Members the draft Treasury Management Mid Year Report for 2013/14 for recommendation to Council.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Council delegates responsibility for the implementation and regular monitoring of its treasury management policies and practices to Cabinet, and for the execution and administration of treasury management decisions to the Head of Finance, who acts in accordance with the Council's Policy Statement and Treasury Management Practices.

2.02 The Council has nominated the Audit Committee to be responsible for ensuring the effective scrutiny of the Treasury Management Strategy and Policies.

2.03 On 1st March 2013, the Council approved the Treasury Management Policy Statement 2013-2016, Treasury Management Strategy 2013/14 and Treasury Management Practices 2013-16, following the recommendation of the Cabinet and consideration by the Audit Committee.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The draft Treasury Management Mid Year Report for 2013/14 is attached as Appendix 1 for review.

3.02 Treasury Management updates have been provided to the Audit Committee at each quarterly meeting so far during 2013/14 and the Audit Committee also received this Mid Year update on 18th December 2013.

3.03 The Audit Committee resolved as follows:-

- That the report be noted.

- The Treasury Management Mid Year Report 2013/14 be presented to Cabinet on 21st January 2014.

3.04 In summary, the key points of the Mid Year Report are:

- Performance during the period was broadly in line with the expectations of the TM Strategy 2013/14.
- There are early signs that the recovery of the UK economy is gaining momentum with increased growth but this is against a backdrop of historically low interest rates and a number of global factors with the potential to impact on the recovery as outlined in the economic update in section 3 of report.
- No new borrowing has been undertaken so far during 2013/14, therefore total long term borrowing stands at £172.1m with associated interest costs of £3.506m paid during the 6 month period at an average interest rate of 5.42% as expected.
- Investments in general were made with UK banks and building societies up to periods of 12 months. When appropriate, suitable longer term investments will be made. The average rate of return was 0.6% generating investment income of £0.201m which is broadly in line with budget.
- AAA rated Money Market Funds continue to be utilised. As at 30th September 2013, £14.6m was invested across 3 separate funds.
- The treasury function operated within the limits detailed in the Treasury Management Strategy 2013/14 with one exception; an investment made in early April exceeded the limit with the particular counterparty. The error was identified promptly and immediate action taken to reduce the total invested in accordance with the policy limit. Internal controls have been improved to ensure that such a procedural error will not happen again. Further details in paragraph 7.03 of the Mid Year Report.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That the Cabinet approves and recommends to the Council the Treasury Management Mid Year Report 2013/14.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 As set out in the Mid Year Report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None directly as a result of this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None directly as a result of this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None directly as a result of this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None directly as a result of this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Arlingclose Ltd as Treasury Management Advisers.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Arlingclose Ltd as Treasury Management Advisers.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1 – Draft Treasury Management Mid Year Report 2013/14.

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

**Contact Officer: Liz Thomas – Finance Manager,
Technical Accounting**

Telephone: 01352 702289

Email: liz.thomas@flintshire.gov.uk

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

TREASURY MANAGEMENT

MID YEAR REPORT 2013/14

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.01 To provide members with a mid year update on matters relating to the Council's Treasury Management function.

2.00 BACKGROUND

- 2.01 Treasury management comprises the management of the Council's cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.
- 2.02 The Council's primary objectives for the investment of its surplus funds are to protect the principal sums invested from loss, and to ensure adequate liquidity so that funds are available for expenditure when needed. The generation of investment income to support the provision of local authority services is an important, but secondary, objective.
- 2.03 The Council's policy is to appoint external consultants to provide advice on its treasury management function. The current external adviser is Arlingclose Ltd.
- 2.04 The Council has adopted the 2011 edition of the CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice, which requires the Council to approve a treasury management strategy before the start of each financial year, a mid-year report, and an annual report after the end of each financial year.
- 2.05 In addition, the Welsh Government (WG) Guidance on Local Government Investments recommends that local authorities amend their investment strategies in light of changing internal or external circumstances.
- 2.06 This report fulfils the Council's legal obligation under the Local Government Act 2003 to have regard to both the CIPFA Code and the WG Guidance.
- 2.07 The Council approved the 2013/14 Treasury Management Strategy at its meeting on 1st March 2013.

3.00 ECONOMIC & INTEREST RATE REVIEW APRIL – SEPTEMBER 2013.

Provided by Arlingclose Ltd the Council's Treasury Management advisors.

Growth: The UK economy showed some improvement, with consumer spending boosting growth. GDP for the first quarter of 2013 was +0.3% and for the second quarter was +0.7%. Recent data suggests a similar rate in quarter three. Revisions by the Office of National Statistics to GDP back-data showed the UK

avoided a double-dip recession in 2012, but that the downturn in 2008-09 was deeper than previously estimated. Growth is now still over 3% below its peak back in 2007.

Some positive signs for household spending emerged. The deterioration in real earnings growth (i.e. earnings less inflation) slowed, which implied a slower erosion of purchasing power. Consumer confidence improved. Household savings rates remained high, which is unsurprising given the uncertain economic outlook, but appear to be on a downward track, suggesting spending was being driven by borrowing or lower savings. This raises questions about the sustainability of the recovery at these rates of growth.

Inflation: Annual CPI was 2.8% in July. Inflation rose in line with expectations and is expected to remain close to this level throughout the autumn. Further out, inflation should fall back towards the 2% target as external price pressures fade and a revival in productivity growth curbs domestic cost pressures. The oil price (Brent Crude) climbed above \$100/barrel on the back of political unrest in Egypt and the unresolved crisis in Syria.

Monetary Policy: There was no change to UK monetary policy with official interest rates and asset purchases maintained at 0.5% and £375bn respectively. The main development for UK monetary policy was the start of Mark Carney's tenure as Governor and the implementation of forward guidance. Within the August Inflation Report, the Bank stated its forward guidance, the main element of which is to defer monetary tightening until the ILO Unemployment Rate falls below 7% (among a raft of caveats). The Bank projected that the probability of this happening would remain below 50% until 2016. The Governor has had to defend the Bank's guidance in the face of rising financial market expectations on the back of the encouraging economic data.

In his testimony to Congress on 22nd May the US Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke stated that, if the nascent recovery in the US economy became established, the Fed would reduce its \$85bn monthly asset purchase programme (QE). The apparent movement by the Fed towards tapering its open-ended QE programme prompted extreme asset price volatility in bonds and equities, as investors sought to crystallise gains driven by excessive liquidity. As a consequence, government bond yields spiked. There is a growing expectation that the Federal Reserve will seek to taper asset purchases before the end of the calendar year.

Global: Whilst the outlook for the global economy appeared to have improved over the first half of calendar 2013/14, significant economic risks remain, particularly in China and the Eurozone. The Chinese banking system is facing tighter liquidity conditions as officials seek to slow down rampant credit growth, and, despite the time gained by the ECB to allow individual members and the

Eurozone as a whole to reform their economies, the Eurozone debt crisis has not gone away. The region appears to be dragging itself out of recession and September's German general election passed with little incident but political uncertainties, particularly in Italy, could derail any progress towards a more balanced and stable regional economy. The US recovery appeared to be in train, but a lack of agreement on the federal budget by the end of September caused a partial government shutdown at the start of October, which could have an effect on GDP growth. Political risks also remain regarding the debt ceiling.

Outlook: At the time of writing this activity report in September 2013, the UK economic outlook appears to have improved. The projected path for growth has risen, but remains relatively subdued, with a distinct reliance on household consumption, which itself remains under pressure given the deterioration in real earnings growth, high unemployment and general low confidence.

A variety of other factors will continue to weigh on a domestic recovery, including on-going fiscal consolidation, muted business confidence and subdued foreign demand. While the economic recovery may pick up steam, forward guidance from the Bank of England suggests that monetary policy is unlikely to be tightened until the ILO Unemployment Rate falls below 7%. The Bank projected this level would be reached in 2016.

The table below details the latest forecast for the Bank of England base rate as provided by our advisors Arlingclose:

	Dec 13	Mar 14	Jun 14	Sep 14	Dec 14	Mar 15	Jun 15	Dec 15	Mar 16	Jun 16	Sep 16
Interest Rate	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%

4.00 BORROWING REQUIREMENTS AND DEBT MANAGEMENT

4.01 PWLB (Public Works Loans Board) Certainty Rate Update.

The Authority qualifies for borrowing at the 'Certainty Rate' (0.2% below the PWLB standard rate) for a 12 month period from 1st November 2012. In August the Authority submitted its application to WG along with the 2013-14 Capital Estimates Return to access this reduced rate for a further 12 months from 1st November 2013.

