

# Public Document Pack

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Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol a Democraataidd



To: Cllr Tim Newhouse (Chairman)

CS/NG

Councillors: Haydn Bateman, Marion Bateman,  
Clive Carver, Peter Curtis, Ian Dunbar,  
Andy Dunbobbin, Ron Hampson, Ray Hughes,  
Richard Jones, Richard Lloyd, Mike Lowe,  
Paul Shotton, Ian Smith and Arnold Woolley

6 February 2014

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Dear Sir / Madam

A meeting of the **CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** will be held in the **DELYN COMMITTEE ROOM, COUNTY HALL, MOLD CH7 6NA** on **THURSDAY, 13TH FEBRUARY, 2014** at **10.00 AM** to consider the following items.

Yours faithfully

Democracy & Governance Manager

## **AGENDA**

- 1 **APOLOGIES**
- 2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**
- 3 **MINUTES** (Pages 1 - 6)  
To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2014.
- 4 **REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2013/14 (MONTH 8)** (Pages 7 - 60)  
Report of Head of Finance enclosed.

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

- 5 **COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME CONSULTATION** (Pages 61 - 72)  
Report of Head of Finance enclosed.
- 6 **ASSETS AS AN ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE STRATEGY WORKSTREAM**  
A verbal update will be provided at the meeting.
- 7 **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 73 - 76)  
Report of Member Engagement Manager enclosed.

# Agenda Item 3

## **CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** **16 JANUARY 2014**

Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held at Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold on Thursday, 16 January 2014

**PRESENT: Councillor Tim Newhouse (Chairman)**

Councillors: Haydn Bateman, Marion Bateman, Clive Carver, Peter Curtis, Andy Dunbobbin, Ron Hampson, Richard Jones, Richard Lloyd, Mike Lowe, Ian Smith and Arnold Woolley

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors: Ian Dunbar and Paul Shotton, Chief Executive and Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development

**ALSO PRESENT:** Councillor Kevin Jones

**CONTRIBUTORS:** Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Cabinet Member for Corporate Management, Head of ICT & Customer Services and Head of Finance

Corporate Finance Manager (for minute number 62)  
Revenues & Benefits Manager (for minute number 63 & 64)  
Revenues Manager (for minute number 64)  
Benefits Manager (for minute numbers 63 & 64)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Member Engagement Manager and Committee Officer

**58. COUNCILLOR TED EVANS**

The Chairman paid tribute to the late Councillor Ted Evans, which was echoed by the Committee.

**59. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**

Councillor Mike Lowe declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 6 'Council Tax Reduction Scheme' as he was in receipt of Council Tax reduction due to the disability of a family member.

Councillor Richard Jones declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 7 'Council Tax and Business Rate Policies 2014-15' as his partner was a business rate payer. He chose to leave the meeting during discussion on this item.

Councillor Clive Carver declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 7 'Council Tax and Business Rate Policies 2014-15' as he was a Director of a company located in his ward. He left the meeting during discussion on this item.

**60. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 12 December 2013 had been circulated to Members with the agenda.

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**61. IMPROVEMENT ASSESSMENT LETTER FROM THE AUDITOR GENERAL FOR WALES**

The Head of ICT & Customer Services introduced the report on the Council's Improvement Assessment Letter from the Auditor General for Wales dated December 2013, together with the Council's response.

In line with requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009, the Letter reported the view of the Auditor General for Wales that the Council had discharged its improvement reporting duties with no new statutory recommendations for improvement.

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance said that the lack of new proposals for improvement gave assurance on the Council's position and that the helpful comments outlined in the Letter to strengthen current arrangements would be taken on board.

In response to a query from Councillor Haydn Bateman on two of the comments, the Head of ICT & Customer Services explained that these related to the level of detail and presentation of information to engage with residents and the suggestion to be proactive in inviting feedback from residents.

On the first comment, the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance spoke of the need to ensure a balance between so that sufficient detail was given in a way that residents could easily engage with.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Council's Improvement Assessment Letter from the Auditor General for Wales, together with the Council's response, be noted.

**62. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2013/14 (MONTH 7)**

The Corporate Finance Manager introduced a report to provide Members with Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 7) information for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The report was due for submission to Cabinet on 21 January 2014 and would be on the same agenda as the initial budget proposals for 2014/15. Therefore it was important to reflect the most accurate position possible, due to the direct link with the level of contingency reserve available which would form a key part of the budget strategy for 2014/15. Due to this, it was reported that detailed work was being undertaken to confirm the timing and achievement of all efficiencies, particularly some of the large more complex areas such as the Customer workstream.

For the Council Fund, the projected net in-year expenditure was reported to be £944K less than the budget, which was a decrease of £68K from that

reported at Month 6. Explanation was given on the main reasons for variances from Month 6, together with actions, as outlined in the report.

On the Programme of Efficiencies, it was projected that £4.506m of the £5.331m included in the budget had either already been achieved or was expected to do so by the end of the financial year.

The position on pay inflation and non-standard price inflation remained unchanged from Month 6. An update on unearmarked reserves reported that an estimated £3.585m was likely to be available at the end of the financial year.

For the HRA, there was a projected underspend of £117K which would mean a closing balance of £1.551m, which at 5.4% of total expenditure was above the recommended level.

On the Council Fund, Councillor Haydn Bateman asked about the increased internal interest costs and reduction in debt management costs under the Central Loans and Investment Account. The Head of Finance explained that this section dealt with all debt and treasury management undertaken across the Council and that the position remained unchanged from that reported at Month 6. She said that further detail was available from the Finance Manager - Technical Accountancy and that the accounting part of treasury management activity (as considered by the Audit Committee, Cabinet and County Council) could be incorporated in the training session scheduled for 27 January 2014, to which all Members were invited. She would ask the Finance Manager - Technical Accountancy to refer to Councillor Bateman's question in a meeting which was being arranged to address previous questions raised.

Councillor Richard Lloyd referred to the potential costs relating to the former chemical plant in Sandycroft and asked for further clarification. The Corporate Finance Manager said that the update included in the report advised of projected costs of £400K for the current financial year. The Head of Finance was aware that the site had been made safe and that discussions were being finalised on its future. She agreed to seek an update from the Head of Legal & Democratic Services to share with Members.

In response to a query from Councillor Clive Carver, the Corporate Finance Manager explained that Denbighshire Council was now the lead Authority for the Coroners service and that the in-year costs were due to outstanding invoices which had been received late from Wrexham as the lead authority.

**RESOLVED:**

That the content of the reports be noted.

**63. COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME**

The Revenues & Benefits Manager introduced the report to seek views on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2014/15 and explained the requirement for the report to be approved by Cabinet prior to endorsement to adopt the

Scheme at County Council before the end of the month. Failure to do so would result in application of a default Scheme.

Following Welsh Government (WG) approval of the regulations, there was a need for the Council to re-adopt the Scheme for 2014/15 with consideration to three additional discretionary elements. The Revenues & Benefits Manager provided explanation on these areas for discretion, as outlined in the report, and advised that the outcome of consultation indicated that the majority of responses were in agreement with the recommendations of the report.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the Committee noted the recommendations to Cabinet and Council;
- (b) That the making of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations ('the Prescribed Requirements Regulations') by Wales Government on 26 November 2013 be noted, as amended by the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2014; and
- (c) To recommend to Council to adopt the Council Tax Reduction Scheme discretionary elements as outlined in Appendix 1 to the report, subject to any input from Cabinet.

**64. COUNCIL TAX AND BUSINESS RATE POLICIES 2014-15**

Councillors Clive Carver and Richard Jones left the room prior to consideration of this item.

The Revenues & Benefits Manager introduced the report giving details of an annual report on Council Tax and Business Rate Policies proposed for the financial year 2014/15. He outlined the areas under Section 13A of the Council Tax regulations where discretionary relief could be applied by Councils, as indicated in the report, and advised that such amounts were funded by the Council and not Welsh Government. Views were sought from the Committee to be reported verbally to Cabinet.

Councillor Marion Bateman queried why discretionary discounts were not available to those who made payments by standing order/direct debit. The Revenues & Benefits Manager explained that a high proportion of residents currently used this preferred method and that a discount was not applied due to anti-poverty issues to residents and cost implications to the Council.

