

# Public Document Pack



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To: Cllr Ron Hampson (Chairman)

Councillors: David Cox, Paul Cunningham, Peter Curtis, Ron Davies, Rosetta Dolphin, Ian Dunbar, Jim Falshaw, George Hardcastle, Ray Hughes, Hilary Isherwood, Sara Parker, Mike Reece, Gareth Roberts and David Roney

17 November 2016

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Community and Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Committee which will be held at 10.00 am on Wednesday, 23rd November, 2016 in the Council Chamber, Connah's Quay Town Council Offices, Quay Building, Fron Road, Connah's Quay, Flintshire CH5 4PJ to consider the following items

**\* Members are requested to note the venue. A tour of the Custom House Lane development in Connah's Quay will take place following the meeting.**

## A G E N D A

### 1 APOLOGIES

**Purpose:** To receive any apologies.

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

**Purpose:** To receive any Declarations and advise Members accordingly.

### 3 MINUTES (Pages 3 - 8)

**Purpose:** To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2016 (copy enclosed).

4 **COUNCIL TAX BASE SETTING FOR 2017-18** (Pages 9 - 14)

Report of Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise) enclosed. Portfolio of the Cabinet Member for Corporate Management.

**Purpose:** To consider the Council Tax Base as part of Council Tax charge setting and calculation of Revenue Support Grant.

5 **REGENERATION PROGRAMMES** (Pages 15 - 24)

Report of Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise) enclosed. Portfolio of the Cabinet Members for Housing and Economic Development.

**Purpose:** To consider an update on the Housing Regeneration Programme and revised Renewal Policy.

6 **STRATEGIC HOUSING AND REGENERATION PROJECT (SHARP)** (Pages 25 - 38)

Report of Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise) enclosed. Portfolio of the Cabinet Member for Housing.

**Purpose:** To review progress on the Strategic Housing and Regeneration Project (SHARP)

7 **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 39 - 46)

Report of Community and Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator enclosed.

**Purpose:** The Committee is asked to consider, and amend where necessary, the Forward Work Programme for the Community & Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Yours faithfully



Robert Robins  
Democratic Services Manager

## **COMMUNITY AND ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** **19 OCTOBER 2016**

Minutes of the meeting of the Community and Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held in the Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold on Wednesday, 19 October 2016

**PRESENT: Councillor Ron Hampson (Chairman)**

Councillors: David Cox, Paul Cunningham, Peter Curtis, Ron Davies, Rosetta Dolphin, Ian Dunbar, George Hardcastle, Ray Hughes, Hilary Isherwood, Sara Parker, Mike Reece, Gareth Roberts and David Roney

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor Jim Falshaw and Councillor Helen Brown, Cabinet Member for Housing

**CONTRIBUTORS:** Councillor Bernie Attridge, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment; Councillor Derek Butler, Cabinet Member for Economic Development; Chief Officer (Community & Enterprise); Service Manager (Enterprise and Regeneration); Service Manager (Council Housing Services); and Benefits Manager

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Community and Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Committee Officer

### **17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **18. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2016 were submitted.

#### Matters Arising

Minute number 11: Council Fund Revenue Budget 2017/18 - in response to Councillor Dolphin's question, the Chief Officer confirmed that the Council's own Bailiff Service was used to pursue law enforcement matters.

#### **RESOLVED:**

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

### **19. GROWTH VISION AND STRATEGY FOR THE ECONOMY OF NORTH WALES**

Councillor Derek Butler introduced a report accompanied by 'A Growth Vision for the Economy of North Wales' which set out regional ambitions on infrastructure development, skills and employment, and business growth. Also received was the 'Growth Track 360' prospectus on rail improvement across North Wales and the Mersey Dee area, which had been developed with various key partners. The documents, which had been shared with the UK Government and Welsh Government (WG), were being submitted to all six North Wales

authorities for adoption and a further regional document on skills had been produced. In stressing the importance of Flintshire's position, Councillor Butler said that the cross-border growth bid was unique in the UK.

The Service Manager (Enterprise and Regeneration) gave an overview of the report which followed an earlier report on the Regional Economy. He described it as a realistic vision with carefully focussed aims, which had been the subject of positive discussions with Ministers. The vision was ambitious in seeking improved sustainable economic growth and employment opportunities for North Wales, with particular focus on the advanced manufacturing, energy and digital sectors. Devolved powers were being sought to deliver local priorities and the vision supported the developing strategy for the Northern Powerhouse and would link with the growth bid by Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

Councillor Ian Dunbar referred to the cost implications of the rail prospectus but supported the vision for growth and welcomed the benefits to local industry. He asked about progress of discussions with new WG Ministers and potential changes to future plans. The Chief Officer (Community & Enterprise) said that if the funding could be secured, this would be invested on early priorities to make improvements on the Wrexham to Bidston route, provide faster trains along the coast, upgrade stations and improve the overall customer experience. Whilst WG had given a commitment to support the growth vision, negotiations with the WG and UK Government would continue on priorities, investment and collaboration to deliver schemes. There would continue to be capital investment in major infrastructure programmes, for example the commitment by WG to ease congestion along the Deeside corridor through consultation on the Red and Blue routes.

Councillor Butler referred to the positive relationship and shared aspirations built up between the Council and the Mersey Dee Alliance over the years.

Whilst Councillor Rosetta Dolphin welcomed the report and understood the focus on the Deeside area, she raised concerns that other areas of the county could miss out on investment. She also suggested that a workshop on the work carried out within the Economy & Enterprise portfolio could be of use to the Committee.

Councillor Hilary Isherwood welcomed the plans and acknowledged the traffic problems along the Deeside strip, but shared concerns about the benefits to other areas of the county, particularly in more rural areas. She spoke about the WG wanting more housing developments but stated the importance of having a proper infrastructure in place first, supported by appropriate bus services giving young people access to employment.

The Chief Officer agreed to the suggested workshop. She gave assurances that the proposals were to benefit the whole of the county in terms of improving transport links and journey times, and attracting investment. The aim was for a fully integrated transport strategy, with investment to improve the infrastructure and connectivity to bus services. The request for devolved powers would provide an opportunity to develop a regional transport body and explore a

regional careers service, identifying skills and apprenticeships needed to support areas of growth.

Councillor Butler drew attention to the strategic projects to support the growth bid, including that on 'localised access to employment opportunities'.

Councillor Bernie Attridge said that the importance of adequate bus services in rural areas was recognised and that work on community transport and hubs would be paramount in helping people to access employment.

Whilst Councillor Peter Curtis supported the Deeside hub, he felt that this should not be at the expense of smaller communities. He welcomed the ambitions of the report and opportunities to improve and modernise customer experience for train users, but felt that the electrification of railway lines could be restricted along some areas of the coastal route.

Concerning a question on the WG consultation on the Deeside corridor, Councillor Attridge explained the requirement for the Council to respond. Points raised by Councillor Hardcastle included the need to address congestion issues along Aston Hill and even more so at the interchange with Mold.

In welcoming the report, Councillor David Roney pointed out major issues along the coast road and the need for access to train services from Mostyn, whilst Councillor Ron Davies highlighted road issues in Queensferry.

Councillor Butler said that a pragmatic approach had been taken to the proposals and that the delivery of a number of 'quick wins' could open up other opportunities.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the Committee supports the 'Growth Vision for the Economy of North Wales' as the basis for negotiation with the UK and Welsh Governments over a Growth Bid for the region; and
- (b) That the Committee supports and endorses the prospectus for Rail Improvement 'Growth Track 360'.

## **20. QUARTER 1 IMPROVEMENT PLAN MONITORING REPORT**

The Chief Officer (Community & Enterprise) introduced the regular update report to consider progress towards the delivery of the impacts set out in the 2016/17 Improvement Plan, focussing on the areas of under-performance relevant to the Committee during Quarter 1.

### Housing

On the prevention of homelessness, the service was working within the budget but there were ongoing pressures to reduce the spend on bed and breakfast accommodation, particularly for young single people. The Chief Officer said that a range of housing options were being explored and that legislative changes would offer more flexibility on shared tenancies.

Councillor Bernie Attridge was pleased to report that Supporting People funding had been protected by Welsh Government (WG).

The Service Manager (Council Housing Services) reported good progress on Year 2 of the programme to meet the Welsh Quality Housing Standards, with targets exceeded on the upgrading of bathrooms and kitchens. Work was on target against the overall budget spend and progress was being maintained at the end of Quarter 2.

