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Contact Officer:
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To: Cllr Patrick Heesom (Chairman)

Councillors: Mike Allport, Sean Bibby, Chris Dolphin, Andy Dunbobbin, David Evans, Veronica Gay, George Hardcastle, Cindy Hinds, Ray Hughes, Dennis Hutchinson, Joe Johnson, Vicky Perfect, Paul Shotton and Owen Thomas

8 January 2020

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee which will be held at 10.00 am on Tuesday, 14th January, 2020 in the Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold CH7 6NA to consider the following items

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 5 - 14)

Purpose: To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2019.

4 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING (Pages 15 - 22)

Report of Environment Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator - Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Countryside

Purpose: To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee and to inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings.

5 **GRASS CUTTING POLICY REVIEW AND WILDFLOWERS ON GRASS VERGES** (Pages 23 - 30)

Report of Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) - Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Countryside

Purpose: To seek a recommendation to Cabinet to accept the revisions to the existing Grass Cutting Standard

6 **OUTCOME OF THE WALES AUDIT OFFICE AUDIT ON FLINTSHIRE HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING CENTRES** (Pages 31 - 58)

Report of Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) - Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Countryside

Purpose: That Scrutiny note the outcome of the recent Wales Audit Office report on HRC sites.

7 **EFFECT ON THE PUBLIC HIGHWAY OF ROADWORKS BY UTILITY COMPANIES** (Pages 59 - 64)

Report of Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) - Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Countryside

Purpose: To provide an overview of the statutory requirements of the Council to manage and inspect the Highway Network during roadworks undertaken by Public Utilities and other organisations

8 **THE INSTALLATION OF VEHICULAR CROSSINGS ON THE PUBLIC HIGHWAY** (Pages 65 - 72)

Report of Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) - Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Countryside

Purpose: To provide Scrutiny with details of the policy and processes required to lower highway kerbs to allow access to private properties.

9 **THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE CHALLENGES OF CLIMATE CHANGE** (Pages 73 - 90)

Report of Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) - Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Countryside

Purpose: To update the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the Council's response to the challenges of climate change.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert Robins', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Robert Robins
Democratic Services Manager

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ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE **10 DECEMBER 2019**

Minutes of the meeting of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held at County Hall, Mold on Tuesday, 10 December 2019

PRESENT: Councillor Patrick Heesom (Chairman)

Councillors: Mike Allport, Sean Bibby, Chris Dolphin, Andy Dunbobbin, George Hardcastle, Cindy Hinds, Dennis Hutchinson, Joe Johnson, Vicky Perfect, Paul Shotton and Owen Thomas

SUBSTITUTE: Councillor: Mike Peers (for Veronica Gay)

APOLOGIES: Councillors: David Evans and Ray Hughes

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Ian Roberts, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education attended as an observer together with the Chief Executive and Democratic Services Manager

CONTRIBUTORS: Councillor Carolyn Thomas, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Streetscene & Countryside; Councillor Chris Bithell, Cabinet Member for Planning & Public Protection; Councillor Glyn Banks, Cabinet Member for Finance; Chief Officer (Planning, Environment & Economy); and Chief Officer (Streetscene & Transportation)

Corporate Finance Manager - for minute number 46

Service Delivery Manager, Highways & Waste (Katie Wilby) and Regulatory Services Manager (Ruth Cartwright) - for minute numbers 47 & 48

Energy Conservation Engineer (Sadie Waterhouse) - for minute number 50

IN ATTENDANCE: Environment Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Democratic Services Officer

42. OPENING COMMENTS

The Environment Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator read out a statement on the restrictions over discussions at meetings during the Election period.

43. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

44. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2019 were submitted.

Minute number 37: Councillor Shotton asked that the minutes include his question about electric vehicle charging points in Flintshire. He thanked officers for the response and welcomed the additional charging points provided by Coleg Cambria.

Minute number 38: The Chairman asked if there was a register of unadopted roads in Flintshire. The Chief Officer (Streetscene & Transportation) said that the Council was represented on a working group established by Welsh Government (WG) to compile a national list of unadopted roads across Wales. Councillor Carolyn Thomas advised that WG colleagues were considering policy changes in respect of unadopted roads at new developments.

Subject to the change, the minutes were moved for approval by Councillor Bibby and seconded by Councillor Shotton.

RESOLVED:

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

45. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING

The Facilitator presented the current Forward Work Programme and an update on actions arising from previous meetings. On Environmental Enforcement, she advised that the policy would be forwarded to Town and Community Councils once it had been approved by Cabinet and that the Budget Statement was due to be circulated.

The Committee supported the suggestion for Climate Change to be the subject of an all-Member workshop in February 2020. The Chairman asked that any questions be submitted to him in advance.

Councillor Peers questioned whether the five 'test of significance' questions used to identify future agenda items applied to all committees and were embodied in the Constitution. He suggested that a sixth question be included on whether the issue was of public or Member concern. The Facilitator's suggestion that this be referred to the Constitution & Democratic Services Committee was supported.

The recommendations, which were amended to reflect the debate, were moved by Councillor Peers and seconded by Councillor Hardcastle.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Forward Work Programme be approved, including the Member workshop on Climate Change in February;
- (b) That the Facilitator, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises;
- (c) That the Committee notes the progress made in completing the outstanding actions; and
- (d) That the suggestion for a sixth 'test of significance' question in section 1.02 of the report be referred to the Constitution & Democratic Services Committee.

46. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY: COUNCIL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2020/21

The Corporate Finance Manager presented a report on the current financial forecast for 2020/21 together with efficiencies and cost pressures across portfolios. Specific proposals for the portfolio were highlighted for review. Since the report to Cabinet in April, the overall projected 'gap' in the Council's funding requirements for 2020/21 had increased by £2.854m to £16.174m.

The report also set out the national position and options available for the Council to achieve a balanced budget. Proposed efficiencies for all portfolios had been shared with Members at a workshop during the summer. Since that time, no further options had been put forward. The overall summary position to date showed a significant contribution of £8-8.5m towards the budget gap comprising of corporate and portfolio efficiencies and income (£1.784m), income derived from a provisional 5% increase in Council Tax (£4.38m) and the amount available to the Council from an Actuarial review which was nearing completion (£2m). The remaining options - dependent on the outcome of the Welsh Government (WG) budget - were a further review of the Pension Fund employer contributions, the sharing of cost pressures with schools and a Council Tax increase above the working assumption. The Provisional Settlement was due to be published on 16 December, with the Final Settlement confirmed for 25 February; possibly after the Council had set its final budget for 2020/21.

Councillor Peers asked whether a review of services was amongst the remaining solutions available to balance the budget. He noted that the provisional 5% increase in Council Tax required a much improved Settlement and said that alternative options were needed to avoid a similar position to that in the budget process for 2019/20. He also commented on the projected income from car parking where some areas had exceeded projected levels

whereas others were consistently below targets. He added that garden waste charges should not be classed as an efficiency as charges were being passed to residents.

In response, the Corporate Finance Manager said that all service efficiencies had been included in portfolio business plans and that to implement anything new at this stage would be difficult. On the Council Tax increase, whilst a positive Settlement was expected from WG, the question remained whether it would be sufficient. More detail on the options available would be reported to Council later in the day. On the single person discount for Council Tax, a review that was underway was expected to generate additional income during 2019/20 and 2020/21. The Corporate Finance Manager acknowledged the need to differentiate between cost efficiencies and income generation.

Councillor Carolyn Thomas said that after the achievement of efficiencies, a decision had been taken not to cut any more services to avoid the impact on residents.

The Chairman sought clarification on contributions from Organisational Change and the efficiency on income from external works.

The Chief Officer (Streetscene & Transportation) said that recognising the difficulty of finding further efficiencies, beyond those already identified, had prompted a change in the way of working to generate income. More information would be shared at a later stage on exploring such opportunities within services through cultural changes or Alternative Delivery Models. On income from external works, the Chief Officer provided explanation on the benefits from the outsourced fleet provision through a single contractor, resulting in newer vehicles and reduced maintenance costs.

When asked by the Chairman, the Corporate Finance Manager said that the income generation approach would be applied across the whole of Council services.

Councillor Banks said that the aim was to protect core services and that no further suggested efficiencies had been put forward by Members. He gave a reminder that garden waste collection was not a mandatory service and that the charges offered value for money to residents.

The recommendations in the report were moved by Councillor Shotton and seconded by Councillor Dunbobbin.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Streetscene & Transportation and Planning, Environment & Economy efficiency proposals for 2020/21 be endorsed; and

- (b) That the Streetscene & Transportation and Planning, Environment & Economy cost pressures recommended for inclusion in the budget for 2020/21 be endorsed.

47. OUTCOME OF THE WASTE STRATEGY REVIEW CONSULTATION PROCESS

Councillor Carolyn Thomas introduced a report to seek a recommendation to Cabinet to approve changes to the recycling and waste collection service following public consultation. She thanked residents for working with the Council to maintain strong recycling performance currently ranked the third best in Wales.

The Regulatory Services Manager explained that the recommendations took account of over 8,000 consultation responses, reflected changes to the national strategy and sought further improvement on recycling performance to meet future targets. Whilst a change in black bin collection frequency was not currently supported, 32% of residents had indicated that they were unsure whether they could manage in the event of such a change. It was recommended that this option be reviewed again in 12 months' time to understand the impact of changes by Welsh Government (WG) to the national strategy. The proposal for increased enforcement had been widely supported, with some residents recognising the need for accountability.

The Chief Officer (Streetscene & Transportation) said that the proposals aimed to achieve a positive impact through changes in behaviour. In recognising concerns about increased enforcement, the three-stage approach allowed for informing and educating in the first instance with formal action taken for continued non-compliance. Current statistics demonstrated the effectiveness of the process in helping residents to understand and follow the system. Other proposed changes were a programme of education for residents, a trial of Absorbent Hygiene Product (AHP) collections funded by WG, a round review of the routing of waste collection rounds and the separation of cardboard and paper recycling to generate additional income.

Councillor Carolyn Thomas said that residents should be encouraged to recycle more food waste and that she was able to visit schools and communities to raise awareness of the proposed changes. She also advised of a national campaign to increase education on recycling.

Whilst in favour of increased enforcement for those consistently failing to recycle, Councillor Peers said that consideration must be given to any contributing factors, for example age or health issues. He asked if there was sufficient capacity within waste collection crews to maintain the monitoring list for recycling which should be evidence-based. The Regulatory Services Manager said that there should be no impact on the crews and that residents' names were removed from the monitoring list where enforcement was no longer required. Vulnerable residents experiencing problems with recycling were

identified and a process was in place to target appropriate support. In response to further questions, it was clarified that AHP collections would mirror the current medical waste collections involving a separate bag. The separation of paper and cardboard was an operational change also reflected through consultation feedback and would be introduced in stages.

Councillor Hardcastle raised concerns that some older or vulnerable residents were uncertain about how to recycle and may worry about the prospect of enforcement. He spoke in support of the proposals but raised concerns about the potential for recycling to be mistakenly placed in a neighbour's black bin.

The Chief Officer reminded Members of the outcomes of discussion on the Waste Strategy at the October meeting. He said that Councillor Hardcastle's concerns would be taken back and gave examples where households in need of support had been identified and followed up by officers, as education was the priority rather than issuing fixed penalty notices. On resource implications, it was noted that the quoted figure of £70K included the cost of the vehicle and overheads for the two additional Enforcement officers.

During the debate, Members commended the extensive consultation exercise, the outcome on black bin collection frequency and the focus on education.

Councillor Dunbobbin paid tribute to members of the public who had responded to the survey. On the consultation process, it was confirmed that the views of Streetscene operatives had been included via workforce briefings.

The outcomes of the report were also welcomed by Councillor Bibby who shared an example where officers had provided support to a vulnerable resident in a caring and sensitive manner.

Councillor Dolphin spoke in support of the removal of Sunday collections and robust enforcement action. He referred to the impact of dropped litter outside properties and adequate provision for storing shredded paper ready for collection. Councillor Carolyn Thomas provided advice on the best way of storing recycling materials to maximise space in the bins.

In response to comments by Councillor Owen Thomas on reducing excessive packaging, Councillor Carolyn Thomas referred to consultation by UK and Welsh Governments on manufacturer responsibility.

Councillor Hutchinson reiterated the need to support vulnerable people across all types of accommodation, and the need to educate people on the correct way of recycling. The Regulatory Services Manager said that leaflet distribution to all residents would form part of the education programme.

In thanking officers for the report, the Chairman encouraged Members who were also school governors to raise awareness of the proposals in schools.

The recommendations in the report were moved by Councillor Bibby and seconded by Councillor Shotton.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the responses to the public consultation exercise on the Council's Waste Strategy be noted; and
- (b) That Cabinet be recommended to approve the changes to the recycling and waste collection service detailed in the report.

48. PROPOSALS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS AT STANDARD YARD WASTE TRANSFER STATION

Councillor Carolyn Thomas introduced a report containing proposals to upgrade the existing Waste Transfer Station (WTS) at Standard Industrial Estate in Buckley due to significant growth in processing demand. The WTS enabled the separation and sorting of recycling materials before being sent for onward processing. The report set out funding proposals and sought approval to Cabinet to progress with the project.

The Service Delivery Manager, Highways & Waste said that the proposals had been informed by the waste consultation exercise including operatives working at the site. The proposals would improve access and facilities and create an educational centre whilst also resolving logistical issues at the site. The aim at this stage was to gain political approval prior to progressing with the design of the development.

In response to questions from the Chairman, Councillor Carolyn Thomas said that there was no potential for sharing the WTS as neighbouring councils had their own facilities.

The two local Members, Councillors Hutchinson and Peers thanked the Service Delivery Manager for meeting with them and giving them the opportunity to provide feedback. Whilst both supported the need for investment on the site, Councillor Peers raised a number of concerns which had already been shared with officers. He questioned the viability of relocating the existing Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) to Greenfield and asked where the equipment breakdown issues had been reported. He considered the proposed new access road off Globe Way to be unnecessary and instead suggested utilising the existing road (marked with arrows on the plan) to avoid cutting off the building. Therefore he proposed that the first recommendation be changed to note the proposal "in principle" to improve the site.