In response to a query from Councillor Richard Lloyd, the Revenues & Benefits Manager confirmed that the 25% discount on Council Tax for single person occupancy was part of primary legislation. A 50% National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR) reduction was applied to establishments which fulfilled the requirements for discretionary relief, such as golf clubs and golf driving ranges.

Following a query by Councillor Peter Curtis on the potential for some golf clubs to attract revenue from on-site functions, the Revenues Manager explained that only a small number qualified for the relief.

When asked by Councillor Haydn Bateman about traveller sites, the Revenues & Benefits Manager explained that Council Tax was payable on any domestic properties within the Council Tax Valuation List which were the main residence of the individual and that single person occupancy discount would apply within the legislation. Business rates would apply to caravans located on holiday parks payable through the site owner.

Councillor Arnold Woolley queried the rationale not to award discretionary 'top up' discounts to small businesses, in view of the current financial climate. The Revenues & Benefits Manager advised that hardship relief was available through the Business Rate regulations which would entitle 100% relief on those businesses which qualified.

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance clarified that it was not the responsibility of the Council to set business rates and that the policy on discretionary elements had remained unchanged by the Council for some time.

Councillor Marion Bateman asked if Cabinet could give consideration to applying an incentive discount for payments by Direct Debit. The Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance agreed that this was a valid point and would be referred to Cabinet. However, there was a need to understand the proportion of those already paying by this method and the potential significant cost implications to the Council.

**RESOLVED:**

That the current Council Tax and Business Rate Policies for 2014/15 be continued.

**65. FEEDBACK FROM CONSIDERATION OF IMPROVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE PLANS**

The Member Engagement Manager presented the report giving feedback from the functional Overview & Scrutiny committees on the new approach to Improvement and Performance Plans.

He reminded Members of the new reporting arrangements which had been received by the committees in November 2013. Whilst detailing the feedback, he advised that following a suggestion made by the Community Profile & Partnerships Overview & Scrutiny Committee, a workshop was to be arranged for the end of February 2014 to assist Members in their scrutiny of the new approach.

Councillor Peter Curtis, who was a member of the Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee, stressed the need for Cabinet to take on board the concerns raised about joint working with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and the increased need for Dementia facilities in hospitals which had been

previously highlighted. Councillor Marion Bateman added that these concerns were also shared by some officers.

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance gave assurance that this risk had already been identified within the Care & Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) report and that the Council would continue to work with the new Board to improve the situation.

**RESOLVED:**

That the observations of the Overview & Scrutiny committees on the Improvement and Performance Plans be forwarded to Cabinet.

**66. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Member Engagement Manager introduced a report to enable the Committee to consider the Forward Work Programme. He drew attention to the workshop scheduled for 27 January 2014 which would give all Members an introduction to the Budget 2014/15.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Forward Work Programme be agreed.

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

There were two members of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 10.55 am)

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**Chairman**



## FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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

**DATE:** **THURSDAY, 13 FEBRUARY 2014**

**REPORT BY:** **HEAD OF FINANCE**

**SUBJECT:** **REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2013/14 (MONTH 8)**

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01 To provide Members with the Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/14 report as at month 8.

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

2.01 Revenue budget monitoring reports are provided on a monthly basis to Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee before being presented to Cabinet in the same cycle.

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

3.01 The revenue budget monitoring report as at month 8 is attached which is scheduled for Cabinet on 18 February 2014.

3.02 Each month, budget monitoring reports are based on actual income and expenditure to a given point (in this case Month 8) but also project the most up to date position possible to year end.

3.03 The Month 8 report for 2013/14 will be on the same agenda as the budget report for 2014/15.

### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 Members are asked to note the report.

### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 As set out in the report.

### **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 None.

### **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 None.

**8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 None.

**9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 None.

**10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 None.

**11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 None.

**12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 Appendix A – Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/4 (Month 8) report.

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

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**FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:**           **CABINET**

**DATE:**                   **TUESDAY, 18 FEBRUARY 2014**

**REPORT BY:**           **HEAD OF FINANCE**

**SUBJECT:**               **REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2013/14 (MONTH 8)**

**1.00**    **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01    To provide Members with the most up to date revenue budget monitoring information (Month 8) for the Council Fund and the Housing Revenue Account for 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 7
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 8, is as follows:

**Council Fund**

- Net in year expenditure forecast to be £1.068m less than budget. (An increase of £0.124m on the £0.944m reported at Month 7).
- Projected contingency reserve balance at 31 March 2014 of £3.709m

## Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

- Net in year expenditure forecast to be £0.212m less than budget (£0.117m as at Month 7)
- Projected HRA balances at 31 March 2014 of £1.646m

### 3.00 COUNCIL FUND LATEST IN YEAR FORECAST

3.01 The table below shows a projected positive variation of expenditure against budget of £1.068m

TOTAL EXPENDITURE AND INCOME	Original Budget	Revised Budget	In-Year Over / (Under) spend	
			Month 7	Month 8
	£m	£m	£m	£m
<b><u>DIRECTORATES (Service Groups)</u></b>				
Services for Adults	45.642	44.302	(0.610)	(0.664)
Services for Children	11.906	12.172	0.569	0.827
Housing Services	1.800	1.835	(0.296)	(0.319)
Development & Resources	1.688	1.659	(0.051)	(0.018)
<b>TOTAL : COMMUNITY SERVICES</b>	<b>61.036</b>	<b>59.968</b>	<b>(0.388)</b>	<b>(0.174)</b>
Assets and Transportation	6.015	6.091	0.065	0.031
Planning	1.708	1.717	(0.039)	(0.068)
Public Protection	3.455	3.464	(0.056)	(0.055)
Regeneration	0.715	0.704	0.011	0.007
Streetscene	19.320	19.210	0.333	0.352
Management, Support & Performance	1.088	1.094	(0.060)	(0.009)
<b>TOTAL : ENVIRONMENT</b>	<b>32.301</b>	<b>32.280</b>	<b>0.254</b>	<b>0.258</b>
Culture & Leisure	6.876	6.378	0.384	0.409
Inclusion Services	14.058	13.245	(0.011)	(0.059)
Primary School Services	43.374	43.334	(0.045)	(0.037)
Secondary School Services	36.638	37.472	0.002	(0.016)
Development & Resources	12.118	12.428	(0.179)	(0.223)
<b>TOTAL : LIFELONG LEARNING</b>	<b>113.064</b>	<b>112.857</b>	<b>0.151</b>	<b>0.074</b>
Chief Executive	2.356	2.301	(0.055)	(0.053)
Finance	14.265	14.235	(0.600)	(1.019)
HR & OD	2.427	2.479	(0.032)	(0.013)
ICT & Customer Services	4.922	5.037	0.010	0.001
Legal & Democratic Services	3.145	3.136	(0.046)	(0.135)
<b>TOTAL : CORPORATE SERVICES</b>	<b>27.115</b>	<b>27.188</b>	<b>(0.723)</b>	<b>(1.219)</b>
<b>TOTAL DIRECTORATES</b>	<b>233.516</b>	<b>232.293</b>	<b>(0.706)</b>	<b>(1.061)</b>
Central and Corporate Finance	26.236	27.459	(0.238)	(0.007)
<b>Total</b>	<b>259.752</b>	<b>259.752</b>	<b>(0.944)</b>	<b>(1.068)</b>

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

3.03 From the table in 3.01 it can be seen that there is an increase of £0.124m on the under spend of £0.944m reported at Month 7. The key variances to note include:

3.04 Community Services – Out of County Placements (Children’s Services)

The projected overspend for Month 8 is £0.452m, which represents an increase of £0.203m on the Month 7 amount of £0.249m. The main reasons for the movement relate to new high cost placements (£0.082m), an unexpected continuation of an existing placement (£0.082m) and required changes to an existing placement with a client being moved to a high cost secure unit placement (£0.049m)

3.05 Corporate Services – Housing Benefit Subsidy and Discretionary Housing Payments

Following a review of the Housing Benefit Subsidy profile and the level of funding required to meet Discretionary Housing Payment need, it has been identified that there will be an in year efficiency of £0.381m. The Council has been proactive in supporting eligible claimants with temporary financial assistance through discretionary housing payments. At the same time, the Council has also been very successful, through interventions by the Welfare Response Team, in assisting households to better manage the financial changes imposed upon them by welfare reforms and economic impacts. As a result of this positive action, the need for discretionary housing payments has been less than had been anticipated. This position will continue to be kept under review alongside the funding provided for this purpose by the Department of Works and Pensions.