The Chairman paid tribute to the Service Manager (Council Housing Services) who was due to leave the Council and extended appreciation and best wishes on behalf of the Committee. The Service Manager in turn thanked the Chief Officer and Committee Members for their support.

Councillor Rosetta Dolphin stressed that careful consideration should be given when allocating properties. As an option to prevent homelessness, she suggested that 2 or 3-bedroom flats, which were unsuitable for families, could be split for easier letting. Officers explained that this type of remodelling had been done in some areas and would be extended to other parts of the county.

Councillor Mike Reece referred to issues where some tenants were refusing refurbishment work and said that this could be resolved by giving them an opportunity to view completed work at other properties. The Service Manager said that the work could not be forced upon tenants but that follow-up visits were made. In response to comments about contractor performance, Councillor Attridge said that such concerns should be raised directly with Sean O'Donnell or Tony Jones for them to deal with the problem. The Service Manager agreed to arrange for those officers to contact Councillor Reece.

Councillor Peter Curtis had raised with officers an issue about the standard of cleaning at a sheltered accommodation complex in his ward. The Service Manager was aware of this and gave assurance that quality and consistency of services was being reviewed across all complexes. The importance of tenant feedback was highlighted to help inform this review.

### Economy and Enterprise

Amongst a number of positive outcomes in the report, the Service Manager (Enterprise and Regeneration) advised that the completion of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) remained an area of focus with good progress made on the action plan which had been developed to improve performance and sustain targets.

On DFGs, Councillor Bernie Attridge spoke about the different approaches taken by other councils and gave assurances that in Flintshire, the exact number of days was recorded until all issues had been fully resolved and the cases were closed.

Councillor Derek Butler drew attention to good performance on the conversion of business enquiries to investment and the delivery of supply chain development events. He said that this reflected the work undertaken by the

service and took the opportunity to thank the Service Manager (Council Housing Services) for his involvement.

In response to a question, the Service Manager said that the impact of the withdrawal of Communities First funding was as yet unknown, but that any information would be shared with the Committee. The importance of this initiative to various workstreams would be highlighted to WG.

### Poverty

The Benefits Manager highlighted the achievements on the support being provided to help people to access benefits and the continued promotion of the Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) scheme to help people adjust to welfare reform changes. Outcomes on Housing Benefit claim processing had been affected by a staff restructure and the legal requirement for additional information to accompany claims.

Councillor Hilary Isherwood commended the work of the Welfare Rights team in helping residents and asked about changes to the service. It was explained that service delivery would continue with closer links to the Citizens' Advice Bureau. Capacity to undertake home visits was now limited and was available only to residents who were unable to attend the office, however low-level advice could be obtained through Flintshire Connects.

### **RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

## **21. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The current Forward Work Programme was considered and the following actions agreed:

- The Facilitator to confirm arrangements for the next meeting on 23 November 2016 to be held in Connah's Quay followed by a site visit of the Custom House Lane development.
- The Facilitator to arrange for the meeting on 1 February 2017 to be held at the Flint office incorporating a site visit to the local housing development.
- Officers to follow up Councillor Dolphin's request for a Committee workshop on the work of the Economy & Enterprise portfolio, possibly attached to a future meeting.

### **RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the Forward Work Programme be noted; and
- (b) That the Facilitator, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises.

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

There was one member of the public and one member of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 11.40 am)

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**Chairman**





## COMMUNITY & ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY MEETING

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Wednesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2016
<b>Report Subject</b>	Council Tax Base Setting for 2017-18
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management
<b>Report Author</b>	Chief Officer (Community & Enterprise)
<b>Type of Report</b>	Operational

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Setting of the Council Tax Base is approved annually by Cabinet and is integral to the revenue budget and Council Tax setting process for 2017-18. It also allows the Council, Police & Crime Commissioners Office for North Wales and Town/Community Councils to calculate next year's Council Tax precept.

The Base for 2017-18 has been calculated as 63,543 band D equivalent properties, after taking into account the total number of properties that will be subject to Council Tax, including the Premium, less those which are exempt from Council Tax or where household discounts apply.

Setting in the Tax Base at 63,543 also represents growth in the Tax Base of nearly 1.3% compared to the previous year, equivalent to an increase of 784 band D equivalent properties.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Note the setting of the annual Tax Base of 63,543 band D equivalent properties (as shown in Appendix 1) for the financial year 2017-18
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## **REPORT DETAILS**

<b>1.00</b>	<b>EXPLAINING THE COUNCIL TAX BASE FOR 2017-18</b>
1.01	The Council fulfils the role of 'billing authority' for the collection of Council Tax and each year is required to set the Council Tax Base for the following tax year.
1.02	From April 2017, local authorities in Wales, are also able to use discretionary powers to charge a Council Tax premium of up to 100% of the standard rate of Council Tax on long term empty homes (unoccupied and unfurnished) and second homes (second homes/holiday homes that are furnished and not someone's main residence).
1.03	Earlier this year, the Council made a determination to introduce a 50% Premium for April 2017. Notwithstanding that many properties will be subject to an exception from the Premium for a further period of 12 months, the Council Tax Base now also includes a projection of those properties that may be subject to the Council Tax Premium in 2017-18.
1.04	Once approved, the Tax Base calculations are also supplied to Welsh Government and are then used for the calculation and distribution of Revenue Support Grant in the annual provision and the final local authority revenue settlement.
1.05	The calculation of the Tax Base for 2017-18 is the measure of the taxable capacity for all areas in the County and is calculated in accordance with prescribed rules. The starting point for determining the Base is the Valuation List supplied by the Valuation Office Agency. The total number of properties in each band is then reduced by exemptions and discounts. Discounts include, for example, reductions for single-persons or students.
1.06	The latest Tax Base has been calculated using a projected collection level of 99.0% with a 1% provision for bad debts. This ensures the Council sets the very highest collection level in Wales and demonstrates the successes in collecting Council Tax.
1.07	To determine the final level of the Base, the Council is also required to determine what discount, if any, is awarded to owners of second or holiday homes (otherwise known as Prescribed Discount Class A and B properties) or long term empty properties (Prescribed Discount Class C).
1.08	The Council Tax Base for 2017-18 has been calculated in line with the current policy of not awarding discounts to any Prescribed Class coupled with the fact that some of these properties will also be liable to pay the 50% Premium.

<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
2.01	Setting of the Tax Base by Cabinet is part of an annual process of determining Council Tax charges for the next financial year as part of the Councils overall 2017-18 budget preparations.

2.02	The Tax Base is also used by the Police & Crime Commissioner and Town/Community Council's to set their Council Tax precepts for 2017-18, which will be included in the bills sent to every Council Tax payer in March 2017.

<b>3.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
3.01	None

<b>4.00</b>	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
4.01	The Council has a statutory duty to set a Council Tax Base and the proposed Tax Base is a complex calculation requiring an accurate forecast for the next financial year of the number of chargeable properties after taking into account new builds, property exemptions and discount schemes, including those properties that will be subject to the 50% Council Tax Premium scheme from April 2017.
4.02	The key risks centre around financial prudence and accuracy of forecasts used to determine the Tax Base. This year, the introduction of the Council Tax Premium scheme makes these financial projections even more challenging as it is very difficult to predict with absolute certainty the number of properties that may be subject to the Premium from April 2017.
4.03	The Base is largely based on property data and discount levels at a fixed point in time (October 2016) but includes a bad debt provision of 1% for non-collection, giving a forecast collection rate of 99.0%. This is consistent with previous collection levels and minimises financial risk to the Council.
4.04	The Council Tax Base at 63,543 sets a Base at an accurate level to ensure as far as possible that a deficit does not occur in the Collection Fund.
4.05	Officers carefully track and monitor the Tax Base and Collection Fund performance on a monthly basis and the results feed into corporate budget monitoring and reporting processes.

<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
5.01	Appendix 1 shows the breakdown of the Tax Base for 2017-18 by Town and Community area.