In welcoming feedback, the Chief Officer (Streetscene & Transportation) expressed a willingness to discuss options for the development of the site to ensure its future viability. He said that the maintenance issues had increased over time as the equipment aged.

The Service Delivery Manager explained that the relocation of the MRF was only intended to provide resilience as a backup facility to increase capacity at Greenfield.

Councillor Shotton urged the Council to take advantage of funding opportunities from Welsh Government as and when they became available.

The recommendations, as amended, were moved by Councillor Peers and seconded by Councillor Hutchinson.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the proposals, in principle, for developing the Standard Yard Waste Transfer Station (WTS) be noted; and
- (b) That Cabinet be recommended to approve the proposed funding bids and investment required for Standard Yard WTS.

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

RESOLVED:

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting as the following item was considered to be exempt by virtue of paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

50. FLINT LANDFILL AND CRUMPS YARD SOLAR PV FINAL BUSINESS CASES

Councillor Bithell introduced a report on the final business cases for proposals to develop solar PV developments at two brownfield sites (Flint Landfill and Crumps Yard) following the conclusion of intensive pre-development activities. Whilst planning permission had been obtained for the development at Flint Landfill, a decision on Crumps Yard was expected early in the New Year. Councillor Bithell outlined the main considerations from the report including a number of financial and environmental benefits from the scheme which would contribute towards local and national priorities.

The Chief Officer (Planning, Environment & Economy) said that the report provided detailed technical and financial information on the scheme.

The Committee was introduced to the Energy Conservation Engineer (Sadie Waterhouse) who provided clarification on the financial implications, contractual requirements and community benefits. Following a request from the Chairman, she agreed to circulate site location plans to the Committee.

The Chairman said that more detail on the community benefits would be welcomed by Members. The Chief Officer spoke about a shift in the procurement strategy to achieve broader environmental benefits.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman thanked officers for the report and welcomed its positive contribution towards climate change.

The recommendation was moved by Councillor Shotton and seconded by Councillor Dunbobbin.

RESOLVED:

That the Project and Business Case be supported for the development of Crumps Yard, Connah's Quay and Flint Landfill for ground mounted solar photovoltaic uses.

51. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

There was one member of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 9.30am and ended at 11.50am)

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Chairman

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ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 14 January 2020
Report Subject	Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking
Cabinet Member	Not applicable
Report Author	Environment Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator
Type of Report	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 Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

The report also shows actions arising from previous meetings of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the progress made in completing them. Any outstanding actions will be continued to be reported to the Committee as shown in Appendix 2.

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.
3	That the Committee notes the progress made in completing the outstanding actions.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING
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">1. Will the review contribute to the Council's priorities and/or objectives?2. Is it an area of major change or risk?3. Are there issues of concern in performance?4. Is there new Government guidance of legislation?5. Is it prompted by the work carried out by Regulators/Internal Audit?6. Is the issue of public or Member concern?
1.03	In previous meetings, requests for information, reports or actions have been made. These have been summarised as action points. Following a meeting of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee in July 2018, it was recognised that there was a need to formalise such reporting back to Overview & Scrutiny Committees, as 'Matters Arising' was not an item which can feature on an agenda.
1.04	It was suggested that the 'Action tracking' approach be trialled for the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Following a successful trial, it was agreed to extend the approach to all Overview & Scrutiny Committees.
1.05	The Action Tracking details including an update on progress is attached at Appendix 2.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	None as a result of this report.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	In some cases, action owners have been contacted to provide an update on their actions.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	None as a result of this report.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Draft Forward Work Programme Appendix 2 – Action Tracking for the Environment OSC.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Minutes of previous meetings of the Committee as identified in Appendix 2. Contact Officer: Margaret Parry-Jones Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator Telephone: 01352 702427 E-mail: Margaret.parry-jones@flintshire.gov.uk

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	Improvement Plan: 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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CURRENT FWP

Date of Meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report/Presentation	Scrutiny Focus	Responsible/Contact Officer	Submission Deadline
<p>Tuesday 11th February 2pm</p>	<p>Flintshire Integrated Transport Strategy</p>	<p>To receive an overview of current developments</p>	<p>Assurance</p>	<p>Chief Officer Streetscene & Transportation</p>	
	<p>Audit Reports – Alltami/Highways Cost Recovery</p>	<p>To consider the Wales Audit Reports referred by the Audit Committee</p>	<p>Assurance</p>	<p>Chief Officer Streetscene & Transportation</p>	
<p>Tuesday 10th March 10.00 am</p>	<p>Pest Control</p>	<p>To receive an update on work taking place across Housing, Streetscene and Environmental Health.</p>	<p>Update</p>	<p>Chief Officer Planning, Environment & Economy</p>	
	<p>Quarter 3 Council Plan Monitoring Report</p>	<p>To enable members to fulfil their scrutiny role in relation to performance monitoring.</p>	<p>Performance Monitoring/ Assurance</p>	<p>Chief Officer Streetscene & Transportation</p>	
	<p>Fleet Electrification</p>	<p>To consider proposals for fleet electrification.</p>	<p>Consultation</p>	<p>Facilitator</p>	
	<p>Provision of MOT's and other Commercial Opportunities</p>	<p>To consider commercial opportunities within the Streetscene & Transportation portfolio.</p>	<p>Consultation</p>		
	<p>Update on the Progress of the Mold to Broughton Cycle Path</p>	<p>To receive a progress report.</p>			

2019

Date of Meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report/Presentation	Scrutiny Focus	Responsible/Contact Officer	Submission Deadline
Tuesday 7 th April 10.00 am	Visit to Parc Adfer Garden Waste update Waste Permitting & Data Flow	To receive a progress report To receive a report	Assurance Assurance	Chief Officer Streetscene & Transportation Chief Officer Streetscene & Transportation	
Tuesday 5 th May 10.00 am	Effect of roadworks by utilities and dropped kerbs policy and practices.	To receive an update	Assurance	Chief Officer Streetscene & Transportation	
Tuesday 7 th July 10.00 am	Year-end Council Plan Monitoring Report	To enable members to fulfil their scrutiny role in relation to performance monitoring.	Performance Monitoring/ Assurance	Facilitator	

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Items to be scheduled:-

Wild Flowers on grass verges.

ACTION TRACKING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Action Required	Action Officer(s)	Action taken	Timescale
21.05.19	Mold to Broughton Cycleway	Detailed designs to be shared when completed. Not yet available.	Sue Price	Details will be shared when available.	On-going
17.09.19	Forward work programme/action tracking	Steve Jones to provide feedback to Committee when trial is completed.	Steve Jones	The trial planned before Christmas had to be cancelled and is now planned to take place in the next few weeks. 08/1/2020	Ongoing
17.09.19	Forward work programme/action tracking	North Wales Regional Growth Deal – invitation to Community & Enterprise OSC when item is considered.	Margaret Parry-Jones	Invitation to be extended to Members of the Committee.	Ongoing
12.11.19	Environmental Enforcement Policy	Budget statement to be provided	Steve Jones	To be provided.	Ongoing
12.11.19	Environmental Enforcement Policy	Circulate policy to Town & Community Councils to raise awareness	Steve Jones	In progress	Ongoing
10.12.19	Flint Landfill and Crumps Yard Solar PV Final Business Cases	Site Maps requested	Sadie Waterhouse	Circulated	Completed

10.12.19	Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking	Inclusion of a sixth question be included in test of significance on whether the issue was of public or Member concern	Margaret Parry-Jones	Democratic Services Manager has agreed to suggestion which will be reflected in reports from 1 st March for all Overview & Scrutiny Committees.	Completed



ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 14 th January 2020
Report Subject	Grass Cutting Policy Review and Wildflowers on Grass Verges
Cabinet Member	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Streetscene & Countryside
Report Author	Chief Officer (Streetscene & Transportation)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council provides a grass cutting service at a number locations and at key facilities around the County. The Grass Cutting Policy has been regularly reviewed since 2012 with the last version being approved in January 2018, which demonstrated the Council's compliance with the latest Highway Code of Practice, which was released in March 2017.

Following the impact of the summer weather on the 2019 grass cutting season, the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee requested that the Council's Grass Cutting Policy be reviewed and a report on the policy was presented to the Committee in October 2019. At the meeting the Committee requested further information relating to the collection of grass cuttings which they felt would improve the service provided.

The report also provides further details on the pilot areas for planting of wildflowers which were detailed in the previous report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Environment and Overview Scrutiny notes the cost of collecting grass during the grass cutting operation and recommend Cabinet approves the current policy.
2	That Environment Overview and Scrutiny support the pilot programme of wildflower planting and managing areas for biodiversity with those Town & Community Councils who have expressed an interest in supporting the initiative.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	BACKGROUND OF GRASS CUTTING POLICY
1.01	The Grass Cutting Policy was last revised in January 2018 and a copy is attached (Appendix 1).
1.02	The County has a legal responsibility for managing the Highway Network in terms of keeping the routes available and safe for the passage of the highway user. It undertakes this duty in its role as the Highway Authority. Grass-cutting takes place on highway verges in areas that are key to maintaining visibility, such as at junctions, laybys, and the inside of bends. The aim of grass-cutting is to keep the highway safe and to maintain visibility for all road users.
1.03	Regular grounds maintenance of publicly accessible areas is recognised to improve the appearance of those areas, and maintains the accessibility by the communities that look to enjoy these green spaces.
1.04	The current delivery mechanisms for grass cutting is as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rural Highway Verges – Contracted• Urban Verges and visibility – Contracted• Amenity Areas – Part contracted / part in-house• Cemeteries – In-house• Tenants Gardens – Contracted• Hedges – Contracted• School Playing fields – Contracted• Rights of Way – Contracted (Managed by Countryside services)
1.05	The frequency of cutting is set as core standards in the current Grass Cutting Policy as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rural Highway Verges – once per year• Urban Verges and visibility splays – 4 times per year• Amenity Areas – Maximum 13 cuts per year / every 2-3 weeks• Cemeteries – Every 2-3 weeks• Tenants Gardens – Maximum 13 cuts per year / every 2-3 weeks• Hedges – once per year• School Playing fields – up to 16 cuts per year
1.06	The programme of grass cutting is scheduled as described in the Policy, however there are periods where the grass will grow more quickly between cuts. Favourable weather conditions, usually in early summer, can cause grass to grow more rapidly.
1.07	During early June 2019, heavy rain interrupted grass cutting services whilst resources were redirected to respond to localised flooding incidents, and were not able to restart the grass cutting rounds whilst the ground remained too sodden for the machinery to operate. Meanwhile, this was a peak grass growing period, and the additional growth interrupted schedules into July 2019.

1.08	July 2019 was a record breaking month for temperatures and this again promoted the pace of grass growth. In efforts to address the issue of rounds struggling to keep up with the accelerated growth, Streetscene & Transportation engaged additional support from an incumbent contractor to assist the in-house amenity grass cutting teams to catch up. Additional contractor support continued until the end of September 2019.
1.09	Grass-cutting may be undertaken more frequently by Town & Community Councils (T&CC). This is at their discretion, with our agreement, and is funded by the T&CC. Under such circumstances, Town & Community Councils are encouraged to take on an extended role in the provision of grass cutting for either additional sites, or more frequent cuts.
1.10	Core Standards can be enhanced on health and safety grounds - where appropriate, through discussion with the Streetscene Area Coordinators and Operational Managers. Streetscene Operational Area Managers can provide advice on current standards, and the appropriate solution for additional services, along with how these may be supported through either the in-house teams or contractors, and the indicative costs.
1.11	<u>Wildflowers</u> Encouraging communities to manage verges and other areas such as smaller roundabouts where visibility is not an issue and amenity areas, for wildflower planting and care, can improve the aesthetics of the areas and reduce the burden on the grass cutting service. This can only be considered where it is safe to do so, and not in conflict with health and safety management of verges.
1.12	Roadside verges and other areas can be sanctuaries for wildflowers, pollinating insects, reptiles, amphibians and small mammals. These are seen as essential green corridors for which these species disperse.
1.13	Through a variety of grant funded and partnership projects, a number of different approaches to wildflower area creation and management have been trialled by the Countryside Service as an alternative to the usual 'engineered' annual wildflower areas which, although often having a stunning visual impact, rely on regular re-creation. Alongside tree planting, areas of amenity grassland and road verges have been allowed to grow longer for the summer with a later cut to allow grasses and flowers to grow throughout the season. This approach has incorporated necessary and essential maintenance work to ensure there is no impact on highway safety.
1.14	Streetscene & Transportation have been contacted by a number of Town & Community Councils to put forward areas for consideration of wildflower planting, and where regular grass cutting can be avoided, these areas are to be trialled as an alternative to less frequent cuts and longer grass. In these instances we would look to the Community Council to contribute towards the costs of the wildflower seeds, and we have been advised that the benefit may not be fully realised until the second season.
1.15	Each Streetscene Area Coordinator has also been ask to nominate an open site in their area, which could be left to grow and would receive just