3.06 Flintshire Futures – Customer Programme

It is now projected that £0.286m of the efficiencies included in the budget in relation to the Flintshire Futures Customer Programme will not now be realised in 2013/14 although it is anticipated that they will be achievable in subsequent years when the project has advanced and the wider network of Flintshire Connects sites are in place.

3.07 All of the movements from Month 7 are summarised in Appendix 1 with the detailed reasons for all variances by Directorate summarised within Appendices 2 to 8.

3.08 **Programme of Efficiencies**

The 2013/14 budget contains £5.331m of specific efficiencies and the table

below summarises the current position in relation to the achievement of these items. This analysis shows that it is currently projected that £4.146m (78%) will be achieved, resulting in a net underachievement of £1.185m. This is lower than the agreed efficiency target of 85% as detailed in the Improvement Plan. The main reason for the underachievement reported in this period relates to delays in the Flintshire Futures Programme as detailed in 3.06 above.

<b>Status of Efficiency</b>	<b>Value of Budgeted Efficiency £m</b>	<b>Valued of Projected Efficiency £m</b>	<b>(Under) Over Achievement £m</b>
ALREADY ACHIEVED	1.973	1.973	0.000
EXPECTED TO BE ACHIEVED IN FULL	1.877	1.877	0.000
ACHIEVED IN PART	0.631	0.296	(0.335)
NOT ACHIEVABLE	0.850	0.000	(0.850)
<b>Total</b>	<b>5.331</b>	<b>4.146</b>	<b>(1.185)</b>

- 3.09 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 8 projected outturn position.
- 3.10 **Request for Carry Forward – Community Services**  
Welfare Reform – in 2012/13 an amount of £80k was carried forward to 2013/14 for two additional posts in the Response Team. Due to delays in recruiting to these posts it is requested that £0.029m is carried forward for the continuation of two fixed term posts in the Welfare Response Team.
- 3.11 **Request for Carry Forward – Corporate Services (Finance)**  
Internal Audit – due to a delay in the procurement of software it is requested that £0.030m be carried forward into 2014/15 to fund audit management software upgrade costs. This software is needed to replace the current provision following the ending of the contract with RSM Tenon.
- 3.12 **Request for Carry Forward – Corporate Services (ICT and Customer Services)**  
ICT and Customer Services – It is requested to carry forward £0.046m into 2014/15 in respect of Event and Log Management due to project delays which mean the system cannot be implemented until 2014/15.
- 3.13 **Impacts for the 2014/15 Budget**  
Any projections relating to in year budget pressures or efficiencies which have an actual or potential ongoing impact have been taken into account in considering the budget proposals for 2014/15 which is also reported on this agenda.

#### **4.00 INFLATION**

4.01 **Pay inflation** of £0.734m is included within service budgets to reflect the national pay award agreed earlier in the year.

4.02 **Non Standard price inflation** – amounts for energy, fuel and food costs are included in the budget and held centrally. The Service budgets which incur these costs are monitored closely and funds released on a full assessment of evidenced need. To date only the food cost allocation of £0.141m has been allocated (month 6) although the report currently assumes that all of the non standard allocation will be required by the end of March.

#### **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. Estimated costs have been reviewed and are reflected within current projections and continue to be monitored monthly.

5.02 Out of County Placements – This area of Children's Services is known to be a highly volatile area of expenditure with potential for significant changes month on month. This is a challenging area of service to monitor accurately and efforts are continuing to improve the timeliness and flow of information to enable the most accurate position to be projected at any given point in time. However, the very nature of the service is such that there will always be a potential for major swings in the projection between specific reporting periods.

#### **6.00 UNEARMARKED RESERVES**

6.01 The 2012/13 final outturn reported to Cabinet on 16 July showed unearmarked reserves at 31 July 2013 (above the base level of £5.564m) of £3.409m after taking into account a commitment in 2013/14 for use of £0.297m 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 into account an allocation of £0.518m for recovery costs following the severe weather in March 2013, 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 £3.709

#### **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 £0.212 and a projected closing balance at month 8 of £1.646, which at 5.76% 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 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 (paragraph 6.02)
- c) Approve the carry forwards detailed in 3.10 – 3.12
- d) 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 7 - 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**

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COUNCIL FUND - REVENUE BUDGET 2013/14  
FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Budget Monitoring (Month 8)**  
**Summary of Movement from Month 7**

	£m	£m
<b>Month 7</b>		
Service Directorates	(0.706)	
Central and Corporate Finance	(0.238)	
<b>Variance as per Cabinet Report</b>		<b>(0.944)</b>
<b>Month 8</b>		
Service Directorates	(1.061)	
Central and Corporate Finance	(0.007)	
<b>Variance as per Directorate Returns</b>		<b>(1.068)</b>
<b>Change Requiring Explanation</b>		<b>(0.124)</b>
<b>Community Services</b>		
<b>Services For Adults</b>		
• Resource and Regulated Service (Intake & Reablement) - Impact of vacancy savings for 2 admin. posts previously reflected within Community Services - now transferred to meet budgeted efficiency for Flintshire Futures (Cross-Organisational admin. review)	0.026	
• Localities (Locality Teams) - Minor adaptations (-£0.050m) reduced expenditure this year following budget uplift, cessation of OT referrals to private service provider as our own OT's are able to meet current demand (-£0.037m), and staffing saving due to maternity leave not backfilled (-£0.014m)	(0.101)	
• Other minor changes of less than £0.025m for Services for Adults	0.021	
<b>Development &amp; Resources</b>		
• Training - premises costs to be recharged at end of year	0.032	
• Other minor changes of less than £0.025m	0.002	
<b>Services For Childrens</b>		
• Out of County Placements - new client placements (+£0.082m), continuation of existing placements (+£0.082m), changes to placement costs (+£0.049m) - offset by a placement ending (-£0.010m)	0.203	
• Professional Support - one-off pension fund strain costs for a former employee (£0.023m), minor variances (£0.005m)	0.028	
• Other minor changes of less than £0.025m	0.026	
<b>Housing Services</b>		
• Accommodation Support Team - impact of completion & implementation of restructure	(0.031)	
• Other minor changes of less than £0.025m	0.008	
		<b>0.214</b>
<b>Environment</b>		
<b>Assets &amp; Transportation</b>		
• Highways Network & Transportation - Actual income received in excess of expected for Road Closures and Fixed Penalty Notices ; Bus Subsidies reduced due to re-negotiated contract prices and cross-boundary recharge increases applied to neighbouring authorities	(0.057)	
• Other minor changes of less than £0.010m	0.023	
<b>Planning</b>		
• Planning Control - increased Planning Fee application income	(0.016)	
• Other minor changes of less than £0.010m	(0.011)	
<b>Public Protection</b>		
• Other minor changes of less than £0.010m	0.002	
<b>Regeneration</b>		
• Other minor changes of less than £0.010m	(0.004)	
<b>Streetscene</b>		
• Transportation & Logistics - additional running costs not able to be reflected in recharges to service users	0.025	
• Other minor changes of less than £0.010m	(0.006)	
<b>Management Support &amp; Performance</b>		
• Corporate Admin Review	0.051	
• Other minor changes of less than £0.010m	(0.003)	
		<b>0.004</b>