<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
6.01	Local Government Finance Act 1992 – section 68 Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (Wales) Regulations The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (Wales)

	<p>(Amendment) Regulations 2016  Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (Wales) Regulations 2004  Housing (Wales) Act 2014 – section 139</p> <p><b>Contact Officer:</b> David Barnes, Revenues Manager  <b>Telephone:</b> 01352 703652  <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:david.barnes@flintshire.gov.uk">david.barnes@flintshire.gov.uk</a></p>
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<b>7.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
7.01	<p><b>Revenue Support Grant:</b> the annual amount of money the Council receives from Welsh Government to partly fund services, alongside revenue from Council Tax and other income the Council raises locally. Council's can decide how to use this grant across services although their freedom to allocate according to local choice can be limited by guidelines set by Government.</p>
7.02	<p><b>Tax Base:</b> is a measure of the Councils 'taxable capacity' taking into account the number of chargeable properties after exemptions and discounts.</p>
7.03	<p><b>Chargeable Dwellings:</b> are all properties deemed to fall liable to Council Tax which appear in the Valuation List.</p>
7.04	<p><b>Prescribed Discount Classes:</b> Special rules apply to certain dwellings where no-one is resident. In these cases, a Welsh billing authority may make a determination to apply a lower rate of discount or, to apply no discount at all. These classes are:</p> <p>Class A – property which is unoccupied and furnished but where occupation is prohibited by law for over 28 days each year, usually, as a result of planning restrictions</p> <p>Class B – property which is unoccupied and furnished and where occupation is not prohibited by law</p> <p>Class C – property which is unoccupied and substantially unfurnished beyond the normal exemption period.</p>
7.05	<p><b>Council Tax Premium:</b> an additional amount of Council Tax of up to 100% (a premium) can be charged by local authorities in Wales for property defined by Regulations as either being second homes or long term empty property</p> <p>For the purposes of charging a premium a long term empty home is defined as a property which is unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for a continuous period of at least 1 year. A second home is defined as a dwelling which is not a person's sole or main residence and is substantially furnished. There are some exceptions from the Council Tax premium for a period of up to 12 months. For example, if the property is being actively marketed for rent or sale.</p>

## APPENDIX 1 - COUNCIL TAX BASE FOR 2017-18

Community	2017-18 Properties at Band 'D'	2016-17 Properties at Band 'D'
Argoed	2,461.95	2,445.57
Bagillt	1,478.04	1,460.48
Broughton & Bretton	2,660.14	2,550.87
Brynford	476.90	475.00
Buckley	6,639.60	6,542.65
Caerwys	624.25	615.91
Cilcain	743.28	742.18
Connahs Quay	6,099.93	6,077.05
Flint	4,580.04	4,509.31
Gwernaffield	1,027.84	1,028.94
Gwernymynydd	560.89	554.22
Halkyn	1,361.79	1,369.46
Hawarden	6,321.93	6,213.80
Higher Kinnerton	838.14	825.11
Holywell	3,265.40	3,269.78
Hope	1,859.72	1,837.10
Leeswood	838.09	834.32
Llanasa	1,940.90	1,925.71
Llanfynydd	864.88	848.48
Mold	4,342.94	4,277.47
Mostyn	713.03	710.77
Nannerch	271.91	272.32
Nercwys	306.59	306.24
Northop	1,534.01	1,525.46
Northop Hall	819.15	762.27
Penyffordd	1,994.20	1,953.93
Queensferry	700.43	687.82
Saltney	1,867.06	1,845.31
Sealand	1,155.47	1,133.04
Shotton	2,190.98	2,186.42
Trelawnyd & Gwaenysgor	418.58	412.73
Treuddyn	758.82	748.03
Whitford	1,154.74	1,139.75
Ysceifiog	671.38	671.50
<b>TOTAL BAND 'D' EQUIVALENT PROPS</b>	<b>63,543.00</b>	<b>62,759.00</b>

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## COMMUNITY & ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Wednesday, 23 November 2016
<b>Report Subject</b>	Regeneration Programmes
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Member for Housing Cabinet Member for Economic Development
<b>Report Author</b>	Chief Officer, Community and Enterprise
<b>Type of Report</b>	Operational

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this Report is outline the activity of the Regeneration Service over the last 12 months.

The report will include an update on the Vibrant & Viable Places Programme, including how the grant funding was spent and the outcomes achieved.

The report will also consider the broader housing improvement activity of the Service, including disabled adaptations, energy efficiency schemes, empty homes and the reduction of housing hazards through the various Council and Welsh Government Loan Schemes.

Finally the report will explore how the Service is supporting town centres, including capital improvement projects and supporting the Town Partnerships to meet their objectives in a more sustainable way.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Members review the progress of the Regeneration Service over the last 12 months.
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## REPORT DETAILS

<b>1.00</b>	
1.01	<p><u>Vibrant and Viable Places</u></p> <p>The Welsh Government Vibrant and Viable Places (VVP) programme was launched in May 2013 and all local authorities were invited to submit competitive proposals. The VVP objectives are that “everyone in Wales should live in well-connected vibrant, viable and sustainable communities with a strong local economy and good quality of life”.</p> <p>Flintshire County Council was successful after submitting a programme of work for the Deeside area, including transport improvements, housing investment, town centre regeneration and action to support business growth and skills. This success follows previous achievements; securing Communities First status, Housing Renewal Area and Enterprise Zone programmes.</p> <p>The Council was initially awarded £6.024m over a period of three years to target regeneration projects in Deeside. This was subsequently increased to £7.391m as a result of the excellent progress made and the ability of the Council to take up funds from other VVP areas where full spend could not be achieved. These funds have been supported by public and private investment and have resulted in a number of key regeneration achievements to date.</p>
1.02	<p>The current VVP programme comes to an end on 31 March 2017. The Welsh Government has not given any indication of how regeneration activity will be funded after this point.</p>
	<p><u>VVP projects</u></p>
1.02	<p>£280,000 of VVP grant funding has been allocated to the Deeside Shopfront Improvement Grant (DSIG) scheme which funds grants of up to £15,000 to improve the external appearance of shops and commercial premises within the Deeside town centres of Connah’s Quay, Garden City, Shotton and Queensferry.</p> <p>The scheme, which offers 80% of the funding needed per property and which has been running since September 2015, is currently helping 14 shop tenants and property owners.</p> <p>Actual building work on the first scheme started in September and is due to be completed by December 2016. The other schemes will all be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017.</p>
1.03	<p>The Living Over The Shops (LOTS) grant through VVP offers £20,000 towards renovating existing accommodation, or converting unused storage space above shops into residential accommodation within the designated VVP area. £60,000 per year has been available to the Council over a period of 3 years, funding 3 projects per year. Under a condition of the funding, the Council has nomination rights for tenants in the new units.</p>



1.04	<p>A total of 366 Council homes across Deeside have received solar panels, making homes more energy efficient and reducing fuel poverty. This targeted investment complements the wider energy strategy of insulating properties, both internally and externally, as well as bringing gas to communities that have previously been reliant on more expensive forms of heating.</p> <p>The benefit of the panels is that they will reduce the running costs of the properties, helping to tackle fuel poverty and reduce carbon emissions. The tenants will benefit from free electricity during daylight hours and the Council derives an income from the surplus electricity produced, that can be reinvested in the housing stock.</p>
1.05	<p>181 private homeowners have also been able to benefit from external wall insulation applied to their properties to date, with a further 70 homeowners set to benefit in this final year of the programme. External wall insulation is a relatively expensive measure to install but provides huge benefits in terms of the thermal efficiency of properties. Through the current round of funding the Council has been targeting solid walled properties on certain streets across Deeside.</p> <p>The increased thermal efficiency of these properties will act to significantly reduce fuel bills and help alleviate fuel poverty. The scheme, which asks for a £500 contribution from the homeowner, has been very popular and demand remains high. The current funding has been committed, but the Council is retaining a list of interested homeowners in the event that more funding is secured.</p>
1.06	<p>The VVP programme has also contributed to the delivery of the Council's Renewal Area programme in Deeside, specifically the Group Repair Scheme.</p> <p>The Group Repair Scheme is jointly funded by VVP, Specific Capital Grant Funding for Renewal Areas, Flintshire County Council and client contributions which are means tested. The aim of the programme is to improve older private properties in the area so that they can continue to offer good quality accommodation into the future.</p> <p>The Group Repair Scheme consists of the external refurbishment of privately owned properties within the Renewal Area which includes the renewal of slate roof coverings, fascia's, guttering, down pipes, soil stacks, windows, external doors, front boundary walls, fences, paths, gates and structural repair works.</p> <p>£200,000 of VVP funding was spent on the Group Repair Scheme on thirteen properties in Glynne Street, Queensferry during 2014/15, whilst a further £250,000 was spent on 22 Group Repair Scheme properties in Glynne Street, and Bank Road, Connah's Quay during 2015/16.</p> <p>The Welsh Government sources of funding for the Renewal Area are expected to end in March 2017. There remain considerable tranches of the original Renewal Area programme still to be delivered for which alternatives sources of funding will need to be sought.</p>