	one cut a year (with the grass collected). This would encourage biodiversity and provide a natural sanctuary for wildlife.
1.16	<p>An assessment of each site will need to be carried out to consider existing wildlife, historic designations or features, plant identification to consider invasive plants and protected species and other wildlife interests. Any works and on-going management of these sites will need to consider the hazards of working in the verge, traffic management considerations and a risk assessment for the site.</p> <p>Once chosen the sites will be clearly signed to notify residents that the site is not to be cut and will remain an area of natural biodiversity.</p>
1.17	<p><u>Grass Collections</u></p> <p>Environment & Scrutiny Committee have requested further information in relation to the additional costs of collecting grass cuttings. We do not currently collect grass cuttings as the equipment needed to collect and remove them would significantly increase the cost of the mowing service. The grass collection boxes need regular emptying, which would cost significantly more to collect, reduce productivity and incur costs for transporting the cuttings and disposal through composting. This enhancement of the service would be costly, uneconomical and environmentally unfriendly, owing to the additional travel involved.</p>
1.18	We currently cut 1,113 amenity sites and cemeteries, along with 20 football pitch sites, which is in excess of 270 hectares, which is undertaken with the in-house teams consisting of 42 operatives. Contractors provide services to cut schools, tenant's gardens and highway verges.
1.19	The in-house grass cutting teams would require the re-procurement of existing mowing equipment which are currently not designed to collect grass. Additional small skips and loading vehicles would be required to collect the grass as the existing fleet vehicles would not have capacity to carry the arisings. It is estimated that this would generate approximately £297k of additional costs over a full season.
1.20	<p>Soft market-testing with the incumbent contractor for grass cutting services has indicated that overall costs would likely increase by in excess of 70% to provide a grass collection service in addition to the existing grass cutting arrangements.</p> <p>In total, the cost of providing a collected service in all areas would exceed £0.5m and would be equivalent to a 1% increase in Council Tax for all residents</p>
1.21	In order to mitigate the concerns raised by the Scrutiny Committee, the operational teams are currently preparing to carry out a 'Winter Cut' in January 2020 where appropriate it is appropriate to do so when areas will be cut to reduce winter growth, subject to weather and ground conditions.
1.22	The teams will then be resourced and prepared to start the first cut of the season from 1st March 2020, subject to weather conditions at that time, which again is intended to minimise excessive growth and support the

	teams in the timely completion of scheduled cuts. This will occur alongside the weed-spraying of the edges and around furniture/obstacles, which will improve the efficiency of the rounds and reduce the requirement for strimming.
1.23	After mowing, any grass cuttings on the pavement will be blown back on to the grass as soon as possible and any long grass in the area of sheltered housing will be raked and removed. The option to collect grass in the areas around sheltered properties during the first cut remains within the current policy and within existing budgets
1.24	The operational grass cutting teams have been reconfigured for the new season to ensure that the rounds are distributed more evenly across the County, provide consistency in the workforce and deliver more timely completion of grass cutting schedules.
1.25	It is intended that these additional resources will ensure that the growth of grass is managed and, along with the timely start to the cutting season, will prevent excessive length of cuttings and remove the need for grass collections to take place.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	It is the intention of the service to maintain budgets and deliver the service with cost neutral implications.
2.02	To provide an additional grass cutting collection service would see an additional requirement for the following: Staff: 7 drivers @ £15k ea. per annum - £105k Vehicles: 7 no. 7.5t skips plus emptying etc. @ ~ £15k ea. per annum - £105k Plant / Equipment: Replacement with grass collection boxes - £20k Disposal: ~ 4,000tonnes p.a. - £67k Total: £297k additional costs
2.03	The operational improvements being put in place over January 2020 and in preparations for the grass cutting season will be covered from within existing service resources and budgets.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	The Streetscene & Transportation service has undertaken risk assessments on the provision of the standard and frequency of all grass cutting services which are outlined within the policy.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	<p>Consultation took place with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operational departments and stakeholders With Cabinet Member
4.02	Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the existing policy and the proposals for introducing wildflower areas at their meeting in October 2019.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Grass Cutting Policy (January 2018).

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Highways Act 1980.
6.02	Code of Practice for Well-managed Highway Infrastructure (2016).

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Stephen O Jones – Chief Officer – Streetscene & Transportation</p> <p>Telephone: 01352 704700</p> <p>E-mail: Stephen.o.jones@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	None.

Flintshire County Council.
Grass Cutting Policy (January 2018)

1. Roadside verges Cut by tractor flail

a) Rural Verges (outside 30mph) - **1 cut per year in July** (subject to weather conditions)

- 1 swathe widths on all principal roads
- 1 swathe width on all non-principal and unclassified roads

Visibility splays at junctions **4 cuts per year** in –

- April
- June
- August
- September/October

Full width verge cutting for weed and self-sown sapling control on all classifications of rural roads **once every 4 years** in September/October

Additional cuts may be carried out on Health and Safety grounds in specific locations as identified by the Area Coordinators.

b) Urban verges (within 30 mph zones) — **4 cuts per year**

- April
- June
- August
- September/October

2. Amenity Areas

Maximum of 13 cuts per year as required.

Flexible start required for the start of the cutting season, in February/March, subject to weather conditions.

Frequency of cuts based on every 2 weeks in April to June, extended to every 3 weeks July to Oct, subject to weather conditions.

(Removal of grass cuttings will only take place in exceptional circumstances i.e. First-Cut of the season)

3. Public footpaths / Cyclic Routes

A **maximum of 4 cuts** per year as required, to prevent rural footways being lost to grass ingress and verge creep due to lack of usage.

4. Hedges

The majority of highway hedges are the responsibility of the adjacent land owner. Where the hedge has grown to an extent that it is causing an obstruction to the highway user, notice will be served on the land owner to cut the hedge accordingly. Highway hedges owned by the Council will be cut **once a year** after the nesting season has passed.

5. Bus-stops

A maximum of 4 cuts per year as required across the grassed areas either side of rural Bus-stops, up to 20 metres across the length of the stop.

6. Village / Town Gateways

A maximum of 4 cuts per year as required across the grassed areas either side of Village / Town Gateways signs, up to 10 metres either side of the gateway.

7. Recreation Sports Grounds –

Up to 16 cuts per year March to October. Subject to separate procurement arrangements and direct liaison with the Schools.

8. Cemeteries

Flexible start required for the start of the cutting season, in February/March, subject to weather conditions.

Frequency of cuts based on **every 2 weeks in April to June**, extended to **every 3 weeks July to Oct**, subject to weather conditions.

(Removal of grass cuttings will only take place in exceptional circumstances. i.e. First-Cut of the season)

Additional key dates outside of the cutting season to include **Christmas** and **Mothering Sunday**.

9. Tenants Gardens

Where tenants have requested and qualify for the assisted gardening service. The service is provided by contractors who will provide the following:

Maximum of 13 cuts per year as required.

Flexible start required for the start of the cutting season, in February/March, subject to weather conditions.

Frequency of cuts based on every 2 weeks in April to June, extended to every 3 weeks July to Oct, subject to weather conditions.



ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 14 th January 2020
Report Subject	Outcome of Wales Audit Office Audit of Flintshire Household Recycling Centres
Cabinet Member	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member (Streetscene & Transportation)
Report Author	Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Flintshire County Council provide five Household Recycling Centres (HRC's) across the County that accept a wide range of recycling and waste materials from household properties. The HRC's are an integral part of the Council's Municipal Waste Strategy which was developed to maximise the amount of recycling collected in order to meet Welsh Government recycling targets.

In accordance with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 the Auditor General for Wales is required to examine public bodies to assess the extent to which they have acted in accordance with the sustainable development principles when setting their well-being objectives and strategies.

Consequently, the Wales Audit Office (WAO) undertook a survey of HRC's in Flintshire during April and May 2019 to consider the Council's current arrangements and performance against the vision set out in the Municipal Waste Strategy and to understand how service users feel about the HRC's and whether they feel they were able to inform service design and delivery. The survey was promoted by the WAO and through the Council's website and in addition the WAO visited all HRC's over five days during the Easter period in 2019 to speak to service users and gather their thoughts on the matter.

This report details the findings of the audit report and provides recommendations for service delivery in future years.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Environment Overview and Scrutiny note the outcome of the Wales Audit Office audit on Flintshire Household Recycling Centres
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2	That Environment Overview and Scrutiny support the recommendation from the report to improve recycling understanding and the working arrangements on Flintshire Household Recycling Centres
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE BACKGROUND
1.01	<p>The strategy for HRC's is clearly set out in the Household Waste Collection Policy Appendix 1.</p> <p>Five HRC's are provided across the County located in Nercwys, Buckley, Oakenholt, Sandycroft and Greenfield. The sites accept a wide range of recyclable and waste materials from Flintshire households that cannot be collected at the kerbside. The waste streams accepted at the sites include wood, electrical items, hazardous waste such as paints and asbestos, carpets and non-recyclable wastes.</p>
1.02	<p>The HRC's provide a service to Flintshire residents only, with a van permit scheme in place to prevent the use of the sites by local trade companies.</p> <p>Each site promotes a 'meet and greet' service where site staff engage and inform service users of the most appropriate way to dispose of their items. Where residents bring black bags filled with waste, the site staff request that they be opened and inspected for recyclable materials.</p>
1.03	<p>Continued investment has been made into the HRC's with the Council providing capital funding of £0.6 million to complete HRC redevelopment works between 2017 to 2019, with an additional £1.7 million funding provided by the Welsh Government.</p> <p>This funding saw the full redevelopment of Buckley and Mold sites and the closure of Flint and Connah's Quay site to introduce a new, modern, fit for purpose site, located in Oakenholt.</p>
1.04	<p>The recycling performance across all of the HRC's currently stands at 80% which contributes to the overall total percentage of waste in Flintshire reused, recycled or composted. Currently 69% (2018-19).</p>
1.05	<p>In accordance with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 the Auditor General for Wales is required to examine public bodies to assess the extent to which they have acted in accordance with the sustainable development principles when setting their well-being objectives and strategies.</p> <p>Consequently the Wales Audit Office (WAO) undertook a survey of HRC's in Flintshire during April and May 2019 to consider the Council's current arrangements and performance against the vision set out in its Municipal Waste Strategy and to understand how services users feel about the HRC's and whether they feel they were able to inform service design and delivery.</p>

1.06	<p>The survey was promoted by the Wales Audit Office and through the Council's website. In addition, over five days, the WAO visited all HRC's over Easter 2019 to speak to service users. In total 887 responses were received. 448 at the HRC's and 399 online. Of the 887, only 23 were provided by people living outside the County in either Wrexham, Denbighshire or Cheshire.</p>
1.07	<p>On review of the audit and responses provided through the public survey, WAO reported the following observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council continually reviews its waste collection policy • The Council continues to invest in HRC's • The Council has set clear priorities to provide high quality, sustainable HRC services • Staff investment remains static • Staff and Local Members have a good understanding of the need to maximise recycling • 65% of respondents felt they needed to use an HRC as the household collection service did not fully meet their full needs • Not all site staff were inspecting black bag waste on site • The most popular waste stream brought to the HRC's is 'general waste' • Most of survey responses were positive • Residents have concerns on operational hours • The Council pro-actively engages with its residents • The Council pro-actively engages with Local Members and Town/Community Council's • Some residents could not recall the Council engaging with them on service provision • The five most popular recycling items are wood, garden waste, cardboard, rubble and electrical items
1.08	<p>Most respondents to the survey were happy with Flintshire's HRC services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 71% think the quality of the service has improved in recent years; • 69% consider the service good value for money; and • 59% found staff are polite and helpful. <p>Most people spoken to were well informed about local HRC's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 92% are aware what HRC services are available locally; and • 89% said it is easy for them to find the information they need about HRC's.
1.09	<p>In conclusion, the WAO have reported that the Council is following a clearly set out vision, continues to invest in its HRC's and has listened to service users to help it secure public satisfaction, but increasing public understanding of how to recycle more effectively has further potential benefit.</p>
1.10	<p>A recommendation to improve Flintshire residents understanding of recycling mirrors the outcome of the Council's own public survey which</p>

	took place during September and October 2019. On review of those responses it was clear that residents wanted to recycle but were unsure what could be recycled and where there waste could be dispose.
1.11	<p>It is therefore proposed to improve recycling awareness and improve the HRC provision through a number of changes which originate from the WAO report:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improved recycling information the HRC's 2. Improved recycling information on the Council website 3. The use of social media to promote recycling initiatives/ideas 4. Target areas of low recycling participation to inform of options 5. Improved engagement during service changes 6. Undertake annual customer surveys to gauge user feedback 7. Provide further training to HRC staff 8. Future opening times will be consistent throughout the year 9. Work with local charities to 'adopt' a HRC to promote recycling and wider local engagement
1.12	The survey also highlighted the concerns of residents in respect of the opening hours of the sites, particularly the fact that the hours change during the winter months. Residents requested regular opening hours throughout the year and it is therefore proposed that the opening hours remain the same throughout the year.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	Waste strategy team and on site workforce will be required to promote and inform residents on recycling information and initiatives.
2.02	Revenue costs from existing budgets for recycling promotional documents.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	Consultation with Cabinet Member.
3.02	Consultation with Wales Audit Office.
3.03	Consultation with Streetscene workforce.
3.04	Consultation with Household Recycling Centre service users and staff.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	Improved information and education on recycling will reduce the disposal of recyclable materials ensuing that Welsh Government targets are achieved.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Household Waste Collection Policy. Appendix 2 - Wales Audit Office audit report.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Contact Officer: Stephen Jones Telephone: 01352 704700 E-mail: stephen.o.jones@flintshire.gov.uk

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	HRC = Household Recycling Centre WAO – Wales Audit Office Information on Household Recycling Centres: https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Bins-Recycling-and-Waste/Household-Waste-Recycling-Centres.aspx

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Flintshire County Council

**HOUSEHOLD WASTE COLLECTION
and
HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING CENTRE
OPERATIONS
POLICY**

June 2017



POLICY FOR HOUSEHOLD WASTE COLLECTION

1.0 Legislation

1.1 Under the terms of the Environmental Protection Act, 1990, Flintshire County Council (the “Council”) is classed as a Waste Collection and Disposal Authority, and as such has a statutory duty to collect household waste from all domestic properties in the County. Under Section 46(4) of the Act, the Council has specific powers to stipulate:

- The size and type of the collection receptacle(s);
- Where the receptacle(s) must be placed for the purpose of collecting and emptying;
- The waste types which may or may not be placed within each of the receptacle(s).

1.2 In addition Section 51 sets out the authorities statutory duty as a waste disposal authority. In that;

- It shall be the duty of each waste disposal authority to arrange—
 - (a)for the disposal of the controlled waste collected in its area by the waste collection authorities; and
 - (b)for places to be provided at which persons resident in its area may deposit their household waste and for the disposal of waste so deposited;

1.3 This policy sets out the Council’s collection and disposal arrangements for householders in the authority and also the householder’s duty all in accordance with the above legislation.