4.02 Borrowing Activity to 30th September 2013.

The total long term borrowing outstanding, brought forward into 2013/14 totalled £172.1 million. Loans with the Public Works Loans Board are in the form of fixed rate (£143.1m) and variable rate (£10m). The remaining £18.95m is variable in the form of Lobo's (Lender's Option, Borrower's Option). The Council's average borrowing rate is currently 5.42%.

	Balance 1/04/2013 £m	Debt Maturing £m	New Debt £m	Balance 30/09/2013 £m
Capital Financing Requirement	184.6			184.6
Long Term Borrowing	172.1	0.00	0.00	172.1
TOTAL BORROWING	172.1	0.00	0.00	172.1
Other Long Term Liabilities	7.4	0.00	0.00	7.4
TOTAL EXTERNAL DEBT	179.5	0.00	0.00	179.5
Increase/ (Decrease) in Borrowing £m				0.0

4.03 The Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) measures the Authority's underlying need to borrow for a capital purpose. The calculation of the CFR is taken from the amounts held in the Balance Sheet relating to capital expenditure and financing.

4.04 No new long term borrowing has been undertaken so far during 2013/14.

Affordability (interest costs charged on new loans) and the "cost of carry" (costs associated with new loans) remain important influences on the Council's borrowing strategy alongside the consideration that, for any borrowing undertaken ahead of need, the proceeds would have to be invested in the money markets at rates of interest significantly lower than the cost of borrowing.

4.05 Loans at Variable Rates

The extent of variable rate borrowing the Council can potentially undertake is influenced by the level of Reserves and Balances. The interest rate on the Council's £10m variable rate loans averaged 0.545%.

The uncertain interest rate outlook further supports the case for maintaining variable rate debt. As the economy still appears unsettled official interest rates are forecast to remain low for much longer, the Council has determined that exposure to variable rates is warranted. It also assists with the affordability and budgetary perspective in the short-to-medium term.

Any upward move in interest rates and interest paid on variable rate debt would be offset by a corresponding increase in interest earned on the Council's variable

rate investments. The interest rate risk associated with the Council's strategic exposure of £10m is regularly reviewed with our treasury advisor against clear reference points, this being a narrowing in the gap between short and longer term interest rates by 0.5%. This strategic exposure to variable interest rates will be regularly reviewed and, if appropriate, reduced by switching into fixed rate loans.

4.06 Internal Borrowing

Given the significant cuts to local government funding putting pressure on Council finances, the strategy will be to minimise debt interest payments without compromising the longer-term stability of the portfolio.

The differential between the cost of new longer-term debt and the return generated on the Council's temporary investment returns was significant at around 3.5%.

The use of internal resources in lieu of borrowing has therefore continued to be the most cost effective means of funding capital expenditure, with £5.1m utilised for this purpose. This has lowered overall treasury risk by reducing both external debt and temporary investments.

The Council acknowledges that this position is not sustainable over the medium term and borrowing options and the timing of such borrowing continue to be assessed, with current expectations that the Council will need to borrow for capital purposes from 2014/15 onwards.

4.07 Lender's Option Borrower's Option Loans (LOBOs)

The option to change the terms on £18.95m of the Council's LOBOs was not exercised by the lender.

4.08 Debt Rescheduling

During the 2nd quarter of 2013/14, consideration was given to a potential opportunity to reschedule some of the Council's debt. Although the increase in PWLB repayment rates during the quarter lowered the premium that would apply on premature redemption of loans, the premia was still expensive, therefore unattractive for debt rescheduling activity. No rescheduling activity was undertaken as a consequence.

The Head of Finance, in conjunction with the Council's treasury advisors will continue to review any potential opportunities for restructuring the Council's debt in order to take advantage of potential savings as interest rates change and to enhance the balance of the long term portfolio (amend the maturity profile and/or the balance of volatility).

5.0 INTERIM INVESTMENT AND PERFORMANCE REPORT

- 5.01 The Welsh Government's Investment Guidance gives priority to security and liquidity and the Authority's aim is to achieve a yield commensurate with these principles.
- 5.02 The maximum investments the Authority had on deposit at any one time totalled £83.3m. The average investment balance for the period was £71.1m and the average rate of return was 0.60%, generating investment income of £212k. The investment income received for the reporting period exceeded the budgeted figure of £201k by £11k.
- 5.03 Investments have been made with UK banks and building societies up to periods of 12 months, as well as utilising investment opportunities afforded by money market funds, instant access accounts, Debt Management Office and other Local Authorities.
- 5.04 The average debt balance held was £172.1m and the average rate paid was 5.42%, generating interest payable of £3.506m in line with budget forecasts.

	Investments		Borrowing	
	Interest received £'000	Interest rate %	Interest paid £'000	Interest rate %
Actual	212	0.60	3,506	5.42
Budget	201	0.60	3,506	5.42
Difference	+11	-	-	-

5.06 *Credit Risk (security)*

Counterparty credit quality was assessed and monitored with reference to credit ratings; credit default swaps; GDP of the country in which the institution operates; the country's net debt as a percentage of GDP; any potential support mechanisms and share price. The minimum long-term counterparty credit rating outlined in the 2013/14 Treasury Management Strategy was A-/A3/A- across rating agencies Fitch, S&P and Moody's.

Counterparty Update (provided by Arlingclose Ltd)

In April Fitch downgraded the UK's long-term sovereign rating by one notch from AAA to AA+, the second of the rating agencies to do so (Moody's had downgraded the UK's ratings in February to Aa1). Where assigned, local authorities' ratings, which benefit from an uplift due to their close and direct links to central government, were also downgraded.

The proposed sale of 632 Lloyds' branches to the Co-op Bank – referred to as Project Verde – fell through in April. These branches were transferred in September to TSB Bank, a new bank which will be sold through a listing on the stock market in 2014.

In the Chancellor's Mansion House speech on 19th June he signalled his intention to sell the government's stake in the Lloyds Banking Group reasonably soon and a 6% stake was indeed sold to institutional investors on 17th September at a price of 75p. The situation was more complicated with RBS since its problems were greater and reflected in its share price. It appeared that a 'good bank' and 'bad bank' split for RBS was being favoured by the Chancellor and sat behind the announcement concerning the departure of RBS Chief Executive, Stephen Hester, who disagreed with that route.

Moody's placed the RBS's long-term of A3 on review for downgrade on 5th July 2013, amid concerns about the impact of any potential breakup of the bank on creditors. Although the probability of losses remains low there is a possibility of capital impairment especially as the government has clearly indicated that it will not put up any further taxable funds. As a precautionary measure the Council has reduced its maximum duration on RBS investments to overnight.

5.07 *Liquidity*

In keeping with the WAG's Government's Guidance on Investments, the Council maintained a sufficient level of liquidity through the use of Money Market Funds and call accounts.

5.08 *Yield*

The Council sought to optimise returns commensurate with its objectives of security and liquidity. The Council's investment yield is outlined in 5.02.

6.00 UPDATE ON INVESTMENTS WITH ICELANDIC BANKS

6.01 The Winding up Board of Landsbanki made distributions to the Council as a priority creditor, in February, May and October 2012 totaling £1.76m. A fourth distribution was made in September 2013 bringing the total received to date to £1.95m.

6.02 The Winding Up Board published details of Landsbanki's (LBI's) financial position as at 31st December 2012 on its website. This showed that LBI's assets, including partial repayments already made in respect of priority claims were

greater than the sum of the priority claims. It is therefore still considered likely that UK local authorities will recover 100% of their deposits, although this is still subject to potential future exchange rate fluctuations, which will have an effect on the total amount recovered. The final impact on the Council will not be known until the distribution process is completed which is not likely to be concluded for some years yet.

7.00 COMPLIANCE

- 7.01 The Council can confirm that it has complied with its Prudential Indicators for the period April to September 2013. These were approved on 1st March 2013 as part of the Council's 2013/14 Treasury Management Strategy.
- 7.02 In compliance with the requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice this report provides members with a summary report of the treasury management activity during the period April – September 2013/14. None of the Prudential Indicators have been breached and a prudent approach has been taken in relation to investment activity with priority being given to security and liquidity over yield.
- 7.03 The treasury function operated within the limits detailed in the 2013/14 Treasury Management Strategy with one exception. The 2013/14 strategy permits investing with counterparties rated at A- for a maximum period of 6 months and a limit of £5m per counterparty (in 2012/13 the strategy was to invest with counterparties rated A or above with a limit of £7m per counterparty).

On the 3rd April 2013 an 'on-call account' investment of £7m was made with a counterparty rated by Moody's at A-, which therefore breached our investment criteria. This was a procedural issue and no loss was incurred by the Council as a consequence. Once the error was discovered action was taken immediately to reduce the investment to the agreed limit of £5m and working practices have since been strengthened.