1.07	<p>The new Deeside Leisure Centre hub has benefitted from a £250,000 investment, with major funding from VVP. The internal foyer, main entrance and play area has undergone a major refurbishment. The foyer has been transformed and redecorated to complement the new integrated Deeside Library. The entrance has been landscaped to improve its visual appeal, access and lighting. A range of new play items have been installed that has improved both the look and play value that includes picnic tables and seats. This play area is very popular with young families and leisure centre customers.</p>
1.08	<p>The VVP funding has also delivered a wide range of regeneration and environmental improvement projects:</p> <p>Purchase of the former Dairy site in Connah's Quay for redevelopment.</p> <p>Programme of environmental improvements in Garden City.</p> <p>Lighting along National Cycle Route 5 between Dock Road, Connah's Quay and Deeside Industrial Park. In 2015 approximately 65,000 cyclists and 54,000 pedestrians used this route.</p> <p>Widening and upgrading existing footpaths and footways between Sandycroft, Queensferry and Shotton to provide a shared use walking and cycling facility.</p> <p>Installation of a toucan crossing in Church Street, Connah's Quay.</p> <p>Increasing the car parking spaces in Terrig Street and Shotton Station car park.</p> <p>Welsh Road recreation ground in Sealand now has a new Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA), replacing an old kickback goal and installing a new fence along Welsh Road. A major refurbishment is also transforming the play equipment with new panels and ropes, replacement handrails and seats.</p> <p>Central Drive recreation ground, Shotton has been landscaped and includes new pedestrian link pathways within the recreation ground, new seating and fencing. A new entrance gate will also improve wheelchair and double buggy access improving the appeal of the area.</p> <p>Alexandra Street play area, Shotton been improved with the provision of a range of dynamic play equipment.</p> <p>Central Park play area, Connah's Quay now has a MUGA for informal ball sports that can be used all year.</p>
1.09	<p>Groundwork North Wales has been working in partnership with the Council and Welsh Government (through the Vibrant and Viable Regeneration Programme) to offer a better future and new opportunities to young people in Flintshire.</p> <p>The Green Team programme started in September 2014 and, to date, five phases of the traineeship programme have been delivered, providing around 90 young people who are not in education, employment or training with a 12 week practical traineeship programme. The young people receive training and employability skills and in addition get practical work experience delivering local community projects improving the appearance</p>

	<p>of green spaces around Deeside.</p> <p>Projects that trainees have worked on have regenerated and refreshed areas around Deeside including creating new cycle paths at Wepre Park, maintaining and improving the grounds at the Connah's Quay Health Centre, and clearing up the High Street in Connah's Quay.</p> <p>Part of the programme has also been inspiring the young people about potential opportunities for local employment. Throughout all the phases of Green Team, Groundwork have been fortunate to get support from local employers including Toyota, Coleg Cambria, Wagtail Specialist Dog Services and Lend Lease - Wrexham Prison Construction Development.</p> <p>The combination of learning new skills and practical work experience has led to some very positive outcomes for the programme to date with the participants gaining 260 qualifications and over 50% of the young people going on to new employment or training.</p>
	<p><u>Disabled Facilities Grants</u></p>
1.10	<p>The Council is required by the Housing Grants, Construction &amp; Regeneration Act 1996 to respond to applications for Disabled Facilities Grants. These mandatory grants are provided to ensure that disabled persons can have full and safe access to their accommodation.</p> <p>The types of work included as part of a disabled facilities grant is anything that costs in excess of £1,000, up to the statutory maximum of £36,000. Typical adaptations are the provision of level access showers, adapted kitchens, door widening, and the installation of ramps and grab rails. Specialist work includes the installation of stair lifts and through floor lifts. The administration of the Disabled Facilities Grant is performed by the Council's Regeneration team, following a referral from an Occupational Therapist (OT).</p> <p>It was identified in May 2016 that performance in meeting the target of 247 days average for adult adaptations was low and worsening and therefore more concentrated action and monitoring was put in place.</p>
1.11	<p><u>Performance data</u></p> <p>The performance data for 2015/16 showed that the service had achieved an average completion within 304 days compared to the target of 247 days. 94 adult DFGs were completed.</p> <p>The first two quarters of 2016/17 have seen average timescales fall. In quarter one 11 adult adaptations were completed with an average timescale of 245 days. In quarter two the average was 203 days for 25 completions.</p> <p>Although this is very positive, it is not considered to be sustainable improvement and it is important that the action plan is fully delivered to improve performance in the long term.</p>

1.12	<p><u>Actions</u></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="304 331 603 719">Learn from more highly performing Councils</td> <td data-bbox="603 331 1364 719">A visit was undertaken to Conwy CBC (average time for adult DFGs around 150 days). Overall, the processes used were found to be very similar to those in Flintshire. Following up from the visit it was decided to drop the current requirement for mortgage lender consents for every DFG as this is not part of the Conwy process, can add up to 90 days or more to the timetable and offers no extra protection to the Council. This has now been implemented.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="304 719 603 1003">Improve case management</td> <td data-bbox="603 719 1364 1003">Monthly case management reviews have been put in place and have been able to identify cases that have become blocked in the system. The enhanced Civica system had become stalled but since May has now been fully developed and tested and is due for staff training and adoption this month.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="304 1003 603 1243">Recruit into vacant positions</td> <td data-bbox="603 1003 1364 1243">The service has a number of empty positions in the adaptation team which have been traditionally hard to fill. Most of them are currently covered by agency staff and, pending job evaluation, the posts are to be re-advertised as a group in more specialized channels during December 2016.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="304 1243 603 2056">Introduce “stop the clock” protocol</td> <td data-bbox="603 1243 1364 2056"> <p>At present, the DFG timetable continues (and the Council’s performance is judged) regardless of whether it is in Council control or not. It is proposed that the counter for DFGs will be stopped when the process leaves Council control so that performance is more accurately measured. There will be two types of events that will trigger this:</p> <p>Very occasionally, there is a blockage in the DFG timetable that can’t be resolved by the Council due to external factors. It is proposed that, subject to Cabinet member consent, these cases will be placed on hold and the clock stopped until the blockage is resolved.</p> <p>More frequently, adaptations are placed on hold over short periods while the needs of the individual are reassessed and reconsidered. In these, more administrative, circumstance the case will be placed on hold whilst this adjustment is made and the reopened when the DFG can proceed again. Use of these processes will be recorded for audit purposes and to prevent over-use.</p> </td> </tr> </table>	Learn from more highly performing Councils	A visit was undertaken to Conwy CBC (average time for adult DFGs around 150 days). Overall, the processes used were found to be very similar to those in Flintshire. Following up from the visit it was decided to drop the current requirement for mortgage lender consents for every DFG as this is not part of the Conwy process, can add up to 90 days or more to the timetable and offers no extra protection to the Council. This has now been implemented.	Improve case management	Monthly case management reviews have been put in place and have been able to identify cases that have become blocked in the system. The enhanced Civica system had become stalled but since May has now been fully developed and tested and is due for staff training and adoption this month.	Recruit into vacant positions	The service has a number of empty positions in the adaptation team which have been traditionally hard to fill. Most of them are currently covered by agency staff and, pending job evaluation, the posts are to be re-advertised as a group in more specialized channels during December 2016.	Introduce “stop the clock” protocol	<p>At present, the DFG timetable continues (and the Council’s performance is judged) regardless of whether it is in Council control or not. It is proposed that the counter for DFGs will be stopped when the process leaves Council control so that performance is more accurately measured. There will be two types of events that will trigger this:</p> <p>Very occasionally, there is a blockage in the DFG timetable that can’t be resolved by the Council due to external factors. It is proposed that, subject to Cabinet member consent, these cases will be placed on hold and the clock stopped until the blockage is resolved.</p> <p>More frequently, adaptations are placed on hold over short periods while the needs of the individual are reassessed and reconsidered. In these, more administrative, circumstance the case will be placed on hold whilst this adjustment is made and the reopened when the DFG can proceed again. Use of these processes will be recorded for audit purposes and to prevent over-use.</p>
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	Introduce new procurement arrangements	The Council is introducing a new procurement framework for adaptations. This will speed up the process for adaptations by removing the tender process, relying instead on a rotation of companies on the framework. It will also require companies to start on site more promptly which can be a source of delay in the process currently. The contractor and supplier submissions are being evaluated currently.
	<u>Empty Homes</u>	
1.13	<p>The Houses Into Homes (H2H) interest free loan is proving to be increasingly popular. The Empty Homes Development Officer has received an increase in enquiries and demand over the last few months. The initial loans released 3 years ago at the start of the scheme are now being re-paid and will be re-issued to new applicants as soon as possible.</p> <p>In total the Council initially received £876,000 of funding, £673,000 of this has been released to applicants, with the remaining £203,000 already allocated to projects that are waiting to obtain planning permission. In addition to this, the Council also received a further £541,000 of H2H funding last year. The majority of the most recent funding is also provisionally allocated.</p> <p>In terms of overall Empty Homes activity, 33 properties received direct assistance from the service in 2015/16 financial year. The figures includes:</p> <p>5 Living Over The Shops (LOTS) grants, fully project managed from start to hand over to North East Wales Homes, the Council's housing company.</p> <p>2 Empty property grants, fully managed. One of which was Baines house, a HMO now providing accommodation for vulnerable people and is being managed by the Housing Solutions Team.</p> <p>Project management of the demolition of 9 properties owned by the local authority, including 7 terraced houses, the old dairy and former magistrates court/police station. These sites will be redeveloped through the SHARP Programme.</p> <p>5 Houses Into Homes loans processed and released.</p> <p>3 long term empty properties returned to use via the Council's empty homes match making service (owners are put in touch with developers/first time buyers wishing to purchase empty property)</p> <p>9 other long term problematic empty properties returned to use through minor enforcement and direct assistance.</p>	
1.14	<u>Town Centre regeneration</u>	
1.15	<p>The focus of the Service since the Roger Tym and Partners Town Centre health check study in 2009 has been on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. improving the image and appearance of the town centres;</li> <li>2. encouraging investment; and</li> <li>3. attracting customers.</li> </ol>	