2.0 Household Waste Collection Eligibility

2.1 Each household in Flintshire registered on the Council Tax Register will be entitled to receive a waste collection service.

2.2 Places of religious worship, registered charities and community halls (where no business activity takes place for profit) may be entitled to the same standard of waste collection service offered to householders.

3.0 Collection Frequency

3.1 The Council operates a Managed Weekly Collection (MWC) service offering the following:

- A weekly collection of all recyclable material which should be cleaned and separated by the residents. This includes – Glass, Mixed plastics, Card/Paper and Tin cans
- A weekly collection of food waste
- A fortnightly collection of a general domestic wheeled bin
Alternating with:
- A fortnightly collection of wheeled bin for garden waste.

4.0 Containers for the Storage of Waste Materials

- 4.1 Where operationally possible all households are included in the MWC service and these properties will receive curtilage collections. However in some locations specific collection points have been identified by the Council and in some locations (particularly flats) local collections will be provided from communal wheeled bin(s) which are provided for the purpose of storing waste materials prior to collection.
- 4.2 All containers supplied to householders for the purpose of the waste/recycling collection service shall remain in the ownership of the Council. When householders move home they will be required to leave all wheeled bins and recycling boxes at the property for the new occupant to use. The only exemptions are additional garden waste bins (Brown Bins) that have been purchased by the householder from the Council.
- 4.3 Householders are responsible for the storage, safe keeping and cleaning of waste containers provided by the Council.

Non recyclable waste containers

Each householder shall be provided with the following containers free of charge in which to store and present their waste non-recyclable waste

- 1 180L black wheeled bin for non-recyclable waste. Only waste produced by a household on a normal day to day basis should be placed in this wheeled bin (i.e. it should not contain non-standard items such as bulky waste, commercial waste or recyclable waste).
- 4.4 Where a household has 6 or more permanent occupants, they may make a request for a larger, 240 litre wheeled bin for the storage of non-recyclable waste. This service shall be subject to annual review and the 240 litre wheeled bin will be exchanged for a standard 180 litre wheeled bin once the number of permanent occupants reduces below 6.

Recyclable waste containers

Each householder shall be provided with the following containers free of charge in which to store and present their recyclable waste

- One blue recycling box for glass bottles and jars.
- One reusable weighted woven sack for mixed plastic bottles, tubs, pots and trays, tin cans and waxed cartons
- One blue reusable plastic sack for paper and cardboard.
- Additional sacks will be available on request.
- Recycling products placed in these receptacles should be rinsed and be free of the material originally stored in them.

- One kitchen caddy for the storage of food waste and a larger kerbside caddy for presentation at kerbside
- Householders will also be supplied with a roll of 52 biodegradable bags for food waste when they notify the collection crew by tying a bag to the handle of their kerbside caddy on collection day.

Garden waste containers

Each householder shall be provided with the following container free of charge in which to store their garden waste

- One 140L wheeled bin for green garden waste. If an additional bin is required please see paragraph 4.9

4.5 All containers supplied by the Council should only be used for the storage of items as prescribed by the Council. Failure to do so may result in the Council retrieving the container(s) from the households.

4.6 Households must separate their waste items into the appropriate containers as per the advice provided by the Council. If the householder fails to correctly segregate their waste materials into the prescribed containers as required, the waste **may not** be collected and this **shall not** be classed as a missed collection. Following such an incident the householder must place the waste items in the correct container which will then be collected at the next scheduled collection.

4.7 Any request to provide a new or replacement wheeled bin, recycling box/bag or food bags (e.g. due to damage or for a new property etc) shall be made by contacting the Streetscene service through the Streetscene Contact Centre (01352 701234) or through the Council's web-site.

4.8 Only wheeled bins will be delivered by the Council to the householder's property. All other items (bags/boxes etc) can be collected from a network of collection sites across the authority. A list of these sites can be found on the Council's website.

4.9 Where a household produces large quantities of green garden waste, they may purchase up to 2 additional 140 litre wheeled bins for the storage of this material. The charge for additional brown bins will be reviewed annually and details of current charges are available on the Council's Fees & Charges listing.

5.0 Collection Points

5.1 All wheeled bins, food containers and recycling boxes/bags must be placed on the drive or footway within one metre of the curtilage or boundary of the property and be easily accessible to the crews without the need to open gates etc. Where this is not possible the containers should be placed on the footway/verge outside the property, at a point causing minimal obstruction to the highway users. See paragraph 8.0 for residents registered as on the Council's assisted collection scheme.

- 5.2** The collection point for householders with long private drives will be the point where their drive meets the adopted highway.
- 5.3** Where possible collection vehicles will travel along un-adopted roads allowing residents to present their waste containers at the same point on their property as though the road were adopted (5.1).
- 5.4** This does not mean that the Council will maintain the road and should the road be deemed unsuitable for the vehicles involved and poses the risk of damage to the vehicle or if the owner of the road refuses to allow the vehicle to use the road, the residents will be required to bring their containers to the nearest adopted highway.
- 5.5** Where required, site specific arrangements will be made for collections at flats or properties with narrow or difficult access arrangements. These specific collection arrangements will be advised to the householder by the Council.
- 5.6** Wheeled bins and recycling containers will be returned to their point of origin by the collection crews immediately after collection with the lid of the container closed.
- 5.7** The householder must collect their wheeled bins/recycling boxes after they have been emptied and return them to within the boundary of their property on the day of collection. Containers must not be permanently stored on the public highway. See paragraph 7.4 regarding enforcement activity.
- 6.0 Collection Day and Time**
- 6.1** Wheeled bin and recycling collections, where operationally possible, will generally take place on the same day each week.
- 6.2** All wheeled bins, food bins and recycling containers should be presented for collection by 7.00 am on the day of collection and removed after collections have taken place (which could be up until 5pm). Containers may be placed at their collection point on the evening before collection however the Council will not accept liability for any injury or damage to third parties as a result of any incidents occurring with a container left on the public highway outside of these periods unless caused by the acts or omissions of its employees, contractors or agents.
- 6.3** It may be necessary for the Council to change collection days from time to time e.g. over the Christmas and New Year period and on some occasions the waste collection service will have to be suspended due to a service disruption (e.g. during heavy snow, fuel shortage etc). The Council will make every effort to minimise the level of disruption to householders during these periods and will try to rectify any missed collections as soon as the cause of the disruption comes to an end. Notification of changed collection days in these instances will be available on the Councils website and from the Councils Streetscene Contact Centre.

6.4 Where the Council is unable to collect any missed waste collections due to a service disruption, householders should retain their waste materials until the next scheduled collection when all of the material will be collected. The Council would encourage residents to use their nearest HRC for the disposal of all waste types in these instances.

7.0 Presentation

7.1 All waste must be presented in Council supplied containers to ensure its safe collection. Lids on wheeled bins must be shut when the waste is collected in order to ensure that the waste is properly contained and to protect the health and safety of the collection crews when handling the bin.

7.2 Any waste jammed in a wheeled bin that does not fall out following the normal mechanical emptying process on the waste collection vehicles will not be taken. In these cases householders will have to loosen the materials themselves ready for the next scheduled collection.

7.3 All non recyclable waste must be contained within the wheeled bin provided by the Council.

7.4 Side waste presentation and enforcement

7.6 Properties presenting side waste will be noted by the crews and advice stickers will be placed on the householders wheeled bin to advise them of the recycling services that the Council provides. The sticker will also advise them that if they continue to present side waste then the Council's environmental crime team will be informed and they may face prosecution under the powers listed in 1.1 of this policy if evidence can be found within the side waste that links the waste to the particular property.

8.0 Assisted Collections

8.1 Where, through frailty or incapacity, a householder cannot present their wheeled bin or recycling boxes at the curtilage, and subject to there being no other able bodied adult person living at the property, the householder may make a formal request to the Council for an Assisted Collection.

8.2 If an Assisted Collection is approved a suitable collection point on the property shall be agreed with the householder and collections will then take place from this point. All containers will be returned to the collection point by the waste teams once they have been emptied.

8.2 Assisted Collections will be restricted to those households who are in genuine need following approval of an application to the Council. The Council will review every individual case every two years.

9.0 Missed Wheeled bin and food caddy

9.1 If a wheeled bin or food waste caddy is placed out ready for collection at a collection point as specified in section 5 and on the correct collection day and time, and is not picked up by the Council, then this will be classed as a missed collection.

9.2 Where a genuine missed collection is reported the Council will endeavour to return and collect the wheeled bin or food caddy the following working day after receipt of notice.

9.3 Where it is proven that the householder has failed to place the bin out for collection at a collection point as specified in section 5 or on the designated day and time; the Council will not return for the collection and the resident will be required to place their waste for collection on the next collection date.

9.4 Missed collections can be reported through the Streetscene Contact Centre (01352 701234) or through the Councils web-site.

9.5 Missed recycling

9.6 Where a recycling container (box/bag) is not collected this can be reported as in 9.4. However, the Council will not return for a missed recycling collection and the householder will be expected to place the recycling out for collection on the next due collection day.

9.7 Alternatively, if the householder is unable to wait until the next collection then the recycling can be taken to one of the Council's HRC's to be recycled.

10.0 Clinical Household Waste Collection

10.1 The Council provides a collection service for clinical household waste from householders upon request from the relevant Health Care provider, via a prescribed application form.

10.2 The Council shall provide a suitable container for the householder to store their clinical waste.

10.3 An agreed collection point, day of collection, frequency of collection and any other specific instructions regarding this service, will be agreed between the Council and the householder.

11.0 Bulky Household Waste Collection

11.1 The Council provides a bulky waste collection services for householders. This is a chargeable service for 1 to 5 items (or up to 10 bin bags). Extra items, up to a maximum of 5, are also collected at an additional charge.

- 11.2** The cost for each of these services will be shown in the Council's Fees & Charges listing which is reviewed each year. Domestic Fridges and Freezers are collected free of charge.
- 11.3** A subsidy to the standard charges is applied to householders in receipt of Income Support, Unemployment Benefit, Disability Living Allowance, State Pension or Guaranteed Pension Credits. Proof of benefit will be required.
- 11.4** Typical examples of bulky waste that will be accepted include the following - mattress's, bed frames, chairs, tables, TV's, carpets, hi-fi's, cupboards, standard cookers, sideboards, lamps, children's toys, computers, bookcases etc. A three piece suite will count as three items.
- 11.5** Home Improvements including kitchen/bathroom renewals, fitted wardrobes and any soils & rubble from landscaping works **will not be collected** as part of a bulky waste collection and households should make the appropriate arrangements with their contractor to ensure they comply with their own duty of care for the safe disposal of the material.
- 11.6** No commercial or industrial waste will be collected.
- 11.7** The Council reserves the right to refuse the collection of any waste items that may cause harm or that may put at risk the health and safety of waste collection staff.
- 11.8** Bulky collection can be requested through the Streetscene Contact Centre or through the Councils web-site where a collection appointment with the householder will be made.

12 Household Recycling Centres (HRC's)

- 12.1** Flintshire County Council currently manages and operates 6 HRC sites for Flintshire residents to recycle/reuse household items that cannot be collected by the kerbside collections vehicles. They are situated at the following locations across the County:
- Greenfield (7 day opening)
 - Sandycroft (7 day opening)
 - Mold (7 day opening)
 - Buckley (7 day opening)
 - Connahs Quay (3 day opening only)
 - Flint (3 day opening only)
- 12.2** The number of HRC sites will reduce to 5 during in the Summer of 2017 when a new site situated in Oakenholt will open to serve the towns of Flint and Connahs Quay. The existing sites in these towns will close on the opening of Oakenholt.
- 12.3** The opening hours for the facilities will be as follows:

Summer(April to September)	Open	10.00hours
	Close	18.00 hours
Winter(October to March)	Open	09.00 hours
	Close	17.00 hours

12.6 Trade or commercial waste will not be accepted at any of the Council's HRC's.

12.7 Resident Van Permits Scheme

12.8 The Council operates a resident van permit scheme for Flintshire residents only. The permit allows a total of 12 visits per annum and residents owning the following vehicles must be in possession of a permit to dispose of their waste at HRC sites:

- Pick up & Crew cab
- Minibus (no internal modifications)
- Camper van & mobile home (no internal modifications)
- Trailers greater in size than 6' x 4'

The following vehicles will **not** be permitted to use the Council's HRC sites:

- Large box vans
- Tipper vehicles
- Horse boxes
- LGV'S
- Sign written vans
- Vans towing trailers

12.9 The Criteria for residents to obtain a van permits is as follows:

- The vehicle must be registered to the resident, not a business or other organisation.
- The vehicle must be registered to an address in Flintshire.
- The vehicle must not be sign-written or display advertising.

12.10 If the resident cannot satisfy the above conditions, they will not be issued with a van permit.

12.11 Permit holders proven to be tipping trade waste will have their permit revoked.

12.12 Hired Van 'One Off' Permits

12.13 If the van is hired or borrowed and taking household waste to a Flintshire County Council HRC a "one off" permit will be required. 'One Off' permits

will be issued at the HRC sites and are subject to a maximum of 3 visits. Residents will need to provide proof of Flintshire residency and any hire documents in the event that the vehicle is hired. Sign written borrowed vehicles are not permitted.

13 The Councils 'Bring Sites'

13.1 In addition to the HRC sites the Council also operates a number of strategically placed Bring Sites across the County. Since the introduction of the Council's MWC in 2012 the waste and recycling collected through these sites has significantly reduced.

13.2 In future bring sites will only provide banks for materials that cannot be collected by the kerbside services such as textiles, shoes etc.

13.3 The latest list of sites can be found on the Council's website:



WALES AUDIT OFFICE
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

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Auditor General for Wales

Household Recycling Centres – Flintshire County Council

Audit year: 2018-19

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We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay. Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg. This document is also available in Welsh.

The team who delivered the work comprised Gwilym Bury, Sabel Wiliam and Jeremy Evans under the direction of Huw Rees.

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Summary report

Summary

What we reviewed and why

- 1 Household Recycling Centres (HRCs) provide the public with opportunities to recycle their waste and these sites have helped councils in Wales to improve recycling performance. HRCs can increase recycling with relatively low investment when compared to other options. Improvements to site infrastructure can increase the range of opportunities to recycle and reuse waste. In addition, 'people' factors, such as efficient welcoming staff at sites, and accessibility within sites help to increase the efficiency of waste segregation and the willingness of citizens to use the facilities.
- 2 In many local government service areas, the ability of service users to influence services so that they meet their needs relies on 'voice' rather than 'choice', either because there are no alternative providers, or where there are alternatives, barriers such as cost or accessibility mean service users have limited or no access to them. This means that the views of service users and their ability to ensure that their voices are heard is particularly important in designing and delivering services and interventions that meet people's needs.
- 3 The context of decreasing resources for local government bodies provides additional impetus to ensure that services and interventions take into account the views, experiences and aspirations of service users. Ensuring that the experiences, views and aspirations of service users are taken into account when determining how and which services to reduce, increase or change in some other way increases the likelihood that services will meet people's needs and therefore provide better value for money.
- 4 Flintshire County Council (the Council) provides recycling opportunities for residents through a local charity which collects re-usable furniture and electrical items from their doorstep free of charge, 23 local recycling banks, and the Council's weekly door to door collection of recycling items.
- 5 The Council also has five HRCs to allow residents to recycle waste from their home. In addition, residents can bring general household waste items to the HRCs. The Council's HRCs are the focus of our review and we developed a survey to ask citizens for their views on them.
- 6 This review considered:
 - the Council's HRC strategy and performance against the vision set out in the strategy; and
 - how service users feel about the HRCs and whether service users feel they are able to inform service design and delivery.
- 7 Our survey was available online during April and May 2019. It was promoted by the Wales Audit Office and through the Council's website. In addition, over five days we also visited all five of the Council's HRCs where we spoke to service users. In

total we received 887 responses - 488 at the HRCs and 399 online¹. Only 23 of the responses were from people not living in Flintshire, these were from people living in Wrexham, Denbighshire and Cheshire.

What we found

8 Our review sought to answer the question: **Do the needs, experiences and aspirations of service users inform the design and delivery of services to more closely meet their needs?**

9 Overall, we found that: **The Council following its clearly set out vision, continues to invest in Household Recycling Centres and has listened to service users to help it secure public satisfaction, but increasing public understanding of how to recycle more effectively has potential benefit.**

We reached this conclusion because:

- the Council continues to invest in its Household Recycling Centres and Council has a clear vision for its Centres; and
- most service users are happy with the Household Recycling Centres, but increasing public understanding of how to recycle more effectively has potential benefit.

Proposals for improvement

Exhibit 1: proposals for improvement

The table below sets out the proposals for improvement that we have identified following this review.

Proposals for improvement	
P1	The Council should consider how to increase public understanding of recycling and how they can recycle more effectively at HRCs in order to reduce the amount of general non-recyclable waste.

¹ The results of the survey are summarised in Appendix 1.

Detailed report

The Council following its clearly set out vision, continues to invest in Household Recycling Centres and has listened to service users to help it secure public satisfaction, but increasing public understanding of how to recycle more effectively has potential benefit

The Council continues to invest in its Household Recycling Centres and has a clear vision for its Centres

- 10 The Council has been developing its approach to maximising the recovery and recycling of waste over a number of years. It adopted a Municipal Waste Strategy in 2010, designed to help meet Welsh Government recycling targets, followed by a Household Waste Collection Policy (the Policy) in 2011. The Policy was revised and updated in 2013, 2015 and 2016 to incorporate new arrangements to improve recycling rates in line with revised Welsh Government targets.
- 11 Changes made to the Policy in 2016-17 included a reduction in the number of HRC sites from seven to five, with the remaining sites being upgraded and the building of a new site at Greenfield which opened in 2019.
- 12 The Council has continued to invest in its HRCs between 2017 and 2019. The Council provided capital funding of £0.6 million to complete HRC redevelopment works in 2017 to 2019, with an additional £1.7 million funding provided by the Welsh Government.
- 13 The Council's annual business plans set out clear priorities to provide a high quality, sustainable HRC service. The Council regularly monitors and reviews HRC performance which continues to improve. The overall total percentage waste in Flintshire reused, recycled or composted (including HRCs and other collection methods) increased from 55% in 2012-13 to 68% in 2017-18, the third highest percentage for a council in Wales.
- 14 There has been little change to the overall number of HRC staff, and terms and conditions have remained the same over the last two years. The Council has not changed staff terms and conditions to reduce costs and has no plans to do so.
- 15 Council officers and members we spoke to have a good understanding of the need to maximise recycling in order to reduce landfill, increase recycling, and discourage fly tipping. They are aware of the need for HRC staff to promote recycling and is identifying ways it can tackle inconsistencies in staff behaviours through greater training.

Most service users are happy with the Household Recycling Centres, but increasing public understanding of how to recycle more effectively has potential benefit

- 16 Nearly two-thirds (65%) of survey respondents felt that the household collections by the Council do not meet all their recycling and residual waste needs and feel they have to use the HRCs to dispose of this additional material.
- 17 The Council Policy is that at all HRCs general non-recyclable 'bagged waste will be opened for inspection to remove recyclable items'. Large signs are prominently displayed at all sites advertising this. We observed people being verbally questioned by HRC staff about the contents of bagged waste but we saw few physical checks taking place. At the time of our survey this policy was only being occasionally followed, to do so would have potentially generated large queues of vehicles developing at site entrances. Some survey respondents told us that they did not wish to recycle and knew that their bagged waste is unlikely to be physically checked at HRCs. The single most popular item (98% of the people who responded to our survey) brought to HRCs in the last two years was general waste. Although it is not possible to say how much potentially recyclable material is being missed in the general waste, the number of skips we saw being filled with general waste bags over five days at each of the HRC sites would suggest it could be significant. The Council should consider how it can communicate more effectively with the public to increase the understanding of why recycling is important and how to recycle more when using the centres.
- 18 Although most of the survey comments we received were very positive about the HRC service, some respondents commented on the differences between summer and winter opening times; in the summer months opening times are 10am to 6pm, and in the winter opening times change to 9am to 5pm. Survey respondents who spoke to us said the different opening times are confusing and that summer times were less convenient for most people. We observed at all sites a significant number of vehicles queuing before the HRCs opened at 10am and that the period from 5pm till 6pm was the quietest part of the day at each site.
- 19 The Council proactively engages with service users and can demonstrate that it uses customer feedback to inform service delivery. For example, when reviewing its HRCs, the Council consulted HRC users on proposed changes and then changed their plans in response to people's suggestions which was subject to further consultation in relation to the new proposals for Flint and Connah's Quay.
- 20 The Council recognises the need to engage with residents and work with them to boost recycling rates. The Council engaged with local members and community councils regarding proposed HRC closures in 2017 and again in 2018 and explored the potential of community asset transfers and retaining some of the sites earmarked for closure. The Council also surveyed residents on waste service provision and aspirations for HRC provision and undertook a county-wide communication campaign in 2017 to inform residents of changes to collection rounds and to highlight the additional materials that would be collected for

recycling. In response to public and scrutiny concerns over proposed 2017 HRC closures, the Council explored options which would provide a compromise between WRAP's² recommendation of three HRCs and residents' preference for more localised provision. As a result, the Council decided to retain and upgrade Buckley HRC and to replace the existing Flint and Connah's Quay sites with a single modern HRC facility.

21 Despite this, over two thirds (68%) of our survey respondents could not remember the Council engaging with them or asking their opinion on HRC services. The Council should therefore consider how it can communicate more effectively the results of its engagement.

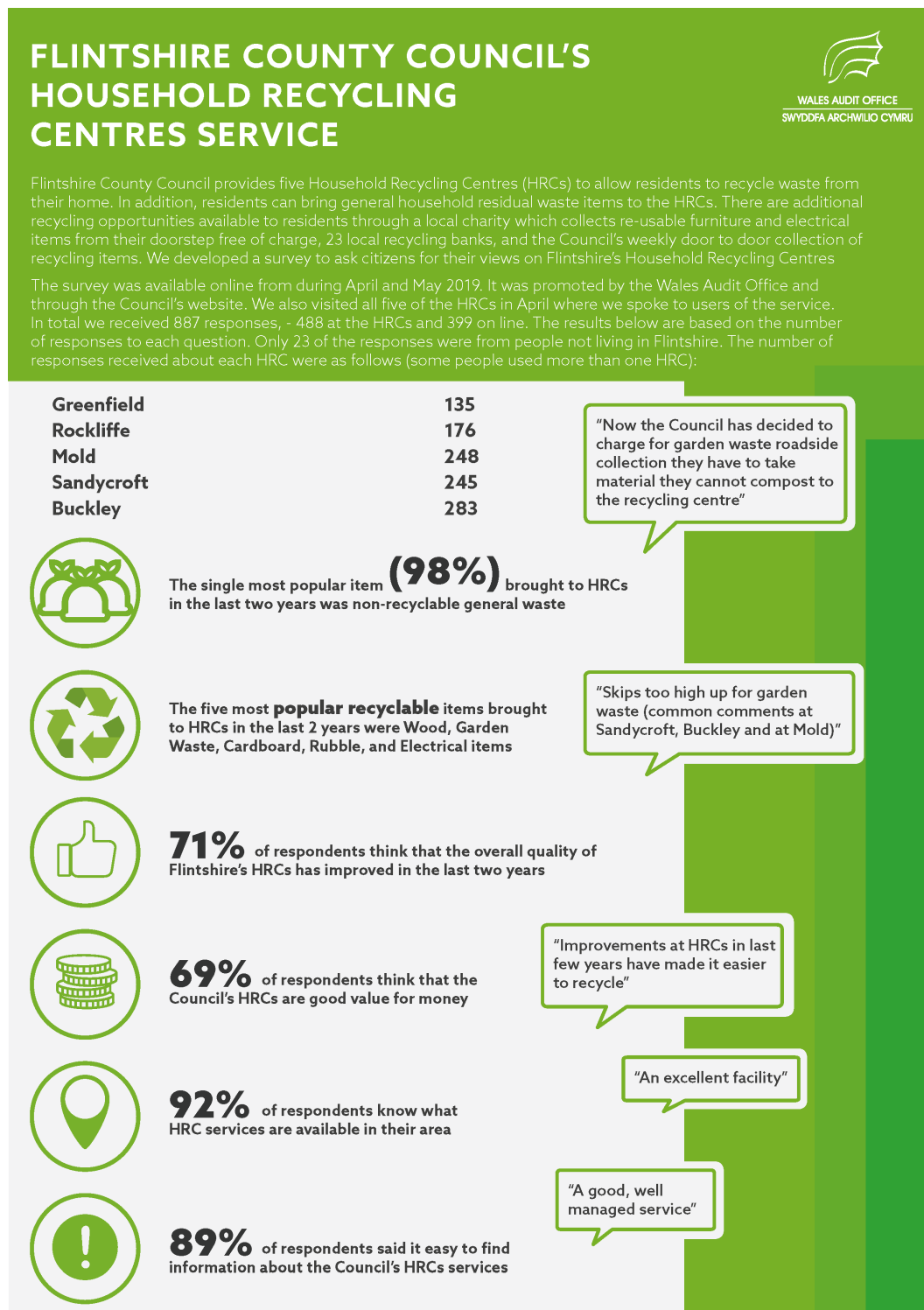
22 From our survey results we also found that:

- Most respondents to our survey are happy with Flintshire's HRC services:
 - 71% think the quality of the service has improved in recent years;
 - 69% consider the service good value for money; and
 - 59% found staff are polite and helpful.
- Most people we spoke to in our survey were well informed about local HRCs:
 - 92% are aware what HRC services are available locally; and
 - 89% said it is easy for them to find the information they need about HRCs.
- People we spoke to in our survey told us the five most popular recyclable items brought to HRCs in the last two years were wood, garden waste, cardboard, rubble, and electrical items.