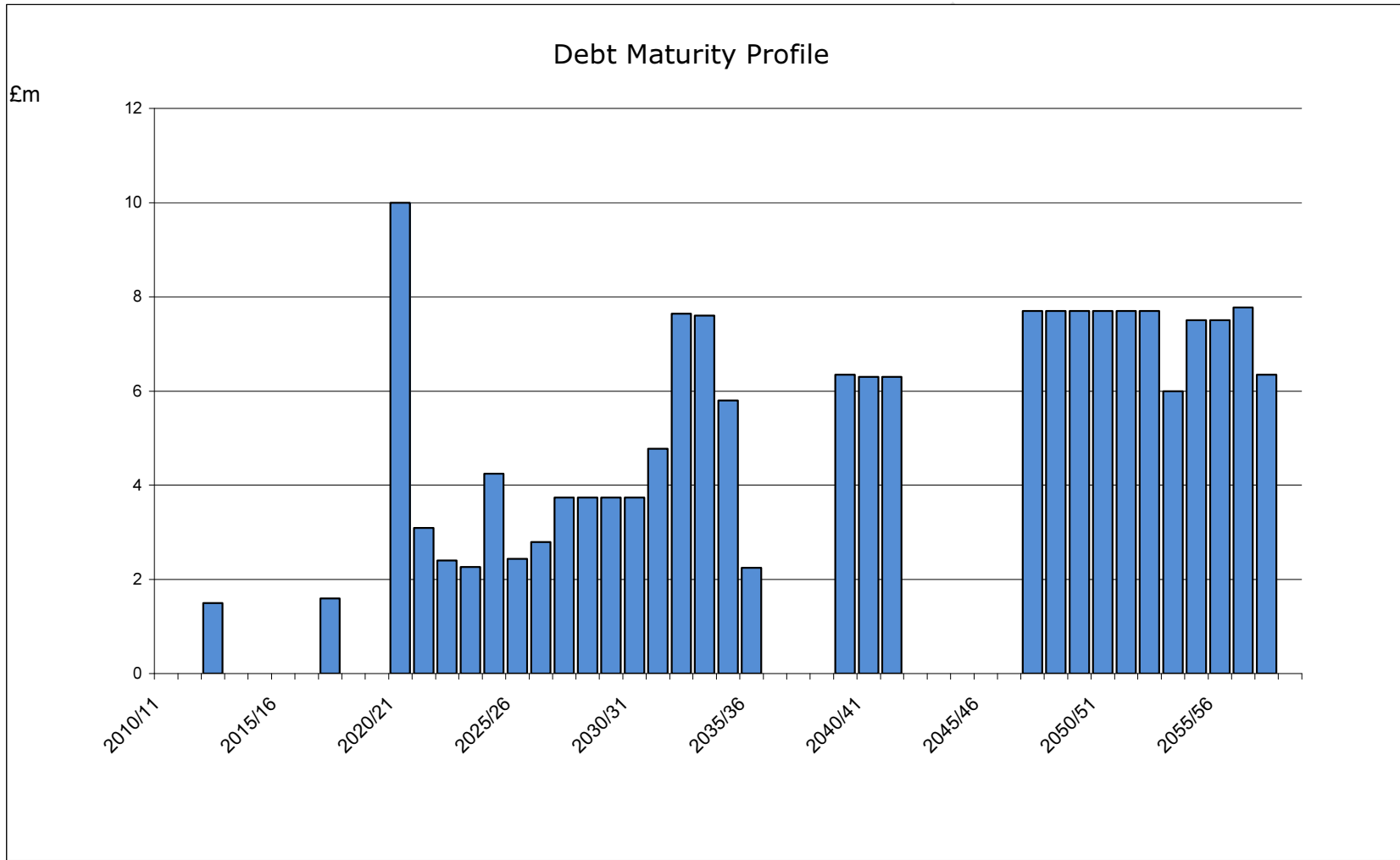
8.00 OTHER ITEMS

- 8.01 Other treasury management related activity that took place during April – September 2013 includes:
- The Head of Finance received a monthly update on treasury activities.
 - The Treasury Management Annual Report 2012/13 was reported to Audit Committee in July. Cabinet and Council reviewed and approved the report during September.
 - Quarterly Treasury Management updates were reported to the Audit Committee.
 - The Council continues to be an active member of both the CIPFA Treasury Management Forum and the CIPFA Benchmarking Club.

- Internal Audit reviewed the treasury management function and concluded that in their opinion the operation provides a substantial level of assurance.
- The treasury management team are currently assessing the merits of an alternative IT system for recording all treasury management activity. Further updates will be provided in future reports to the Audit Committee.

9.00 CONCLUSION

- 9.01 In compliance with the requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice this report provides members with a summary report of the treasury management activity during the first half of 2013/14.
- 9.02 As indicated in this report none of the Prudential Indicators have been breached and a prudent approach has been taken in relation to investment activity with priority being given to security and liquidity over yield.



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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **CABINET**

DATE: **TUESDAY, 21 JANUARY 2014**

REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT**

SUBJECT: **CHARGING FOR RE-RATING INSPECTIONS CARRIED OUT UNDER THE FOOD HYGIENE RATING (WALES) ACT 2013**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To provide details of the new legislation and to seek approval for the delegation of powers and the setting of fees.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Act 2013 received Royal Assent in March 2013. The Regulations that implement this Act, namely, the Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Regulations 2013, came in to force on 28th November 2013.

2.02 The Act requires food businesses that have received a food hygiene rating sticker under the new Regulations to display the sticker in a conspicuous place.

2.03 This Act is a stand alone Act and is separate from all other Food Hygiene offences. This Act is also separate from all other Food Hygiene Formal Enforcement such as Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notices and Hygiene Improvement Notices, which are within EU Regulations.

2.04 The Act creates several new offences, namely:

- Failure to display a valid sticker in the location and manner prescribed on the Regulations
- Displaying an invalid sticker
- Failing to retain a valid sticker
- Parting with possession of a sticker to any other person than an Authorised Officer of the Local Authority
- Denying a person's requests to be informed verbally
- Giving false or misleading information
- Intentionally altering, defacing or tampering with a sticker other than for the purpose of removing it for specific purposes detailed in the Act.

2.05 Penalties

Any person guilty of the offences listed above can be fined up to £1000 for each offence. However, the Act allows for officers to issue Fixed Penalty Notices, giving the person an opportunity of discharging their liability to conviction. The penalties prescribed within Act for Fixed Penalty Notices are:

- £200 to be paid within 28 days of the penalty notice being given
- £150 for early payment i.e. within 14 days

Fixed Penalty Notices will be issued in line with the Public Protection Enforcement Policy. Welsh Government have also put forward a six month leniency period before any Fixed Penalty Notices are issued.

2.06 The new legislation applies to the prescribed new sticker only. The old sticker, issued under the non-mandatory scheme, becomes obsolete within 18 months.

2.07 As a safeguard to businesses, the Act provides a mechanism by which they can apply to be re-rated before their next programmed inspection date. Programmed inspections are carried out at frequencies dictated by the Food Law Code of Practice and can be between 6 months for most high risk premises up to 3 years for low risk premises.

2.08 The Act also allows Local Authorities to charge for the carrying out of visits to food businesses for the purpose of re-rating them. These visits are called Rescore Visits.

2.09 Local Authorities can not charge for the initial inspection which generates the Rating as this is an Official Control under Food Hygiene legislation. We can not currently charge for Official Controls.

2.10 If a request for a re-rating has been made by an operator of a food business establishment, there are certain duties placed on a Local Authority:

- The food authority must calculate the reasonable costs of the re-rating.
- Before carrying out the re-rating, the food authority must inform the operator of the costs of the re-rating and the way the costs have been calculated.
- An operator of a food business establishment must pay the costs of the re-rating.
- A food authority may require payment in advance of the re-rating being carried out.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The Act allows Local Authorities to charge for a Rescore Visit such that reasonable costs for administering this process, including the cost of actually undertaking the re-visit, can be recovered from the person requesting the re-rating.

3.02 Welsh Heads of Environmental Health Group “All Wales Food Safety Technical Panel” has put forward a calculation for costing of a Rescore Visit. This is with the aim of providing a single fee level for all types and sizes of food businesses.

3.03 This calculation gives a charge of £150 per Rescore visit.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That Cabinet agrees to the £150 Rescore Charge recommended by the Welsh Heads of Environmental Health “All Wales Food Technical Panel”.

4.02 That Cabinet delegates authority to review the fee level in the future to the Director of Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Public Protection, Waste and Recycling.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 The charge for re-rating of £150 will result in some additional income. The current level of requests for rescoring is around 80 per year. If this level continues, this should see an income generation of around £12,000 per annum.