	<p>The Service was successful in securing and managing over £5m in investment funds for the town centres to improve their physical appearance and tackle vacant properties. The Service also helped to establish new partnership structures in most of the towns.</p> <p>The final projects from this phase of work are currently underway: improvements to the Square outside St. Mary's Church in Flint and property improvement in Buckley town centre.</p>
1.16	<p>A review is now underway of the future approach to supporting town centres in Flintshire. Smaller town centres across the UK continue to face major challenges to their sustainability including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a decline in retail scale and viability due to changing consumer behaviour and increased retailer concentration in the larger centres;</li> <li>reduced retail investment since the economic downturn;</li> <li>rents reflecting previous economic conditions and acting as a barrier to new business and weakening current business viability; and</li> <li>buildings and land uses reflect historic economic conditions and are slow to adapt to changing needs.</li> </ul> <p>The review will identify where, with limited resources, the Council can intervene to help to sustain and adapt town centres to future community needs.</p>
	<u>Service planning</u>
1.17	<p>As part of the medium term planning for the Service consideration is being given as to what priorities the Council should focus on at a time when external grants are diminishing.</p> <p>A Private Sector Housing Stock Condition and Energy Survey has been commissioned which will inform a revised Private Sector Housing Renewal and Improvement Policy. This revised Policy will be subject to public consultation and provided to Scrutiny in the new year for implementation from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017.</p> <p>The future approach from Welsh Government to Renewal Area and Regeneration Area funding remains unclear at present and therefore the scale of resources available for regeneration projects is unknown. The service will continue to secure external funding for projects wherever possible.</p> <p>The Service staffing complement is directly linked to the size of the capital programme to be delivered.</p>

<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
2.01	None arising directly from this report.

<b>3.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
3.01	<p>In respect of the Vibrant &amp; Viable Places Programme the Service consults with the Deeside Forum (local elected representatives) and the Deeside Partnership who are the governing for the Programme.</p> <p>For the town centre programmes the Service works closely with local partnerships and other stakeholders.</p>

<b>4.00</b>	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
4.01	<p>The Service is maintains a risk log which identifies project and programme risks. All risks are present require close monitoring, but there are no risks for which action is required at this stage.</p>

<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
5.01	None

<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
6.01	<p>None.</p> <p><b>Contact Officer:</b> Gavin Griffith  <b>Telephone:</b> 01352 703428  <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:Gavin.Griffith@flintshire.gov.uk">Gavin.Griffith@flintshire.gov.uk</a></p>

<b>7.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
7.01	<p><b>V&amp;VP</b> – Vibrant &amp; Viable Places – a Welsh Government funded Regeneration Programme across Deeside</p> <p><b>DFG</b> – Disabled Facilities Grant – provision of disabled adaptations in private homes</p> <p><b>H2H</b> – Houses into Homes – a loan scheme funded by Welsh Government devised to bring long term empty homes (over 6 months) back in to use.</p> <p><b>HIL</b> – Home Improvement Loan - a loan scheme funded by Welsh Government devised to repair and improve owner occupied and privately rented properties.</p>

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## COMMUNITY AND ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Wednesday 23rd November 2016
<b>Report Subject</b>	Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme (SHARP)
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Member for Housing
<b>Report Author</b>	Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise)
<b>Type of Report</b>	Strategic

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides Elected Members with an update of the progress of the Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme (SHARP).

The report aims to provide details on the individual schemes being undertaken or being considered as part of the programme going forward. The detail of each scheme includes the number of Council and affordable homes to be developed on each site, details of any consultation undertaken, as well as status in terms of starting development including planning. A summary of the capacity of the sites are provided for those schemes identified for future development.

The report gives an overview of financial sources and opportunities for further income.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Scrutiny Committee supports the overall approach for the delivery of new Council and affordable homes through the SHARP and reviews the progress of the programme.
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## REPORT DETAILS

<b>1.00</b>	<b>Explaining the Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme (SHARP) Update</b>
<b>1.01</b>	<b>Introduction</b>
	<p>The report provides an update to Scrutiny Committee members on progress made on the delivery of new Council and affordable homes being delivered through the SHARP.</p> <p>The SHARP aims to deliver 500 new Council and affordable homes over 5 years with the Council's partner developer, Wates Residential. The programme is being delivered in phases known as 'batches' and this report provides an update of the progress on each batch to date.</p> <p>As part of the development process, due consideration is given to local housing needs, including ensuring where feasible, that suitable accommodation will be provided for people registered on the Council's Specialist Housing Register.</p>
<b>1.02</b>	<b>Schemes on site</b>
	<p>Batch 1 consists of 2 sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Custom House, Connah's Quay: The site is due for completion on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2016. There are 12 new Council homes on site, eight 2 bedroom and four 3 bedroom properties. These properties will be let through a Local Lettings Policy.</li> <li>• The Walks, Flint: Construction is underway and good progress is being made with full completion due in April 2018. The site will deliver 30 Council homes and 62 affordable rented properties, which will be owned and managed through North East Wales (NEW) Homes. There is a mix of property types including: 1 and 2 bed apartments; and 2 and 3 bed houses. Furthermore, 4 of the ground floor apartments are to be adapted to meet the needs of people on the Specialist Housing Register.</li> </ul>
<b>1.03</b>	<b>Emerging schemes</b>
	<p>Batch 2 sites have been approved by Cabinet and the pre-development work is underway.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maes y Meillion and Heol Y Goron, Leeswood: In total these sites will deliver 13 new Council homes. A local information event was held on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2016. The scheme has been submitted for planning permission and is awaiting a decision.</li> <li>• Redhall, Connah's Quay: The site will deliver 5 new Council homes. The local information event was held on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2016. The scheme received planning approval on 09/11/16, and starts on site mid-2017.</li> <li>• Dairy Site, Connah's Quay: The site will deliver 6 new Council homes. The local information event was held on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2016. The scheme has been submitted for planning approval.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ysgol Delyn, Mold: The site will deliver 16 new Council homes. The local information event was held on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2016. The scheme has been submitted for planning approval.</li> <li>• The Police Station, Flint: This proposed scheme requires Cabinet approval and will be considered in early 2017. The scheme will deliver a total of 18 units with a mix of apartments and houses, tenure to be determined.</li> <li>• Melrose Centre, Aston: This proposed scheme requires Cabinet approval and will be considered in early 2017. The scheme will deliver a total of 6 Council homes with a mix of 1 and 2 bed apartments and 2 and 3 bed houses. Furthermore, the intention is that 1 of the apartments will be adapted to meet the needs of person on the Specialist Housing Register.</li> </ul>
1.04	<b>Next phase</b>
	We are working on the next phase of sites which will be included in a report to Cabinet for approval to proceed.
1.05	<b>Funding</b>
	<p>Welsh Government have made Housing Finance Grant 2 (HFG2) available to stock retaining Local Authorities who are developing new affordable and social homes. The HFG2 is a capital grant and guidance on how the grant can be spent or what is eligible expenditure has not yet been agreed by Welsh Government, although WG have stated HFG2 for the LA Build schemes will have different parameters to the Housing Associations. Previous HFG was to cover the interest on borrowing.</p> <p>Flintshire indicative allocation is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2018/19 = £1.9m</li> <li>• 2019/20 = £1.2m</li> </ul> <p>There are 11 Local Authorities across Wales which are developing affordable homes and have been allocated HFG2, however Welsh Government have indicated that if there is underspend in other areas, Flintshire will be able to apply for the additional funding.</p> <p>There is scheme evaluation work being undertaken by the team to ensure the HFG is allocated to the most appropriate schemes in terms of viability and other potential constraints, providing best value in terms of investment.</p> <p>We are exploring with Welsh Government the opportunities for NEW Homes to access this new grant funding stream.</p>
1.06	<b>Performance and Community Benefits</b>
	Monitoring of performance against key performance indicators is carried out monthly however final performance outcomes will be reported at the end of the financial year. Table 1 provides the detail of the key regeneration targets:

<b>Table 1.</b>			
<b>KPI</b>	<b>Target 16/17</b>	<b>Performance up to Oct 16</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Local (Flintshire) SME spend: Locality Radius	25%	23%	Spend locally is projected to increase as the SHARP rolls out across the County.
Local (Flintshire) Labour Usage	50%	51%	This exceeds the target figure agreed with the Council. Wherever possible, the Council will look to maximize opportunities for local labour.
Percentage of Supply Chain Opportunities Advertised	100%	100%	A number of "Meet the Buyer" events have been held with Wates Residential to maximize the supply chain opportunities for Flintshire-based businesses.
Performance against CITB Client Based Approach Performance Levels	100%	Yearend target	Exceeded apprenticeship target of 6, anticipate 11 apprentices recruited by the end of the year.  Wates Residential are actively working with Communities First and have so far placed 3 employees within the construction.

Table 2 provides a summary of the Community Investment Performance to date for the Batch 1 schemes at Custom House, Connah's Quay and The Walks, Flint.

<b>Table 2. SHARP Community Investment Performance Batch 1 Sites</b>	
<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Narrative</b>
<b>Employment and Training</b>	
194	Local people have benefited from Employment & Training Initiatives on this project

653	Training/employment weeks have been created for local people
3640	Hours have been invested to support these people by Wates staff
£195,090	Is the value of investment into training local people
<b>Investing in the local economy</b>	
£1,497,241	Has been spent with local small businesses on this project
£2,440,503	Economic Benefit has been generated for the local community as a result of this spend
£19,460	Has been invested into Social Enterprises on this project
<b>Investing in the Community</b>	
229 Hours	have been invested into volunteering in the community
£21,781	Has been invested into local charities / community causes
£2,676,834	Worth of Economic, Environmental and Social Value has been generated on this project
*According to FSB, 63 pence of every £1 spent locally with an SME is reinvested into the local economy for the Batch 1 sites (Custom House and The Walks).	

<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
2.01	The SHARP is managed through the Housing Programmes Team with support from other internal teams including Property and Design Consultancy; Finance; Legal; Housing Management and NEW Homes.
2.02	<p>The projected scheme costs for the Council schemes detailed below will be funded through the HRA via prudential borrowing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Custom House, Connah's Quay - £1.7M</li> <li>• The Walks, Flint - £4.18M</li> <li>• Maes y Meilion, Leeswood - £1.2M</li> <li>• Heol y Goron, Leeswood - £0.9M</li> <li>• Redhall, Connah's Quay - £0.8M</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dairy Site, Connah's Quay - £1.1M</li> <li>• Former Ysgol Delyn School, Mold - £2.2M</li> </ul> <p><b>Total Projected Costs - £12.08M</b></p>
2.03	In September 2016 NEW Homes Board approved the development of 62 affordable rented properties on The Walks, Flint at a total projected scheme cost of £6.977m. Flintshire Council has secured approval from NEW Homes Board to fund the 62 affordable rent units on The Walks, Flint through a capital financing loan. The terms of the loan will be European State Aid compliant and will ensure that the company can meet its own scheme development viability criteria and the Council's requirements for the properties to be built to the Flintshire House Standard; let at sub market rents and offered to local people for whom the Housing market has failed. The process for lending are that the council borrows from the market and on lend to NEW Homes.
2.04	<p>The loan would be organised into 2 phases. The first a short term development phase loan during construction period. The loan fee will become due at the end of the first year and the interest will become due at the end of each year.</p> <p>The second phase, on completion would see the loan refinanced into a long term loan secured against the properties. The council will take out a 45 year annuity loan and on lend to NEW Homes for this purpose. Based on current rates, the estimated lending rate is 3.09%. NEW Homes will review the rents annually, establishing the comparative market rent for each property and increase rent levels accordingly.</p>
2.05	Flintshire has been allocated £3.1m HFG funding for 18/19 and 19/20 from Welsh Government, with the potential of accessing underspend from other Local Authorities with an allocation. The funding needs to be allocated to the most appropriate schemes in terms of viability and other potential constraints, providing best value in terms of investment.

<b>3.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
3.01	All schemes are approved by Cabinet and the Community and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
3.02	Consultation is undertaken on individual schemes with local Elected Members and the community through information events.
3.03	In addition, internal stakeholders are consulted at a very early stage including Streetscene; Planning; Highways and Housing Management.

<b>4.00</b>	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
4.01	Figure 1 details the SHARP Strategic Risk Register which is overseen by the SHARP Community and Enterprise Programme Board.
4.02	Wates Residential develop a Risk Register for each live scheme and this is overseen by the SHARP Project Team, which includes Officers from both Wates Residential and Flintshire Council and meet on a monthly basis.
4.03	Joint Design meetings also take place monthly on an individual scheme basis.

<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
5.01	Figure 1 – SHARP Strategic Risk Register

<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
6.01	None.  <b>Contact Officer:</b> Melville Evans, Housing Programmes Manager <b>Telephone:</b> 01352 701436 <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:Melville.Evans@flintshire.gov.uk">Melville.Evans@flintshire.gov.uk</a>

<b>7.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
7.01	<p><b>Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme (SHARP)</b> – Flintshire County Council House Building Programme which will build 500 new homes, of which 200 are to be Council (Social Rent) and 300 are to be affordable rent (also known as Intermediate Rent) through NEW Homes.</p> <p><b>Housing Finance Grant (HFG)</b> – is a revenue and capital grant from Welsh Government to support the development of Local Authority house building scheme.</p> <p><b>Housing Revenue Account</b> – The Council is required by the Local Government and Housing 1989 (Section 74) to keep a Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which records all revenue expenditure and income relating to the provision of Council dwellings and services.</p> <p><b>Community Benefits</b> – the SHARP has contractualised Community Benefits which must be delivered as part of the programme. The Council sees an important outcome of the programme is the promotion of quality of life for Flintshire residents through improved employment, training and education opportunities.</p> <p><b>North East Wales Homes, (NEW Homes)</b> - is a Housing company based in Flintshire and owned by Flintshire County Council. NEW Homes owns,</p>

leases and manages properties across Flintshire. The company was established to increase the quantity and quality of affordable housing available across the county; increasing housing choice for those who may not qualify for social housing but for whom market housing is unaffordable or difficult to access.

**Specialist Housing Register** – is a register which sits alongside the Council’s Housing Register for people who have disabilities and require specially adapted properties.

**Local Lettings Policy** – is a lettings policy which sits alongside the Council’s housing allocation policy and considers local connection as part of the assessment criteria for allocation.