**Lifelong Learning**

<b>Culture &amp; Leisure</b>	
• Leisure Services - £0.020m relates to admin vacancy savings. The remainder relates to minor variances.	0.017
• Libraries, Culture & Heritage - minor variances.	0.007
<b>Inclusion Services</b>	
• Inclusion Services - the position has improved on Inclusion Services since month 7 by £0.035m. The majority of this improvement relates to a reduction in the projected costs for Teaching Assistants in the Special Units. A minor variance of £0.004m relates to maximisation of grant claims in terms of admin charges. £0.012m relates to additional grant income.	(0.035)
• Out of County - A saving of £0.029m relates to a placement which was anticipated to be funded by Lifelong Learning and is now a joint arrangement with Children's Services. This has been reduced by minor net increased costs on four other placements of £0.009m. A small saving of £0.004m is also expected on one Post 16 placement.	(0.013)
<b>Primary School Services</b>	
• Minor variances in the projection for Primary School Services relate to School Service Level Agreement income, supplies and services efficiencies and maximisation of grant income.	0.008
<b>Secondary School Services</b>	
• Minor Variances in the projection for Secondary School Services relate to the Music Service and maximisation of grant income.	(0.018)
<b>Development &amp; Resources</b>	
• Children, Youth & Community - minor variances.	0.005
• Pupil/Student Transport - minor variances relating to transport contracts.	0.010
• Business Units - the projected outturn on Business Units has improved by £0.035m since month 7. £0.025m relates to controls on expenditure in the Schools Management Information Team. The remainder relates to minor savings.	(0.035)
• Facilities - minor variances	0.001
• Management & Business Support - savings of £0.038m relate to Governor Training, adjustments to the allocation of the School Effectiveness Grant allocation to maximise the admin charge allowable and supplies and services budgets across the directorate. Savings have been reduced by £0.014m for admin vacancy savings to be reported under Flintshire Futures	(0.024)
	(0.077)
<b><u>Corporate Services</u></b>	
• Legal and Democratic Services - vacancy savings £0.017m, Members Services savings (£0.013m), Members Allowances underspend (£0.086m), Legal Subscriptions expenditure (£0.011m), minor variances £0.004m	(0.089)
• HR and Organisational Development - Disclosure & Barring Service expenditure £0.009m, vacancy savings £0.016m, loss of income £0.007m, minor variances (£0.013m)	0.019
• ICT and Customer Services - vacancy savings £0.013m, registrars income £0.003m, postage spend £0.014m, ICT Strategy underspend (£0.025m), minor variances (£0.014m)	(0.009)
• Finance - Housing Benefit Subsidy efficiency (£0.381m), reduced shortfall on CTRS (£0.019m), minor variances (£0.019m)	(0.419)
• Chief Executives Department - vacancy savings (£0.002m), minor variances £0.004m	0.002
	(0.496)
<b><u>Central &amp; Corporate Finance</u></b>	
• Pension Fund Contribution - projected budgeted surplus on recovery of FCC share of pension fund deficit	(0.116)
• Mass / Matrix Contract - decrease in rebate due to less use of Agency workers	0.115
• Organisation Review - vacancy savings in Flintshire Futures programmes	(0.022)
• Minimum Revenue provision - the calculation has been reviewed within the CLIA Account	(0.021)
• Flintshire Futures - Customer Programme requires further advancement - wider network of connect sites	0.286
• Minor Variances	(0.011)
	0.231
<b>Total Changes</b>	(0.124)

COMMUNITY SERVICES

APPENDIX 2

Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 8)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
<b>Services for Adults</b> Hospital Social Work (Intake and Reablement)	0.405	0.353	(0.052)	(0.056)	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 (£0.014m) is due to a staff vacancy.	One-off.
Resources and Regulated Services (Intake and Reablement)	5.348	5.102	(0.246)	(0.272)	<u>Extra Care</u> Projected underspend on Liys Jasmine (£0.310m) is due to an initial delay in opening the facility. <u>In-house Domiciliary Care</u> underspend (£0.061m) due to greater use of reablement and independent sector care providers. <u>Client Transportation Service</u> underspend (£0.041m) relates to staff vacancies. <u>Day Services</u> underspend (£0.033m) mostly due to vacancies (£0.026m). These underspends are offset by a projected overspend within <u>In-house Residential Service</u> (£0.204m) due to the need to ensure staff cover (£0.228m) additional premises costs (£0.049m) and additional supplies and service (£0.045) offset by client (£0.070m) and Health (£0.048m) income.	<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.  <u>Client Transportation Service</u> Underspend adjusted in budget rationalisation.  <u>Residential Service</u> further work required to determine the most appropriate way to address the overspend.

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Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 8)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Locality Teams (Localities)	13.881	13.843	(0.038)	0.063	<p><u>Older People Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Locality Teams are together expected to underspend (£0.200m) mostly due to vacant posts.</li> <li>&gt; Purchased domiciliary costs are projected to overspend (£0.030) due to additional service user costs.</li> <li>&gt; Purchased residential costs are projected to overspend (£0.094) due to additional service user costs.</li> <li>&gt; Early Onset Dementia is projected to overspend (£0.074m) due to purchased domiciliary care costs.</li> <li>&gt; Minor adaptations underspend (£0.047m) due to reduced demand following uplift to budget based on 2012/13 activity levels</li> </ul>	<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	15.115	(0.128)	(0.104)	<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>

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Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 8)

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	0.765	0.107	0.080	This is mostly due to overspends against staff pay costs (£0.040m), third party payments (£0.030m), transport (£0.017m, and a shortfall of grant income of £0.028m. (Supporting People)	Keep under review.
Disability Services (Disability Services)	1.941	2.016	0.075	0.070	The overspend is due to additional transition service user costs.	Keep under review.

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Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 8)

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	0.457	0.050	0.053	This is mostly due to an overspend against staff pay costs (£0.041m).	Keep under review.
Residential and Domiciliary Service (Mental Health & Substance Misuse Service)	0.703	0.617	(0.086)	(0.120)	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	0.728	(0.100)	(0.084)	This is mostly (£0.050m) due to a one-off pay cost reduction following an agreed absence with no pay.	One-off.



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Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 8)

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	0.156	(0.149)	(0.136)	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	0.429	(0.053)	(0.055)	Reflects current care packages for 2013/14.	
Other Services for Adults variances (aggregate)	4.101	4.057	(0.044)	(0.049)	Various minor variances.	Continue to review but not expected to be recurrent.
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>44.302</b>	<b>43.638</b>	<b>(0.664)</b>	<b>(0.610)</b>		

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Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 8)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
<b>Development &amp; Resources</b>						
Vacancy Control	(0.100)	0.000	0.100	0.100		Realignment of vacant posts
Other Development & Resources variances (aggregate)	1.759	1.641	(0.118)	(0.151)	Various minor variances.	Continue to review but not expected to be recurrent.
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>1.659</b>	<b>1.641</b>	<b>(0.018)</b>	<b>(0.051)</b>		

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Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 8)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
<b>Services for Children</b>						
Family Placement (Children's Services)	1.977	2.342	0.365	0.354	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	0.263	(0.045)	(0.052)	The underspend within this area is mostly due to vacant posts.	One-off.
Out of County Pooled Budget (Children's Services)	3.178	3.630	0.452	0.249	Costs reflect existing placements up until March 2014. The increase in overspend (£0.203m) is due to additional placements (£0.082m), continuing placements (£0.082m), changes to existing placements (£0.049m), offset by a placement ending (£0.010m).	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	6.764	0.055	0.018	Various minor variances.	Continue to review but not expected to be recurrent.
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>12.172</b>	<b>12.999</b>	<b>0.827</b>	<b>0.569</b>		

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Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 8)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
<b>Housing Services</b>						
Homelessness Accommodation (Housing Services)	0.360	0.157	(0.203)	(0.206)	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	1.130	(0.083)	(0.052)	Service recently undergone a restructure now fully reflected within projection.	Restructure now implemented.
Other variances (aggregate)	0.262	0.229	(0.033)	(0.038)	Various minor variances.	Continue to review but not expected to be recurrent.
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>1.835</b>	<b>1.516</b>	<b>(0.319)</b>	<b>(0.296)</b>		
<b>Total :</b>	<b>59.968</b>	<b>59.794</b>	<b>(0.174)</b>	<b>(0.388)</b>		

## Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 8)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Period 7 (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
<b>Assets &amp; Transportation</b>	<b>6.091</b>	<b>6.122</b>	<b>0.031</b>	<b>0.065</b>		
Industrial Units	(1.256)	(1.148)	0.108	0.101	Estimated net income shortfalls across the Industrial Estate portfolio which have increased at Period 8 by a further £7k.	Keep Unit rental income closely monitored throughout 2013/14.
Property Holdings	0.083	0.040	(0.043)	(0.032)	NNDR costs lower than anticipated	Review of site budgets necessary in line with asset management programme
Property Asset & Development	0.528	0.429	(0.099)	(0.100)	Net Vacancy Savings	
Highways Development Control & Regulatory Services	0.813	0.910	0.097	0.108	Lower than anticipated levels of income for FPN's (based on improving standards of repair by utility companies) & road closures. A commitment of £60k is included for the potential excess payment to be made to the Council's Insurers in relation to a claim.	
Transportation	1.466	1.402	(0.064)	(0.016)	Period 8 reflects the Bus Subsidy payments to Bus Operators that have reduced due to re-negotiated contract prices, together with increased cross-boundary recharges to neighbouring authorities.	
Aggregate of other Variances	4.457	4.489	0.032	0.004		
<b>Planning</b>	<b>1.717</b>	<b>1.649</b>	<b>(0.068)</b>	<b>(0.041)</b>		
Planning Control	0.363	0.328	(0.035)	(0.019)	Favourable move in planning fee income at Period 8, subject to further application levels up to financial year end.	Further potential for increased planning fee income which will be closely monitored
Aggregate of other Variances	1.354	1.321	(0.033)	(0.022)	Net Vacancy Savings and staff recharge income for specialist planning advice to neighbouring authorities	

## Budget Monitoring 2013/14 (Month 8)

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Period 7 (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
<b>Public Protection</b>	<b>3.464</b>	<b>3.409</b>	<b>(0.055)</b>	<b>(0.057)</b>		
Community Protection	1.243	1.199	(0.044)	(0.051)	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	2.221	2.210	(0.011)	(0.006)		
<b>Regeneration</b>	<b>0.704</b>	<b>0.711</b>	<b>0.007</b>	<b>0.011</b>		
<b>Streetscene</b>	<b>19.210</b>	<b>19.562</b>	<b>0.352</b>	<b>0.333</b>		
Waste Disposal & Waste Collection	9.266	9.602	0.336	0.334	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	9.960	0.016	(0.001)		
<b>Management Support &amp; Performance</b>	<b>1.094</b>	<b>1.085</b>	<b>(0.009)</b>	<b>(0.057)</b>		
Management Support & Performance	1.094	1.085	(0.009)	(0.057)	Net Vacancy Savings ahead of service review implementation and reduced commitments on supplies and services budgets. At period 08 vacancy savings of £51k realigned to now form part of Corporate Admin Review.	
<b>Total :</b>	<b>32.280</b>	<b>32.538</b>	<b>0.258</b>	<b>0.254</b>		

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Culture & Leisure	6.378	6.787	0.409	0.384	<p><b>School Library Service (£0.100m saving)</b> 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><b>Libraries, Culture &amp; Heritage (£0.001m pressure)</b> Minor variances</p> <p><b>Leisure Services (£0.508m pressure)</b> 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. £0.054m 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>

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Inclusion Services & Special Schools	13.245	13.186	(0.059)	(0.011)	<b>Inclusion Services &amp; Special Schools (£0.059m saving)</b> £0.038m relates to a projected saving on Out Of County. £0.024m to minor savings in Inclusion Services and £0.003m to a minor pressure on Special School SLA income.	
Primary School Services	43.334	43.297	(0.037)	(0.045)	<b>Primary School Services (£0.037m saving)</b> Minor Variances	Service Manager to review and reduce planned expenditure by £0.025m. Awaiting further information on planned usage of the Foundation Phase grant.
Secondary School Services	37.472	37.456	(0.016)	0.002	<b>Secondary School Services (£0.016m saving)</b>	
Development & Resources	12.428	12.205	(0.223)	(0.179)	<b>Children, Youth &amp; Community (£0.001m saving)</b> Minor variances <b>Schools ICT (£0.150m saving)</b> 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. <b>Transport (£0.023m pressure)</b> Minor Variances	Service Manager to place a hold on £0.150m of the budget within Schools ICT.  Work is ongoing to revise contract information.



Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
					<p><b>Service Units (£0.031m saving)</b>            Pressures of £0.085m on Pupil Support (Free School Meals, School Trips and Music Remissions) and £0.028m on Regional Capital One have been offset by estimated savings on Mobile Classrooms (£0.065m), Insurance (£0.036m), SMIT (£0.028m) and other minor variances of £0.015m.</p> <p><b>Facilities Services (£0.042m saving)</b>            Minor Variances</p> <p><b>Management &amp; Business Support (£0.022m saving)</b>            Minor Variances</p>	We are awaiting information from the Schools relating to Music remissions which is likely to affect the estimated costs.
<b>Total :</b>	<b>112.857</b>	<b>112.931</b>	<b>0.074</b>	<b>0.151</b>		



Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Chief Executive	2.301	2.248	(0.053)	(0.055)	£0.018m Corporate voluntary sector contribution to Dangerpoint (£0.060m) Vacancy savings (£0.011m) minor variances	
Finance	14.235	13.216	(1.019)	(0.600)	(£0.138m) net Vacancy savings following realignment of budget (£0.381m) in year efficiency following review of the level of funding required to meet Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) need and review of Housing Benefit Subsidy profile. (£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) £0.394m CTRS shortfall in funding compared to estimated in year cost	Request to carry forward £0.030m to fund Software upgrade costs in Internal Audit. This is due to a delay in procurement of the Software.  Demand led service but subject to ongoing monitoring. Contributing to national discussion on CTRS funding for 2014/15.

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Legal & Democratic Services	3,136	3,001	(0.135)	(0.046)	<p>(£0.004m) net Vacancy savings including the use of Agency/Locums and recharges</p> <p>(£0.028m) Members Services underspend</p> <p>(£0.086m) Members Allowances underspend (inc. training, travel etc.)</p> <p>(£0.011m) reduced Legal Subscriptions expenditure</p> <p>(£0.006m) minor variances</p>	

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Human Resources & Organisational Development	2.479	2.466	(0.013)	(0.032)	(£0.021m) reduced DBS Check expenditure (£0.016m) Vacancy savings £0.034m loss of income from external organisations (£0.010m) minor variances	
ICT & Customer Services	5.037	5.038	0.001	0.010	£0.074m postage costs (£0.013m) Vacancy savings (£0.024m) additional Registrars Income. (£0.025m) ICT Strategy underspend. (£0.011m) minor variances	Postage contract under review. Request to carry forward £0.046m in respect of Event & Log Management due to project delays.
<b>Total :</b>	<b>27.188</b>	<b>25.969</b>	<b>(1.219)</b>	<b>(0.723)</b>		



Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Central Loans & Investment Account	15.283	15.020	(0.263)	(0.242)	Review of the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) calculation to include MRP on Local Government Borrowing Initiative.	Continue to monitor in line with Treasury Management Strategy.
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.	Overspend is non recurring. Regular monitoring with Denbighshire County Council undertaken on in year spend
Centrally Held Provisions	4.645	3.733	(0.912)	(0.772)	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 budgeted pension fund deficit - final year of three year strategy (-£0.244m), under recovery of corporate windfall income £0.046m. ( other minor variances (-£0.034m).	Budgets are considered as part of 2014/15 Council Budget
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.	Subject to an overall review of Support Services
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.	Ongoing monthly monitoring

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Mass Matrix Contract	(0.315)	(0.200)	0.115	0.000	A review of the rebate on the Matrix Contract has been undertaken. Agency usage has decreased in 2013/4 and the variance projection reflects the up to date position.	Further analysis to be undertaken to consider the impact in 2014/15
Flintshire Futures	(0.469)	(0.183)	0.286	0.000	Assets Programme - £0.060m will not be achieved due to delays in the full review of hard and soft facilities management across the Council. Customer Programme - £0.300m of efficiencies will not be realised until the programme has advanced and the wider network of Flintshire Connects sites are in place. Back to Basics spend review - £0.074m additional efficiency as a result of an in year initiative to challenge spend on stationery and furniture, putting category management arrangements in place to support spend challenge going forward.	A Workshop is due to take place shortly to review progress and assess the methodology for realising efficiencies. Continued challenge of spend categories will support further efficiencies in 2014/15.
Other variances - aggregate	10.053	10.054	0.001	0.010		
<b>Total :</b>	<b>27.459</b>	<b>27.452</b>	<b>(0.007)</b>	<b>(0.238)</b>		



APPENDIX 7

**Movements on Council Fund Unearmarked Reserves**

	£m	£m
Total Reserves as at 1 April 2013	9.540	
Less - Base Level (inclusive of total increase of £0.270m agreed as part of the 2013/14 budget)	(5.834)	
Total Reserves above base level		<b>3.706</b>
Less - Amount approved by Council on 1 <sup>st</sup> March for funding of one-off costs in the 2013/14 budget proposals		(0.297)
Less - Amount approved by Cabinet on 16 <sup>th</sup> 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		<b>3.159</b>
Add projected underspend as at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2014		£1.068
Less - Estimate of severe weather recovery costs		(0.518)
<b>Projected Level of Total Contingency Reserve as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014</b>		<b>3.709</b>



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	189	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)	(224)	(223)	Bad Debt provision reviewed based on the first quarter impact of "bedroom tax", resulting in a saving of £258k	Monitor impact of "Bedroom Tax" and review expected costs
Repairs and Maintenance	8,393	8,635	242	277	£224k net under spend variance on salaries due to restructure not being in place and recruitment freeze in place. £234k over spend on materials and £76k overspend on equipment due to increase in the number of high cost jobs. Travis Perkins is to review pricing. Subcontractor agreed overspend on guttering of £127k due to bad weather early in year.  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 the second half of the year.

## HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

## APPENDIX 8

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance Last Month (£m)	Cause of Variance	Action Required
Finance & Support	2,656	2,413	(243)	(213)	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. Insurance claim non-reimbursement reviewed and reflected at 2012/13 figures, saving £21k  Carry forward request for £85k due to software costs not materialising in 2013/14 but will be purchased in 2014/15. Carry forward request for £15k due to Maisonet budget not being fully spent in year.	
Housing Estates	1,852	1,692	(160)	(130)	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)		
<b>Total :</b>	<b>497</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>(212)</b>	<b>(117)</b>		

Month 8

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	
<b>Fees &amp; Charges (APPENDIX 7a)</b>						
<b>Community Services</b>						
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	✓				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.118</b>					
<b>Service Change (APPENDIX 7b)</b>						
<b>Community Services</b>						
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 8

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 £0.032.
Preventative foster care service - day care	0.005	✓				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.456</b>					
<b>Procurement (APPENDIX 7c)</b>						
<b>Community Services</b>						
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

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	✓				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.686</b>					
<b>Organisational Design (APPENDIX 7d)</b>						
<b>Community Services</b>						
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	✓				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.458</b>					





**Month 8**

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	
<b>Fees &amp; Charges (APPENDIX 7a)</b>						
<b>Environment</b>						
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
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.140</b>					
<b>Service Change (APPENDIX 7b)</b>						
<b>Environment</b>						
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 (HAMM) -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 8

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.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.780</b>					
<b>Procurement (APPENDIX 7c)</b>						
<b>Environment</b>						
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 8**

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
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.144</b>					
<b>Organisational Design (APPENDIX 7d)</b>						
<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
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.020</b>					
<b>Other Efficiencies (APPENDIX 7e)</b>						
<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
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.050</b>					



Month 8

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	
<b>Fees &amp; Charges (APPENDIX 7a)</b>						
<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.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.207</b>					
<b>Service Change (APPENDIX 7b)</b>						
<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 flaw 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 8

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	✓				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.192</b>					

**Month 8**

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	
<b>Procurement (APPENDIX 7c)</b>						
<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		✓			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.466</b>					
<b>Organisational Design (APPENDIX 7d)</b>						
<i>Lifelong Learning</i>						
Libraries - Flexible retirement	0.015	✓				
Libraries - Library Service Review	0.037	✓				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.052</b>					
<b>Other Efficiencies (APPENDIX 7e)</b>						
<i>Demographic Change in Schools (pupil numbers)</i>						
	0.132	✓				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.132</b>					





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	
<b>Fees &amp; Charges (APPENDIX 7a)</b>						
<b>FINANCE - Corporate Services</b>						
Revenues - increased number of Council Tax fines	0.027		✓			
<b>ICT &amp; CUSTOMER SERVICES - Corporate Services</b>						
Registrars - increased fees	0.019		✓			
Network Services - income from hosting PSBA equipment	0.004	✓				
<b>LEGAL &amp; DEMOCRATIC - Corporate Services</b>						
External Fees - conveyancing / S106 agreements	0.015		✓			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.065</b>					
<b>Service Change (APPENDIX 7b)</b>						
<b>Chief Executive - Corporate Services</b>						
Corporate Comms - reduced workforce bulletins	0.003		✓			
<b>HR &amp; OD - Corporate Services</b>						
CRB checks - review of options	0.035		✓			
<b>LEGAL &amp; DEMOCRATIC - Corporate Services</b>						
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		✓			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.138</b>					

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	
<b>Procurement (APPENDIX 7c)</b>						
<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		✓			
<b>ICT &amp; CUSTOMER SERVICES - Corporate Services</b>						
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 influenceable 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		✓			
<b>FINANCE - Corporate Services</b>						

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		✓			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.245</b>					
<b>Organisational Design (APPENDIX 7d)</b>						
<b>Chief Executive - Corporate Services</b>						
Reduction in mileage travelled - Emergency Planning	0.001		✓			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.001</b>					

Month 8

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	
<b>Service Change (APPENDIX 7b)</b>						
<i>Central &amp; Corporate Finance</i>						
Clwyd Theatr Cymru - agreed reduction to contribution	0.015	✓				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.015</b>					
<b>Procurement (APPENDIX 7c)</b>						
<i>Central &amp; Corporate Finance</i>						
Flintshire Futures - E-procurement and improved processes	0.102		✓			
Flintshire Futures - Internal Fleet Review	0.160	✓				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.262</b>					
<b>Other Efficiencies (APPENDIX 7e)</b>						
<i>Central &amp; 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 8

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				✓	Detailed work being undertaken to assess the timing of efficiency
Flintshire Futures - Customer Workstream face to face customer contact	0.100				✓	Detailed work being undertaken to assess the timing of efficiency
Flintshire Futures - Customer Workstream Channel Shift	0.100				✓	Detailed work being undertaken to assess the timing of efficiency
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.704</b>					

## FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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

**DATE:** **THURSDAY, 13 FEBRUARY 2014**

**REPORT BY:** **HEAD OF FINANCE**

**SUBJECT:** **COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME CONSULTATION**

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.01 To provide Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee with information on a Welsh Government Consultation seeking views on the review of options for the future of Council Tax support in Wales. The closing date is 5<sup>th</sup> March 2014.
- 1.02 To provide members with a series of recommended responses, as drafted by officers, on the proposals as set out in Appendix 2 to this report, and seek members support to them.

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

- 2.01 In October 2010, the UK Government announced its intention to abolish Council Tax Benefit (CTB) and cut funding for replacement schemes. CTB was abolished on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 and the responsibility for developing a replacement scheme for Wales was taken up by the Welsh Government. The Welsh Government introduced a system for Council Tax Support for 2013-14, and the regulations governing the system for 2014-15 and 2015-16 have recently been approved by the Assembly.
- 2.02 The UK Government has transferred £222 million to the Welsh Government for 2013-14, and will transfer a further £222 million in each of 2014-15 and 2015-16. Thereafter, funding will be included in the overall Welsh budget. The reduction in funding for replacement schemes means this transfer is insufficient on its own to continue to maintain the same level of support as was provided under CTB. The Welsh Government is therefore providing an additional £22 million in 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16 to support Local Authorities in maintaining entitlements, with Authorities meeting the remaining costs.
- 2.03 However, whilst the funding from the UK Government is not increasing, the cost of maintaining entitlements will rise year on year if council tax rises, or the number of eligible applicants increases, placing an increasing financial pressure on the Welsh Government

and Local Authorities, which will become more and more difficult to sustain.

- 2.04 The Welsh Government are therefore reviewing the options for the future of Council Tax Support (CTS) in Wales, with a view to provide a scheme which is equitable, sustainable, and delivers the maximum protection for low income and vulnerable households within the financial constraints.

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.01 The Welsh Government is supplementing the UK Government funding transfer with an additional £22 million to support Local Authorities in maintaining existing entitlements. However if Council Taxes continue to rise at current rates, by 2015-16 the estimated total cost of maintaining existing levels of CTS could increase to over £260million, around £40 million more than the provision from the UK Government.

- 3.02 Removal of all support would expose low income households to the full impact of Council Tax. In Flintshire there are currently 12,800 households in receipt of £10.2 million CTS; as a result, the impact of removing support would be significant., for local residents and for the Councils ability to collect Council Tax.

- 3.03 The impact of maintaining entitlements through a CTS scheme, in terms of the revenue lost to Authorities from households receiving CTS, is likely to fall on local services, which may themselves also be providing support to some of the low income and vulnerable households who benefit from CTS. Equally, reducing entitlement to CTS will have a direct impact on the income of Flintshire's poorest and most vulnerable households at the same time as they are facing reductions in income through the welfare reforms.

- 3.04 The Welsh Government has identified a range of options for reducing entitlement (Appendix 1). The options will impact in different ways on households currently in receipt of CTS and on Local Authority revenue. As the cost of maintaining entitlements increases year on year, some of the options presented will not be sufficient to fully offset the shortfall in funding.

### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.01 For Members to note the consultation.
- 4.02 For Members to consider the recommended responses, as prepared by senior officers within the Revenue and Benefits services, as detailed in Appendix 2 to this report.
- 4.03 That any feedback from Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny is reported verbally to Cabinet on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2014.



## **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 Although the Welsh Government funds a significant element of the CTS scheme through the Revenue Support Grant, the Authority is required to fund subsequent increases in Council Tax and any fluctuations in the number of claimants. As such the cost of the current scheme will increasingly become a budget pressure impacting on service provision or requiring significant increases in Council Tax. The expected additional cost to Flintshire in 2014/15 is £0.633m.

## **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 A change to the current scheme will expose low income and vulnerable households to a liability to pay Council Tax, in many cases for the first time due to their financial circumstances. This change is at a time when many are struggling to cope with the impact of other changes to the welfare system.

## **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 None.

## **8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 The Welsh Government have completed an equalities Impact assessment of potential options, which will reflect the impact in Flintshire.

## **9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 None.

## **10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 The purpose of the report is to provide members with the opportunity to comment on the consultation proposals.

## **11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 A report will be taken to Cabinet on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2014 to finalise the Council's response.

## **12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 Appendix 1 to this report contains the Options being considered by WG.

12.02 Appendix 2 to this report contains the recommended responses to the latest consultation.

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

*2013 Review of Council Tax Support Consultation*

*2012 Council Tax Support in Wales: Equality Impact Assessment*

*2012 Reforming Council Tax Benefit: options for Wales*

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## Appendix 1

### **Option 1 – CTRS is based on a fixed percentage of council tax liability**

Under this option, all households have to pay a percentage of their Council Tax liability, regardless of their personal circumstances or the band of property in which they live. They then receive CTRS to help them pay for the remaining percentage.

**Impact on recipients:** Band D Council Tax levels in Wales in 2013-14 range from £974.36 to £1,525.87. Band D households currently in receipt of full CTRS, would pay, for example, 10% of their bill, which would range from £97 to £153, depending on the Authority in which they live. The average annual household loss by Authority (ie. across all CTRS households) in 2013-14 would range from £72 to £102, with at least 96% of CTRS-entitled households in each Authority affected. This option withdraws more support from those in partial CTRS than option 2 below.

**Impact on LA revenues:** Across all 22 Authorities the total 'saving' (in terms of additional revenue collected) would be around £28 million, with the proportionate impact on revenues broadly equal across Authorities (at between 10.9% and 11.5% of their CTRS expenditure).

### **Option 2 - Council Tax Support is cut by a fixed percentage across-the-board**

Entitlement is calculated as normal, but all reductions are then reduced by the percentage.

**Impact on recipients:** The impact on those currently in receipt of full CTRS is the same as for the previous option but, because of the way in which the reduction is calculated, this option is slightly more beneficial for those in receipt of a partial reduction of CTRS. The average annual household loss by Authority ranges from £64 to £89, again with at least 96% of households affected in every Authority.

**Impact on LA revenues:** Across all 22 Authorities the total 'saving' (in terms of additional revenue collected) would be around £25 million, with the proportionate impact on revenues equal across Authorities.

### **Option 3 - Capping CTRS entitlement at the Council Tax liability for the band below the one in which the recipient lives**

The maximum reduction in Council Tax liability is capped at the Council Tax rate for the tax band below that for the dwelling. So a Band B household's CTRS reduction would be equal to that for a Band A dwelling in their Authority, a Band C reduction would be capped at the Band B level and so on.

**Impact on recipients:** The impact would depend on the band of the property in which they live and on their Authority. The annual average household loss by Authority would range from £101 to £152, and at least 96% of CTRS-entitled households would be affected in all areas.

**Impact on LA revenues:** Across all Authorities the total 'saving' would be £40 million, and in contrast to the other property band-based options above, the impact would be broadly the same across individual Authorities (ranging from 14.9% to 18.7%).

#### **Option 4 - Reducing entitlement by capping CTRS entitlement at the Council Tax liability for a Band B property**

Entitlement to CTRS is calculated as normal, but the maximum reduction in Council Tax liability is capped at the level of Council Tax for a Band B property. Full entitlement is maintained for Bands A and B, but all other households have to pay part of their Council Tax, with those in higher band properties paying more.

**Impact on recipients:** The Band B council tax charge 2013-14 ranges from £758 to £1,187. A band D household currently receiving full CTRS would face a bill of between £217 and £339, which is the difference between the Band B and Band D rates in their area. Residents in Bands A and B would be protected, but those in higher bands would pay more than under the previous options. The average annual loss for households affected is therefore higher than for the previous options, ranging from £160 to £291. The proportions of CTRS-entitled households affected would vary widely between Authorities (from 5% to almost 70%), because of the variation in the numbers of Band A and B properties.

**Impact on LA revenues:** Across all Authorities the total 'saving' would be £27 million, but the impact would vary between Authorities from only 1.6% of CTRS income to over 23%, with the more deprived areas generating less additional revenue and those with larger numbers of higher band properties generating more. Without a mechanism to redistribute the funding released, some Authorities would still face a substantial shortfall.

#### **Option 5 - Reducing entitlement by removing entitlement entirely from residents in Band E and above**

Residents in Band E or above are automatically disallowed from any entitlement to CTRS. Residents of Bands A to D are unaffected: their entitlements are protected, and are determined in the same way as now.

**Impact on recipients:** The CTRS entitlements for those in Bands A to D are unaffected, and these residents account for around 93% of the total caseload. However, the rise in Council Tax liability for residents in higher property bands who currently receive CTRS would be very steep. The average CTRS reduction paid to Band E households is £1084, but under this option, they would receive no reduction, and would be liable for their full Council Tax bill.

The proportion of CTRS households affected in each Authority would vary from less than 1% to over 17%.

**Impact on LA revenues:** Across all Authorities the total 'saving' would be £26 million (or around 10.6% of CTRS expenditure) but again the impact would vary between Authorities because of the variation in the numbers of properties in each band.

### **Option 6 – Increase the income taper to 30%**

For CTRS recipients subject to the means test, if their income exceeds their applicable amount, their weekly entitlement is reduced by 20p for each £1 of excess weekly income (the taper), until entitlement is fully withdrawn. This option would increase the reduction to 30p for each £1, leading to a steeper fall in entitlement as income increases.

**Impact on recipients:** Those in receipt of full CTRS would be unaffected, but those on partial reductions would see their entitlement reduced. This is likely to affect between 19% and 25% of CTRS households, with an average loss ranging between £114 and £189. An increase in the taper rate will erode any additional income generated from working, reducing the incentive for those receiving welfare benefits to find work or increase earnings.

**Impact on LA revenues:** Across all Authorities the total 'saving' would be approximately £9.2 million, and the impact would be broadly the same across individual Authorities.

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## APPENDIX 2

### **Draft Responses to the Welsh Government Consultation Document**

#### **Question 1: Do you agree the Welsh Government should maintain a system of Council Tax Support?**

Agreed that a system of Council tax support needs to be maintained, failure to maintain a system would lead to many vulnerable and low income households being liable to pay Council Tax in full, with the consequence of increasing levels of poverty and the subsequent impacts of social dependency.

#### **Question 2a: Given the financial pressures and the likely impact on local services, should entitlements be maintained at current levels from 2015-16? Or should entitlements be reduced, exposing low income and vulnerable families to increases in the Council Tax they have to pay?**

Unfortunately the financial cost of the scheme cannot be sustained in the current economic climate, without significant increases in Council Tax levels to fund the scheme which would have a detrimental impact on households where levels of income are marginally above benefit entitlements. Therefore entitlements must be reduced to sustainable levels.