5.02 If the request for rescore level remains at a similar level seen over the last 2 years, the current resource should be able to absorb this work. However, if the level increases significantly, additional resource may be required. Therefore, the number of requests for rescoring received will be monitored closely and resource levels reviewed on a regular basis.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 None.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 None.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None.

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

Contact Officer: Miss H E Roberts
Telephone: 01352 703390
Email: h.roberts@flintshire.gov.uk

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **CABINET**

DATE: **TUESDAY, 21 JANUARY 2014**

REPORT BY: **HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

SUBJECT: **ELEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE FLINTSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 For Cabinet, on behalf of the County Council, to note and approve the eleventh annual report of the Flintshire Local Access Forum, prepared in accordance with Regulation 16 of the Countryside Access (Local Access Forums) (Wales) Regulations 2001.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Flintshire Local Access Forum was established in 2002 by the County Council in accordance with the provisions of the above Regulations. It is a requirement of those Regulations that an annual report be prepared and approved by the County Council which must include the following:-

(i) information relating to the Forum's functions during the twelve month period ending on 31st March in each year, and

(ii) a programme of works which has been agreed between the Forum and the County Council which the Forum plans to undertake during the twelve months commencing immediately after 31st March in each year.

2.02 Appended to this report is the draft report (excluding the minutes of the Forum meetings which are at Appendix 4) for the period 1st April 2012 to 31st March 2013 as prepared by the Forum Secretary, David M. Davies, who is a solicitor employed in my Department. Copies of the draft report, with all the accompanying appendices, are available in the Group Rooms. The format of the report follows the advice issued by the former Countryside Council for Wales (now Natural Resources Wales (NRW)). The draft report has already been considered at a meeting of the Forum on 30th September 2013, when it was agreed that it should be submitted to the County Council for approval.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The Forum's eleventh annual report follows the format of the previous annual reports. It has been completed in accordance with the guidance issued by NRW regarding the preparation of annual reports.

3.02 NRW will maintain a central record of annual reports of all the local access forums in Wales. A copy of the appended report, once approved, will be sent to NRW.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That the eleventh annual report of the Flintshire Local Access Forum, for 2012/2013, be noted and approved by Cabinet, on behalf of the County Council, and be submitted to Natural Resources Wales for their records.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 There are costs associated with the administration of the Local Access Forum. Those costs are met from the Environment Directorate's budget.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 Under the terms of the 2000 Act, the function of the Forum is to advise the County Council, Welsh Government and the Countryside Council as to the improvement of public access to land in the area for the purposes of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 None.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 The report has already been submitted to the Local Access Forum.

12.00 APPENDICES

Draft eleventh annual report of the Flintshire Local Access Forum.

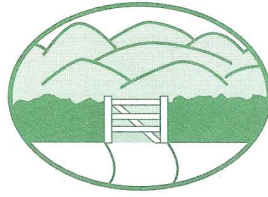
LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.

Contact Officer: David M. Davies, Principal Solicitor
Telephone: 01352 702325
Email: david_m_davies@flintshire.gov.uk

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**Flintshire
Local Access
Forum**



**Fforwm
Mynediad Lleol
Sir y Fflint**

*Established under the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000
Sefydlwyd o dan y Ddeddf Cefn Gwlad a Hawliau Tramwy 2000*

FLINTSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM ELEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT 2012/13

Prepared in accordance with
Regulation 16 of the Countryside Access (Local Access Forums)
(Wales) Regulations 2001
(approved by Flintshire County Council on ?????????)

[as submitted to and agreed by
the Flintshire Local Access Forum on 30th September 2013]

FLINTSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

ELEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT 2012/13

INTRODUCTION

1. The Flintshire Local Access Forum was established for the whole of the geographical area of Flintshire on 14th October 2002. Flintshire County Council had a statutory duty to establish the Forum as required by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. The statutory function of the Forum is to advise the County Council, Natural Resources Wales (formerly the Countryside Council for Wales) and others as to the improvement of public access to land in the area for the purposes of open air recreation and the enjoyment of the area. All meetings of the Forum are open to the public.
2. The present Forum membership was appointed with effect from 16th January 2012 for a period of three years.
3. This is the eleventh annual report of the Forum.

THE STATUTORY FUNCTIONS OF THE FORUM

3. The Forum was not consulted during the year in relation to any of its statutory functions.

OTHER MATTERS CONSIDERED BY THE FORUM

4. The following matters were considered by the Forum during the year:-

Topic Considered : Dates Considered : Summary :	All Wales Coastal Path/Coastal Access. 23 rd April 2012, 9 th July 2012, 1 st October 2012, & 14 th January 2013. The Forum was advised of progress on the Wales Coastal Access Improvement Plan.
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Topic Considered : Dates Considered : Summary :	Flintshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP). 23 rd April 2012, 9 th July 2012, 1 st October 2012, & 14 th January 2013. The Forum was advised of progress on the implementation of the ROWIP.
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Topic Considered : Dates Considered : Summary :	Cycling Provision in Flintshire. 23 rd April 2012, 9 th July 2012, 1 st October 2012, & 14 th January 2013. Updates were presented to the Forum.
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Topic Considered : Dates Considered : Summary :	Involvement of Town and Community Councils in Public Rights of Way Maintenance. 23 rd April 2012, 9 th July 2012, 1 st October 2012, & 14 th January 2013. The Forum sought to encourage the County Council to persuade town and community councils to have greater involvement in preserving, enhancing and promoting the public rights of way network, and agreed to establish a Forum committee to consider the matter further. Meetings took place with town/community councils which led to the identification of potential projects.
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Topic Considered :	Review of the Maps of Access Land Prepared Under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.
Date Considered :	23 rd April 2012 & 9 th July 2012.
Summary :	The Forum received a presentation from Molly Lovatt, Access and Recreation Officer, Countryside Council of Wales and decided to establish a sub-group to consider the revised maps.

Topic Considered :	<i>Linking Flintshire Communities</i> project
Date Considered :	23 rd April 2012, 9 th July 2012, & 14 th January 2013.
Summary :	Updates were presented to the Forum.

Topic Considered :	Public Rights of Way and Level Crossings.
Date Considered :	23 rd April 2012.
Summary :	The Forum received a presentation from Christine Booth and Richard Hayden, Network Rail Operations Risk Control Co-ordinators for Wales, regarding the raising of awareness regarding the issues about public rights of way crossings railway lines.

Topic Considered :	Consultation on Active Travel (Wales) Bill.
Dates Considered :	9 th July 2012.
Summary :	The Forum considered a response to the above consultation by Welsh Government.

Topic Considered :	Approval of the Tenth Annual Report of the Forum.
Date Considered :	14 th January 2013.
Summary :	The Forum agreed the contents of the draft report for submission to the County Council for approval.

Topic Considered :	Disability Issues.
Date Considered :	14 th January 2013.
Summary :	The Forum received a presentation from Stephanie Aldridge, the County Council's Assistant Policy Equalities/Access Officer.

PROGRAMME OF WORKS FOR THE COMING YEAR (2012/13)

5. Regulation 16(2)(b) of the Countryside Access (Local Access Forums) (Wales) Regulations 2001 requires the annual report to include a programme of works which has been agreed between the Forum and the County Council which the Forum plans to undertake during the twelve months commencing after 31st March in each year.
6. The County Council has advised the Forum that it will seek advice from the Forum in relation to the following matters in the forthcoming year:-
 - Rights of Way Improvement Plan
 - cycling provision in Flintshire
 - *Linking Flintshire Communities* project
7. The Forum has already been advised by Natural Resources Wales that it will be consulted upon the matters set out on the following table supplied by NRW:-

CYFOETH NATURIOL CYMRU / NATURAL RESOURCES WALES
LOCAL ACCESS FORUMS – WORK PLANS 2013/ 2014

The following are matters that Natural Resources Wales & Welsh Government anticipate that they will refer to LAFs during the year. This is for guidance only and may change to reflect work priorities. **It should not be taken as definitive.** In addition Local Authorities and National Park authorities will refer matters to LAFs. LAF members themselves should also be encouraged to put forward agenda items.

	Referred by	Approx Timing	Nature of Referral	Which LAFs?
ROWIP Monitoring Implementation	NRW	Ongoing	Work with local authorities to support and monitor the implementation of the provisions of ROWIPs. The 2km coastal zone continues to be eligible for ROWIP funding in 2013/14.	All
ROWIP Evaluation	NRW	Summer 2013	Research is being undertaken by a contractor this year to evaluate ROWIP implementation, the ROWIP Funding Programme and make recommendations to Welsh Government on future support for the management of rights of way and related access. As part of the research we expect the contractor to seek views of LAFs.	All LAF Chairs
Review of LAF Working Practices	NRW	Summer 2013 for 3 months	NRW would like to collate information on how LAFs are operating in order to identify how administration, guidance and support can be improved to help LAFs become more effective. There will be a questionnaire for LAF secretaries and questions for LAFs to discuss at a meeting.	All

	Referred by	Approx Timing	Nature of Referral	Which LAFs?
Wales Coast Path	WG/NRW	Ongoing	Work with coastal local authorities and the 2 national parks (SNP and PCNP) to further develop, enhance and promote the WCP and associated community links.	Those with coastal areas
Review of Open Access Draft Map	NRW	August – November 2013	Take an active interest in the provisional map stage of the review of open access land, disseminating information about the process to relevant local groups/individuals that members may be involved with. At the provisional map stage only those with a legal interest in the land can appeal to the Planning Inspectorate if they feel land is shown incorrectly.	All
Glastir Advance	WG	Ongoing	Review and update proposals to proposed permissive access maps on an annual basis which should include access to woodlands.	All
Wales Legislative Programme	WG	Ongoing	To engage in consultation and discussion over the development new legislation impacting on opportunities for access and outdoor recreation. To assist Welsh Government, local authorities and other partners in the implementation of new legislative provisions on access and outdoor recreation.	All

	Referred by	Approx Timing	Nature of Referral	Which LAFs?
Outdoor Wales online (OWoL)	NRW	Ongoing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support the use and promotion of CCW's Outdoor Wales onLine (OWoL) interactive map which local authorities can use to promote access, recreational sites and associated facilities in their area. 2. Work with local authorities to contribute routes and sites in their areas to OWoL, including the development of smart phone technology 3. Consider opportunities to promote OWoL in their local areas. 	All
Access to water	WG/NRW	Ongoing	<p>Take an active interest in promoting access to water agreements. It would be helpful if LAF considered potential areas for new or improved access to water (lakes rivers and the coast) and identified any obvious barriers that could be resolved</p> <p>Provide support for adding any new access to inland water opportunities to the interactive maps on OWoL.</p>	All

	Referred by	Approx Timing	Nature of Referral	Which LAFs?
Improving Local Environment	WG/NRW	2014-2015 (if confirmed)	LAFs to identify and draw to the attention of local authorities urban green space sites which might be considered for bids for funds from the Tranquil, Greener and Cleaner programme of the Welsh Government, to improve the local environment should that programme be confirmed for the 2014/2015 financial year. http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/epq/cleanneighbour/greenerplaces/?lang=en	All
Countryside Code Campaign	NRW	Ongoing	Many thanks to the LAFs for inputting into the refresh of the Countryside Code and the creation of the 1 st three activity codes (canoeing, angling and wild swimming). A further three activity codes will be created in 2013/14. At present the subjects being considered are dog walking, sea angling and sea kayaking. LAF involvement in the consultation on these codes would be gratefully received.	All
Suggested other areas of work for LAFs to get involved with which aren't directly managed by WG & NRW				
Green Flag/Green Flag Community Award	WG/NRW	Ongoing	Suggest public green spaces managed by local authorities, corporate organisations and community groups that could be eligible for this award which recognises and publicises the best parks and recreational areas in the country. http://www.keepbritaintidy.org/GreenFlag/	All

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL DETAILS

8. The details of the County Council are set out in Appendix 1 to this report, and are substantially unchanged from the previous annual reports.

DETAILS OF MEETINGS OF THE FORUM

9. The date and venues of meetings of the Forum are set out in Appendix 2 to this report.

MEMBERSHIP DETAILS

10. The present Forum consists of 14 Members, including the Chair and Deputy Chair who were appointed with effect from 16th January 2012 (one member who ceased to be a member as he became a Flintshire county councillor was reappointed as its representative on the Forum – see Appendix 3).
11. Brief details of all persons who have served as Members of the Forum during 2012/13 are set out in Appendix 3 to this report.

FORUM COMMITTEES

12. At its meeting on 15th May 2006, the Forum established the Maintenance Priorities Committee. Its purpose is to provide to Flintshire County Council a prioritised list of public rights of way requiring maintenance works, in order to inform the County Council's budget preparations, based upon criteria agreed with the appropriate Council officers. The Committee was reconstituted at the Forum meeting on 26th January 2009. However, it was agreed at the Forum meeting on 11th July 2011 that the work of the Committee be combined with the County Council's ROWIP Working Group.
13. At its meeting on 11th October 2010, the Forum established the Engagement with Town and Community Councils Committee to enhance local awareness of public rights of way, as more specifically set out in the minutes of that meeting.

14. A meeting of the Committee was held on 18th February 2011. It was reconstituted at the Forum meeting on 6th February 2012.

MINUTES OF THE FORUM

15. Copies of the approved minutes of the four meetings of the Forum held during the year are set out in Appendix 4 to this report.

COSTS OF THE FORUM

16. The costs of the Forum during the year are shown in summary below:-

Cost Heading	Cost 2012/13
	£
Officer time (estimated)	6,088.66
Room Hire, Refreshments and lunches	221.08
Members' and Secretary's Travelling Expenses	264.00
Printing, postage and sundries	118.47
Translation	748.11

18. The above costs are paid for from the budget of the Environment Directorate of the County Council.

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL DETAILS

The appointing authority for the Flintshire Local Access Forum is Flintshire County Council. The area covered by the Forum is the whole of the County of Flintshire.

The Secretary of the Forum is:-

David M. Davies
Principal Solicitor
Corporate Directorate
Flintshire County Council
County Hall
Mold
Flintshire CH7 6NR

Telephone: 01352 702325
Fax: 01352 700289
e-mail : david.m.davies@flintshire.gov.uk

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DETAILS OF MEETINGS

Meetings of the Forum took place on the following dates, the venue on each occasion being either the Clwyd or the Delyn Committee Room at County Hall, Mold:-

23rd April 2012,

9th July 2012,

1st October 1012, and

14th January 2013.

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DETAILS OF MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the Forum during 2012/13 was as follows :-

Name	Date Appointed to LAF	Date LAF Membership Terminated	Date Reappointed (if applicable)	Brief Background Details
Mrs. Alison Chamberlain	5.12.05	22.12.11	16.1.12	Stud owner and horse rider. British Horse Society member.
Mrs. Vera Darby	16.1.12	N/A	N/A	Retired teacher. Owner of agricultural holding. Access and bridleways officer for British Horse Society.
Councillor David Evans (previously a member but appointment terminated when elected as a Flintshire county councillor: subsequently appointed by Flintshire CC as its representative)	16.1.12	7.5.12	11.6.12	Appointed by Flintshire County Council as its representative. Previously Parliamentary caseworker. Walker and cyclist. Member and chair of several councils.
Mr. Bryan Harrison (Deputy Chair: appointed 26.1.09 & 6.2.12)	5.12.05	22.12.11	16.1.12	Chairman, Flintshire Disability Forum and Flintshire Access Group. Member of Access Panel for Wales.
Mr. Neville Howell	16.1.12	N/A	N/A	Retired systems and planning director for steel processing company within British Steel. Volunteer walk leader for <i>Troedio Clwyd Walks</i> . Past Acting Sec. of Friends of Walkabout Flintshire. Volunteer footpath worker for Ramblers' Association. Member of various groups.

Name	Date Appointed to LAF	Date LAF Membership Terminated	Date Reappointed (if applicable)	Brief Background Details
Mr. David M. Hýtch	5.12.05	22.12.11	16.1.12	Retired teacher. Experienced mountain walker. Volunteer ranger – SUSTRANS. Volunteer warden – RSPB. Member of Deeside Naturalists. Member of Friends of Rhydymwyn Valley.
Mr. Michael Moriarty	16.1.12	N/A	N/A	Retired police officer. Community councillor. Walker.
Mr. P. John Richards	22.12.08	22.12.11	16.1.12	Retired former Head of Flintshire CC Countryside Service.
Dr. Jean Rosenfeld (Chair from 16.1.06: reappointed 26.1.09 & 6.2.12)	5.12.05	22.12.11	16.1.12	Research Scientist (renewable energy, solar). Past Chair of Clwyd/Flintshire branch of CPRW.
Mr. Barry Scragg	16.1.12	N/A	N/A	Retired trade union official. Walker. Member of Holywell Town Council.
Mr. Howard White	14.10.02	22.12.11	16.1.12	Self-employed Planning Consultant, Member of the Ramblers' Association, Open Spaces Society, North Wales Wildlife Trust, National Trust, SUSTRANS and Forestry and Timber Association.

Name	Date Appointed to LAF	Date LAF Membership Terminated	Date Reappointed (if applicable)	Brief Background Details
Mr. E. Gareth Williams	22.12.08	22.12.11	16.1.12	Retired. Member of Halkyn Graziers' Association. Nominated by the Association.
Miss Janet O. Williams	22.12.08	22.12.11	16.1.12	Retired. British Driving Society Commissioner for NE Wales/N Powys. Chair of Coed Llandegla Carriage Driving & Horse Riding Association.
Mr. John Woolley	16.1.12	N/A	N/A	Geologist and environmentalist and engineer by training. Member of Buckley Town Council.
Councillor Matt Wright	20.5.08	11.6.12	N/A	Appointed by Flintshire County Council as its representative. Executive Member for Regeneration and Tourism.

Copies of the approved minutes for the meetings on:-

23rd April 2012 (Appendix 4A),

9th July 2012 (Appendix 4B),

1st October 2012 (Appendix 4C), and

14th January 2013 (Appendix 4D),

are enclosed.

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FOR INFORMATION

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **CABINET**

DATE: **TUESDAY, 21 JANUARY 2014**

REPORT BY: **CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

SUBJECT: **EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To inform Members of action taken under delegated powers.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 At the Executive Meeting held on 31st October, 2000 it was agreed that one of the standard agenda items at each Executive should be a report on the "Exercise of Delegated Powers".

3.00 RECOMMENDATION

3.01 Members note the details of actions taken under the "Exercise of Delegated Powers".

4.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.01 As detailed in each report.

5.00 ANTI-POVERTY IMPACT

5.01 As detailed in each report.

6.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

6.01 As detailed in each report.

7.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

7.01 As detailed in each report.

8.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

8.01 As detailed in each report

9.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

9.01 Not applicable

10.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

10.01 Not applicable

11.00 APPENDICES

11.01 Summary of Decisions taken under Delegated Powers.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background documents: See individual report.

Contact Officer: Detailed on the individual reports.

APPENDIX 1

EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS – DECISIONS TAKEN

<u>Directorate</u>	<u>Subject</u>
Corporate Services	Business Rates – Application for Hardship Rate Relief Business Rates – Write Offs
Community Services	Entering into a private sector leasing agreement for a 7 bedroom property in Queensferry to provide interim accommodation for individuals who have been homeless
Environment	Disposal of car park adjacent to Buckley Town Council Offices The sale of two areas of land adjacent Bryn Coch House and Flint Filling Station, Mold Road, Flint Englefield Avenue / Linden Avenue / Celyn Avenue – proposed traffic calming
Lifelong Learning	Leisure Services Tariff 2014 Leisure Services Re-structure

Copies of the Delegated Powers reports are on deposit in the Team Manager's Room, Committee Services

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**FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME ITEMS
COUNCIL, CABINET, AUDIT AND OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
JANUARY 2014 TO JUNE 2014**

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
January					
Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee	8 January 2014	Housing	Housing Asset Management Strategy To consider stock investment and proposals to provide high quality sustainable housing stock to meeting the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS).		
Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee	8 January 2014	Housing	Tenant Satisfaction Survey Results and Action Plan To consider the tenant satisfaction survey results and benchmark them with the last independent survey and agree an action plan to address any issues identified.		Agenda Annex

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee	8 January 2014	Housing	<p>Anti-Social Behaviour and Neighbourhood Management To consider progress in delivering the revised Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy.</p>		
Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee	8 January 2014	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Forward Work Programme To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee.</p>		
Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	9 January 2014	Community Services	<p>Home Enhanced Care Scheme To receive an update regarding the implementation of HECS in Flintshire</p>		
Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	9 January 2014	Community Services	<p>Integrated Family Support Service To receive a progress report post implementation of the Integrated Family Support Service across Flintshire and Wrexham.</p>		

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	9 January 2014	Community Services	<p>Collaborative Projects update To receive a progress report on projects and services running collaboratively across North Wales</p>		
Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	9 January 2014	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Social & Health Care Forward Work Programme To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Social and Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee</p>		
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	16 January 2014	Finance	<p>Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 7) To provide Members with the Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 7) report.</p>		
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	16 January 2014	Finance	<p>Council Tax Reduction Scheme Approval of a Council Tax Reduction Scheme within prescribed requirements and local discretions for 2014/15</p>		

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	16 January 2014	Chief Executive's	<p>Improvement Assessment Letter from the Auditor General for Wales To receive the Improvement Assessment Letter from the Auditor General for Wales and note the Council's Response</p>		
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	16 January 2014	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Feedback from consideration of Improvement and Performance Plans Consultation</p>		
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	16 January 2014	Finance	<p>Council Tax and Business Rate Policies 2014-15 For Overview and Scrutiny members to review various policies for the administration of Council Tax and Business Rates for the financial year 2014-15</p>		

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	16 January 2014	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Corporate Resources Forward Work Programme To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee.</p>		
Community Profile & Partnerships Overview & Scrutiny Committee	20 January 2014	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Presentation by the Red Cross To receive a presentation by the Red Cross</p>		
Community Profile & Partnerships Overview & Scrutiny Committee	20 January 2014	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Community Profile & Partnerships Forward Work Programme To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Community Profile and Partnerships Overview & Scrutiny Committee</p>		

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Cabinet	21 January 2014	Finance	Council Fund Revenue Budget 2014/15 To present initial budget proposals for the Council Fund 2014/15 for approval and presentation to Overview & Scrutiny Committees later in January 2014.	Strategic	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance
Cabinet	21 January 2014	Finance	Housing Revenue Account 2014/15 & Capital Programme 2014/15 To consider the Housing Revenue Accounts (HRA) budget, Revenue Budget proposals for 2014/15 financial year and budget proposals for the HRA Capital Programme 2014/15.	Strategic	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance
Cabinet	21 January 2014	Chief Executive's	Improvement Assessment letter from Wales Audit Office Receipt of Improvement Assessment letter from the Auditor General for Wales and endorse the Council's response	Strategic	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Cabinet	21 January 2014	Finance	<p>Council Fund Capital Programme 2014/15 and Indicative to 2017/18</p> <p>To propose the allocation of funding to the core capital programme in 2014/15 (with indicative allocations for future years). Provide information on the total capital programme, including schemes financed from other sources such as Government grants, Prudential and other borrowing.</p>	Strategic	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance
Cabinet	21 January 2014	Community Services	<p>Double Click & the case to progress to a social enterprise</p> <p>This report has been developed to seek Cabinet approval to progress Double Click to a Social Enterprise in 2014.</p>	Strategic	Cabinet Member for Social Services

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Cabinet	21 January 2014	Finance	<p>Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 7) To provide Members with the most up to date revenue budget monitoring information (Month 7) for the Council Fund and the Housing Revenue Account 2013/14.</p>	Operational	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance
Cabinet	21 January 2014	Finance	<p>Council Tax and Business Rate Policies 2014-15 For Members to approve various policies for the administration of Council Tax and Business Rates</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management
Cabinet	21 January 2014	Finance	<p>Council Tax Reduction Scheme To approve a Council Tax Reduction Scheme within prescribed requirements and local discretions for 2014/15.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Cabinet	21 January 2014	Finance	Treasury Management Mid Year Report 2013/14 To present the 2013/14 mid year report on the Council's Treasury Management Strategy.	Operational	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance
Cabinet	21 January 2014	ICT and Customer Services	Customer Services Strategy Update To provide an update on progress with the implementation of the Customer Services Strategy.	Strategic	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management
Cabinet	21 January 2014	Legal and Democratic Services	Eleventh Annual Report of the Flintshire Local Access Forum For Cabinet, on behalf of the County Council, to note and approve the eleventh annual report of the Flintshire Local Access Forum, prepared in accordance with Regulation 16 of the Countryside Access (Local Access Forums) (Wales) Regulations 2001	Operational	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Cabinet	21 January 2014	Environment	<p>Rural Development Plan Local Action Groups 2014-2020</p> <p>To seek Member approval for “in principle” support from the Council for Cadwyn Ciwyd to act as the Local Action Group for Flintshire for the next Rural Development Plan programme.</p>	Strategic	Cabinet Member for Economic Development
Cabinet	21 January 2014	Environment	<p>Local Development Plan Delivery Agreement: Finalising the Delivery Agreement following Consultation</p> <p>To seek the agreement of the Cabinet for revisions to the draft Delivery Agreement following feedback from consultation, in order to send the Delivery Agreement to Welsh Government for their formal approval.</p>	Strategic	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Environment

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Cabinet	21 January 2014	Environment	<p>Charging for Re-rating Inspections Carried Out Under the Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Act 2013</p> <p>To gain approval for the recommended fee level for re-rating visits carried out under the Food hygiene Rating (Wales) Act 2013.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Waste Strategy, Public Protection and Leisure
Cabinet	21 January 2014	Community Services	<p>SARTH</p> <p>This report seeks approval to implement the Single Access Route to Housing Project locally and continue to engage with the project across the North East Wales sub region.</p>	Strategic	Cabinet Member for Housing
Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee	21 January 2014	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Budget Consultation for 2014/15</p> <p>To set out the consultation arrangements with Overview & Scrutiny for 2014/15.</p>		

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee	22 January 2014	Environment	<p>The Council's Household Waste Collection Policy To seek Scrutiny comments on the revised waste collection policy</p>		
Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee	22 January 2014	Environment	<p>Town Centres & High Streets</p>		
Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee	22 January 2014	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Environment Forward Work Programme To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee</p>		
Joint Housing and Social and Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	28 January 2014	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Joint Housing and Social & Health Care Budget Consultation for 2014/15 To set out the consultation arrangements with Overview & Scrutiny for 2014/15</p>		

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee	28 January 2014	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Environment Budget Consultation for 2014/15 To set out the consultation arrangements with Overview & Scrutiny for 2014/15</p>		
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	28 January 2014	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Corporate Resources Budget Consultation for 2014/15 To set out the consultation arrangements with Overview & Scrutiny for 2014/15.</p>		
Flintshire County Council	28 January 2014	Finance	<p>Treasury Management Mid Year Report 2013/14 To present the 2013/14 mid year report on the Council's Treasury Management Strategy.</p>		
Flintshire County Council	28 January 2014	Finance	<p>Council Tax Reduction Scheme To approve a Council Tax Reduction scheme within prescribed requirements and local discretions for 2014/15.</p>		

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Audit Committee	29 January 2014	Finance	<p>Treasury Management Strategy 2014/15 and 2013/14 Update To present the 2014/15 Treasury Management Strategy and provide an update on the 2013/14 Treasury Management activity.</p>		
Audit Committee	29 January 2014	Chief Executive's	<p>Improvement Assessment Letter from the Auditor General for Wales To receive the Improvement Assessment Letter from the Auditor General for Wales and note the Council's Response</p>		
Audit Committee	29 January 2014	Finance	<p>Council Banking Arrangements To provide an update on the arrangements for the letting of the Council's banking contract.</p>		
Audit Committee	29 January 2014	Finance	<p>Action Tracking To inform the Committee of the actions resulting from points raised at previous Audit Committee meetings.</p>		

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Audit Committee	29 January 2014	Finance	<p>Audit Charter Update To report back to the Audit Committee following the meeting of the Constitution Committee on 16th October 2013.</p>		
Audit Committee	29 January 2014	Chief Executive's	<p>Protocol on Collaboration To note the updated protocol on collaboration.</p>		
Audit Committee	29 January 2014	Legal and Democratic Services	<p>Annual Report on External Inspections</p>	Operational	
Audit Committee	29 January 2014	Chief Executive's	<p>Risk Management update To provide members with an update on the improved risk management approach as part of streamlining and integrating the business planning arrangements. To provide an overview of the key risks of the Improvement priorities of the Council.</p>	Strategic	

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Audit Committee	29 January 2014	Finance	Forward Work Programme To consider the Forward Work Programme for the Audit Committee.		
Lifelong Learning Overview & Scrutiny Committee	30 January 2014	Overview and Scrutiny	Lifelong Learning Budget Consultation for 2014/15 To set out the consultation arrangements with Overview & Scrutiny for 2014/15		
Lifelong Learning Overview & Scrutiny Committee	30 January 2014	Lifelong Learning	School Funding Formula Review To provide an update on the recommendations arising from the Formula Review and Consultation Process.		
Lifelong Learning Overview & Scrutiny Committee	30 January 2014	Overview and Scrutiny	Lifelong Learning Forward Work Programme To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Lifelong Learning Overview & Scrutiny Committee.		
February					

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	3 February 2014	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Corporate Resources Budget Consultation for 2014/15 To set out the consultation arrangements with Overview & Scrutiny for 2014/15.</p>		
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	3 February 2014	Finance	<p>Capital Strategy and Capital Programme 2014/15 to 2023/24 To propose the allocation of funding to the core capital programme in 2014/15 and provide information on the total capital programme, including schemes financed from other sources such as Government grants, Prudential and other borrowing.</p>		
Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee	5 February 2014	Housing	<p>Update on the delivery of the Choices Document To receive an update report on the delivery of the Choices Document.</p>		

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee	5 February 2014	Housing	<p>Collaborative Working within Housing Services To receive and consider current and future collaborative initiatives</p>		
Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee	5 February 2014	Housing	<p>Sheltered Housing Improvement Project To consider progress following the review of sheltered accommodation.</p>		
Joint Housing and Social and Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	6 February 2014	Housing	<p>Supporting People To update Members on the Supporting People Programme in Flintshire.</p>		
Joint Housing and Social and Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	6 February 2014	Housing	<p>Extra Care To update Members on the development of further Extra Care schemes in Flintshire.</p>		

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Joint Housing and Social and Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	6 February 2014	Housing	Telecare To update Members on the regional plan for Telecare / Telehealth.		
Joint Housing and Social and Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	6 February 2014	Housing	Disabled Facilities Grant (and the use of removable 1 bedroom/bathroom pods) To inform Members of current performance in relation the administration of Disabled Facilities Grants		
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	13 February 2014	Finance	Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 8) To provide Members with the Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 8) report.		
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	13 March 2014	Chief Executive's	Workforce Information Quarter 3 October - December 2013 To provide Scrutiny Members with an update for the third quarter 2013/14		

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	13 February 2014	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Corporate Resources Forward Work Programme To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee</p>		
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	13 February 2014	Environment	<p>Assets as an Organisational Change strategy workstream (6 monthly update, as per the resolution of the committee on 17/1/13) To provide a update</p>		
Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	13 February 2014	Community Services	<p>Annual Fostering Inspection To inform members of the outcome of the Annual Fostering Inspection</p>		
Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	13 February 2014	Community Services	<p>CSSIW Inspection Report – Commissioning Dementia To inform members of the outcome of the Dementia Inspection</p>		

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	13 February 2014	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Social & Health Care Forward Work Programme To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Social and Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee</p>		
Community Profile & Partnerships Overview & Scrutiny Committee	17 February 2014	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Community Profile & Partnerships Forward Work Programme To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Community Profile and Partnerships Overview & Scrutiny Committee</p>		
Cabinet	18 February 2014	Chief Executive's	<p>Annual Improvement Report from Wales Audit Office Receive Annual Improvement Report from the Auditor General for Wales and endorse the Council's response</p>	Strategic	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Cabinet	18 February 2014	Chief Executive's	<p>Successor Outcome Agreement 2013-2016 To provide (i) an update of the new arrangements for the Successor Outcome Agreement from 2013-2016; and (ii) to endorse the outline of a new Successor Outcome Agreement for 2013-2016 based on draft Welsh Government guidance.</p>	Strategic	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management
Cabinet	18 February 2014	Chief Executive's	<p>Single Integrated Plan 2012 - 2017 To receive and support the Single Integrated Plan 2012 - 2017</p>	Strategic	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Cabinet	18 February 2014	Finance	<p>Council Fund Capital Programme 2014/15 and Indicative to 2017/18 To propose the allocation of funding to the core capital programme in 2014/15 (with indicative allocations for future years). Provide information on the total capital programme, including schemes financed from other sources such as Government grants, Prudential and other borrowing.</p>	Strategic	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance
Cabinet	18 February 2014	Finance	<p>Treasury Management Strategy 2014/15 To present the 2014/15 Treasury Management Strategy.</p>	Strategic	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Cabinet	18 February 2014	Lifelong Learning	<p>National Model for School Improvement The Hill Review set out a number of options for improving the delivery and structure of education services in Wales. One of the key options was that there needed to be greater consistency in the delivery of school improvement services via the regional education consortia. This view was endorsed by local government through the WLGA response to the Hill Review in September 2013.</p>	Strategic	Cllr Chris Bithell
Cabinet	18 February 2014	Finance	<p>Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 8) To provide Members with the most up to date revenue budget monitoring information (Month 8) for the Council Fund and the Housing Revenue Account 2013/14.</p>	Operational	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Cabinet	18 February 2014	Finance	Universal Credit Delivery Partnership Agreement To seek approval of Members to agree the Universal Credit Delivery Partnership Agreement.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management
Cabinet	18 February 2014	Finance	Council Tax Reduction Scheme Consultation To advise Members and approve responses to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme Consultation.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management
Cabinet	18 February 2014	Finance	Bailiff Reform To advise Members of reforms to the Bailiff Regulations and the impact of changes.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management
Cabinet	18 February 2014	Finance	Minimum Revenue Provision 2014/15 To present the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision policy for approval.	Strategic	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Cabinet	18 February 2014	Finance	Prudential Indicators 2014/15 To present the 2014/15-2016/17 Prudential Indicators for approval.	Strategic	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance
Cabinet	18 February 2014	Human Resources and Organisational Development	WORKFORCE INFORMATION QUARTER 3 (OCT - DEC 2013) To provide Members with an update for the third quarter 2013/14.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management
Cabinet	18 February 2014	ICT and Customer Services	Flintshire Registration Service - Fees To seek approval from Members for the adoption of revised fees for Registration Services.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management
Cabinet	18 February 2014	Environment	The Council's Household Waste Collection Policy To seek Cabinet approval for the revised waste collection policy	Strategic	Cabinet Member for Waste Strategy, Public Protection and Leisure
Cabinet	18 February 2014	Community Services	Asset Management Strategy	Strategic	Cabinet Member for Housing

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Cabinet	18 February 2014	Lifelong Learning	<p>North Wales Capital Procurement Framework The purpose of this report is to present the outcome of the North Wales Schools and Public Buildings Contractor Framework (NWSBPCF) procurement process.</p>	Operational	Cllr Chris BitHELL
Flintshire County Council	18 February 2014	Legal and Democratic Services	<p>Community Review Update To update the County Council on the Community Review Progress.</p>		
Flintshire County Council	18 February 2014	Legal and Democratic Services	<p>Independent Remuneration Panel Annual Report To inform the County Council of the annual report by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales for 2014/2015</p>		
Flintshire County Council	18 February 2014	Finance	<p>Treasury Management Policy and Strategy Statement To present to Council the recommendations of the Cabinet in relation to the Treasury Management Policy Statement for 2014/15.</p>		

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Flintshire Council County	18 February 2014	Finance	Prudential Indicators 2014/15 - 2016/17 To present to Council the recommendations of the Cabinet in relation to the setting of a range of prudential indicators.		
Flintshire Council County	18 February 2014	Finance	Minimum Revenue Provision 2014/15 To present to Council the recommendations of the Cabinet in relation to the setting of a prudent minimum revenue provision for the repayment of debt.		
Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee	26 February 2014	Overview and Scrutiny	Environment Forward Work Programme To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee		
March					

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Lifelong Learning Overview & Scrutiny Committee	6 March 2014	Lifelong Learning	School Performance Report To provide Members with details of overall School Performance and Inspection outcomes		
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	13 March 2014	Overview and Scrutiny	Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 9) and Capital Programme 2013/14 (Quarter 3) To provide Members with the Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 9) and Capital Programme 2013/14 (Quarter 3) report.		
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	13 March 2014	Chief Executive's	Annual Improvement Report from Wales Audit Office Receive Annual Improvement Report from the Auditor General for Wales and note the Council's response		

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	13 March 2014	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Corporate Resources Forward Work Programme To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee</p>		
Cabinet	18 March 2014	Chief Executive's	<p>Improvement Plan Quarterly Monitoring Quarterly assessment of performance against the Improvement Plan</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management
Cabinet	18 March 2014	Finance	<p>Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 9) To provide Members with the most up to date revenue budget monitoring information (Month 9) for the Council Fund and the Housing Revenue Account 2013/14.</p>	Operational	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance
Cabinet	18 March 2014	Finance	<p>Capital Programme 2013/14 (Month 9) To provide Members with the Month 9 (end of December) capital programme information for 2013/14.</p>	Operational	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Cabinet	18 March 2014	Finance	<p>Business Rate Debt - Write Off To request Member authorisation to write off a large number of business rate debts relating to Public Safety Charitable Trust.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management
Cabinet	18 March 2014	Lifelong Learning	<p>School Admission Arrangements 2014 School Admission Arrangements 2014</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Education
Cabinet	18 March 2014	ICT and Customer Services	<p>ICT Strategy Update To provide an update on progress with the implementation of the Corporate Information and Communications Technology [ICT] Strategy.</p>	Strategic	Cllr Billy Mullin

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Cabinet	18 March 2014	Environment	<p>Setting up of a Joint Committee for the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty To advise on new arrangements for the management of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.</p>	Strategic	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Environment
Cabinet	18 March 2014	ICT and Customer Services	<p>Update on Collaborative Procurement Projects To provide an update on progress with the previously agreed collaboration projects.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management
Cabinet	18 March 2014	Community Services	<p>Flying Start Update To provide Cabinet with an update regarding the progress of expanding the Flying Start Programme.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Social Services

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee	19 March 2014	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Improvement Plan Monitoring Report To note and consider elements of the 2013/14 Mid Year Improvement Plan Monitoring Report relevant to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The report covers the period October – December 2013.</p>		
Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	20 March 2014	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Improvement Plan Monitoring Report To note and consider elements of the 2013/14 Mid Year Improvement Plan Monitoring Report relevant to the Social & Health Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The report covers the period October – December 2013.</p>		

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Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee	19 March 2014	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Environment Forward Work Programme To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee</p>		
Audit Committee	26 March 2014	Chief Executive's	<p>Annual Improvement Report from Wales Audit Office Receive Annual Improvement Report from the Auditor General for Wales and note the Council's response</p>	Strategic	
Audit Committee	26 March 2014	Finance	<p>Treasury Management Update 2013/14 To provide an update on the 2013/14 Treasury Management activity.</p>		Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance
Audit Committee	26 March 2014	Legal and Democratic Services	<p>ICO Audit Update on ICO Data Protection Audit</p>	All Report Types	
April					

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Flintshire Council County	8 April 2014	Finance	Clwyd Pension Fund Update To update Members on issues relating to the Clwyd Pension Fund.		
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	10 April 2014	Finance	Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 10) To provide Members with the Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 10) report.		
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	10 April 2014	Overview and Scrutiny	Improvement Plan Monitoring Report To note and consider elements of the 2013/14 Mid Year Improvement Plan Monitoring Report relevant to the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The report covers the period October – December 2013.		

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Lifelong Learning Overview & Scrutiny Committee	10 April 2014	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Improvement Plan Monitoring Report To note and consider elements of the 2013/14 Mid Year Improvement Plan Monitoring Report relevant to the Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The report covers the period October – December 2013.</p>		
Cabinet	15 April 2014	Chief Executive's	<p>Local Service Board and Strategic Partnerships end of year report Local Service Board and Strategic Partnerships end of year report</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management
Cabinet	15 April 2014	Finance	<p>Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 10) To provide Members with the most up to date revenue budget monitoring information (Month 10) for the Council Fund and the Housing Revenue Account 2013/14.</p>	Operational	

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Cabinet	15 April 2014	Chief Executive's	<p>Clwyd Theatr Cymru Business Plan Members are requested to endorse the Business Plan as recommended by the Theatre Board of Governors.</p> <p>A full copy of the Business Plan is available in the Members Library and each of the group rooms.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management
Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee	16 April 2014	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Improvement Plan Monitoring Report To note and consider elements of the 2013/14 Mid Year Improvement Plan Monitoring Report relevant to the Community Profile & Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The report covers the period October to December 2013</p>		
May					

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Cabinet	13 May 2014	Community Services	<p>Flintshire Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2014 - 2017 To report the main findings of the most recent Childcare Sufficiency Assessment.</p>	Strategic	Cabinet Member for Social Services
Cabinet	13 May 2014	Finance	<p>Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 11) To provide Members with the most up to date revenue budget monitoring information (Month 11) for the Council Fund and the Housing Revenue Account 2013/14.</p>	Operational	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance
Flintshire County Council	20 May 2014	Legal and Democratic Services	<p>Constitutional Matters: Committees and Outside Bodies To deal with those matters which require decisions at the Annual Meeting of the County Council in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 1.1(vii)-(xiv). Those matters are set out in separate paragraphs.</p>		

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Flintshire Council	20 May 2014	Legal and Democratic Services	Schedule of Member Remuneration The purpose of the report is to approve the Council's Schedule of Member Remuneration for 2014/2015.		
June					
Cabinet	17 June 2014	Chief Executive's	2014/15 Improvement Plan 2014/15 Improvement Plan	Strategic	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management
Cabinet	17 June 2014	Chief Executive's	2013/14 Performance reports Assessment of performance for 2013/14 from Heads of Service	Operational	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management
Cabinet	17 June 2014	Environment	Public Rights of Way Annual Report For the Cabinet to endorse a hierarchical approach to public rights of way maintenance, definitive map and public path orders and handling complaints.	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Environment

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	DIRECTORATE	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Audit Committee	25 June 2014	Finance	Treasury Management Annual Report 2013/14 To present the 2013/14 annual report on the Council's Treasury Management Policy, Strategy and Practices.		