# Strategic Housing And Regeneration Programme (SHARP) Strategic Development Programme

Version: 004

Date:

11/11/2016

Prepared by: Mel Evans

Approved by: Community and Enterprise Programme Board

18 - 25	High
9-17	Medium
1 - 8	Low

Item	Risk Description	Pre-mitigation					Notes / Action / Comment / Mitigation Plan	Owner	By When	Post-mitigation					Change in Period
		Probability (1:5)	Impact (1:5)	Total Prob x Imp	Time	£				Probability (1:5)	Impact (1:5)	Total Prob x Imp	Time	£	
<b>1.0 TOP 5 RISKS</b>															
1.01	Programme Delivery - SHARP does not deliver 500 new Council (200) and Affordable (300) new homes due to insufficient land availability, complex internal land ownership arrangements (including State Aid) and not maximising commercial opportunities to cross-subsidise.	4	5	20			A number of Council-owned and other public sector sites have been identified for potential residential development which will be subject to site feasibility before inclusion in the Housing Delivery Programme; Housing Delivery Programme has agreed collective annual targets and key performance indicators for the delivery of new Council and affordable homes between 2016/17 - 2022/23; Progress against these targets set in the Housing Delivery Programme will be reported on a quarterly basis to the SHARP Community and Enterprise Programme Board for approval by Cabinet and NEW Homes Board. FCC recently raised concerns on State Aid rules affecting the viability of schemes and the scope for applying for State Aid Block Exemption for all future housing schemes. Explore commercial options on the larger sites to use cross subsidy.	Housing programmes Manager	on-going	4	4	16			Lower
1.02	Programme Delivery - Scheme costs are expensive making them unfeasible for the Council and NEW Homes.	4	5	20			Detailed site feasibility works undertaken to identify any potential issues with ground conditions which either preclude or make scheme development particularly expensive; Council / NEW Homes are proposing to jointly invest in Proval Development software which will be used evaluate new build housing schemes, including projected rent levels from the scheme to cover repayment obligations; From 2018/19 Housing Finance Grant indicative allocation of £3.144M for SHARP will enable SHARP to potentially deliver more schemes in Flintshire. KPI targets have been established to monitor performance in this area; Additional scheme investment could also be made available to support delivery in the form of commuted sums (£735K) and Shared Equity Redemption Payments (£676K). Housing Programmes are developing proposals for Cabinet to consider on the use of these within the SHARP. From 1st April 2017, WG Housing Finance Grant will become available to fund SHARP schemes. The Housing Programmes Team have been attending meeting with WG in preparation for the availability of grant.	Housing Programmes Manager / Finance Manager	On-going	2	4	8			Higher
1.03	Delivery of poor quality product, leading to low customer satisfaction, high future maintenance costs, reputational damage to Council / NEW Homes	3	5	15			Robust contract specifications and design as set out in Flintshire House Standard and WG Development Quality Requirements (DQR); Products aligned to planned works specification; Council's Design and Consultancy Team employed Employers Agent to support the Housing Programmes Team on the strategic delivery of the SHARP, whilst the Council's Housing Asset Team have been employed Clerk of Works on site to oversee the quality of works on site; Quality Management system and formal practical completion sign-off; Indicators for development included with contract.	Housing Programmes Team	On-going	2	4	8			

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Item	Risk Description	Probability (1:5)	Impact (1:5)	Total Prob x Imp	Time	£	Notes / Action / Comment / Mitigation Plan	Owner	By When	Probability (1:5)	Impact (1:5)	Total Prob x Imp	Time	£	Change in Period	
1.04	Failure to deliver scheme within budget due to site issues increasing costs, variations and tender costs etc.	4	4	16			Development framework with formal approval processes; Supply chain management of key products; Accurate estimates and site investigations undertaken; Monthly development scheme reviews: Monthly QS cost plans managed through monthly meetings with NEW Homes Financial Lead; Increase scheme costs and large contingency included to address inflation to both materials and labour; Robust contract management and control of loss and expense/variations etc.	Design and Consultancy Team	On-going	3	3	9				
1.05	Inadequate internal capacity to deliver SHARP in terms of cost, time and quality	4	5	20			A number of teams are centrally involved in delivering the SHARP which collectively have extensive and proven experience of delivering large-scale and complex housing and construction schemes. The core SHARP team is small and the resource is shared with other service areas. This presents a risk for both the Council and NEW Homes in terms of capacity and resources available to maintain the excellent progress which the SHARP has made to ensure robust on-site monitoring arrangements are maintained. The staffing resourcing for the SHARP is scheduled to be reviewed to consider existing and future growth of the programme.	Housing Programmes Manager	on-going	3	4	12				
<b>2.0 SAFETY</b>																
2.01	Breach of HSE Legislation leading to death or injury, site closure, reputational damage, improvement notice, prosecution.	5	4	20			CHAS registered contractors utilised; CDM Principle Designer role in place in line with updated regulations (2015); Robust CDM procedures and Construction Phase Plan; Site supervision; Weekly site checks undertaken in relation to Section 106 and PRS contractors.	Wates Residential	on-going	3	3	9				
<b>3.0 PRE-CONSTRUCTION / DESIGN</b>																
3.01	Programme Delivery Housing Need - Sites included in the programme do not reflect the strategic housing priorities of the Council or NEW Homes	3	5	15			All sites included in the SHARP are approved by Council Cabinet; Robust housing need exercise is undertaken for each site to determine the level and type of housing needed; This includes housing needs data supplied from SARTH and Flintshire Affordable Housing registers and the Specialist Housing Group. Process set out to approve individual sites by SHARP Partnership Board, Asset Management Board, NEW Homes, Community and Enterprise Scrutiny Committee prior to Cabinet approval.	Housing Programmes Team	On-going	2	2	4				Lower
3.02	Delays in planning approvals - Schemes not being approved in a timely manner or not attaining necessary planning advice. Also delays in signing off planning conditions	5	2	10			Regular consultation and dialogue with Planning Team has fostered an excellent, "can do" approach.	Design and Consultancy Team	on-going	2	3	6				
3.02	Inaccurate construction time estimates leading to delay in handover, loss of rent to the Council and NEW Homes respectively	3	5	15			JCT Contractual terms and conditions will enable penalties/damage to be imposed for inaccurate delivery times. KPI targets have been established to monitor performance in this area.	Design and Consultancy Team	on-going	2	3	6				
3.03	Failure to reduce Environmental Impacts / manage sustainability risks	1	5	5			Sustainability risk assessment completed prior to each site to manage environmental impacts. KPI targets have been established to monitor performance in this area.	Design and Consultancy Team	on-going	1	4	4				
<b>4.0 CONSTRUCTION / DELIVERY</b>																

Item	Risk Description	Probability (1:5)	Impact (1:5)	Total Prob x Imp	Time	£	Notes / Action / Comment / Mitigation Plan	Owner	By When	Probability (1:5)	Impact (1:5)	Total Prob x Imp	Time	£	Change in Period	
4.01	Non-contractor site delays	3	4	12			<p>Local customer consultation events held on every scheme and with local Elected Member and Community Councils;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strong Project Management</li> <li>- Scheme monitoring arrangements</li> <li>- Effective working relationship established through early dialogue with key Council departments including Planning, Highways, Streetscene, Housing, Building Regulations, Legal, Estates and Valuation</li> <li>- Close working relationship developed with statutory agencies including Welsh Water, Scottish Power, British Gas etc.</li> <li>- Instruct statutory authorities as early as possible with letter of undertaking if necessary</li> <li>- Attain evidence from Wates that diversion/connection orders placed</li> <li>- Approach reviewed for dealing with statutory diversions and new supplies</li> </ul>	Housing Programmes Team / Design and Consultancy Team	Scheme by scheme basis	2	4	8				
<b>5.0 COMMERCIAL</b>																
5.01	Council funding option selected is expensive and present a risk to NEW Homes	4	4	16			<p>A number of different funding solutions have been identified and reviewed to finance the affordable homes for rent on The Walks. These options include NEW Homes borrowing privately itself from the market; lease back and the Council borrowing directly to NEW Homes. The detailed financial modelling undertaken for each option has made very prudent Standard Development Scheme Assumptions about rental income and management and maintenance costs providing comfort that there is minimal risk for NEW Homes in meeting the finance costs for each option. Council borrowing is the most competitive and low risk as the funding has no dependencies on external approvals unlike the private funding models offered by Octopus-QSH and L&amp;G respectively, with the mechanism of payments being managed clearly between NEW Homes and the Council. The cost of the overall cost of finance on council options is the most efficient route. The Council is free of all funder obligations and retains ownership which allows the Council to review its options on its investment annually, as time moves on and headroom moves with it, the Council may require to change its position, only this option allows such in term change.</p>	Finance / Housing Programmes Team	on-going	3	3	9				