#### **Question 2b: If entitlements are maintained, how should the gap be funded? Should the Welsh Government pay, should Local Government pay, or should the cost be shared?**

If entitlements are to be maintained, it would require an examination as to the drivers for maintenance e.g. if WG commit to anti poverty policies which include maintenance for specified groups, such as ensuring families with children have an income of at least 60% of the average household income, then WG should be responsible for funding.

#### **Question 2c: If some of the costs continue to be met by Local Authorities, what might be the implications for the communities for whom they provide services?**

Maintenance of entitlements will increase pressures on budgets with only available solutions of either increasing Council Tax or reducing services both of which will have a detrimental effect on Communities.

#### **Question 3a: Should some of the costs of maintaining entitlement be offset by changes to the Council Tax system itself, to enable Local Authorities to generate additional revenue? If so, how? What are the implications of making changes to the Council Tax system itself? What would be the administrative implications for Local Authorities?**

It must be recognised that any changes to the Council Tax system would impact on the Tax payer, particularly in the instances of discounts and exemptions. For example, reduction of 25% Single person discount (SPD) would increase the liability to the Tax payer, in many cases SPD claimants are pensioners or single parent households with limited budgets, additional tax burdens may have a detrimental impact on their finances and for SPD working households may mean that work no longer pays more than unemployment.

If changes were to be implicated there would be additional administrative burdens for Authorities with the cost of software changes and the potential higher levels of recovery action required.

**Question 3b: Should any such changes be prescribed nationally or should there be local flexibility?**

Changes to the Council Tax system should be prescribed nationally with limited local flexibility which would allow the consideration of local issues, however this may set a precedent allowing further changes to the Council Tax system to an extent that Council Tax itself would no longer be a national scheme.

**Question 4a: If entitlements have to be reduced, should everyone pay a proportion of their Council Tax, or should some groups be protected?**

To protect some groups would increase the burden on other vulnerable groups as evidenced in England where pensioners have been protected with the consequence that a non-Pensioner household in receipt of means-tested Welfare benefits can be liable for 40% of Council Tax.

**Question 4b: If you think any groups should be protected, which groups and on what grounds?**

See question 4a

**Question 4c: What are the equality implications and potential impacts on those with protected characteristics of making everyone pay a proportion of their Council Tax, or of protecting particular groups?**

The removal of full CTRS will impact on all groups who have in previous years been identified by a process of means testing as unable to pay, therefore the removal will have significant impact on available income for basic needs, for this reason there is a requirement to limit impact as far as possible which indicates that the burden should be equitable for all groups.

**Question 5a: If entitlements have to be reduced, should this be through a single national framework scheme proposed by Welsh Ministers and approved by the Assembly or should Local Authorities have flexibility to devise local solutions?**



To prevent a “post code lottery” there should be a single national scheme.

**Question 5b: If a localised approach is introduced, should Local**

**Authorities have full flexibility or should some national prescription be maintained? What aspects of a CTRS scheme would it be appropriate to determine locally?**

If there is to be a localised approach then LA’s should have full flexibility to devise a scheme which adapts to local conditions.

**Question 6a: If entitlement has to be reduced, what is the most equitable and sustainable option (or combination of options) for doing so? What are the implications for groups with protected characteristics under the Equality Act? What would be the impact on the rights of children and young people?**

To achieve an equitable solution the options must have equal impact on all groups, as previously stated the protection of any group effectively is at the detriment of another group. Therefore Options 1, 2 & 3 fulfil these criteria.

**Question 6b: Are there other options which should be considered? If so, how would they work and what advantages would they offer? What would be the equality impacts?**

All effective options are considered

**Question 6c: What are the relative administrative implications for Local Authorities of the different options?**

All options will require software change which could be achieved by current suppliers at the cost of upgrades. The major administrative implication would be the resources required to collect / recover relatively small amounts of Council Tax, from Tax payers who are on low incomes. This has already been evidenced in the significant increase in effort and resources that social housing landlords have had to employ in order to try and collect rent from (a smaller number of residents) impacted by the spare room subsidy.

**Question 6d: The impact of some property band based options on revenues will vary widely from Authority to Authority. How might these variations be mitigated if such options are implemented?**

It would require an examination of each Authorities tax base compared with required savings to calculate band changes required. This process would be cumbersome and would lose the uniformity of a one Wales scheme.

**Question 7a: In the longer term, it may be desirable or necessary to make changes to the system of means testing, as UC is fully rolled out, but our proposal is to retain the existing means testing approach in the medium term. What are your views on this?**

Although there is an increased administrative burden on LA's to means test, this does ensure that CTRS recipients receive the correct entitlement, non means testing would produce a "winners and losers" scenario and potentially the scheme would be open to abuse, which could result in a higher cost whilst potentially not supporting vulnerable groups.

**Question 7b: What are the main implications of wider welfare reforms for CTRS, and how should these be addressed?**

The impacts of Welfare Reform are in many cases reducing benefit entitlement within a context of "making work pay", at a time of economic uncertainty. The reduction in income for these groups effectively increases the impacts on CTRS where there will become a liability for payment.

To reduce the impacts requires a long-term commitment to provide / promote employment, with a demand to increase the skills and education to produce a workforce which would enhance the potential for employment

**Question 8: What are the implications of the Commission's findings for the future of CTRS?**

The Commission has correctly identified the unsustainable of funding for the future of CTRS, this consultation addresses the current issues but in the future further decisions will have to be made to reflect increasing costs. To ensure a seamless approach the decision as to options available within this paper should also reflect potential for future change, which will remove banding based options.

## FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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

**DATE:** **13 FEBRUARY 2014**

**REPORT BY:** **MEMBER ENGAGEMENT MANAGER**

**SUBJECT:** **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

**1.01** To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

**2.01** Items feed into a Committee's Forward Work Programme from a number of sources. Members can suggest topics for review by Overview & Scrutiny Committees, members of the public can suggest topics, items can be referred by the Cabinet for consultation purposes, or by County Council, or Directors. Other possible items are identified from the Cabinet Work Programme and the Strategic Assessment of Risks & Challenges.

**2.02** In identifying topics for future consideration, it is useful or a 'test of significance' to be applied. This can be achieved by asking a range of questions as follows:

1. Will the review contribute to the Council's priorities and/or objectives?
2. Are there issues of weak or poor performance?
3. How, where and why were the issues identified?
4. Do local communities think the issues are important and is there any evidence of this? Is there evidence of public dissatisfaction?
5. Is there new Government guidance or legislation?
6. Have inspections been carried out?
7. Is this area already the subject of an ongoing review?

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

**3.01** Overview & Scrutiny presents a unique opportunity for Members to determine the Forward Work Programme of the Committees of which they are members. By reviewing and prioritising the forward work programme Members are able to ensure it is member-led and includes the right issues. A copy of the Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1 for Members' consideration which has been updated following the last meeting.

**4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

**4.01** That the Committee considers the draft Forward Work Programme attached as Appendix 1 and approve/amend as necessary.

**5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

None as a result of this report.

**6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

None as a result of this report.

**7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

None as a result of this report.

**8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

None as a result of this report.

**9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

None as a result of this report.

**10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

N/A

**11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

Publication of this report constitutes consultation.

**12.00 APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Forward Work Programme

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

None.

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**Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee**  
**FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2012/13**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>O&amp;S FOCUS</b>	<b>REPORT FROM</b>
Thursday 13 <sup>th</sup> March 2014 10.00	Annual Improvement Report from Wales Audit Office  Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/14 Month 9 and capital Programme Q 3  Workforce Information Quarter 3 October - December 2013  Forward Work Programme		KA  GF  HS
Thursday 10 <sup>th</sup> April 2014 10.00	Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/14 Month 10  Improvement Plan Monitoring Report  Forward Work Programme	Monitoring  Monitoring  Development	
Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> May 2014 10.00	Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/14 Month 11  People Strategy 2014/17  Forward Work Programme	Monitoring  Development	
Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> June 2014 10.00	Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/14 Month 12  Improvement Plan monitoring 2013/14 and 2014/15	Monitoring	

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