² The Waste and Resources Action Programme (which operates as WRAP) is a registered UK Charity providing advice and guidance across Wales

Appendix 1

Survey results infographic





68% of respondents said they had **not** been consulted effectively on recent changes to HRC services

The most common reasons for using the Council's HRC services are:



76%

convenient location



63%

Wide range of recycling skips available



59%

Staff are polite and helpful



65%

The collections by the Council from their home do not meet all their recycling and residual waste needs and feel they have to use the HRCs



65%

It's important that people should recycle as much as possible

"9 to 5 opening all year would be better with no change in the Summer opening times"

"The Buckle HRC site is badly planned for parking and poorly sign posted"

"Staff always help you to unload"

"A good, well managed service"

Only **23%** said that they would still use HRCs for disposing of rubble, plasterboard, roofing felt, or tyres if they had to pay a contribution to the Council



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ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 14 th January 2020
Report Subject	Effect on the Public Highway of Roadworks by Utility Companies
Cabinet Member	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member (Streetscene & Transportation)
Report Author	Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee requested a summary report, explaining effect and impact of road work's undertaken by utility companies on the Highway Network and the Council's role in relation to the regulation, co-ordination and inspection of these works.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Scrutiny notes the content of this report and acknowledge the statutory framework and duties on the Council as Highway Authority in relation to utility works carried out on the Highway Network.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	BACKGROUND
1.01	The majority of utility infrastructure reaches residential properties under the Highway Network and the Highway Authority plays an integral role in ensuring residents and business owners have the necessary amenities, such as clean drinking water, gas, electricity and telecommunications.
1.02	The New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA) provides the legal framework for road works undertaken by statutory undertakers, such as utility companies. In 2004 the Traffic Management Act was introduced, tightening the regulatory framework within which utilities excavate roads, giving Highway

	Authorities more power to co-ordinate, control and direct works effectively with the aim of minimising disruption.															
1.03	<p>All statutory undertakes have the statutory right to access their apparatus, and lay new equipment in the public highway. Utilities are however required to notify the Highway Authority of their intention to work on the highway under the following timescales;</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Works Category</th> <th>Works Duration</th> <th>Notice Periods</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Major</td> <td>+ 10 Days</td> <td>3 Months</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Standard</td> <td>4 – 9 Days</td> <td>10 Working Days</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Minor</td> <td>Up to 3 Days</td> <td>3 Working Days</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Immediate</td> <td>n/a</td> <td>2 Hours After</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Works Category	Works Duration	Notice Periods	Major	+ 10 Days	3 Months	Standard	4 – 9 Days	10 Working Days	Minor	Up to 3 Days	3 Working Days	Immediate	n/a	2 Hours After
Works Category	Works Duration	Notice Periods														
Major	+ 10 Days	3 Months														
Standard	4 – 9 Days	10 Working Days														
Minor	Up to 3 Days	3 Working Days														
Immediate	n/a	2 Hours After														
1.04	<p>Under section 56(4) of NRSWA, the Highway Authority are required to co-ordinate all works undertaken on the adopted Highway Network and, this also includes highway maintenance works, such as the Council's own resurfacing work.</p> <p>All road works are co-ordinated by staff from the Streetscene and Transportation portfolio under the direction of the Highway Network Manager and recorded on the Council's Street Works register, via a 'return path' inbox, which enables the utilities to detail their works and allows the Council to place restrictions and suggest preferred timings for the works.</p> <p>The Road Space Manager will analyse each notice, and determine if the works duration and proposed traffic management (such as traffic signals) are suitable and appropriate. The Council can only refuse works if the proposed traffic management is deemed unsuitable and could cause a hazard on the network, and/or works are already planned or taking place at or near the location which deems the road space unavailable.</p> <p>In 2018, 4,125 individual road works were undertaken by utility companies on the Highway Network in Flintshire</p>															
1.05	<p>Flintshire County Council facilitate quarterly co-ordination meetings with all the utility companies that operate in the County. The purpose of these meetings is to explore opportunities for all works promoters to share long term plans for asset upgrades and major maintenance projects and promote opportunities for trench, site sharing and long term strategic road space booking.</p> <p>Utilities are required to provide information regarding any works that are over 10 days in duration. Collaborative working is promoted, however it is not always feasible. Cables and pipes within the highway must be a certain distance apart and this can prevent the utilities from laying their apparatus in the same trench. In addition, consideration is given to the size of the excavation and the impact the subsequent traffic management would have on our network before approval.</p>															

1.06	<p>The Council will place a 3 year restriction on a road that has been resurfaced. During the period of the restriction a utility company can only carry out road works if they are of an urgent nature, or if a new service connection is required. During December, the Council also places a restriction on all non-immediate works on the Classified A and B network, and on all main roads leading and in town centres, to reduce congestion on the network during the run-up to Christmas. There is no legal basis to this restriction, and the Council relies on its positive working relationships with the utilities to ensure this embargo is adhered to.</p>								
1.07	<p>Every time a utility carries out roadworks on the highway, their subsequent reinstatement is guaranteed for a period of 2 years. If defects are identified within the 2 years, the utility are responsible for any remedial works, following this period the burden falls onto the Council. Under section 72 of NRSWA the Highway Authority are empowered to carry out investigatory works to check whether or not a utility has complied with the duties placed on it in respect of reinstatement of the street.</p> <p>These visual inspections are categorized as follows;</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="363 853 1332 1193"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="363 853 850 909">Inspection Category</th> <th data-bbox="850 853 1332 909">Timing of Inspection</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="363 909 850 1003">A</td> <td data-bbox="850 909 1332 1003">Undertaken during the progress of the works</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="363 1003 850 1097">B</td> <td data-bbox="850 1003 1332 1097">Undertaken 6 months after the works have been completed</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="363 1097 850 1193">C</td> <td data-bbox="850 1097 1332 1193">Undertaken 3 months before the end of the guarantee period</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Highway Authorities are required to inspect 10% of each of these categories. In order to ensure the burden of remedial costs do not fall onto the Council, Flintshire inspect a far higher percentage than required (15% of A and B, and 100% of C).</p>	Inspection Category	Timing of Inspection	A	Undertaken during the progress of the works	B	Undertaken 6 months after the works have been completed	C	Undertaken 3 months before the end of the guarantee period
Inspection Category	Timing of Inspection								
A	Undertaken during the progress of the works								
B	Undertaken 6 months after the works have been completed								
C	Undertaken 3 months before the end of the guarantee period								
1.08	<p>In addition to the visual inspections, in April 2019 the Council introduced a core sampling programme on completed reinstatements.</p> <p>The long term performance of a reinstatement is dependant, not only on the surface characteristics but also on the underlying properties of that reinstatement and the correct placement and compaction of the reinstated materials. The coring programme enables the Council to carry out detailed investigatory sampling and testing to determine any non-compliance. An appointed contractor carries out the sampling and laboratory are undertaken to determine compliance. The subsequent results are used to promote good working practices with reinstatement teams operating in the area. The Council currently take 20 core samples per month, an increase in this number is currently under consideration for 2020/21.</p>								
1.09	<p>The Council issues a roadworks bulletin to all stakeholders on a weekly basis, which includes details of all planned works for the following week. Recent amendments have been made to this document, removing industry jargon and simplifying the format. The Council use the 'One Network'</p>								

	<p>mapping platform which details road works on the network in real-time. This system extracts data directly from the Council's Streetworks register and uploads them to a mapping system, and offers the opportunity to communicate live updates to all road users to influence driver behaviour.</p> <p>The platform will detail the extent of the works, the traffic management in use and the promoters contact details. Date ranges can also be set to view any forthcoming planned roadworks. The system is particularly useful in communicating immediate roadworks, which, due to the statutory notice periods are rarely captured within the weekly roadworks bulletin. The Council are currently considering expanding the use of this platform to include the plotting of all diversion routes.</p>
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	Road Space is currently supported by one Operational Manager and two Road Space Inspectors supported by the Streetscene Coordinators who undertake some of the site inspections. Established cost recovery processes are in place for reinstatements failing to meet the required standard and currently this service area operates cost neutrally. There are no additional resource implications as a result of the report.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	The Streetscene service has undertaken risk assessments on the provision of road space related activities.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
4.01	None.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	New Roads and Street Works Act 1991
6.02	Traffic Management Act 2004

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: Stephen Jones Telephone: 01352 704700 E-mail: stephen.o.jones@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	None.

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ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 14 th January 2020
Report Subject	The Installation of Vehicular Crossings on the Public Highway
Cabinet Member	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member (Streetscene & Transportation)
Report Author	Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Vehicular crossings are required to facilitate access and egress to and from a property onto the Highway Network, without causing damage to the vehicle or the footway. Most properties in the County have existing crossing points and the Council, as Highway Authority, are responsible for maintaining the facility. The Council however regularly receives requests for additional or new access points and a policy for the installation of new Vehicular Crossings has been previously approved by Cabinet.

Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee requested details of the processes associated with the installation of vehicular crossings on the Highway Network.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Scrutiny note the process for installing a vehicular crossings on the Highway Network.
---	---

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	Background
1.01	Vehicular crossings are required to facilitate the access and egress to and from a property, preventing damage to vehicles and the footway. In certain cases the formation of a crossing may require planning permission, dependent on the category of the road. Under section 184 of the Highways Act 1980 it is an offence to drive over a highway footway where there is no formed access.

1.02	<p>Most properties in the County have existing vehicular crossing points and the Council, as Highway Authority, are responsible for their maintenance. The Council however regularly receives requests for additional or new access points and a policy for the installation of new Vehicular Crossings has been previously been approved by Cabinet.</p>
1.03	<p>Residents can apply to lower the kerb outside their property and install a vehicular access to their property from the adopted highway network, which will be constructed to an agreed specification and at the cost of the applicant. Details of the processes associated with the installation of vehicular crossings are detailed in Appendix 1.</p>
1.04	<p>The initial applications are processed by the Planning Service, Development Control Team, who will initially determine if planning approval is required for the installation. Consideration is given as to whether other accommodation works are required, such as the creation of a hard standings, the erection of retaining walls, gates and fences and the removal of a hedge row or tree. If the property is a Listed Building or within a designated Conversation Area, where there are additional controls over development, contact should be made with the Council's Planning service in the first instance and before the application is submitted. If the property is a Council owned property, permission will also be required to make alterations to the curtilage of the plot. The applicant must seek approval from Flintshire County Councils Housing and Asset Management Department before applying to lower the kerb.</p> <p>The application fee is £200, which covers both the associated administrative tasks and any visits to site, but does not cover the cost of constructing the new access.</p> <p>Once approved the applicant will receive details of the specification for the new crossing which will ensure the completed facility complies with nationally agreed standards of construction.</p>
1.05	<p>The construction of a crossing shall be carried out at the applicant's expense and to the satisfaction of the Council as Highway Authority. A crossing for a single width driveway will normally include the placement of three flat kerbs, plus two transition taper kerbs. If there is no alternative other than to create a double width vehicle crossing, this should be restricted to a maximum of six lowered kerbs plus tapers. Parking guidelines specify the size of a standard residential parking space (2.4m X 6.0m), vehicular crossings will not be authorized unless this facilitates access to a standard, useable space in accordance with these guidelines.</p> <p>In creating an access there may be the need to make alterations to existing utility apparatus and/or highway features. This includes amendments to traffic orders, and the relocation of street lighting or utility equipment, such as gas and water pipes. The costs associated with this is the responsibility of the applicant.</p> <p>Where there is less than two full height kerbs which can be retained between the formation of a new crossing and an existing crossing point, the new crossing should be extended to meet the adjacent lowered kerb. Where an existing vehicular crossing is being replaced by a crossing at a</p>

	different location, the redundant crossing must be returned to a full height kerb, with the footway reinstated.
1.06	<p>Works on the public highway can only be undertaken by a competent contractor. The Council does not hold a list of approved contractors, however a list of locally accredited contractors will be supplied, if requested by the applicant. Previously there has been a reluctance from the Council to undertake works of this nature, with Streetscene resources focused towards core service delivery. This current approach is under review, and the Streetscene and Transportation Service Delivery team will provide quotes for works of this nature if requested to do so. As part of the application process the applicant must provide evidence that their appointed contractor has the following documentation;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public liability insurance to the sum of £5m – Valid both during the application, and during the dates of the proposed works. • Accredited Supervisor and Operative to the requirements of the Codes of Practice under The New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 – This qualification ensures competency in relation to the excavation and reinstatement of the highway, and the installation of the temporary traffic management requirements. <p>The subsequent amendments to the highway must be guaranteed for a period of two years. During this maintenance period any claims arising from the works will be the responsibility of the applicant and their contractor. After the guarantee period the Council to resume responsibility for the section of highway.</p>
1.07	Following a successful application, the applicant will be required to notify Streetscene and Transportation. The Road Space Team will agree a date the works can take place, considering other highway activities in the area. The Streetscene Area Coordinator will visit the location of the works during the period of construction to undertake safety and compliance checks and ensure the works are being carried out in accordance with the Council's specification.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	The application fee is sufficient to recover the costs of the approval by staff within the Planning Development Control Team

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	Each location is assessed prior to approval being provided to construct the facility.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
4.01	None.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 - Installation of Vehicular Crossings Policy

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None.

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: Stephen Jones Telephone: 01352 704700 E-mail: stephen.o.jones@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	None.

Flintshire County Council - Streetscene and Transportation

Policy for the Installation of Vehicular Crossings on the Adopted Highway

Contents

- 1. The Purpose of Vehicular Crossings**
- 2. Applying for a Vehicular Crossing**
- 3. Policy for Vehicular Crossings**
- 4. Contractors**
- 5. During the Works**

1. The Purpose of Vehicular Crossings

Vehicular crossings are required to facilitate the access and egress to and from a property, preventing damage to cars and the footway. In certain cases the formation of a crossing may require planning permission, dependent on the category of the road. Under section 184 of the Highways Act 1980 it is an offence to drive over a highway footway where there is no formed access.

2. Applying for a Vehicular Crossing

The initial applications are processed by the Planning Service, Development Control Team, who will initially determine if planning approval is required for the installation. Consideration is given as to whether other accommodation works are required, such as the creation of a hard standings, the erection of retaining walls, gates and fences and the removal of a hedge row or tree. If the property is a Listed Building or in a Conservation Area where there are additional controls over development, contact should be made with the Council's Planning service, before the application is submitted. If the property is a Council owned property, permission will also be required to make alterations to the curtilage of the plot. The applicant must seek approval from Flintshire County Councils Housing and Asset Management Department in the first instance.

The application fee is £200, which covers both the associated administrative tasks and any visits to site but does not cover the cost of constructing the new access.

Once approved the applicant will receive details of the specification for the new crossing which will ensure the completed facility complies with national standards of construction.

3. Policy for Vehicular Crossings

The construction of a crossing shall be carried out at the applicant's expense, and to the satisfaction of the Council as Highway Authority. A crossing for a single width driveway will normally include the placement of three flat kerbs, plus two transition taper kerbs. If there is no alternative other than to create a double width vehicle crossing, this should be restricted to a maximum of six lowered kerbs plus tapers. Parking guidelines specify the size of a standard residential parking space (2.4m X 6.0m), vehicular crossings will not be authorized unless this facilitates access to a standard, useable space in accordance with these guidelines.

In creating an access there may be the need to make alterations to existing utility apparatus and/or highway features. This includes amendments to traffic orders, and the relocation of street lighting or utility equipment, such as gas and water pipes. The costs associated with this is the responsibility of the applicant.

Where there is less than two full height kerbs which can be retained between the formation of a new crossing and an existing crossing point, the new crossing should be extended to meet the adjacent lowered kerb. Where an existing vehicular crossing is being replaced by a crossing at a different location, the redundant crossing must be returned to a full height kerb, with the footway reinstated.

4. Contractors

Works on the public highway can only be undertaken by a competent contractor. The Council does not hold a list of approved contractors, however a list of locally accredited contractors will be supplied, if requested by the applicant. Previously there has been a reluctance from the Council to undertake works of this nature, with Streetscene resources focused towards core service delivery. This current approach is under review, and the Streetscene and Transportation Service Delivery team will provide quotes for works of this nature if requested to do so.

As part of the application process the applicant must provide evidence that their appointed contractor has the following documentation;

- Public liability insurance to the sum of £5m – Valid both during the application, and during the dates of the proposed works.
- Accredited Supervisor and Operative to the requirements of the Codes of Practice under The New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 – This qualification ensures competency in relation to the excavation and reinstatement of the highway, and the installation of the temporary traffic management requirements.

The subsequent amendments to the highway must be guaranteed for a period of two years. During this maintenance period any claims arising from the works will be the responsibility of the applicant and their contractor. After the guarantee period the Council to resume responsibility for the section of highway.

5. During the Works

Following a successful application, the applicant will be required to notify Streetscene and Transportation. The Road Space team will agree a date the works can take place, considering other highway activities in the area. The Streetscene Area Coordinator will visit the location of the works during the period of construction to undertake safety and compliance checks and ensure the works are being carried out in accordance with the Council's specification.

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ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 14 th January 2020
Report Subject	The Council's Response to the Challenges of Climate Change
Cabinet Member	Collective Responsibility
Report Author	Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy)
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At its meeting on 17th December 2020, the Cabinet agreed to the recommendations of the attached report at Appendix 1 and also agreed that an all-Member workshop be organised to engage with all elected Members in relation to the challenges of climate change.

The attached Cabinet report sets out the challenges to the public sector in general and Flintshire County Council in particular in meeting the Welsh Government target of a carbon neutral public sector by 2030.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	To note the content of the attached Cabinet report in preparation for the all-Member workshop on 25th February 2020.
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1.00	APPENDICES
1.01	Cabinet report from 17 th December 2019.

2.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
2.01	Contact Officer: Andrew Farrow – Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) Telephone: 01352 703201 E-mail: andrew.farrow@flintshire.gov.uk



CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 17 th December 2019
Report Subject	The Council's response to the challenges of climate change
Cabinet Member	Collective Responsibility
Report Author	Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy)
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines (1) how the Council should respond to Climate Change as a responsible body and (2) the challenge of meeting Welsh Government's requirement that the public sector in Wales should be carbon neutral by 2030. It sets out work undertaken so far, actions that need to be taken in the future and how the strategy will be governed monitored and resourced.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	To support the establishment of a Response to Climate Change Strategy Board
2	To support the recruitment of a Programme Manager to coordinate the Council's response to Climate Change
3	To support the progress undertaken so far to reduce the Council's carbon footprint
4	To issue a public statement of commitment and intent on our position, activities to date and intended actions e.g. Carbon Reduction, Plastics reduction, Renewable energy, greening

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE REPORT
1.01	<p>The impact of human activity on global warming is accepted as significant and will require immediate action to mitigate the potential catastrophic global events including higher temperatures, severe weather events and rising sea levels. Flintshire will not be immune to the impact these global issues have on food supplies and economic stability, but will also feel the effects of global warming more locally and directly, with more regular flood events likely, higher summer temperatures leading to higher mortality rates for older people, and a different natural environment developing as existing flora and fauna decline and new, invasive species fill the ecological niches they leave.</p> <p>The question then arises about how the Council responds appropriately. One significant step that the Council can take is in relation to balancing its emissions of carbon (known as achieving carbon neutral state)</p>
1.02	<p>The Welsh Government is expecting the public sector to take an early leadership role in driving towards and delivering a low carbon future. Their document “Prosperity for All: A Low Carbon Wales” sets a clear aim of a carbon neutral public sector by 2030. Appendix 1.</p> <p>The scale of this challenge is significant and for the Council to achieve a net carbon zero position – where we have either completely eliminated our carbon emissions, or we have balanced emissions we make with measures to offset those emissions through renewable power generation or tree planting – will require a different approach to be taken to our existing.</p> <p>Public sector organisations across Wales are stepping up to this challenge through declaring climate emergencies, baselining their total carbon emissions and coordinating decarbonisation projects and work streams.</p> <p>The County Council have been promoting decarbonisation through activities such as installing energy efficiency measures, renewable energy technologies, promoting recycling and landfill avoidance, managing land for the benefit of biodiversity etc for a number of years. The extent of our activities are reflected in Appendix 2.</p> <p>Broadly, there are 12 areas which will help to shape the Council’s response to Welsh Government’s challenge are we are making progress in the bulk of these</p> <p>1. Leadership</p> <p>The Council has a duty of leadership as a democratically elected local body representing the population of Flintshire. This leadership involves the example it sets, the actions it takes and what it says – all of which should benefit local citizens, communities, economies and the environment. A lack of leadership in terms of sustainability and activity to address climate change would fall short of public expectations. The aims that the Council is trying to achieve should be well thought out, consulted on, publicised and acted upon.</p>

The Council has recognised the gravity of the climate change challenge in the revised Council Plan for 2019 onwards with a series of actions identified and being progressed (see below). The Council have ratified the Council Plan and recently received the mid-year progress update against those actions.

Given its breadth, magnitude and impacts, the climate change response falls across all portfolios and Cabinet Member functions. The issue of carbon reduction will be led by the Cabinet with a Climate Change Strategy Board being established with all-portfolio membership and political representation at Cabinet level.

2. Strategy

The Council needs a strategy to address the climate change challenge, to promote carbon emissions reduction and improve sustainability. Any strategy should show the way forward and how success will be realised over time. However, the strategy should not stand alone. It should link to other over-arching strategies within the local authority such as Council Plans, Local Development Plan and long term investment plans, as well as specific annual business plans and individual project plans. The strategy needs to be woven in to other strategies.

Whilst we have actions and projects within the Council Plan to address carbon reduction and improve sustainability, we do not have an up-to-date over-arching strategy, other than an ambition and requirement for us to meet WG's challenge for the public sector to be carbon neutral by 2030. We have an existing Carbon Reduction Strategy, which was originally produced in 2009, which sought to reduce our carbon output by 60% but this is based purely on energy usage. This strategy will be revised and broadened in its scope to establish a programme of projects to drive the Council's move to carbon neutrality by 2030.

3. Capacity

Significant change will not happen in any organisation without adequate capacity. That can take many forms – enough political will to perpetuate an approach; the human resource to spend time carrying out the necessary work; the skills and knowledge to imagine and manage projects; the financial resource to invest when necessary; the understanding to realise the benefits of long term commitment and planning.

Currently the climate change response is being led by the Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) with assistance from our Energy Conservation Engineer and her colleagues. Colleagues within Streetscene and Transportation are also leading a number of projects within the Green Theme of the Council Plan.

It is becoming clear that if we are to actively respond to the climate change challenge, the Authority needs to invest in staff capacity to develop our strategy and manage a programme of projects to lead us to carbon neutrality by 2030. A business case will be prepared for this specific staffing resource to lead the delivery of our Carbon Reduction Strategy.

4. Action Plan and Projects

Strategies and targets can only be achieved through projects and they require planning. Action plans need projects so drawing one up should help generate ideas

within our portfolios. Any action plan should be split into short (the first 100 days), medium and long term. Some projects may not be technically possible yet but may be achievable over a long timescale. A timescale for projects helps to clarify priorities and the resources to be allocated. Input to plans and the responsibility to carry them out needs to come from all in the organisation. Monitoring, reporting and reviewing them may be the job of an individual but objectives, such as climate emergency targets, will not be met without the support of all officers and councillors.

The action plan and additional projects will flow from the revised Carbon Reduction (Neutrality) Strategy. Some projects are already being progressed as outlined below, but short, medium and long term action plans will be produced.

5. Targets and data

Whilst an informed strategy and action plan are key to addressing the carbon neutrality challenge, finding the data to make them informed is much more difficult. Setting a target date for carbon neutrality and then producing up a plan to meet that date, is one approach. Another is to analyse the relevant data and establish when carbon neutrality can be achieved. Both methods have benefits. The point is that data is a vital ingredient when setting and monitoring targets.

We currently have a wealth of data available and this will inform the state of play analysis to be undertaken by the end of Q4 2019/20 which the Council Plan requires. Given the extent of the data which we collect, when produced, our revised Strategy and Action Plan will be well informed and deliverable.

6. Finance and risk

In times of austerity, it is even more important to justify how spending decisions are made. Many councils have declared climate emergencies and it seems natural that any emergency deserves money being spent on it. However, others would argue that local authorities have many emergencies so the skill is in the prioritisation. This will come down to how seriously a council considers its responsibilities in the realm of sustainability. The risk of allocating financial resources to one emergency or priority over another requires skill, time and a tried and trusted method.

The Green Council theme projects have been undertaken within the existing workloads of the portfolios. Where a Business Case for investment has been established, the Council has historically made the necessary capital investment e.g. solar farms, PV on schools. The Academi session which took place with senior managers on November 6th 2019 generated a series of potential projects which need to be reviewed for further appropriate investment.

7. Partnership and collaboration

A local authority's activities will make a contribution to their locality's carbon emissions, but it may only 2 or 3% of all the emissions within the area. Other businesses, employers, academic institutions, public services and citizens make up the rest and we should engage with them to make sure they understand, accept and work towards reducing their emissions. The local authority has a responsibility to support others to improve their actions but it cannot be held responsible for them. This split needs to be made clear.

We have begun initial discussions with Denbighshire and Wrexham Councils in relation to procurement, potential investment opportunities and the sharing of knowledge and skills. The Public Services Board is taking a regional approach to carbon reduction, led by Natural Resources and Flintshire is fully engaged with this work. We need to seek regional support amongst other public sector authorities for decarbonisation activities that are cross cutting and cross boundary or would benefit from economies of scale. We need to conclude which projects we can take forward with these partners and how we will resource them.

8. Suppliers and procurement

Those who supply local authorities have a duty to supply sustainably and local authorities have a duty to inform them about their sustainability requirements. There is a need to work closely together and to identify clearly what is and is not acceptable. A local authority cannot have a climate related target whilst ignoring the activities of its suppliers. The impact of our choice of supplier through the procurement can have a significant impact on a public body's carbon footprint (estimated in the region of 50%).

The Council has taken steps to revise our Procurement strategy in relation to improving the environmental, societal and ethical impacts.

9. Education and culture change

Everybody needs to be brought up to speed with the sustainability agenda and about how our actions as individuals and organisations impact on the natural environment and how it will impact on us. That means making a definite effort to put in place materials and resources that will educate us so that our citizens and workforce are informed enough to make the changes we need to, in order to change our behaviour.

Whilst we have begun work with staff at Academi level, the interaction with the workforce and the public has been limited to date. The new educational curriculum addresses sustainability and that will increase interest, expectation and desire to support carbon reduction initiatives. We will produce a Communications Plan for the Carbon Reduction project to make our citizens aware of the work undertaken so far and to seek their support for our future proposals.

10. Innovation

Some of the technologies associated with reducing carbon emissions, and with renewable energy generation and energy efficiency specifically, are developing at a rapid rate. This can mean that local authorities may wish to invest in technology that they have never used before, deliver services and collaborate in ways they haven't done before and work with suppliers in new ways. Without innovation we may not move forward so there is a responsibility on us all to accept our share of innovation and make sure we manage it successfully.

Historically, the Council has been innovative in terms of our investments: e.g. solar farms in Buckley, replacing street light bulbs with LEDs, placing solar PV on schools. The Council Plan has identified further innovative actions and the recent Academi session produced a significant number of other initiatives. These need further exploration and Business Cases produced for those which we want to progress.

11. Review and Inform

The dynamic nature of this agenda means that reviewing strategies and action plans is vital. New technologies and models are emerging continually and can make a significant contribution to meeting targets, so regularly revisiting our approach is good practice. Equally, keeping those within the Council, partners, suppliers and others informed of progress and opportunities is a role for the Council.

We will review the original Carbon Reduction Strategy and have a governance structure in place to monitor the success of the Carbon Reduction programme and individual projects.

12. Behaviour change

This is the most difficult aspect of the climate change agenda to achieve and will take the longest. Of course different people will have different views about what behaviour change means but it involves supporting people to change their eating habits, travelling habits, buying habits and some of their most fundamental routines. It will take generations and governmental intervention to fully see these types of changes. However, making smaller changes to the suppliers the Council uses, how staff, councillors and citizens are engaged in the sustainability agenda and simply ensuring this agenda remains at the forefront of people's minds, are changes which will impact on behaviour and can be made over shorter timescales.

The work that we have done so far

As a Council we have not stood still and have recognised and reacted to the challenge of climate within our Council Plan – Green Council theme and committed to the following actions for 2019/20:

4.1.1.1 (CP) Establishment of an officer group by quarter three to lead on the Council's commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030

4.1.1.2 (CP) Completion of a 'state of play analysis' of current Council activities on carbon reduction underpinned by the mapping of existing activity data

4.1.1.3 (CP) Completion of a greenhouse gas inventory covering scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions and greenhouse gas sequestration across the Council's land assets

4.1.1.4 (CP) An agreed plan to design and resource further energy efficiency and sustainable energy schemes such as the ground mounted solar PV schemes in Flint and Connah's Quay

4.1.1.5 (CP) Completing the renewable energy assessment through the Local Development Plan process in support of the future strategy

4.1.1.6 (CP) Agreement of a strategy for fleet conversion, away from diesel and petrol vehicles, for the medium and longer-term

4.1.1.7 (CP) Developing a local plan to meet the need access to E- charging points across the county network

4.1.1.9 (CP) Approval of the Council's Strategy to act as an enabler rather than a direct provider for electric charging infrastructure

4.1.1.10 (CP) Identification of commercially viable sites for the introduction of appropriate charging infrastructure

4.1.1.11 (CP) The adoption of a strategy to reduce the Council's reliance on single use plastics

Items on this Cabinet agenda show the progress against two of these actions in relation to the development of e-charging points across the County and the development of solar farms in Flint and Connah's Quay.

Decarbonisation

To meet the decarbonisation aim, the Council needs to determine its complete carbon footprint (action 4.1.1.2) to enable actions to be prioritised and ensure efficient and appropriate investment of time and resources.

The steps below detail proposed activities of how the Council can begin its journey to carbon neutrality. These are short term actions that could be completed in the next 1-2 years if resourced adequately.

Review the current state of play

This should focus on:

- The relevant National and Regional Policy which supports and advocates carbon reduction.
- The Council Plan and other policies/strategies (e.g. tree strategy) including a review of the current Carbon Reduction Strategy.
- The assessment of how carbon reduction/neutrality meets the needs of the Council in achieving its long term ambitions.
- Action that the Council is already taking.
- Assessment of what data is currently collated and gap analysis e.g. energy consumption, tonnes of recyclables collected etc.
- A review of best practice from other organisations such as NRW, other public sector organisations, universities, third sector such as the National Trust.
- An assessment of opportunities for collaboration and partnership working.
- A review of resource and capacity requirements and whether this is internal or external resource. For example NRW had a team of 3 officers who solely focused on the Carbon Positive project and were funded by Welsh Government.
- Partnership working with other public sector organisations/Welsh Government Energy Service may facilitate cost and resource savings. E.g. modelling carbon sequestration is likely to require external consultancy support however the modelling inputs/outputs will be fairly standard across other local authorities.

The findings of the state of play analysis will be reported to the Climate Change Strategy Board to inform the revised Carbon Reduction Strategy.

Current Decarbonisation Activities

The following activities relate to projects and programmes which are or could specifically reduce the Council's carbon footprint.

Energy Efficiency

Energy efficiency measures include the installation of new lighting, new boilers, fuel switching, insulation, heating controls, draught proofing etc. The Energy Unit and Property Maintenance have been installing energy efficiency technologies since 2008 and have a rolling programme of upgrades. These are funded through capital (those projects managed by Property Maintenance) or invest to save/income (those projects managed by the Energy Unit) budgets. Many of the low cost measures have been achieved so to continue to save energy, money and carbon higher cost measures will need to be installed such as switching oil and LPG heating systems to more carbon neutral fuels, whole building lighting upgrades to LED etc.

Energy efficiency is a core component of new buildings constructed by the Council in line with funding requirements and building regulations.

Renewable Energy

Building mounted renewable energy systems have been installed by the Energy Unit on non-domestic buildings since the beginning of the feed in tariff scheme in 2010. Technologies installed have primarily been solar PV, small wind turbines, solar thermal and biomass boilers.

Renewable energy systems are included in new buildings where funding/budget allows.

Biodiversity

Under the Tree and Urban Woodland Plan Flintshire County Council has committed to an increase in urban canopy cover from 14.5 to 18% by 2033. To achieve this, strategic tree planting will be planned, working with communities and delivered by the natural environment team, each winter planting season. We are also committed to trialing new methods of grassland management, reducing the management of selected areas of amenity grass, which can receive up to 13 cuts per year and managing more areas for wildflowers. This will support both de-carbonisation and the creation of resilient ecosystems. Flintshire County Council actively manage woodland estate in our ownership to ensure long term ecosystem resilience which supports carbon sequestration.

Waste and Recycling

There is significant ongoing promotion of recycling in line with Welsh Government targets. The Council only offers trade waste collections to its own buildings, and therefore has excellent data on tonnage collected and end destination. Very little of the Council's residual waste currently goes to landfill and it will now go to Parc Adfer Energy from Waste plant.

	<p>Transport</p> <p>The Council only owns around 10% of its fleet vehicles. The remaining 90% are provided by Go Plant which the Council fuels and maintains and can install telematics. The majority of vehicles have recently been replaced to meet the Euro 6 requirement. The current contract with Go Plant ends in 2023 and there is limited scope to vary the current contract to include electric vehicles. The Council has limited control over what vehicles Go Plant supply. There may be an opportunity to update the new contract to include electric vehicles. Alternatively, the Council could buy these outright and claim the savings in running costs.</p> <p>Broader decarbonisation activities</p> <p>There are a number of activities at the wider regional and County level that are delivering carbon reduction. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional energy planning and the North Wales Growth Deal seeks to deliver investment in energy infrastructure linked to demand for electricity and heat. The Smart Access to Energy work stream of the Growth Deal also seeks to establish a regional energy supplier/energy developer. • Promotion of active travel and development of active travel routes (dependent on funding). • Large scale renewable energy developments on Council owned land. • The sustained increase in recycling and reduction in waste to landfill, driven by Welsh Government targets. • Council housing energy efficiency improvements and gas infill schemes as part of the delivery of Warm Homes/Nest and ECO funding.
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	<p>Financial resource implications</p> <p>Capital: Business cases will be developed as appropriate to support investment in decarbonisation and / or carbon sequestration activities. Revenue: None immediately. The business cases referred to above will also identify revenue implications.</p>
2.02	<p>Human Resources: There is a recognition that project management support will be necessary to drive our move towards carbon neutrality.</p>

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	<p>The Academi session with senior County Council officers on 6th November identified carbon reduction work undertaken so far, potential future projects and partners who we need to work with to deliver those projects.</p> <p>We need to work with the wider County Councillor group to undertake a similar exercise and embed the move to carbon neutrality in their thinking and actions.</p>

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT							
4.01	<p>There will be significant reputational risk if the County Council is not seen to take a leadership role in moving towards carbon neutrality.</p> <p>Financial risk will be assessed on a project by project basis.</p>							
4.02	<p>Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="320 456 1385 2029"> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 456 746 1043">Long-term</td> <td data-bbox="746 456 1385 1043"> <p>Positive: Decarbonising the Council’s activities and services will require long term planning and a long term vision to ensure systems and services are fit for purpose as the climate changes as well as reducing the impact of harmful climate change through mitigation. A number of decarbonisation activities such as planting trees and developing renewable energy will have long lasting impacts over 30-100 years. It also contributes to the climate change targets set by Welsh Government particularly Wales generating 70 per cent of its electricity consumption from renewable energy by 2030 and reducing carbon emissions by 95% by 2050.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1043 746 1559">Prevention</td> <td data-bbox="746 1043 1385 1559"> <p>Positive: Reducing the Council’s carbon emissions and increasing the amount sequestered in its land assets is vital if harmful climate change and temperature rise is to be avoided. Carbon/greenhouse gas emissions caused by human activities are the main cause of climate change. Mitigating climate change will help to reduce impacts such as extreme weather leading to flooding/deaths from extreme heat, increased pests and diseases etc and will in turn possibly reduce the expected costs of adapting to a changing climate.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1559 746 2029">Integration</td> <td data-bbox="746 1559 1385 2029"> <p>Positive: Becoming net carbon zero integrates with the following priorities under the Council Plan; Green Council, Ambitious Council and Supportive Council. It integrates with the public service board objectives in the Environment priority of the Wellbeing Plan as well as the Smart Access to Energy project in the North Wales Growth Deal. It also integrates with the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and the Act's wider goals and Welsh Government's decarbonisation of the public sector agenda.</p> </td> </tr> </table>		Long-term	<p>Positive: Decarbonising the Council’s activities and services will require long term planning and a long term vision to ensure systems and services are fit for purpose as the climate changes as well as reducing the impact of harmful climate change through mitigation. A number of decarbonisation activities such as planting trees and developing renewable energy will have long lasting impacts over 30-100 years. It also contributes to the climate change targets set by Welsh Government particularly Wales generating 70 per cent of its electricity consumption from renewable energy by 2030 and reducing carbon emissions by 95% by 2050.</p>	Prevention	<p>Positive: Reducing the Council’s carbon emissions and increasing the amount sequestered in its land assets is vital if harmful climate change and temperature rise is to be avoided. Carbon/greenhouse gas emissions caused by human activities are the main cause of climate change. Mitigating climate change will help to reduce impacts such as extreme weather leading to flooding/deaths from extreme heat, increased pests and diseases etc and will in turn possibly reduce the expected costs of adapting to a changing climate.</p>	Integration	<p>Positive: Becoming net carbon zero integrates with the following priorities under the Council Plan; Green Council, Ambitious Council and Supportive Council. It integrates with the public service board objectives in the Environment priority of the Wellbeing Plan as well as the Smart Access to Energy project in the North Wales Growth Deal. It also integrates with the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and the Act's wider goals and Welsh Government's decarbonisation of the public sector agenda.</p>
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Collaboration	<p>Positive: Decarbonisation is a cross cutting agenda and will require internal cross departmental collaboration at all levels. Collaboration with the following groups is needed to ensure decarbonisation is integrated into everything that the Council and the wider region does and plans for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Welsh Government -Other public sector organisations such as local authorities, NRW, health boards, universities. -Private sector -Regional groups such as the Economic Ambition Board -Local Town and County Councillors -the local communities
Involvement	<p>Positive: If decarbonisation is to succeed and harmful climate change is to be avoided then everyone at a professional and personal level will need to be involved</p>
Well-being Goals Impact	
Prosperous Wales	<p>Positive: Reducing the Council's carbon emissions should enable strategic investment in projects and ways of working that could deliver savings or generate new income streams, therefore supporting delivery of local services. It should also facilitate the development of the low carbon economy through infrastructure projects, sustained tree planting, land management etc which can support local businesses and communities.</p>
Resilient Wales	<p>Positive: Decarbonisation of the Council's activities and services will promote resilience through actions such as investment in renewable energy infrastructure which helps to reduce reliance on imports from across Europe and the World and the associated price fluctuations and increasing ecological resilience through enhancing biodiversity particularly on land with low ecological value. By planning for long term change and future trends the Council's services will also be resilient.</p>

	Healthier Wales	Positive: Decarbonisation will require a shift to active travel, investment in green infrastructure and renewable energy developments which are likely to promote healthier lifestyles, improved wellbeing and reduced health impacts from poor air quality.
	More equal Wales	Neutral; No impact identified
	Cohesive Wales	Neutral; No impact identified
	Vibrant Wales	Neutral; No impact identified
	Globally responsible Wales	Positive: Reducing the Council's carbon emissions to net zero helps to mitigate climate change and therefore contributes to the achievement of Welsh Government, UK Government and international climate goals.
4.03	There are not expected to be negative anti-poverty, equalities or environmental impacts of the scheme.	
4.05	<p>The Council's Well-being Objectives</p> <p>Decarbonisation of the Council's activities will support the Green Council objective with a key impact of reducing carbon emissions mitigating climate change, for example, through the development of alternative and renewable energy production, promoting active travel, shifting to electric fleet vehicles, engaging with the supply chain and promoting a low carbon economy through the goods and services purchased.</p> <p>It can also contribute towards the success of other Council Wellbeing objectives such as 'An Ambitious Council' and 'A Caring Council' through providing local job creation and apprenticeships and therefore potentially reducing poverty through maximising residents' income and employability.</p>	

5.00	APPENDICES
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prosperity for all – a low carbon Wales https://gov.wales/prosperity-all-low-carbon-wales 2. Initiatives which the Council have undertaken or are planning to undertake to move to carbon neutrality

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>Contact Officer: Andrew Farrow – Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) Telephone: 01352 703201 E-mail: andrew.farrow@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	<p>Carbon emissions: Used interchangeably with greenhouse gas emissions; meaning emissions of carbon dioxide, methane etc from human and natural activities and sources.</p> <p>Carbon Sequestration: the process involved in carbon capture and the long term storage of atmospheric carbon dioxide.</p> <p>Decarbonisation: Reducing and ultimately eliminating carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>Direct Emissions: Greenhouse gas emissions that are from sources that are owned or controlled by an organization. E.g. emissions from burning gas in a boiler.</p> <p>Emission Sinks: A natural or manmade reservoir that stores greenhouse gas emissions over time. E.g. trees, peat bogs, soils, water.</p> <p>EPC: Energy Performance Certificate which provides details on the energy performance of a building based on its construction and installed equipment and provides information on how the performance can be improved.</p> <p>Greenhouse gas emissions: Carbon Dioxide, Methane, Water Vapour, Nitrous Oxide, Per/Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), Sulphur Hexafluoride.</p> <p>Indirect Emissions: Greenhouse gas emissions that are a consequence of the activities of the organization but occur at sources owned or controlled by another organisations. E.g. electricity used in a building, the emissions occur at the power station which is owned by another company.</p> <p>Net Carbon Zero: Balancing carbon emissions with carbon removal or simply eliminating carbon emissions altogether.</p> <p>Scope 1/2/3: Classification of different greenhouse gas emissions as defined in the greenhouse gas protocol. Scope 1 refers to direct GHG emissions, scope 2; indirect emissions from electricity and scope 3; all other indirect emissions from an organisation's activities.</p>

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COUNCIL STATEMENT ON OUR RESPONSE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Flintshire County Council has a longstanding commitment to protecting the environment. We have had action plans in place for some years to reduce our own 'carbon footprint' as part of this commitment.

As part of the international campaign to do more if we are to slow climate change, and in support of the Welsh Government challenge for the public sector to be carbon neutral by 2030, we are reviewing our plans with some urgency.

In stepping up our plans to become a carbon neutral Council we plan to do the following in 2020:-

- We will be developing our third and fourth local solar parks.
- We will be looking to build a new waste transfer station in Buckley powered by renewable energy to further increase our recycling rates and divert more material away from landfill;
- We will continue to ensure our fleet of vehicles are "green".;
- We will continue the installation of a network of charging points for electric vehicles across the County;
- We continue to invest in energy efficiency measures across all of the Council's buildings;
- We will calculate our complete carbon footprint to enable prioritisation of short, medium and long term actions to reduce it further;
- Working with Welsh Government and Transport For Wales, we will develop multi modal transport solutions of railway, bus and cycle ways, along with Park and Ride facilities;
- We will implement our 15 year Urban and Woodland tree strategy to increase tree cover across the County by 4% by 2033.

Flintshire is in a good position to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. We ask for the support of the public to help us achieve our aims.

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