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Item	Risk Description	Probability (1:5)	Impact (1:5)	Total Prob x Imp	Time	£	Notes / Action / Comment / Mitigation Plan	Owner	By When	Probability (1:5)	Impact (1:5)	Total Prob x Imp	Time	£	Change in Period	
5.02	Contractor failure to deliver SHARP	1	5	5			Over Arching Agreement signed with Wates sets out the following controls; - Contractor financial monitoring including subcontractor payments; - COW on site checking and recording progress and resources; - KPI and programme monitoring and reporting to NEW Homes / Council; - Monthly operational development meetings to review scheme by scheme progress; - Assessment of exposure (for development and investment work) against turnover; - Meetings with senior managers from contractors to carry out financial reviews where necessary; - Address performance at senior management level when necessary; - Significant Due Diligence work undertaken at tendering stage by independent auditors.	Housing Programmes Manager / Chief Officer Community and Enterprise	Ongoing	1	1	1				
5.03	Maes Gwern, Mold site not developed to generate "subsidy" to develop other sites in SHARP and 25% affordable homes for NEW Homes to manage	3	5	15			Council has established a working group to develop proposals to bring Maes Gwern site forward in Batch 2 schemes.	Housing Programmes Team	Sep-16	2	4	8				
5.04	Missed opportunity for the Council to purchase Well Street, Buckley from WG at discounted price though All Wales Land Release Protocol. Site has capacity to accommodate 160 units	3	5	15			Council is currently negotiating potential purchase of 13.09 acre site. An initial valuation has been jointly commissioned with WG. This has been further informed by a Site Investigation Study by Opus international Consultants which has identified a number of site abnormalities which will be deducted from the final overall land value. WG are supportive of the Council purchasing the site in three "tranche" payments. Detailed proposals will be presented for Council to consider early in 2017.	Housing Programmes Manager	Mar-17	2	2					
<b>6.0 REPORTING &amp; CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION</b>																
<b>7.0 OTHER</b>																
7.01	Reputational risk through poor communication of Programme objectives progress and outcomes and lack of coordinated engagement with/responses to comments on the initiative via all media outlets	1	5	5			Communications and Community Benefits work stream established to oversee strategy for maximizing positive PR to the Council. Work stream meets monthly and is chaired by Delwyn Evans, FCC Communications and supported by Wates appointed PR company, Truth. Work is supported by Communications Plan which is regularly updated and monitored to ensure key communications and engagement opportunities are maximized.	Housing Programmes Team	Scheme by Scheme basis	1	3	3				
7.02	Stakeholder opposition to development Programme and / or housing specifications	3	5	15			Regular community information events take place and development details circulated e.g. the Flint Master Plan Event. Stakeholder feedback is reviewed and monitored and the progress of the initiative and consultation carried out with residents and community groups.	Housing Programmes Team	Scheme by Scheme basis	2	4	8				

Item	Risk Description	Probability (1:5)	Impact (1:5)	Total Prob x Imp	Time	£	Notes / Action / Comment / Mitigation Plan	Owner	By When	Probability (1:5)	Impact (1:5)	Total Prob x Imp	Time	£	Change in Period	
7.03	Local people not benefitting from jobs and training opportunities available	2	5	10			The realisation of permanent employment, training and work placement and apprenticeship opportunities have been contractualised within the SHARP. KPI targets have been agreed with Wates to monitor performance in this area. Failure to achieve these targets would be considered a serious default by Wates. Good progress is being made on this, with the first two apprenticeships awarded for The Walks, Flinmt and Custom House School schemes. The Council's Communities First and Business Development Team are key partners in the programme and are leading on key initiatives to maximize local opportunities for long-term unemployed or traditionally under-represented groups.	Housing Programmes Team / Communities First	On-going	2	3	6				
7.04	Failure to realise positive publicity on a local, regional and national level for the SHARP	2	5	10			Positive PR received, with recognition from WG received that Flintshire is one of the first local authorities in Wales to develop a Council House volume building programme	Housing Programmes Team	On-going	2	2	4				
7.05	Failure to sell SHARP contract to other local authorities and public sector partners	3	4	12			On-going dialogue with a number of local authorities who have expressed a firm interest in using the SHARP contract	Housing Programmes Manager	On-going	2	3	6				

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## COMMUNITY & ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Wednesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> November, 2016
<b>Report Subject</b>	Forward Work Programme
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Not applicable
<b>Report Author</b>	Community & Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator
<b>Type of Report</b>	Operational

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview & Scrutiny presents a unique opportunity for Members to determine the Forward Work programme of the Committee 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.

The Committee is asked to consider, and amend where necessary, the Forward Work Programme for the Community & Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

### RECOMMENDATION

1	That the Committee considers the draft Forward Work Programme and approve/amend as necessary.
2	That the Facilitator, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises.

## REPORT DETAILS

<b>1.00</b>	<b>EXPLAINING THE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME</b>
1.01	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 Chief Officers. Other possible items are identified from the Cabinet Work Programme and the Improvement Plan.
1.02	<p>In identifying topics for future consideration, it is useful for a 'test of significance' to be applied. This can be achieved by asking a range of questions as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Will the review contribute to the Council's priorities and/or objectives?</li><li>2. Is it an area of major change or risk?</li><li>3. Are there issues of concern in performance?</li><li>4. Is there new Government guidance of legislation?</li><li>5. Is it prompted by the work carried out by Regulators/Internal Audit?</li></ol>
<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
2.01	None as a result of this report.
<b>3.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
3.01	Publication of this report constitutes consultation.
<b>4.00</b>	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
4.01	None as a result of this report.
<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
5.01	Appendix 1 – Current Forward Work Programme
<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
6.01	<p>None.</p> <p><b>Contact Officer:</b> Ceri Shotton Overview &amp; Scrutiny Facilitator</p> <p><b>Telephone:</b> 01352 702305</p> <p><b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:ceri.shotton@flintshire.gov.uk">ceri.shotton@flintshire.gov.uk</a></p>



<b>7.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
7.01	<b>Improvement Plan:</b> the document which sets out the annual priorities of the Council. It is a requirement of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 to set Improvement Objectives and publish an Improvement Plan.

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	<b>Update on North East Wales (NEW) Homes Board</b>	To update the Committee on the work of the North East Wales (NEW) Homes Board.	Assurance/Monitoring	Service Manager, Housing Programmes	
<b>1 February, 2017</b>	<b>Update report on partnership working between the Council and Travis Perkins</b>	To receive a report on the partnership working between the Council and Travis Perkins following 12 months of the new contract and arrangements.	Assurance/Monitoring	Senior Manager, Council Housing Services	<b>25 January 2017</b>
	<b>Customer Services Strategy Update</b>	To update on the Customer Services Strategy.	Assurance/Monitoring	Service Manager, Customer Support	
	<b>SARTH</b>	To update the Committee on the local project and progress with the Denbighshire Partnership	Assurance/Monitoring	Service Manager, Customer Support	
<b>8 March, 2017</b>	<b>Quarter 3 Improvement Plan Monitoring Report</b>	To enable Members to fulfil their role in relation to performance monitoring.	Assurance/Monitoring	Community & Enterprise Facilitator	<b>1 March 2017</b>
	<b>Welfare Reform Update</b>	To update on the impact of Welfare Reform on Flintshire residents	Assurance/Monitoring	Service Manager, Customer Support	
	<b>Galw Gofal</b>	To update on the future tender arrangements.	Consultation	Service Manager, Customer Support	

5 April, 2017					29 March 2017
14 June, 2017	<p><b>Review of Fair Debt Policy</b></p> <p><b>Quarter 4/Year End Improvement Plan Monitoring Report</b></p>	<p>To enable Members to review the Fair Debt Policy.</p> <p>To enable Members to fulfil their role in relation to performance monitoring.</p>	<p>Assurance/Monitoring</p> <p>Assurance/Monitoring</p>	<p>Income Manager</p> <p>Community &amp; Enterprise Facilitator</p>	7 June 2017
19 July, 2017	<p><b>Welfare Rights Collaboration Update</b></p>	<p>To update on the collaboration, outcomes and performance</p>		<p>Service Manager, Customer Support</p>	12 July 2017

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**Items to be scheduled**

- Work of the Economic Ambition Board
- Local Lettings Policy, Flint – to be submitted nearer the completion of the housing development in Flint

**REGULAR ITEMS**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>	<b>Responsible / Contact Officer</b>
<b>Quarterly / Annual</b>	<b>Performance Reporting</b>	To consider performance outturns for improvement targets against directorate indicators.	Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise)
<b>Six monthly</b>	<b>HRA Business Plan &amp; WHQS</b>	To update Members on progress made in meeting the WHQS and HRA business plan budget efficiencies	Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise)
<b>Six monthly</b>	<b>Welfare Reform Update – including Universal Credit</b>	To update Members on the impact of Welfare Reform and the cost to the Council.	Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise)
<b>Six monthly</b>	<b>Update on North East Wales Homes &amp; Property Management</b>	To update Members on the work of the North East Wales Homes & Property Management	Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise)
	<b>HRA Efficiencies</b>	To enable the Committee to monitor progress in meeting proposed HRA Efficiencies.	Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise)
	<b>HRA Subsidy Risk Register</b>	To enable the Committee to monitor ongoing risks following the introduction of self-financing for the HRA.	Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise)