

Public Document Pack

Gareth Owens LL.B Barrister/Bargyfreithiwr
Chief Officer (Governance)
Prif Swyddog (Llywodraethu)



Contact Officer:
Nicola Gittins 01352 702345
nicola.gittins@flintshire.gov.uk

To: Cllr Ian Roberts (Leader)

Councillors: Glyn Banks, Chris Bithell, Derek Butler, Dave Hughes, Christine Jones, Billy Mullin and Carolyn Thomas

14 April 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

NOTICE OF REMOTE MEETING
CABINET
TUESDAY, 20TH APRIL, 2021 at 10.00 AM

*** This agenda is subject to restrictions on content due to the Election Period which runs from Monday 22 March to Sunday 9 May 2021.**

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert Robins'.

Robert Robins
Democratic Services Manager

Please note: This will be a remote meeting and 'attendance' will be restricted to Committee Members and those Members of Council who have asked the Head of Democratic Services for an invitation. Such attendees may only speak at the Chair's discretion.

The meeting will be live streamed onto the Council's website. A recording of the meeting will also be available, shortly after the meeting at <https://flintshire-public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact a member of the Democratic Services Team on 01352 702345.

A G E N D A

1 **APOLOGIES**

Purpose: To receive any apologies.

2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Purpose: To receive any declarations and advise Members accordingly.

3 **MINUTES** (Pages 7 - 16)

Purpose: To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 16th March 2021.

TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING REPORTS

OPERATIONAL REPORTS

4 **REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2020/21 (MONTH 11)** (Pages 17 - 50)

Report of Corporate Finance Manager - Cabinet Member for Finance

Purpose: This regular monthly report provides the latest revenue budget monitoring position for 2020/21 for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account. The position is based on actual income and expenditure as at Month 11, and projects forward to year-end.

5 **EDUCATION & YOUTH SELF EVALUATION REPORT 2020/2021** (Pages 51 - 114)

Report of Chief Officer (Education and Youth) - Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education

Purpose: To provide details of the Portfolio's review and evaluation of services during 2020/2021.

6 **TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION – PROPERTY INTERVENTION** (Pages 115 - 120)

Report of Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) - Cabinet Member for Economic Development

Purpose: To consider the role the Council could play in helping towns to adapt to a changing economic situation through direct intervention in acquiring, redeveloping or managing properties.

7 **EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS** (Pages 121 - 122)

Purpose: To provide details of actions taken under delegated powers.

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

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

The following item is considered to be exempt by virtue of Paragraph(s) 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

The report contains details of proposed contracts, and the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in releasing it, until such time as the contracts have been awarded.

8 **GRAPHIC DESIGN AND PRINT FRAMEWORK** (Pages 141 - 154)

Report of Chief Executive - Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets

Purpose: To seek approval for a new Dynamic Purchasing System framework.

The following item is considered to be exempt by virtue of Paragraph(s) 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

The public interest in withholding the information outweighs the interest in disclosing the information until such time as the commercial arrangements have been finalised.

9 **APPROVAL OF COSTS FOR NEW HOUSING SCHEME AT DUKE STREET, FLINT** (Pages 155 - 168)

Report of Chief Officer (Housing and Assets) - Cabinet Member for Housing

Purpose: To approve the development of two new Social Rent homes at Duke Street Flint.

Please note that there may be a 10 minute adjournment of this meeting if it lasts longer than two hours

Procedural Note on the conduct of meetings

The Chair will open the meeting and introduce themselves.

The meeting will be attended by a number of Councillors. Officers will also be in attendance to present reports, with Democratic Services officers acting as hosts of the meeting.

All attendees are asked to ensure their mobile phones are switched off and that any background noise is kept to a minimum.

All microphones are to be kept muted during the meeting and should only be unmuted when invited to speak by the Chair. When invitees have finished speaking they should go back on mute.

To indicate to speak, Councillors will use the chat facility or use the electronic raise hand function. The chat function may also be used for questions, relevant comments and officer advice and updates.

The Chair will call the speakers, with elected Members addressed as 'Councillor' and officers addressed by their job title e.g. Chief Executive' or name. From time to time, the officer advising the Chair will explain procedural points or suggest alternative wording for proposals, to assist the Committee.

If and when a vote is taken, the Chair will explain that only those who oppose the proposal(s), or who wish to abstain will need to indicate, using the chat function. The officer advising the Chair will indicate whether the proposals are carried.

If a more formal vote is needed, this will be by roll call – where each Councillor will be asked in turn (alphabetically) how s/he wishes to vote

At County Council and Planning Committee meetings speaker's times are limited. A bell will be sounded to alert that the speaker has one minute remaining

The meeting will be live streamed onto the Council's website. A recording of the meeting will also be available, shortly after the meeting at <https://flintshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

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CABINET
16TH MARCH 2021

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet of Flintshire County Council held virtually via Webex on Tuesday 16th March 2021.

PRESENT: Councillor Ian Roberts (Chair)

Councillors: Glyn Banks, Chris Bithell, Derek Butler, Dave Hughes, Christine Jones, Billy Mullin and Carolyn Thomas.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Executive, Chief Officer (Governance), Chief Officer (Housing and Assets), Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation), Chief Officer (Education and Youth), Strategic Finance Manager and Team Leader – Democratic Services.

OTHER MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillors: Ian Dunbar and Patrick Heesom.

105. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

106. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 16th February 2021 were submitted and confirmed as a correct.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record.

107. FOOD POVERTY

Councillor Mullin introduced the report and explained that since the summer of 2018 the Council had been tackling food poverty and food insecurities in Flintshire. The food poverty strategy had been adopted by the Public Service Board with Flintshire being the regional lead.

Significant challenges had been raised over the last year, however rather than constrain progress, opportunities had been created and had enabled some of the future ambitions for delivery and business transformation to be brought forward.

The Chief Officer (Housing and Assets) explained that full details of the following work undertaken were outlined in the report:

- School Holiday Support;
- Slow Cooker Programme;
- Free School Meals – Alternative Delivery;
- Shielding and Vulnerable Residents Food Support – 14th April 2020 – 16th August 2020;

- Shielding and Vulnerable Residents Food Support – 17th August 2020 – 22nd September 2020;
- Well-fed Food Box at a Reduced Cost – 23rd September 2020 – 3rd November 2020;
- Christmas Food Boxes;
- Self-isolating and Shielding Residents;
- Work Plan – Research;
- Well-fed at Home: Meal Box Scheme – Reimagining ‘Meals on Wheels’;
- Good Food Hubs – Emergency Food Support;
- Hospital to Home – Well-fed Safety Box;

Details were also provided on the following future projects:

- Opening a Shop;
- Slow Cooker Pilots – Reimagined;
- Free Fruit for High Schools;
- Conference;
- Community Capacity Building; and
- “A Right to Good Food”;

On “A Right to Good Food”, the Chief Officer explained the research that had been undertaken had considered how communities could best be protected and how the diet and wellbeing of residents could be supported in the longer term. He added the right to food was not about charity, but about ensuring that all people had the capacity to feed themselves with dignity.

He commented on the considerable support that had been provided by local volunteer groups which had had a major impact on local communities which in turn had brought people together.

All Members welcomed the report and the work that was being undertaken to tackle food poverty which demonstrated that Flintshire was a caring Council. Also welcomed was the focus on home cooking and nutritious food cooked from fresh. They also extended their thanks to the many volunteer groups across the County in providing support in their local communities.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the progress made to tackling food poverty and food insecurity in Flintshire be welcomed and noted;
- (b) That the ongoing work and the delivery plan for the next 12 months be supported; and
- (c) That the development of a “Right to Food” policy for Flintshire be supported.

108. DELIVERY OF ASPECTS OF THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME THROUGH A MEASURED TERM CONTRACT

Councillor Mullin introduced the report which proposed a procurement process that would deliver a programme of projects (circa £1m per year) e.g. Disability Discrimination Act work, Fire Risk Assessment works, School building works, Corporate property works, on time, on budget and to a high standard.

The proposed Joint Contracts Tribunal (JCT) Measured Term Contract (MTC) was planned to commence in September 2021 and expire in September 2025 with an anticipated spend of £4m over that period. The individual works would range from £10k to £300k.

The Chief Officer (Housing and Assets) explained that since 2010 the Property Maintenance and Design Consultancy Team had used a JCT MTS contract tendered on a Quality / Price basis with a partnering / collaboration ethos in order to deliver work. Part of the quality submission included Community Benefits e.g. local small and medium sized enterprises, local supply clauses and local spend. To date, that procurement process had delivered circa £14m of projects on time, on budget and to a high standard.

The MTC was an Industry Standard Form of Contract specifically for use in delivering multiple projects efficiently, ensuring time and cost constraints were achieved. If approved, it would be tendered on Sell2Wales in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules.

RESOLVED:

That the procurement method be supported and approved, noting the requirement was in compliance with Contract Procedure Rules and would support delivery of elements of the Capital Programme 2021/22 to 2023/24.

109. SUSPENSION OF CAR PARKING CHARGES

Councillor Thomas introduced the report which provided information on the proposal to further extend the suspension of car parking charges until 30th June 2021, and provided details of the financial impact of that proposal. The extension would support the re-opening of town centres once lockdown restrictions were removed, and support town centre regeneration efforts such as those undertaken in June 2020.

The report also sought support to explore alternative methods of contactless payment for car parking charges once charging was reintroduced.

Members welcomed the report which they felt would help to support local business recovery.

The Chief Executive explained the rationale of the second recommendation on the possibility of extending the period, as it was not yet known when lockdown would ease. Welsh Government (WG) had confirmed that the Council could apply for lost

income for Quarters 1-2 of 2021/22 with no confirmed funding availability for Quarters 3-4.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the suspension of car parking charges in Flintshire's town centre car parks until 30th June 2021 be approved;
- (b) That delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive, after discussions with the Deputy Leader and portfolio holder, to further extend the car parking charge suspension arrangement until 30th September 2021, if the circumstances in place at the time support such a move; and
- (c) That a review of alternative methods of payment for parking charges such as contactless payment or pay by phone be supported.

110. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2020/21 (MONTH 10)

Councillor Banks introduced the report which provided the latest detailed revenue budget monitoring position for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account for the financial year, and presented the position based on actual income and expenditure, as at Month 10. The report projected how the budget would stand at the close of the financial year if all things remained largely unchanged. It also took into account the latest position on Welsh Government (WG) Emergency Grant Funding announcements.

The projected year end position, without new actions to reduce cost pressures and/or improve the financial return on efficiency planning and cost control was:

Council Fund

- An operating surplus of £0.924m (excluding the impact of the pay award which would be met by reserves), which was a favourable movement of £0.552m from the surplus figure of £0.372m reported at Month 9.
- The operating surplus of £0.924m equated to 0.3% of the Approved Budget, which was within the target Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Key Performance Indicator (KPI) for a variance against budget of 0.5%.
- A projected contingency reserve balance as at 31st March 2021 of £2.339m.

The improved position had predominantly arisen from a detailed review of the risks included within the Streetscene and Transportation portfolio as a consequence of the pandemic in conjunction with confirmation of further funding from the WG Hardship Fund.

Housing Revenue Account

- Net in-year revenue expenditure forecast to be £1.642m lower than budget.
- A projected closing balance as at 31st March 2021 of £3.815m.

The Strategic Finance Manager provided details on the projected position, the projected position by portfolio, significant movements from Month 9, open risks, new emerging risks, achievements of planned in-year efficiencies, carry forward requests and reserves and balances.

Section 1.05 of the report detailed the main grant announcements at the time of writing. On the funding for the Unachieved Savings and Digital Transformation, £1.181m had now been received for each of those allocations. As that funding was unhypothecated, that would bolster the Council's reserves by £2.362m which was positive news and would provide an additional safeguard for the risks that would be faced in 2021/22.

The report had been considered at Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee the previous week where further information was requested on the expected contribution from Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board towards jointly funded care packages being less than originally expected.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the overall report and the projected Council Fund contingency sum as at 31st March 2021 be noted;
- (b) That the projected final level of balances on the Housing Revenue Account be noted; and
- (c) That the carry forward requests be approved.

111. COMMENCEMENT OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

Councillor Mullin introduced the report and explained that the Socio-economic Duty in Wales would come into force on 31st March 2021. The duty placed a legal responsibility on listed public bodies, when taking strategic decisions, to have due regard to the need to reduce the inequalities of outcome that resulted from socio-economic disadvantage.

The final list of relevant public bodies would be published in the Regulations and statutory guidance.

The Chief Executive explained that the report outlined the actions being taken to prepare for the new duty, which would be a key mechanism for supporting the most vulnerable in society.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the requirements of the Socio-economic Duty be noted;
- (b) That Cabinet be assured of the preparedness in meeting the new duty; and

- (c) That the report be shared with all Overview and Scrutiny Committees to ensure they are familiar with the requirements of the legislation.

112. PERFORMANCE OF THE WELSH HOUSING QUALITY STANDARD (WHQS) CAPITAL PROGRAMME – ASSURANCE REPORT

Councillor Hughes introduced the report which provided an update on the delivery of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) the Council was delivering through its Capital Investment Programme, and focussed on the achievements to date.

The work undertaken through the WHQS had transformed the Council's Housing stock and delivered substantial improvements to the quality of tenants housing both internally and externally.

Financial investment had been significant year on year since the start of the programme and from April 2021 a further investment of £21m would be made, with an additional £14m being committed to the new build programme. Over the life of the programme contractors engaged in the WHQS would have created training or job opportunities for 57 apprentices which was a significant achievement.

Throughout the WHQS programme customer satisfaction levels had been consistently high with the most recent satisfaction rating outcome at 96% and reflected the hard work the team had put into the programme.

Whilst there had been particular challenges and disruption this financial year due to the pandemic, the Council had continued to deliver the work. WG had noted those particular challenges and confirmed their agreement to extend the programme by a further year which would enable concentration on external areas and envelope work.

The Chief Officer (Housing and Assets) added that the next challenge would be to decarbonise the housing stock, making them as energy efficient and low carbon as possible.

Members thanked all of the team involved, including WG who had stopped the sale of Council houses which meant Councils could retain their stock and manage housing issues effectively.

Members also said the positive information contained within the report demonstrated that the decision of tenants in the housing ballot in 2012 for the Council to retain the housing stock had been the right one.

RESOLVED:

That the progress made in delivering the Welsh Housing Quality Standard programme be noted, and the Capital Investment Programme be supported in its final year.

113. SCHOOL MODERNISATION

Councillor Roberts introduced the report which provided an update on progress on the Welsh Government's (WG) 21st Century Schools Capital Investment programme, Band B.

In order that progress was made through the programme, the report sought Cabinet approval to procure a contractor (or contractors) through the North Wales Construction Partnership to proceed with proposed projects at Ysgol Croes Atti, Y Fflint and Drury County Primary school. Both projects were noted in the Council's Strategic Outline Plan (SOP) submitted to WG for the Band B Investment Programme.

Members welcomed the report which was a significant step forward for the Council in building a Welsh primary school.

RESOLVED:

That the commissioning of a contractor or contractors to enter into a two stage design and build contract for proposed projects at Ysgol Croes Atti, Y Fflint and Drury Council Primary school be approved.

114. SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2022/23

Councillor Roberts introduced the report which provided details on the outcome of the statutory consultation exercise on the admission arrangements for September 2022.

The consultation process took place between 11th December 2020 and 29th January 2021 and no comments were received. There were no changes proposed to the admission arrangements. The proposed admissions timetable had been drawn up in consultation with neighbouring authorities and took into account factors such as allowing parents sufficient time to visit schools and express their preferences and the time needed to process applications. The timetable also incorporated the "common offer dates" prescribed by the School Admissions Code.

As part of the consultation, Headteachers were asked if there had been any changes to the accommodation at their schools which could necessitate a review of their Admission Number. No requests had been received and therefore there were no changes proposed to any Admission Numbers for 2022/23.

Councillor Roberts urged parents and carers to ensure that their application forms were submitted by the deadline, adding that 96% of school children were given their first choice of school. The Chief Officer (Education and Youth) explained that schools assisted parents and carers in that process with providing them with details of approaching deadlines. Support was also offered for help to complete any forms if required. In response to a question, the Chief Officer explained that the admissions policy made the school transport policy and eligibility criteria clear which parents and carers had to acknowledge before the form could be submitted.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed admission arrangements for 2022/23 be approved.

115. EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS

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

Housing and Assets

- **Council Rent – Application to Write off Tenancy Arrears**

Financial Procedure Rules (section 5.2) stipulates that individual bad and irrecoverable debts in excess of £5,000 are considered for write off in conjunction with the relevant Cabinet Members.

The decision to write off is in respect of one tenant who is subject to a Debt Relief Order (DRO). Rent Arrears of £6,500 are included in the DRO which are now irrecoverable as a result of the award of the DRO.

- **Community Asset Transfer – Pentre Halkyn Playing Field, Pentre Halkyn Football Ground and Premises, Uwch Y Mor, Pentre Halkyn, Flintshire**

The transfer of Pentre Halkyn playing field, Pentre Halkyn football ground and premises.

Education and Youth

- **Local Authority Appointed School Governors**

Appointment of Local Authority Governor(s) representatives on school governing bodies in accordance with The Government of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2005.

Streetscene and Transportation

- **School Meal Price Increase**

Increase the price of meals within schools to continue to provide a quality service whilst bringing them more into line with other school meal providers across Wales.

- **Ffordd Llewelyn, Ffordd Glyndwr, Maes Alaw, Albert Avenue, Coed Onn Road, and Glan Gors, Flint**

To advise Members of the objections received following the advertisement of the proposed Prohibition of Waiting, Prohibition of Waiting At Any Time and Limited Waiting on Ffordd Llewelyn, Ffordd Glyndwr, Maes Alaw, Albert Avenue, Coed Onn Road and Glan Gors, Flint.

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

RESOLVED:

That the press and public be excluded for the remainder of the meeting for the following items by virtue of exempt information under paragraph(s) 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

116. TRANSPORTATION TENDERS

Councillor Thomas introduced the report and explained approximately 200 school transport route tenders were due for renewal in July 2021.

For the reasons outlined in the report it was recommended that the existing school transport contracts be extended for one year to a point in time when contractors would be in a better position to tender for the work.

RESOLVED:

That the revised timetable to extend existing school transport tenders for a period of one year be approved.

117. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

There was one member of the press in attendance.

(The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. and ended at 11.22 a.m.)

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Chair

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CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 20th April, 2021
Report Subject	Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2020/21 (Month 11)
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Finance
Report Author	Corporate Finance Manager
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This monthly report provides the latest detailed revenue budget monitoring position 2020/21 for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account for the financial year and presents the position, based on actual income and expenditure, as at Month 11. This report projects how the budget would stand at the close of the financial year if all things remain unchanged; it also takes into account the latest position on Welsh Government Emergency Grant Funding announcements.

The projected year end position is:

Council Fund

- An operating surplus of £1.912m (excluding the impact of the pay award which has been met by reserves), which is a favourable movement of £0.988m from the surplus figure of £0.924m reported at Month 10.
- The operating surplus of £1.912m equates to 0.67% of the Approved Budget, which is marginally above the target MTFS KPI for a variance against budget of 0.5%.
- A projected contingency reserve balance as at 31st March, 2021 of £5.689m

The improved position has predominantly arisen from the confirmation of further funding from the Welsh Government Hardship Fund for Income Losses incurred during the financial year (£0.665m). In addition, Welsh Government have also adjusted the eligibility criteria for grants within Social Services (Adults and Children's services) which has had a further positive movement on the outturn (£0.258m)

Previous forecasts included potential losses of income totalling £0.665m within the Planning and Environment and Governance Portfolios. This was due to the fact that Welsh Government had only confirmed funding for up to 50% of these losses at that stage. As funding for the full amount has now been confirmed the positive impact on the projected outturn has now been reflected.

Housing Revenue Account

- Net in-year revenue expenditure forecast to be £1.675m lower than budget
- A projected closing un-earmarked balance as at 31st March, 2021 of £3.684m

As reported in previous reports and to assist with mitigating the overall projected overspend the following measures were introduced from Month 5:-

- 1) All non-essential spend be reviewed and challenged with a view to ceasing/delaying where able and
- 2) Further Portfolio Management Team challenge of recruitment to vacancies i.e. ceasing/delaying.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	To note the overall report and the projected Council Fund contingency sum as at 31 st March 2021.
2	To note the projected final level of balances on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).
3	To approve the carry forward requests included in paragraph 1.18.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE MONTH 11 POSITION
1.01	<p>Council Fund Projected Position</p> <p>The projected year end position is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An operating surplus of £1.912m (excluding the impact of the pay award which has been met by reserves)• A projected contingency reserve available balance as at 31 March 2021 of £5.689m. <p>To assist with mitigating a previously reported projected overspend the following measures have been introduced:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) All non-essential spend is being reviewed and challenged with a view to ceasing/delaying where able and2) Introduction of a vacancy management process to consider new recruitment requests <p>The outcome of this work is included in the projected figures within the report.</p>

1.02

Table 1. Projected Position by Portfolio

The table below shows the projected position by portfolio:

Portfolio/ Service Area	Approved Budget	Projected Outturn	In-Year Over / (Under) spend
	£m	£m	£m
Social Services	68.463	68.167	(0.296)
Out of County Placements	11.940	12.737	0.797
Education & Youth	8.790	8.152	(0.638)
Schools	98.709	98.709	0.000
Streetscene & Transportation	30.650	31.039	0.389
Planning & Environment	5.789	5.860	0.071
People & Resources	4.459	4.322	(0.137)
Governance	9.193	8.640	(0.553)
Strategic Programmes	4.943	4.596	(0.347)
Housing & Assets	16.154	15.376	(0.778)
Chief Executive	2.750	2.432	(0.318)
Central & Corporate Finance	24.147	24.044	(0.102)
Total	285.986	284.074	(1.912)

1.03

The reasons for the favourable net movement of £0.988m from the previous month are shown in Appendix 1.

Previous forecasts included potential losses of income totalling £0.665m within the Planning and Environment and Governance Portfolios. This was due to the fact that Welsh Government had only confirmed funding for up to 50% of these losses at that stage. As funding for the full amount has now been confirmed the positive impact on the projected outturn has now been reflected.

The reasons for the overall projected variances are summarised within Appendix 2 showing the detail of all variances over £0.050m and a summary of minor variances for each portfolio.

Within the projected underspend position of £1.912m, there are net COVID-19 related pressures totalling £0.109m which are shown in a separate column in Appendix 2 (cost savings of £0.516m and cost pressures of £0.407m). We continue to look at legitimate funding opportunities from the Welsh Government Hardship Fund which if confirmed will have a positive impact on the overall position.

Significant Movement from Month 10

1.04	<p>Social Services (£0.301m)</p> <p>The majority of the positive movement is due to a change in Welsh Government eligibility criteria for grant funded expenditure and the transfer of Council funded expenditure, mostly staff costs to grant funded services such as Flying Start and Integrated Care Fund (ICF) Grants (£0.258m).</p> <p>A reduction of care package costs within the Residential Care and Disability Services budgets together with an additional Property Income received (£0.082m).</p> <p>This is mitigated by a carry forward request for training costs to fund an increased number of staff to undertake the Social Worker qualifications over the next three years £0.079m.</p> <p>Minor movements across the portfolio each less than £0.025m (£0.040m)</p> <p>Out of County Placements £0.169m</p> <p>The movement is mainly due to a reduction in recoupment costs from other Local Authorities and the impact of new and existing placement changes.</p> <p>Planning, Environment & Economy (£0.255m)</p> <p>The positive movement mainly relates to the confirmation of Welsh Government Hardship Funding for Income losses which have now been agreed and backdated to April 2020 for Planning Fees, Building Control Fees and Land Charges Fees. Minor movements across the portfolio (£0.019m) account for the remainder.</p> <p>Governance (£0.394m)</p> <p>The positive movement relates to the confirmation of Welsh Government Hardship Funding for Income losses for Court Costs and Enforcement fines and Registrars Ceremonies Income.</p> <p>Housing & Assets (£0.060m)</p> <p>The positive movement relates to the reduced usage of utilities (£0.068m) together with the removal of the provision for Bed and Breakfast accommodation for Homelessness (£0.096m), offset by an increase in costs for the Carelink project of £0.035m and shortfall of fee income recovered by the Design Services of £0.070m.</p> <p>Central and Corporate Finance (£0.078m)</p> <p>The positive movement follows a revised projection on Employer Pension Fund contributions, updated information on Support Service Recharges and a minor increase in the one off benefit of Matrix Agency rebates received.</p>
1.05	<p>Key Financial Risks – Council Tax Income and Council Tax Reduction Scheme</p> <p>There have been significant impacts on Council Tax income and the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.</p>

	<p>The potential financial impact of these two areas is being reported separately due to 1) the difficulties in predicting the impacts of these risks and 2) the potential for these areas to be further supported by additional Welsh Government funding.</p> <p>An update on the latest position on each area is detailed below.</p>
1.06	<p>Council Tax Income</p> <p>As with all Councils the pandemic has significantly impacted on council tax collection. At this stage council tax income is 1.0% below target which equates to £1.0m. Income is recovering slower than anticipated, but is expected to recover over time now that recovery processes have resumed in full and when agreed payment deferrals are settled. Welsh Government have provided financial support of £22.6m across Wales as a contribution towards these potential losses. As a result of this, the Council has received an additional £1.051m from the Welsh Government COVID Hardship Fund Council Tax Collection which has been set aside in a provision to safeguard against potential future bad debts arising from the current shortfall.</p>
1.07	<p>Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS)</p> <p>During the early stages of the pandemic there was a significant increase in demand with additional costs of £0.294m identified. Welsh Government have recently confirmed funding is available to meet the additional costs in full which closes the risk for the current financial year.</p>
1.08	<p>OPEN RISKS</p> <p>Members were made aware when setting the budget that there were a number of open risks that would need to be kept under close review. An update on these is provided below.</p>
1.09	<p>Pay Award</p> <p>The Teachers Pay Award which is effective from September 2020 has been set at 3.1% and the financial impact of this for 2020/21 is estimated to be £0.535m. Welsh Government have previously announced grant funding of £0.200m to part fund this increase. The remainder will need to be met from Schools delegated budgets.</p>
1.10	<p>Charging for Post 16 Transport</p> <p>The budget for 2020/21 provides for expected additional income of £0.449m based on the assumption that charging would be introduced from September 2020. This policy decision was reversed by Cabinet in May.</p> <p>The developing financial solution through effective partnership working with Coleg Cambria will assist with mitigating the financial risk for 2020/21. An agreement has been reached with the college that a level of the anticipated</p>

	value of the journeys would be reimbursed to the Portfolio and that is now reflected in the projected outturn.
1.11	<p>Out of County Placements</p> <p>Additional funding of £2.7m was included in the budget for 2020/21 to address the historic significant increase in demand. At this stage, based on current activity there is an overall net projected overspend of £0.797m (underspend of £0.064m within Education together with an overspend of £0.861m within Children’s Services). The impact of this increase in demand has been considered as part of the budget considerations for 2021/22 and additional provision of £0.750m provided.</p>
1.12	<p>ADDITIONAL RISKS</p> <p>Free School Meals (FSM)</p> <p>Schools have a delegated budget for free school meals which is based on the number of eligible pupils. The budget for 2020/21 is £1.256m. Following the closure of schools in March 2020, the Council made direct payments to families and there was a marked increase in the number of claims. However, based on updated free school meal claims and making projections for a range of take-up percentages for the remainder of the year, this is now estimated to be within budget.</p>
1.13	<p>Severe Weather / Flood Risks</p> <p>The recent severe weather in January has impacted a number of services across the Council. As a result, there are likely to be significant costs being incurred, having both Revenue and Capital implications.</p> <p>Welsh Government have confirmed that the Emergency Financial Assistance Scheme (EFAS) threshold will not apply for the costs incurred.</p> <p>Revenue costs are being claimed through the Welsh Government Hardship Fund with the Council required to meet the first £0.030m. Discussions on some of the capital impacts are still ongoing and the outcome will be reported in future Capital reports.</p>
1.14	<p>Achievement of Planned In-Year Efficiencies</p> <p>The 2020/21 budget contains £5.206m of specific efficiencies which are being tracked and monitored. The Council aims to achieve a 95% rate in 2020/21 as reflected in the MTFS KPI’s.</p> <p>The current assessment of the efficiencies to be achieved in 2020/21 reports that £5.357m or 100% of the efficiencies will be achieved. This includes an over recovery of £0.151m on Discretionary Transport Review – Post 16 Transport.</p> <p>Further details on the current status on efficiencies can be seen in Appendix 3.</p>
1.15	Reserves and Balances

	<p>Un-earmarked Reserves</p> <p>The level of Council Fund Contingency Reserve brought forward into 2020/21 was £2.370m as detailed in the 2019/20 outturn report. This is the amount available for general purposes following the set-aside of £3.0m for Emergency Funding.</p>
1.16	<p>The Council has now received funding from Welsh Government for the two unhypothecated grants included in the previous report - Digital Transformation (£1.181m) and Unrealised Efficiencies (£1.181m)</p> <p>Taking into account the above and, the current projected underspend at this stage, and previously agreed allocations, the balance on the Contingency Reserve at 31 March 2021 is projected to be £5.689m as detailed in Appendix 4.</p> <p>This assumes that the projected underspend of £1.912m increases the overall Reserve.</p> <p>Although the overall level of Contingency Reserve has increased, it still only brings it to similar levels of recent years. The use of this reserve will be subject to further consideration but will need to include potential 'top ups' to existing earmarked reserves (e.g. Investment to Save/Workforce) as well as being a safeguard against the reported risks in the 2021/22 budget (e.g. pay provision/Out of County Placements)</p> <p>The £3m emergency ring-fenced fund would have an amount of £2.316m remaining after allowing for currently known ineligible items, However, there are a number of holding items still being considered by the Grants Panel. Therefore, it is estimated that the final amount remaining will be in the range £1.5m to £2.2m.</p>
1.17	<p>Request for Carry Forward of Funding</p> <p>Further requests to carry forward revenue funding into 2020/21 are included in Appendix 6 and are recommended for approval.</p>
1.18	<p>Housing Revenue Account</p> <p>The 2019/20 Outturn Report to Cabinet on 16 June 2020 showed an un-earmarked closing balance at the end of 2019/20 of £2.009m and a closing balance of earmarked reserves of £0.437m.</p>
1.19	<p>The 2020/21 budget for the HRA is £36.672m which includes a movement of £0.164m to reserves.</p>
1.20	<p>The monitoring for the HRA is projecting in year expenditure to be £1.675m lower than budget and a closing un-earmarked balance as at 31 March 2021 of £3.684m (£3.848m less earmarked reserve of £0.164m), which at 10.58% of total expenditure satisfies the prudent approach of ensuring a minimum level of 3%. Appendix 5 attached refers.</p>
1.21	<p>The budget contribution towards capital expenditure (CERA) is £12.928m.</p>

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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	As set out within the report.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	The financial impacts of the emergency as set out in the report are a combination of actual costs and losses to date and estimates of costs and losses for the future. There is the possibility that the estimates will change over time. The budget will be monitored closely and mitigation actions taken wherever possible.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	None specific.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1: Council Fund – Movement in Variances from Month 10 Appendix 2: Council Fund – Budget Variances Appendix 3: Council Fund – Programme of Efficiencies Appendix 4: Council Fund – Movement on Un-earmarked Reserves Appendix 5: Housing Revenue Account Variances Appendix 6: Carry Forward Requests

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Various budget records.

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: Dave Ledsham Strategic Finance Manager Telephone: 01352 704503 E-mail:

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	Budget: a statement expressing the Council's policies and service levels in financial terms for a particular financial year. In its broadest sense it includes both the revenue budget and capital programme and any authorised amendments to them.

Council Fund: the fund to which all the Council's revenue expenditure is charged.

Financial Year: the period of twelve months commencing on 1 April.

Housing Revenue Account: the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is a local authority account showing current income and expenditure on housing services related to its own housing stock. The account is separate from the Council Fund and trading accounts and is funded primarily from rents and government subsidy.

Intermediate Care Fund: Funding provided by Welsh Government to encourage integrated working between local authorities, health and housing.

Projected Outturn: projection of the expenditure to the end of the financial year, made on the basis of actual expenditure incurred to date.

Reserves: these are balances in hand that have accumulated over previous years and are held for defined (earmarked reserves) and general (general reserves) purposes. Councils are required to regularly review the level and purpose of their reserves and to take account of the advice of the Chief Finance Officer.

Revenue: a term used to describe the day-to-day costs of running Council services and income deriving from those services. It also includes charges for the repayment of debt, including interest, and may include direct financing of capital expenditure.

Variance: difference between latest budget and actual income or expenditure. Can be to date if reflecting the current or most up to date position or projected, for example projected to the end of the month or financial year.

Virement: the transfer of budget provision from one budget head to another. Virement decisions apply to both revenue and capital expenditure heads, and between expenditure and income, and may include transfers from contingency provisions. Virements may not however be approved between capital and revenue budget heads.

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Budget Monitoring Report
Council Fund Variances

MONTH 11 - SUMMARY

Service	Movement between Periods (£m)	Narrative for Movement between Periods greater than £0.025m
Social Services		
Older People		
Localities	-0.056	Most of this movement has occurred in the residential care budget, where there has been a reduction in payments as well as additional property income.
Community Transformation Fund	0.045	Movement due to projected costs of the Community Transformation Fund activities exceeding the amount able to be claimed from the grant funding
Resources & Regulated Services	-0.093	There have been some Council funded costs transferred to an Integrated Care Fund (ICF) project, which is externally funded by Welsh Government.
Impact of Covid-19	0.006	
Minor Variances	0.005	
Adults of Working Age		
Resources & Regulated Services	-0.026	The variance is due to changes to care package costs within Disability Services.
Minor Variances	-0.010	
Children's Services		
Flintshire Independent Co-Ordinator	-0.041	Changes to eligibility criteria within the Flying Start grant by Welsh Government has meant some Council funded expenditure has been able to be transferred to the grant.
Professional Support	-0.124	This movement is due to the transfer of Council funded costs, mostly staff costs to grant funded services. Welsh Government recently amended the eligibility criteria for costs funded from these grants.
Minor Variances	-0.050	
Safeguarding & Commissioning		
Management & Support	0.079	A carry forward request has been submitted for training costs. The training is to pay for an increased number of staff to undertake Social Worker qualifications over the next three years.
Impact of Covid-19	-0.020	
Minor Variances	-0.016	
Total Social Services (excl Out of County)	-0.301	
Out of County		
Children's Services	0.082	Net impact of placement changes and new/ended placements
Education & Youth	0.087	Reduction in recoupment income from other LAs and new placements
Total Out of County	0.169	
Education & Youth		
Inclusion & Progression	0.059	Due to the service underspend in previous months, a carry forward request has been submitted to support the service in 2021-22. Not all pressures were agreed, therefore the carry forward will support the service in 2021-22.
School Improvement Systems	-0.084	Savings arising from the challenge of the non-essential spend. Early Entitlement savings due to demography and reduced number of settings requiring funding. WG recently announced top up funding to support payments to non maintained settings.
Minor Variances	0.011	
Total Education & Youth	-0.014	
Schools	-0.000	

MONTH 11 - SUMMARY

Service	Movement between Periods (£m)	Narrative for Movement between Periods greater than £0.025m
Streetscene & Transportation		
Service Delivery	0.088	Additional pressures in winter maintenance and traffic management
Highways Network	0.369	This variance is as a result of a carry forward request being required in relation to a match funding contribution required on electric recycling vehicles following grant funding being confirmed by WG on 15th March 2021. The Council has ordered the vehicles and they are due to be delivered in September 2021 and this contribution will meet the terms and conditions of the grant funding.
Transportation	-0.187	Further Impact of 75% payable to School Transport providers due to school closures to the end of March totalling £0.085m and reflects the projected 25% saving. Social services transport has reduced by a further £0.020m. Also £0.037m grant received and various minor underspends across the area.
Regulatory Services	-0.183	Increased Income of £0.100m for Car parking losses from the WG Income Loss Fund. Additional sweeper costs £0.020m, haulage cost increases £0.050m. There has been a favourable movement due to receiving a £0.160m grant which can be offset against existing service spend, which is partly offset £0.010m in reduced materials income.
Impact of Covid-19	-0.092	Updated position on the proposed Hardship claims due from Welsh Government, including Car Park income, private contractors and additional fleet costs.
Other Minor Variances	-0.000	
Total Streetscene & Transportation	-0.005	
Planning, Environment & Economy		
Development	-0.236	Welsh Government Hardship Funding Fee Income Loss for Planning, Building Control, Land Charges for Quarters 1 to 4.
Management & Strategy	-0.023	Minor movements across the service
Impact of Covid-19		
Minor Variances	0.005	
Total Planning & Environment	-0.255	
People & Resources		
HR & OD	0.013	Minor movements across the service
Corporate Finance	0.013	
Total People & Resources	0.026	
Governance		
Customer Services	-0.080	Receipt of WG Hardship Fund Income Loss Grant for Registrars Quarters 1 to 4.
Revenues	-0.298	Receipt of WG Hardship Fund Income Loss Grant for Court Fees and Enforcement Fines Quarters 1 to 4.
Minor Variances	-0.016	
Total Governance	-0.394	
Strategic Programmes		
Leisure	-0.080	Reduced Utility costs and reduced usage have contributed to the -£0.080m positive variance
Total Strategic Programmes	-0.080	

MONTH 11 - SUMMARY

Service	Movement between Periods (£m)	Narrative for Movement between Periods greater than £0.025m
Housing & Assets		
CPM & Design Services	0.070	The adverse movement is due to the net impact of slippage on approved maintenance programmes due to COVID-19 which is being requested to be carried forward for use in 2021/22, less a shortfall of fee income from the Design Services section.
Centralised Costs	-0.068	£0.067m movement resulting from reduced electric and water usage.
Housing Solutions	-0.096	Removal of provision for Bed and Breakfast accommodation for homeless persons
Council Fund Housing	0.035	Increase in costs for Carelink service contract
Impact of Covid-19	0.021	
Minor Variances	-0.093	
Total Housing & Assets	-0.060	
Chief Executive's	0.004	
Impact of Covid-19	-0.000	
Central & Corporate Finance	-0.078	Favourable movement actuals for support service recharges £0.015m higher than projected; Revised projection for Pension Recharges Added years and one off income benefit of Matrix Agency rebates .
Impact of Covid-19	0.000	
Grand Total	-0.988	

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Budget Monitoring Report
Council Fund Variances

MONTH 11 - SUMMARY

Service	Approved Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Annual Variance (£m)	Impact of Covid-19 (£m)	Last Month Variance (£m)	Cause of Major Variances greater than £0.050m	Action Required
Social Services							
Older People							
Localities	19.096	18.491	-0.605		-0.549	The net cost of residential care is £0.507m underspent. This includes the cost of residential care placements net of income received such as property charges and contributions from health. There is a decline in the demand for residential care placements due to Covid 19. Day care is £0.058m under budget, this service is currently closed and will be reopened only when it is safe to do so. Domiciliary and Direct Payments are reporting a combined overspend of £0.202m and are projected based on recent levels of care provision. The Localities Team staff budget is underspending by £0.173m due to a number of staff not yet on top of scale, some temporary reduced hours and in-year savings on travel costs. The minor adaptations budget is £0.057m underspent based on expected activity and there is a small underspend on service level agreements paid to the third sector.	
Resources & Regulated Services	8.027	7.548	-0.478		-0.385	The Councils in-house care provision is reporting an underspend of £0.478m. Day care is reporting an overspend of £0.005m, day centres are currently closed and assumed to be so until it is safe to reopen. The day centre staff are deployed to residential care to assist in delivering care, however the staff costs are still recorded against the day-care budget. Homecare is underspent by £0.037m. Staff costs are incurred as a result of the amount of homecare delivered and projected forward based on estimated activity. Residential care is underspent by £0.003m due to a number of small variances. Extracare is underspending by £0.472m. The opening of Plas Yr Ywern in Holywell was delayed and a full complement of staff had not been recruited, however the care staff employed were redeployed to alternate in-house care services which has meant additional costs due to Covid 19 were avoided.	
Impact of Covid-19	0.000	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.000		
Minor Variances	1.224	1.241	0.017		-0.033		
Adults of Working Age							
Resources & Regulated Services	25.464	25.379	-0.085		-0.058	The outturn represents the current cost of care packages projected to the end of the financial year.	
Disability Services	0.657	0.738	0.082		0.092	The overspend is due to the costs of care packages net of contributions from Welsh Government and health.	
Administrative Support	0.328	0.256	-0.072		-0.075	Not all staff are currently paid at top of grade and there are also some staff seconded from this service. There have also been in-year savings on staff travel costs.	
Residential Placements	1.297	2.001	0.704		0.712	The overspend is the cost of social care for people within the Mental Health service. These costs include nursing and residential care, domiciliary care and Direct Payments. Care needs for individuals within this service vary over time, sometimes suddenly, and the corresponding costs are subject to the same changes.	
Minor Variances	3.463	3.236	-0.227		-0.232		

Budget Monitoring Report
Council Fund Variances

MONTH 11 - SUMMARY

Service	Approved Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Annual Variance (£m)	Impact of Covid-19 (£m)	Last Month Variance (£m)	Cause of Major Variances greater than £0.050m	Action Required
Children's Services							
Flintshire Independent Co-Ordinator	0.112	0.031	-0.082		-0.041	Eligibility criteria for the Flying Start grant has been adjusted to allow for some costs, normally funded from the Councils budget, to be funded by the grant. The underspend is due to these costs transferring to the grant.	
Family Placement	2.621	2.759	0.138		0.149	The overspend is a result of the current demands on the service from the number of fostering placements, which in some instance avoid making an Out of County placement which would be more expensive. The main pressure areas are payments for foster carers, foster agencies and special guardianship payments.	
Legal & Third Party	0.225	0.518	0.293		0.313	Legal costs are overspent due to the number of cases going through the courts and the use of some external legal professionals. Direct Payments have also increased in demand.	
Professional Support	5.346	5.421	0.075		0.199	To support adequate levels of child protection, the established staffing structure needs to be at a sufficient level to meet mandatory safeguarding standards. Vacancies are therefore minimised and additional temporary posts are sometimes required.	
Minor Variances	1.370	1.363	-0.007		0.012		
Safeguarding & Commissioning							
Charging Policy income	-3.060	-2.546	0.513		0.503	A misinterpretation of complex financial assessment rules has been detected. This has resulted in a number of service users being overcharged over a number of years. The overspend is due to cost to reimburse service users of any overcharges. This is being partially offset by by recoupment of Direct Payments.	
Business Support Service	1.224	1.151	-0.073		-0.066	This variance is on salaries and due to some staff not yet paid top of scale and some staff opting out of the pension scheme.	

Budget Monitoring Report
Council Fund Variances

MONTH 11 - SUMMARY

Service	Approved Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Annual Variance (£m)	Impact of Covid-19 (£m)	Last Month Variance (£m)	Cause of Major Variances greater than £0.050m	Action Required
Management & Support	-2.057	-2.114	-0.058		-0.136	The underspend is due to not having to contribute towards the Regional Collaboration unit in 2020/21. Some additional training costs are requested to be carried forward for Social Worker qualification costs. This is offsetting some of the saving.	
Impact of Covid-19	0.000	-0.400	-0.400	-0.400	-0.380	This underspend is due to hardship funding received from Welsh Government to support the Councils in-house care provision. Most additional costs incurred due to Covid are staff costs which are reported within their respective service areas.	
Minor Variances	3.128	3.090	-0.038		-0.019		
Total Social Services (excl Out of County)	68.463	68.167	-0.296	-0.394	0.005		
Out of County							
Children's Services	7.437	8.296	0.860		0.778	The pressure reflects the current cohort of placements with significant numbers of new placements in recent months together with a number of placement changes at higher cost due to breakdowns of placements	Continue to robustly challenge placement proposals presented to the Out of County panel and explore opportunities for cost reductions across the whole of the current cohort.
Education & Youth	4.504	4.440	-0.064		-0.151	The projected underspend reflects the current cohort of Education placements with demand for new placements still being maintained	Continue to robustly challenge placement proposals presented to the Out of County panel and explore opportunities for cost reductions across the whole of the current cohort.
Total Out of County	11.940	12.737	0.796	0.000	0.627		
Education & Youth							
Integrated Youth Provision	1.353	1.120	-0.234	-0.122	-0.234	Includes a projected underspend of -£0.122m on Youth Centres due to closures arising from COVID-19 safety measures producing savings on building cleaning and some relief staffing costs. Also includes a total saving of -£0.104m on the Youth Justice Service mainly due to a delay in recruitment to a new post and savings on equipment purchase and training.	
School Improvement Systems	1.709	1.370	-0.339		-0.254	Savings arising from the challenge of non-essential spend. Early Entitlement savings due to demography and reduced number of settings requiring funding. Covid has caused a significant reduction of non-maintained settings requiring funding. WG recently announced top-up funding to support payments to Non-maintained settings	

Budget Monitoring Report
Council Fund Variances

MONTH 11 - SUMMARY

Service	Approved Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Annual Variance (£m)	Impact of Covid-19 (£m)	Last Month Variance (£m)	Cause of Major Variances greater than £0.050m	Action Required
School Planning & Provision	0.676	0.620	-0.056		-0.053	Mainly a saving against the provision for third party/public liability insurance claims	
Minor Variances	5.051	5.042	-0.010		-0.083		
Total Education & Youth	8.790	8.152	-0.638	-0.122	-0.624		

Budget Monitoring Report
Council Fund Variances

MONTH 11 - SUMMARY

Service	Approved Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Annual Variance (£m)	Impact of Covid-19 (£m)	Last Month Variance (£m)	Cause of Major Variances greater than £0.050m	Action Required
Schools	98.709	98.709	-0.000		-0.000		
Streetscene & Transportation							
Service Delivery	8.839	9.261	0.422		0.334	The service has incurred additional revenue pressure of £0.068m security costs following vandalism at the Household Recycling Centres. There has been additional overspend of £0.057m in JCB purchases that were not covered by capital grant and additional £0.180m of hire and repairs in Waste Operations. Streetlighting is also incurring a £0.080m pressure on Community Income Budget which has been highlighted since earlier in the financial year.	
Highways Network	7.764	8.137	0.373		0.005	Highways network incurred this variance as a result of a carry forward request being required in relation to a match funding contribution on electric recycling vehicles following grant funding being confirmed by WG on 15th March 2021. The Council has ordered the vehicles and they are due to be delivered in September 2021 and this contribution will meet the terms and conditions of the grant funding.	
Transportation	9.366	8.679	-0.687		-0.499	School Transport operators have been supported during school closures by receiving 75% of their contracted values. In addition, a number of school routes have been re-procured to reflect current arrangements for operation in the school year. This has resulted in a projected net underspend in School Transport of £0.499m. It should be noted however that the improvement from the 75% will only impact during COVID-19 circumstances. There are increased cost pressures for Social Services and Childrens Services transport totalling £0.080m. In addition transportation Strategy is £0.1m underspent due to delay in SCPs recruitment due to Covid 19. There are also risks around Post 16 transport and the College meeting the agreement to support this to the sum of £0.600m. However, if this additional income of £0.200m income is not realised in full, the position will be impacted accordingly.	
Regulatory Services	4.681	4.897	0.215		0.398	This service has experienced a downturn in the levels of income generated by sales of Electricity and this is currently anticipated to reach a level of some £0.140m during the year. The variance also reflects the projected loss of car park income of £0.200m following amendments to WG Income Loss Funding eligibility criteria. Training is currently showing £0.04m underspend due to delay in training facilities development. To support overall overspend we received higher Income in burial fees of £0.04m due to higher death rates.	
Impact of Covid-19	0.000	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.157	Following a full reconciliation and review of Streetscene expenditure and income loss relating to the Coronavirus Pandemic, all relevant details are consolidated in one code. This has been done to facilitate enhanced reporting and monitoring of the impact. All risks identified are now recorded in this forecast and at month 11 include £0.065m for residual waste tonnages.	

Budget Monitoring Report
Council Fund Variances

MONTH 11 - SUMMARY

Service	Approved Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Annual Variance (£m)	Impact of Covid-19 (£m)	Last Month Variance (£m)	Cause of Major Variances greater than £0.050m	Action Required
Other Minor Variances	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000		
Total Streetscene & Transportation	30.650	31.039	0.389	0.065	0.395		
Planning, Environment & Economy							
Community	0.847	0.930	0.083		0.071	At month 11 revised projections on Licensing Income, lower than anticipated fee levels	
Development	0.023	-0.049	-0.072		0.165	Welsh Government Hardship Funding Fee Income Loss for Planning, Building Control, Land Charges agreed Q1 - 4	
Impact of Covid-19	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.044	0.000		
Minor Variances	4.919	4.979	0.060		0.091	Cumulative minor variances across the portfolio	
Total Planning & Environment	5.789	5.860	0.071	0.044	0.326		
People & Resources							
HR & OD	2.398	2.293	-0.104		-0.117	Favourable variance due to the agreed recharge for overheads claimed for the TTP project for hosting the service on behalf of the region	
Corporate Finance	2.062	2.029	-0.033		-0.046		
Impact of Covid-19	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		
Total People & Resources	4.459	4.322	-0.137	0.000	-0.163		

Budget Monitoring Report
Council Fund Variances

MONTH 11 - SUMMARY

Service	Approved Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Annual Variance (£m)	Impact of Covid-19 (£m)	Last Month Variance (£m)	Cause of Major Variances greater than £0.050m	Action Required
Governance							
Legal Services	0.736	0.865	0.129		0.135	Overspend as a result of employing locums covering absence to ensure continuing client service delivery in the area of child protection £0.197m. Historical efficiency target that was dependant on demand reduction in another service that has not occurred, thereby preventing the consequent achievement of the efficiency £0.091m. Total overspend is mitigated by vacant posts, expected fee income and commitment challenge across the service.	
Democratic Services	2.098	2.000	-0.098	0.010	-0.093	Favourable variance following reduced take up of Members Allowances £0.057m and savings from travelling expenses due to remote working £0.016m, non requirement to resource Electoral Canvassers £0.020m Commitment challenge and minor variances across the service.	
Internal Audit	0.826	0.772	-0.055		-0.058	Vacant post within Internal Audit (£0.049m); reduced expenditure on postage within Central Despatch	
ICT	4.445	4.385	-0.060	0.150	-0.063	Reduced expenditure on Records Management costs £0.020m together with minor variances across the Service	
Customer Services	0.731	0.677	-0.054		0.026	Favourable variance following receipt of Welsh Government Hardship Funding Income Loss claim Q1-4	
Revenues	0.037	-0.341	-0.377		-0.079	Favourable variance as a result of projected surplus on the Council Tax Collection Fund £0.209m; Revenues £0.100m Welsh Government Lockdown Grant Admin Fee, Vacant Posts and minor variances across the service.	
Impact of Covid-19	0.000	-0.000	-0.000	-0.000	-0.000		
Minor Variances	0.320	0.282	-0.038		-0.027		
Total Governance	9.193	8.640	-0.553	0.160	-0.159		
Strategic Programmes							
Strategic Programmes	4.943	4.567	-0.376		-0.296	The Climate Change Levy (formerly the Carbon Reduction Levy) was in prior years paid as a separate one off charge. However from 2019 the energy provider changed the way they issued costs for CCL and these charges are now included in service specific utility bills within the centralised budgets.	
Minor Variances	0.000	0.030	0.030		0.030		
Total Strategic Programmes	4.943	4.596	-0.346	0.000	-0.266		

Budget Monitoring Report
Council Fund Variances

MONTH 11 - SUMMARY

Service	Approved Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Annual Variance (£m)	Impact of Covid-19 (£m)	Last Month Variance (£m)	Cause of Major Variances greater than £0.050m	Action Required
Housing & Assets							
Enterprise Centres	-0.217	-0.118	0.099		0.098	Pressure due to loss of income in respect of void units	
Caretaking & Security	0.262	0.196	-0.066		-0.066	Mainly staffing cost savings due to vacancies	
CPM & Design Services	0.681	0.751	0.070		-0.000	The pressure of £0.070m is due to a shortfall of fee income recovered by the Design Services team following impacts of a change to the way fees are charged for their work supporting the Council's capital programme. This has been partly mitigated by an allocation from a reserve earmarked for this purpose.	
Centralised Costs	3.353	2.342	-1.011		-0.943	£1.011m positive variance across all utilities. NDR reduced due to the savings from County Hall Phase 3&4 demolition. Electric and Gas also reduced due to a combination of a reduction in rates and reduced usage.	
Benefits	11.665	11.800	0.135	0.119	0.154	A pressure of up to £0.750m on the Council Tax reduction scheme due to additional take up arising from the COVID-19 pandemic impact on employment. This figure takes account of £0.147m of WG emergency funding support in respect of the April to September element of the overall pressure but the £0.750m is not included in the variance figures. Funding support has also now been confirmed for the remainder of 2020/21. Variance includes pressure of £0.077m on overpayments due to the suspension of recovery action caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which we are currently pursuing with WG with a view to inclusion of this within the final COVID-19 Hardship Fund claim for 2020/21 covering March when the year-end figure has been finalised. Staffing cost pressure are also in the main being funded by WG through the COVID-19 Hardship Fund.	
Housing Solutions	1.091	0.905	-0.186		-0.090	Savings on Bed and Breakfast accommodation due to managing demand through use of temporary accommodation	
Council Fund Housing	-0.324	-0.163	0.161		0.125	Reduction of internal Housing Support grant allocation due to eligibility issues and pressure arising from new service contract for Carelink with additional increase in pressure arising from charges from the outgoing contractor.	
Impact of Covid-19	0.000	0.011	0.011	0.011	-0.010		
Minor Variances	-1.039	-1.169	-0.130		0.015		
Total Housing & Assets	16.154	15.376	-0.777	0.130	-0.718		
Chief Executive's	2.750	2.432	-0.318		-0.322	Vacant Posts across the service; commitment challenge	
Impact of Covid-19	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.008	0.000		
Central & Corporate Finance	24.147	24.044	-0.102		-0.024	Over recovery of planned pension contributions recoupment against actuarial projections based on the level of contributions received to date and forecast to the end of the financial year. Final outturn agreed for Support Services recharge.	
Impact of Covid-19	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.000		

Budget Monitoring Report
Council Fund Variances

MONTH 11 - SUMMARY

Service	Approved Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Annual Variance (£m)	Impact of Covid-19 (£m)	Last Month Variance (£m)	Cause of Major Variances greater than £0.050m	Action Required
Grand Total	285.986	284.074	-1.912	-0.109	-0.924		

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2020/21 Efficiencies Outturn Tracker - Master Mth 11

Efficiency Description	Accountable Officer	Efficiency Target	Projected Efficiency	(Under)/Over Achievement	Efficiency Open/Closed (O/C)	Confidence in Achievement of Efficiency - Based on (see below) R = High Assumption A = Medium Assumption G = Figures Confirmed
		2020/21 £m	2020/21 £m	2020/21 £m		
Portfolio						
Corporate						
Employer Pension Contributions	Reduced requirement due to recovery	Rachel Parry Jones	0.800	0.800	0.000	C G
Actuarial Review	Reduced contribution rate	All	2.646	2.646	0.000	C G
Single Person Discount Review	One Off Efficiency	David Barnes	0.300	0.300	0.000	O G
Total Corporate Services			3.746	3.746	0.000	
Social Services						
Reviewing Function	Reduction of Post	Neil Ayling	0.025	0.000	(0.025)	C G
Supported Living	Reduction of Voids	Neil Ayling	0.025	0.000	(0.025)	C G
Communications	Reduction in Mobile Hardware	Neil Ayling	0.030	0.000	(0.030)	C G
Vacancy Management Saving	Appropriate Vacancy Management	Neil Ayling	0.030	0.070	0.040	C G
Strategic Use of Grant Funding	Core Funding Replacement Solution	Neil Ayling	0.100	0.170	0.070	C G
Regional Collaboration Wrexham CBC	Reduction in Posts	Neil Ayling	0.030	0.000	(0.030)	C G
Additional Social Services Grant	Social Services Grant	Neil Ayling	0.426	0.426	0.000	C G
Total Social Services			0.666	0.666	0.000	
Education & Youth						
Integrated Youth Provision	Youth Centres - Premises	Claire Homard	0.014	0.014	0.000	O G
Total Education & Youth			0.014	0.014	0.000	
Streetscene & Transportation						
Discretionary Transport Review - Post 16 Transport	Joint with Education	Stephen O Jones	0.449	0.600	0.151	O G
Income from External Works		Stephen O Jones	0.010	0.010	0.000	O G
Garden Waste Charges	Additional take up of service	Stephen O Jones	0.030	0.030	0.000	O G
NWRWTP Gate Fee Benefit	Utilisation of WG Grant funding	Stephen O Jones	0.200	0.200	0.000	O G
Total Streetscene & Transportation			0.689	0.840	0.151	
Planning, Environment & Economy						
Countryside	Additional Tree Income	Tom Woodall	0.010	0.010	0.000	O G
Countryside	Review of Spending	Tom Woodall	0.017	0.017	0.000	O G
Review of Pest Control	Trading Standards Investigations and Community Safety	Sian Jones	0.035	0.035	0.000	O G
Development Management	Increased Planning Fee Income	Mandy Lewis	0.015	0.015	0.000	O G
Minerals & Waste	Adoption of new SLA with Partners	Gary Nancarrow	0.005	0.005	0.000	O G
Portfolio Admin	Supplies and Services Review	Lynne Fensome	0.005	0.005	0.000	O G
Regeneration	Bus Dev, Housing and Markets	Niall Waller	0.004	0.004	0.000	O G
Total Planning, Environment & Economy			0.091	0.091	0.000	
Total 2020/21 Budget Efficiencies			5.206	5.357	0.151	

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	%	£
Total 2020/21 Budget Efficiencies	100	5.206
Total Projected 2020/21 Budget Efficiencies Underachieved	3	0.151
Total Projected 2020/21 Budget Efficiencies Achieved	103	5.357
Total 2020/21 Budget Efficiencies (Less Previously agreed Decisions)	100	0.000
Total Projected 2020/21 Budget Efficiencies Underachieved	0	0.000
Total Projected 2020/21 Budget Efficiencies Achieved	0	0.000

Corporate Efficiencies Remaining from Previous Years

Income Target Remaining	£m	
Income Target Efficiency remaining from Previous Years	All Portfolios	(0.150)
Pressure 2020/21		0.100
Total Income Efficiency Remaining		(0.050)
		0.050

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Movements on Council Fund Unearmarked Reserves

	£m	£m
Total Reserves as at 1 April 2020	11.025	
Less - Base Level	(5.769)	
Total Reserves above base level available for delegation to Cabinet		5.256
Less - amount approved for Childrens Services ' Front Door Pressures'		(0.134)
Less - COVID-19 Emergency Funding Allocation		(2.886)
Plus Month 11 projected outturn		1.912
Plus COVID Digital Transformation Support for Services		1.181
Plus Support for Unachieved Savings Hardship Fund Support		1.181
Less - projected national pay award increase		(0.821)
Total Contingency Reserve available for use		5.689

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Budget Monitoring Report
Housing Revenue Account Variances

MONTH 11 - SUMMARY

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Last Month Variance (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Housing Revenue Account						
Income	(36.676)	(36.504)	0.172	0.209	There is a pressure forecast of £0.172m. Of this £0.103m relates to loss of income voids which are currently running at 2.00% void rate compared to 1.75% in the Business Plan. £0.071m relates to garages, £0.035m relates to void water charges. Additional new build rental income projected at £0.055m. The remaining £0.018m is attributed to Minor Variances	
Capital Financing - Loan Charges	9.027	7.916	(1.111)	(1.111)	Reduced spend on SHARP has reduced the level of prudential borrowing required for 20.21.	
Estate Management	1.846	1.631	(0.215)	(0.208)	Additional expenditure of £0.061m is anticipated during the year in respect of the purchase of software. This is offset by salary efficiencies arising from vacancy savings and the pay award of £0.206m. There is also a saving of £0.030m relating to court costs as action has been suspended due to Covid. The remaining £0.040m is minor variances	
Landlord Service Costs	1.434	1.363	(0.071)	(0.063)	There is a saving of £0.044m which relates to servicing costs which are lower due to some Covid restrictions, and £0.027m of minor variances	
Repairs & Maintenance	8.907	8.441	(0.466)	(0.504)	Overall positive variance of £(0.466)m. Contributory factors : Reduction in Materials for Responsive and Voids expenditure due to Covid restrictions (£0.126m). Reduced projection of Responsive sub-contractor spend on basis of Covid restrictions (£0.221m). Staffing Vacancy savings (£0.109m). Overall NI staffing saving (£0.089m). Increased Fleet projection based on Q2 charges £0.084m. Minor variances (0.008m).	
Management & Support Services	2.523	2.534	0.011	0.032	There is a pressure projected of £0.010m of this £0.020m relates to salary savings. £0.011m relates to underspend on training due to Covid restrictions. There has been a increase in insurance costs of £0.084m. Underspend on IT -£0.019. -£0.040m minor variances.	
Capital Expenditure From Revenue (CERA)	12.928	12.928				
HRA Projects	(0.153)	(0.149)	0.004	0.003		
Contribution To / (From) Reserves	0.164	0.164				
Total Housing Revenue Account	0.000	(1.675)	(1.675)	(1.642)		

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2020/2021 CARRY FORWARD BALANCE REQUESTS

Social Services

£0.076m The carry forward request is to be able to provide additional Trainee Social Worker qualifications over the next three financial years (21/22 to 23/24). By providing the additional qualifications there will likely be greater staff retention which reduces the amount of recruitment required, which saves time and money, as well as providing greater stability for the service.

This will be funded from not having to contribute to the Regional North Wales Collaboration Fund this financial year. We usually make an annual contribution of £122k to the Regional Collaboration Fund, however due to a build-up of funds it has not been necessary to contribute this year resulting in an in-year saving of £122k. This saving has been reported in full throughout the year within budget monitoring.

Flintshire Crèche Service; £0.121m - This service has generated surplus income this year. The Crèche service is to be remodelled in 2021/22 and the surplus income is requested to be carried forward to fund the remodelled service. The remodelled service is expected to be funded by Welsh Government Grants and income generated from private placements. The income from private places is not guaranteed and the carried forward funding is to be used to offset any initial income shortfalls and setting up costs.

Flintshire Community Parents; £0.078m – There is a commitment to delivering the voluntary parenting programme in full for 2021/22 and have a national Agreement in place. Unfortunately, the Early Years Pathfinder monies has been significantly reduced from £0.250m to £0.137m for next year. It is requested that the Community Parents surplus income generated is carried forward to continue to pilot this significant work for a further 2 years.

Flintshire Parenting Strategy; £0.043m - Income is received from a variety of sources which usually funds the majority of the Parent Strategy Work, this is mainly generated through national work that Flintshire officers are involved with and been able to charge to providers e.g. Big Lottery Funding, conference speaking. Due to COVID-19, this work has been put on hold during 2020/21 although a similar level of funding was received. It is anticipated this funding will need to be used during the recovery stage in 2021/22 to undertake additional parenting strategy work.

Planning, Environment & Economy

£0.090m Local Development Plan (LDP) at this stage of the process both the Inspectorate and Programme Officer for preparing for the Examination are being paid on a monthly basis and the Examination itself will not begin until 13th April thus the requirement to carry over into the new financial year on that basis. The cost to the Council in paying the Inspectorate continues until they provide their report for adoption which at best estimate will be late 2021 at the earliest.

£0.015m Regeneration EU Settled Status (EUSS) Grant WLGA Grant claimed by the 30/05/20 – to raise awareness, increase and support the number of people applying for EUSS. **£0.015m** Regeneration Export Health Certificate WLGA Grant – work is on-going and UKG deadlines for both these grants have moved delayed to July, 2021.

£0.037m Heritage Lottery Fund 'OFF FLINT' agreed extension into 21/22 due to delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

£0.060m Town Centre Regeneration carried forward from 2019/20, difficulty in recruitment had delayed any progress on the project and delivering the outcomes. A robust staff team are now in place and work is ongoing into 2021.

£0.058m During various points in the second half of 2020/21 we have received a number of WG administration grants to support the Business Grants work. Resources have been diverted over the past eight months from several areas in the Business Development service to support this emergency response work, much to the cost of other work in the service. None of these administration grants have been used in year however there will be a significant volume of 'catch up' work to undertake in 2021/22 on the economic recovery work programme to deliver business support projects.

£0.185m Countryside Welsh Government Green Recovery Funding Grant. Grant Allocation received March, 2021 to support the post COVID response and green recovery in Wales. The purpose of the funding is to support public bodies to take action reduce carbon emissions and increase resilience to the impacts of climate change, reverse the decline in biodiversity and connect people and nature. The WLGA have agreed flexibility in the timeline into the 2021/22 financial year.

Governance

£0.096m WG Electoral Reform Grant was received during 2020/21 its purpose was to assist electoral teams with the pressures associated with the extension of the franchise, canvass and electoral reforms in particular registering newly enfranchised individuals. Plans were put in place during 2020/21 but due to the pandemic were ultimately delayed. Works will resume during 2021/22 with an expected completion by March, 2022.

£0.042m ICT this is to support resources:

1. Information Governance: - Temporary Position to run from 01/07/21 – 31/03/2022 at Grade G2, SCP5 £18,990 incl. on-costs.
A trainee who the service have invested significant time and effort in to training in the Information Governance team. This is a very niche area and the trainee has undertaken a range of funded courses in this discipline. The trainee has already 'acted up' to this level whilst a member of the team was seconded to TTP. An extremely experienced member of the team is due to retire in March 2022. In order to ensure service continuity and to support succession planning, the carry forward funding would support a temporary contract ensuring continuation of required skills and capacity to replace the current team member and retention of skills that have been developed. It will also allow for further skills transfer during this period.
2. Digital Solutions:- Temporary Position to run from 01/07/21 – 31/03/2022 at Grade G4, SCP15 £23,403 incl. on-costs
A higher level/graduate trainee within the team who is due to complete a traineeship this year. Working within a team which underpins the delivery of the digital strategy and has already contributed significantly in his time with the authority demonstrating skill and commitment to producing high quality output in a timely manner. As the team have been diverted to developing solutions to support COVID response, the trainee has successfully managed a project to ensure aspects of our website achieved a required accessibility standard. The carry forward would allow an offer of a temporary digital solutions technician contract which would provide additional

capacity to support delivery of key digital projects. The service would then look to submit a bid to the MTFS to consider this becoming a permanent role from 2022/23 onwards. A method statement has previously been submitted for this role (03/08/2020) which will be forwarded for inclusion following Digital Strategy discussions and future operations with Chief Officer and Finance colleagues.

Strategic Programmes

£0.105m The CERA (Capital Expenditure Revenue Account) funding for the 20/21 Play Area Schemes will not be used this year and has been postponed until 2021/22. It has been requested that £0.105m funding is split and carried forward to be utilised over the next two years.

Education and Youth

£0.074 Inclusion and Progression:

Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

£0.031m to cover the full costs of the Early Years Additional Learning Needs Lead Officer (ALNLO). This post was identified as a cost pressure within the Budget Method Statement and a contribution was made for the financial year 2021/21. This was based on the post being recruited to in September 2021. The internal arrangements which allowed a delayed appointment became unsustainable and an officer has now been recruited to this statutory post.

Counselling Service

£0.023m to cover the increased salary cost pressure within the Counselling Service. The recent restructure within the Counselling Service led to a re-evaluation of the Counsellor post salary grade which created a budget pressure. A Budget Method Statement was submitted but rejected due to being below £0.025m. This service has a key role in supporting pupils as a result of the pandemic and the carry forward would sustain the current level of delivery.

EOTAS (Education Other Than At School)

£0.020m to add capacity to the team overseeing children and young people who are EOTAS and on the Fresh Start Register. These are pupils who may have been excluded or require a bespoke provision and will need additional monitoring and support to re-engage with educational packages as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Streetscene and Transportation

£0.010m The Streetscene training service has not been able to deliver all of the Streetscene training plan in year 20/21 and there is a requirement to complete this in 21/22, in addition to all mandatory training provision required for that year as well. Training centres have been closed under COVID-19 regulations for large proportions of the year meaning Health & safety training to front line staff (in particular in high risk Streetscene roles) has only been completed where operationally they had to undertake specific tasks in their bubble areas. Moving into 21/22 there will be an increased pressure on the training budget to provide all of these additional training requirements.

£0.350m As a result of Welsh Government funding for Energy Trust Fund – Electric Recycling Vehicles being confirmed in mid-March, an immediate contractual commitment was required to be made to purchase the vehicles, which also involved a match funding contribution from the Council. Unfortunately, due to the lead in time, the vehicles won't be delivered until September 2021, but by proposing this carry forward request, the necessary funding requirement is being provided towards the vehicles, that would otherwise fall on the 2021/22 service budget as a contribution to overall project costs.

Chief Executives

£0.030m. The contract for a Performance Management software with CAMMS is due to expire 30th April. Procurement of a new supplier is nearing completion however initial costs for the first year will include implementation, training, data migration and an Annual Licence Fee totalling £0.056m. The carry forward will augment the existing Annual budget allocation for the Licence fee and minimise any additional pressure on the budget.

Housing & Assets

£0.130m. The net impact of slippage on approved maintenance programmes (condition surveys, fire risk assessments and legionella monitoring/testing) due to COVID-19 access restrictions, which is being requested to be carried forward for use in 2021/22.



CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 20 th April 2021
Report Subject	Education & Youth Self Evaluation Report 2020/2021
Cabinet Member	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education
Report Author	Chief Officer (Education & Youth)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Flintshire County Council undertakes an annual self-evaluation of its education services. Normally it is written against the framework for the inspections of Local Government Education Services published by Estyn but as this framework was suspended as a result of Covid-19, this report is presented in a different format with each service area focusing on its work over the last twelve months and how it has responded and adapted to the ongoing health emergency. It also identifies areas for ongoing development which will be reflected in the Council Plan and the Portfolio Business Plan for 2021-2022.

The suspension of key data collections by Welsh Government during the pandemic has resulted in many of the key performance indicators by which the portfolio usually measures its progress not being available. Pupil assessment data at all key stages is also unavailable to be able to make judgements on standards.

The committee has already received detailed reports on how schools have adapted their provision and developed a blended learning approach for pupils and also how the regional school improvement service, GwE have provided robust support for school improvement so this is not revisited as part of this report.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales, Estyn, have maintained contact with the portfolio during the last twelve months and have undertaken a thematic review of the work of education services across Wales. Their positive report about Flintshire's response is included as part of this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Members note the content of the self-evaluation report and provide their feedback to officers on the current performance of education services.
2	That Members note the positive thematic report undertaken by Estyn on the work of education services in Flintshire to support children and young people during the pandemic.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE SELF EVALUATION REPORT
1.01	<p>The last twelve months have been unique and posed unprecedented challenges for the Council, particularly in relation to its delivery of education services. The statutory provision of education for all learners was suspended for the period March 2020 to September 2020 and schools were forced to completely repurpose themselves as childcare hubs for vulnerable children and children of critical workers.</p> <p>Since the restart of education provision in September and the rising rates of infection through the Autumn Term and early Spring Term, the delivery of education in all Flintshire schools has been significantly disrupted with pupils having to isolate for extended periods of time.</p> <p>In January 2021, Welsh Government directed all schools to cease face-to-face learning for the majority of pupils and only making provision for those children identified as vulnerable or those of critical workers in the face of escalating infection rates. Foundation Phase pupils have only recently returned to school and more learners are able to return from 15th March and then after Easter, when all pupils will have returned to full time school.</p> <p>The committee has already received and commended a report on Blended Learning which gave assurance on how schools have facilitated the ongoing learning offer for pupils on digital platforms during the lockdown periods.</p>
1.02	<p>The prime purpose of self-evaluation is to lead service improvements to secure the best possible outcomes for children and young people supported by the Education and Youth Portfolio. Only by robustly evaluating the strengths of the current provision and identifying areas for further improvement can the Portfolio continue to refine the manner in which it delivers services to secure better outcomes.</p>
1.03	<p>Flintshire County Council normally undertakes an annual self-evaluation of its education services against the framework for the inspections of Local Government Education Services published by Estyn but as this framework was suspended as a result of Covid-19, this report is presented in a different format with each service area focusing on its work of the last</p>

	twelve months and how it has responded and adapted to the health emergency.
1.04	The suspension of key data collections by Welsh Government during the pandemic has resulted in many of the key performance indicators by which the portfolio usually measures its progress, not being available. Pupil assessment data at all key stages is also unavailable to be able to make judgements on standards.
1.05	Each section of the report provides an overview of the service area, how it has adapted and its ongoing development priorities which will be reflected in the Council Plan and the Portfolio Business Plan for 2021-2022. Where progress has been possible, against the Estyn recommendations following the 2019 inspection of Education Services in Flintshire, these are reflected in each service report.
1.06	Although the formal inspection frameworks for school and local authority education services remains suspended, Estyn has maintained regular contact with schools and education officers. Welsh Government commissioned Estyn to undertake a review of the work of local authorities in supporting their learning communities in schools and pupil referral units (PRUs) during the period March to October 2020 and this was undertaken in the Autumn term.
1.07	The feedback report is based on virtual meetings with Education Officers, the Cabinet Lead Member for Education, the Chair of the Education & Youth Scrutiny Committee and a sample of headteachers in schools and PRUs.
1.08	<p>The report is attached at Appendix 2 and outlines the swift and effective response of the Council to support children and schools from the outset of the pandemic.</p> <p>It acknowledges the strong leadership from the Council's Emergency Response Team and the Education Portfolio. It highlights the strength of the shared collaborative approach across the Council and with external partners e.g. GwE, to effectively adapt services to meet the needs of children, young people and their families during the national emergency.</p> <p>It also notes the thorough review of the Council's response through the work of the Education, Youth and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The report is very positive and does not identify any recommendations for further improvement.</p>

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	There are no revenue / capital implications as a result of this report.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	<p>Impact Assessment not required for this report.</p> <p>The Education Portfolio has a detailed risk assessment which outlines key risks related to the delivery of education services and the continued disruption of teaching and learning as a result of the ongoing pandemic and method statements which describe how these risks are managed. These are regularly reported to the committee.</p>

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	N/A for this report.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	<p>Appendix 1 – Education & Youth Portfolio Self-Evaluation Report 2020-2021</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Estyn Thematic Review Feedback Letter for Flintshire</p>

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	N/A

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Claire Homard, Chief Officer (Education & Youth)</p> <p>Telephone: 01352 704190</p> <p>E-mail: claire.homard@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
	<p>Estyn – the Education and Training Inspectorate for Wales</p> <p>GwE – Regional School Improvement Service for the North Wales region commissioned by Flintshire County Council</p>

Education & Youth Portfolio

Self-Evaluation Report

2020-2021



**Connah's Quay
High School**



Ysgol Penyffordd

Flintshire County Council

Contextual Information

Formed in 1996 following local government reorganisation, Flintshire is a well governed and high performing unitary local authority in the north east corner of Wales bordering Cheshire, Wrexham and Denbighshire. Flintshire has a strong track record of being a direct provider of local services from Education to Streetscene to Housing. Whilst direct provision is at the core of its model, Flintshire is also a creative and flexible council and operates both as a provider and a commissioner of services. It has been instrumental in developing collaborative arrangements such as a regional school improvement service, an employee-owned mutual in leisure, libraries and cultural services and a local social housing trading company. Continuing to develop sustainable models of delivery and maintaining high quality services continues to be a priority for the Council.

Flintshire provides local public services for 155,155 people who live in 65,489 households. It has the largest population of the North Wales authorities and is the sixth largest in Wales. With 5,831 staff the Council is the second largest employer in the County and provide services including, education, housing, leisure, libraries, planning, refuse collection, environmental health, recycling, roads, social services, trading standards, transport and tourism. Flintshire has 78 schools (64 Primary, 11 Secondary, 2 Specialist & 1 PRU) providing education for 23,565 pupils (all ages), including those educated other than at school. 15.3% of the total population are of school age.

Based on the 2011 Census, the Welsh language is spoken by 14.4% of the population in Flintshire compared to 19% across Wales. The County has 5 Welsh medium primary schools and 1 Welsh medium secondary school. There are no dual stream or bilingual schools presently in the County. The County also has a mixed provision of faith based education with 7 Church in Wales Voluntary Aided primary schools, 5 Roman Catholic primary schools and 1 Roman Catholic secondary school.

Flintshire has a strong tradition of supporting a local infrastructure of non-maintained early years' provision through both English and Welsh, which supports the Council in its delivery of childcare and early years' education. Flintshire has successfully embedded the Welsh Government's flagship childcare policy of 30 hours free provision for working parents and there is a strong network of childminders, playgroups and private day nurseries delivering this combination of childcare and early education prior to children transitioning into schools.

The current (PLASC 2020) population of school aged pupils entitled to Free School Meals (e-FSM) is 19.09% compared to a Wales average of 18.24%. The County has a mix of affluent and deprived areas. 20.68% of school aged pupils are designated as having a Special Educational Need in Flintshire compared to a Welsh average of 20.79%.

Structure of the Council

Flintshire County Council has 70 Councillors that are normally democratically elected every 5 years. It is currently run by a minority Labour administration with a political make up of: Labour 34, Independent Alliance 16, Conservative 6, Independents 3, Liberal

Democrats 5 and New Independents 4. There is currently 1 non-aligned member and 1 vacancy.

Leader of the Council – Cllr Ian Roberts



Chief Executive – Colin Everett



The Council has a Cabinet and a Scrutiny function. Decisions are usually made by the Cabinet for all issues including major policy matters. The role of Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to hold the Cabinet to account and to assist in the improvement and development of the Council's policies and services. Flintshire has five Overview and Scrutiny Committees covering: Corporate Resources; Community, Housing & Assets; Education, Youth & Culture; Environment & Economy; and Social and Health Care.

Flintshire's Corporate Plan 2017-23

The Council has a good track record of being a high performing authority. The Council Plan 2017-23 was adopted by the Council in September 2017 and is reviewed on an annual cycle. The year-end Council Plan report for 2019/20 shows good progress has been made with 88% of activities being assessed as having made good progress and 91% having achieved the desired outcome. Performance indicators show good progress with 78% meeting target and 14% not meeting target but ending the year within an acceptable range. Risks are managed effectively with the majority assessed as moderate (67%).

The Corporate Plan is in the process of being refreshed for 2021/22. The refreshed plan has the Council's wellbeing objectives embedded within its priorities and is aligned to the ongoing recovery following the response to the pandemic. The draft Council Plan has six themes and they are:

- Poverty
- Affordable and Accessible Housing
- Green Society and Environment
- Economy
- Personal and Community Well-being
- Education and Skills

Working in Partnership

Flintshire County Council has a longstanding and proud track record of partnership working. The communities it serves rightly expect statutory and third sector partners to

work together to manage shared priorities through collaboration. The Flintshire Public Services Board (PSB) is at the heart of promoting a positive culture of working together and concentrates energy, effort and resources on providing efficient and effective services to local communities and is a key vehicle in delivering the response phase of the Council to the pandemic.

The priorities of the Public Service Board are:

- Independent Living
- Integrated Community Social and Health Service
- Developing and Inspiring Resilient Communities
- Safeguarding

Public Services Board partners include: Natural Resources Wales, Public Health Wales, North Wales Police, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, National Probation, Flintshire Local Voluntary Council, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, Coleg Cambria, Glyndwr University and Welsh Government.

Explanatory Note - Self Evaluation Report 2020-2021

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought about huge changes in the delivery of education services over the last twelve months, including the temporary suspension of statutory schooling between March and September 2020. Since the start of the autumn term, education provision has been regularly disrupted by outbreaks of the virus within communities, requiring schools and the Council to rapidly adapt to different models of delivery. This has been further challenged by the Welsh Government's decision to suspend face to face learning for the vast majority of pupils since January 2021 and schools having to extend their digital learning offer for pupils. Recent announcements have brought Foundation Phase learners back into school from 22nd February 2021 and the Council is currently planning for the return of Key Stage 2 learners and Years 10-13 from 15th March. The remaining pupils in years 7-9 will return after the Easter holidays.

The suspension of the Estyn Inspection Framework for schools and local government education services during the last year, which is usually the basis for the portfolio's self-evaluation report, means that the report structure is very different this year. This has also been influenced by the suspension of key data collections by Welsh Government, meaning that many of the key performance indicators by which the portfolio usually measures its progress are not available. Pupil assessment data at all key stages is also unavailable to be able to make judgements on standards.

In this context, each service area within the portfolio has produced a self-evaluation report on their work for the reporting period 2020-21 and these are compiled into this single document. Regular reports on the portfolio's response during the lockdown period and the response of schools to the requirement to develop blended learning approaches have already been presented to the Education, Youth and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Estyn have also monitored the work of the portfolio through regular engagement with senior managers and through engagement calls with schools and their report on the council's performance in supporting learners during the pandemic should be read alongside this self-evaluation report.

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Education & Youth Senior Management Team

Chief Officer Education & Youth	Claire Homard
Senior Manager – School Improvement	Vicky Barlow
Senior Manager – Inclusion & Progression	Jeanette Rock
Senior Manager – Integrated Youth Provision	Ann Roberts
Senior Manager – Youth Justice Services	James Warr
Senior Manager – School Planning & Provision	Damian Hughes
Senior Manager – Business Support & Governance	Kim Brookes
Finance Business Partner	Lucy Morris
Human Resources Business Partner	Steve Gow



Inclusion & Progression Service

Self-Evaluation Report

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Section 1 – Service Overview

The Inclusion & Progression Service provides support, guidance and intervention to children and young people with a range of individual needs. This is delivered by a number of services namely:

- Additional Learning Needs Service
- Education Psychology Service
- Young Person’s Counselling Service
- Inclusion Outreach Team (ASD)
- English as an Additional Language/Gypsy Traveller and Looked after Children Service
- North East Wales Sensory Service
- Communication, Language and Speech Service (CLASS)
- Education Welfare Service
- Progression Team
- TRAC & ADTRAC
- Behaviour Support Team
- Plas Derwen Portfolio Pupil Referral Units

The service discharges the Council’s statutory duties in relation to children and young people with special educational needs (SEN), meeting the requirements as outlined in the SEN Code of Practice for Wales. The service also has responsibility for the statutory processes around school attendance and exclusion. Whilst the duties associated with the SEN Code have not been relaxed as a result of the Covid pandemic, Welsh Government (WG) has altered the requirements around attendance and exclusion and teams within the service have adjusted their function in response.

Section 2 – Review of 2020-2021

The Inclusion & Progression Service has responded proactively and responsively during what has been a very challenging year. The initial lockdown in March led service managers to review and consider their role in supporting children and young people, schools and families in these unprecedented circumstances and how their range of interventions could be delivered in as safe a manner as possible. Staff were directed to work from home in line with government directive and equipment was quickly distributed to facilitate this. Whilst new delivery models were being developed by managers, staff were required to complete home working assessments to ensure that an appropriate working environment was established and to use the initial lock down time to ensure that all mandatory training was up to date.

Flintshire quickly established a Hub model across the school network utilising primary, secondary and specialist schools and the portfolio of pupil referral units, Plas Derwen, to offer childcare and provision for vulnerable children. The Senior Manager for the Inclusion & Progression service was designated lead for vulnerable children and operated as part of the Silver Tactical Group to ensure that decision making was taken in line with wider Flintshire policy and was also informed by other service developments. Close working was undertaken with colleagues in Children's Services to ensure that a shared definition of vulnerable was developed for use across the Council and its schools and this was used to inform decisions in relation to provision/intervention. A total of 138 children and young people met the definition and accessed provision in the Resilience Hubs during the initial lockdown period.

Having established staff as remote home workers, managers identified ways in which they would continue to offer support and intervention to designated pupils during lockdown and the actions that were required to make this successful. This included:

- Making direct contact with families to agree ways of working
- Providing access to specialist equipment at home for pupils with sensory impairment to facilitate home schooling
- Delivery of educational packs to support targeted learning
- Training videos to support staff and parents to engage with online platforms
- Adaptation of the WG live streaming guidance to suit the service's delivery model and support pupil/staff safety
- Access to targeted staff training to enable teams to deliver specific online intervention, e.g. Counselling
- Developing protocols and amending parental consent for secure video observation and video led consultation to facilitate assessment by the Education Psychology Service
- Development of training/awareness raising resources for schools and parents

Safeguarding and welfare were key priorities for the services in the initial weeks. The Education Welfare Service extended their role to support schools and Social Services with additional welfare/safeguarding checks. Managers established stronger links with other Council services such as the Benefits and Housing teams and also other third sector agencies. Support, advice and guidance was offered to families to ensure they had access to food and relevant benefits. Translation support was offered via the English as an Additional Language Team and additional welfare packs were provided by the Gypsy/Traveller and Progression Teams. Since the

implementation of Track, Trace & Protect (TTP) in Flintshire, the Inclusion & Progression Service has supported the TTP team to contact families where there has been difficulty with this, using their knowledge and in some cases, already well established communication links.

WG recognised the difficulties during the lockdown period for schools and councils to deliver against their statutory duties for children and young people with special educational needs (SEN). Although mooted in a number of forums, no alterations were, however, made to the legislation covering this area and as a result, Learning Advisors within the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) service have continued in their work to meet the statutory obligations. The team responded swiftly in response to the Covid restrictions to identify and determine approaches to support and to ensure statutory obligations were fulfilled. The Council's decision making Moderation Panel continued to be held, without any break or disruption to service with the use of online platforms to facilitate this process.

The lockdown period saw a significant reduction in the number of requests for statutory assessment, 37 as compared with 110 for same period April – August in 2018/19. This period also contributed to an increase in the number of assessments being completed outside of the designated 26 week timescale. This was due in the main to the suspension of health appointments which are an integral part of the process, along with the difficulty for Educational Psychologists to complete their statutory element of the process due to pupils not being in school. To prevent a negative impact of the delays, schools were supported to identify alternative means of support for pupils and extensions to Service Level Agreements were instigated to ensure that additional support remained available to individuals. Schools were also supported to complete outstanding annual reviews of Statements using alternative means. This included telephone and online platform reviews and ensured that all of the reviews for the academic year 2019/20 were completed.

As well as working with Flintshire schools to support access to provision for statemented pupils, information was collated and recorded regarding the provision and education for vulnerable learners in non-maintained provision. Regular communication has been maintained with providers and risk assessments were collated and reviewed to ensure safe working practices were being implemented.

Officers have recognised the importance of communication during these challenging times and have responded promptly to queries from schools and families. Ahead of the 'Check In, Catch Up' period in June, all services created a one-page service profile outlining how services would operate amid the restrictions. This template was shared with external agencies such as Health to provide a consistent approach to information sharing with schools/families. The profiles have been reviewed and updated in response to the change in restrictions/operational guidance.

It has been important to be flexible and responsive during the past year and to understand the emerging needs of pupils, schools, families, teams and other professionals. The frequency of managerial meetings has increased to a fortnightly occurrence to ensure that information is shared in a timely manner and that managers feel supported and authorised to modify their delivery models as required within the Council/WG policies. School cluster meetings were scheduled for the second week of the term in September so that school staff could share any concerns experienced on their return to schools with Educational Psychologists, ALN officers and Education Welfare officers who could offer support and guidance. Training materials were identified, developed and collated at both local and regional level. Learner Support was included as a specific area on the support dashboard created for schools by GwE in collaboration with local authorities. This housed a range of relevant support documents in recognition of the anticipated

pupils and also staff needs. The Education Psychology service and Behaviour Support Team also created a range of targeted resources focusing on wellbeing. A toolkit and training resource was developed to support schools to create a suitable environment for those pupils experiencing a range of behaviours, social and emotional difficulties, a group that was anticipated to experience greater difficulty attending school with the Covid restrictions in place. A guidance document on bereavement was also developed and shared with schools which fed into the Grief Recovery training that was offered to schools via Plas Derwen PRU.

Advice and guidance was also given in support of looked after children. Officers liaised with both the Fostering Team and Foster Carers to ensure the effective communication of key educational messages. Information was also shared with regards to Trauma Informed Practice, Attachment Theory and the use of Boxall Profiling.

The multi-agency Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) Panel continued to operate on a fortnightly basis to monitor the engagement young people who have been excluded or are accessing alternative education in the form of home tuition or bespoke packages. Parents who have chosen to home educate their children (elective home education) have been contacted during the pandemic and made aware of the funding available from WG to support them with this.

Access to IT equipment to support remote learning has been an important issue. The Inclusion & Progression Service has worked alongside schools and families to identify those most in need to ensure that these pupils have had access to both hardware and internet access. Free top up internet 'Hot Spot' vouchers have been secured to increase the level of access where required.

Work has continued against the Council's Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Transformation Plan. Progress ahead of the ALN and Education Tribunal Act (ALNET) 2018 implementation in September 2021 remains on track and officers have worked hard to maintain the momentum across services and our schools. Training has been delivered on Person Centred Practices and also the completion of Independent Development Plans. A new ALN IT system framework has been procured and this is underdevelopment to operate as the schools' and Council's database to support the implementation of ALNET. The Statutory requirement to have an Early Years Additional Learning Needs Lead Officer (ALNLO) has been fulfilled.

The new build for Plas Derwen Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) is on track for completion in September 2021. A transition Plan has been developed to support the move from 4 different centres into the new build and work is on track against this. The staff are also being supported in their transition by Sycol, a company experienced in this area.

Successes

The service has experienced a number of successes despite the impact of the pandemic and the work undertaken by the teams was positively recognised by Estyn in their thematic review undertaken during the Autumn Term. The requirement for closer working with schools to gain an understanding of their different operating models has served to strengthen relationships between schools and services, facilitating swift and decisive support for families.

The increased direct contact with parents has in some cases enabled them to become more informed regarding their child's educational needs and how these can supported, including a greater understanding of the specialist resources and equipment available to them. Families have also benefitted from the advice, support and resources offered particularly in relation to food and benefits.

Stronger links are now in place between internal and external services/agencies. Managers have a broader knowledge of third sector provision to be able to signpost both schools and families. The move to online platforms has been swift by requirement across key agencies and not hampered by lengthy bureaucratic inter-agency discussion. Weekly meetings have been established between Social Service, Health and Education to facilitate information sharing and practice development.

Local, regional and national links with service counterparts have been strengthened with attendance at meetings being facilitated by the use of online platforms. This has supported services to respond quickly and effectively, benefitting from the sharing of knowledge, experience and resources.

Despite the difficulties experienced with the implementation of the statutory assessment process for children with Special Education Needs (SEN), the levels of appeal to the SEN Tribunal for Wales remain very low with one case paused whilst an assessment period in a new provision is underway and one other having taken place in January 2021.

The CLASS team has worked in partnership with BCUHB to support the implementation of the Foundation Phase Talk Boost training across 11 primary schools with 31 teachers and 32 teaching assistants having completed the training. This is part of the wider Pathfinder Project to support the development of language skills with young children. The training has been well received and training for a new cohort of schools is planned for.

The level of young people designated not in education, employment or training (NEET) is relatively low with the figures for January 2021 for Year 11 leavers being:

- Tier 1 – 50 (moved out of area)
- Tier 2 – 29 (Unable to engage due to pregnancy, illness, custody etc.)
- Tier 3 – 11 (currently not engaged with no known barriers)

No looked after children are NEET.

EAL learners have, with very few exceptions, remained engaged with the school process, have attended when possible and have engaged with learning in some format appropriate to needs. In some instances, isolated pupils have been linked via technology to access support together. There is great potential for technology to support with this namely bringing families from the same country and learners at the same level together to receive the support they need in a more efficient manner.

Lessons Learnt

The move to remote working has had a number of benefits in relation to service efficiency, particularly in terms of time and expenses. Staff have engaged with the new way of working but it has exposed some areas of skill deficit within teams with regards to IT skills/competency. Whilst there is an increase in time available due to the lack of a need to travel, time management and the use of online platforms needs to be managed carefully with an increase in expectation around availability. Online engagement can be challenging and managers are supporting officers to work effectively within this new operating model.

Staff anxiety and feelings of isolation have been evident. The two-way flow of information and the frequency of this has been important to ensure people feel well-informed and supported. Many have taken up the social engagement opportunities which have been instigated by

managers to support with this; the cross service nature of this and wider team meetings has strengthened the links across the service areas. Careful consideration has also been given with regards to staff working out of Tŷ Dewi Sant to support their wellbeing. Flexible working practices will need to be considered and reviewed in line with individual and service needs going forward.

The wider understanding of IT as a tool has improved across schools, services and families. Managers are identifying where this has enhanced their usual provision and are looking to maintain it as part of their operating model going forward. Online platforms have been used to conduct meetings with providers not based within the locality and this form of contact will be maintained to reduce the need for extended travel in the future.

Whilst there are examples of very positive engagement from pupils and parents to remote engagement, it hasn't suited all and there are particular groups where this has been more evident, e.g. the Travelling community. Despite significant attempts a number of pupils have generally failed to access online learning and access to education, either in school or at home, has been significantly reduced throughout the pandemic. It has become apparent that the relationships between the school and the home is significant in many cases, with the development of trust and understanding being a requirement for progress to be made. Services and schools will need to be willing to adapt practice and reconsider the nature of our intervention if we are to reengage these individuals and actually support their educational progress.

A further group that has been impacted on by the lockdown has been the Year 6/7 transfer pupils, in particular those with ALN. Schools responded positively to the challenges of offering transition activities within the Covid restrictions, with many developing video footage of the schools for pupils to view. The limited transition opportunities and the ongoing restrictions in place within our schools has resulted in some pupils having struggled to settle well into Year 7. Services are engaging with schools and families to see what else can be offered to reduce the impact of Covid restrictions for the coming year.

There has been a wealth of resources made available to schools in response to the pandemic. It has been important to review these and be selective if terms of what is shared with schools by services so that they can make informed choices from quality products. A corporate format and an increase in the eLearning modules available has been identified as a requirement for services going forward.

Section 3 – Recommendation from Estyn Report

A number of strategic actions for the Inclusion & Progression Service were identified in response to Estyn Recommendations 2 & 3. Improving levels of attendance and reducing exclusion remain priority areas for the service. However, it has been challenging to measure any impact of changes implemented to date on the levels of both given the Covid restrictions and changes to WG legislation and recording.

A Senior Learning Adviser for Engagement was appointed in January 2020 with a remit to review the operation including the use of data by key services such as the Education Welfare Service (EWS). Attendance and exclusion were identified as priority areas for Flintshire internal audit to support improvement; the audit is due for completion in the Spring Term 2021.

A new Mission Statement has been developed for the EWS, with the referral process being revised and clarified with schools. The Senior Learning Adviser has taken lead responsibility for permanent exclusion to increase the status and monitoring of this area.

A new Education Support Officer (ESO) post has been established within the EWS. An audit process for school attendance utilising the ESO has been developed and three high schools have been identified to work as partner schools to trial the process. Following completion of the audit process, a report is compiled which reviews the existing practice and offers recommendations for improvement. Schools will offer feedback on the process to help refine this targeted intervention going forward. Data will be used to review the impact of the intervention.

To support the increased use of data to facilitate improvement, the Senior Learning Adviser Engagement has worked closely with the Schools Management Information Team (SMIT) to review the existing data sets and develop a process of regular data collection and analysis for both attendance and exclusion. Education Welfare Officers are required to review these with their schools and Team Manager to identify any areas of concern.

Senior managers are reviewing and refining policy and procedures to ensure shared understanding and agreement around these within the service which is then being disseminated to schools.

The service will be represented on the Early Help Hub to help strengthen links with other agencies and to feed relevant information into the decision making processes in support of children and families in need.

Services such as the Behaviour Support Team (BST) and Education Psychology Service have continued to offer support to schools to develop strategies to reduce the number and frequency of short term exclusions. BST officers have also attended regular behaviour planning review meetings with mainstream schools and multi-agencies, to offer a coordinated approach to improving attendance.

Plas Derwen is leading on the roll out of the National Nurturing Schools Programme across Flintshire. This initiative is an integral part of the service's strategy to improve attendance and support a reduction in exclusion through the development of inclusive practices across schools. To date, fourteen schools have signed up to this project with twelve about to embark on their training in the summer term and two schools moving into Year 2 alongside Plas Derwen in their training schedule.

The Education Psychology Service has delivered the Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) training to 39 staff from 24 primary, secondary and special schools. Ongoing supervision from an Education Psychologist is being offered to support the participants in their delivery roles.

Section 4 – Next Steps / Future Priorities

Educational Engagement and Achievement

- Work in collaboration with schools and other agencies to identify effective strategies and interventions to support pupil progress, particularly vulnerable children post Covid.


- Respond to the outcomes of the internal audit on attendance and exclusion.
- Implementation of a revised operating model for Engagement Services linked to supporting an improvement in attendance and reducing exclusion.
- Adaptation and development of training offer to schools and families, building on the success achieved this year. Identification of priority areas for training and intervention, e.g. supporting children who have been language deprived as a result of the Covid restrictions through the further roll out of the Talkboost training.
- Further develop the role of the Emotional Wellbeing Group to identify appropriate and effective intervention and develop appropriate regular forums to share effective practice.
- Complete the review of the Behaviour Support Service and Secondary Intervention as part of the Plas Derwen Outreach provision.
- Implement the Young Person Counselling Service pilots within the primary sector.
- Continue the work into Emotionally-based Schools Avoidance (EBSA) by the Education Psychology service.
- Continue to identify and source alternative education opportunities via the Progression Service.

Digital Learning Opportunities

- Continue to support staff, schools, pupils and parents to use IT equipment and software effectively.
- Increase the electronic and physical library of adapted books available for all pupils with Visual Impairments.
- Continue to roll out the use of Video Interactive Guidance via the Education Psychology service.
- Continue with the development and implementation of the ALN support system Eclipse.
- Develop innovative ways of using IT to support engagement and also training.
- Developing the online presence of Plas Derwen in social media to promote the service and the New Build.

Specialist Education Provision

- Continue to embed the ALN Transformation plan to deliver a new statutory approach for supporting children and young people with additional learning needs from 0-25 years.
- Consider innovative ways for the Education Psychology Service to disseminate psychology and best practice, working with other teams and settings to ensure consistency on quality assessment protocols and processes.
- Complete the feasibility studies around the extension of specialist provision within Flintshire.
- Continue the work of the Plas Derwen Transition Group ensuring that moving into the new build is as seamless as possible for pupils and staff.



**School Improvement - Welsh Advisory
Service
Self-Evaluation Report**

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Section 1 – Service Overview

The Welsh Advisory Team (WAT) consists of 3 staff; 2.8 full time equivalent working in English and Welsh medium primary schools and 1 Admin. Support, 20hrs per week. This includes the service manager/team leader. There are 59 English-Medium primary schools and 5 Welsh-Medium primary schools. According to Welsh Government's Welsh-Medium provision, primary school categories all 59 English-Medium schools are defined as category 5 schools and all 5 Welsh schools are defined as category 1, Welsh -Medium primary schools.

The team's main objectives are to contribute to Flintshire's Welsh in Education Strategy, improve standards in Welsh (first and second language) and develop the language skills and teaching of the education workforce in primary schools.

The Welsh Advisory Team provides targeted support following careful analysis of information from a range of sources, e.g. key officers, school improvement priorities and Estyn reports. Support ranges from advice and guidance on school effectiveness in relation to the teaching of Welsh; guidance on curriculum changes, implementation and delivery; comprehensive and flexible in-service training programme by subject specialists,; support for teachers and headteachers before and following an inspection; advice and support in developing the school's self-evaluation processes in relation to Welsh; classroom advice and support for teachers who deliver first and second language Welsh; support for KS2/KS3 moderation; opportunities for more able and talented pupils to extend their Welsh language skills; support for latecomers in Welsh-Medium schools at Key Stage 2 and support for Flintshire's Welsh-Medium secondary school with the 'Trochi' programme (6 week programme to yr 6 learners from English-Medium primary schools wishing to transfer to Welsh-Medium secondary education). The Service also provides support and guidance to primary schools in relation to Siarter Iaith (for Welsh-Medium) and Cymraeg Campus (for English-Medium) programmes for developing the use of Welsh beyond the classroom setting.

The Service collaborates closely with the regional school improvement service, GwE, to support schools with the greatest need. The Service also provides input into the regional strategy for Welsh.

Section 2 – Review of 2020-2021

The Service delivery for 2020-2021 has been reviewed and adapted significantly to respond to the changing needs of schools as a result of the pandemic. The main focus of this delivery has been creating and adapting resources to enable primary schools to have access to suitable resources for effective blended learning to ensure that Welsh is still accessible in the home learning environment. This was developed alongside the national and regional plan for blended learning - developing new approaches to teaching and learning to accommodate pupils who are learning in different environments – at home or at school. The emphasis has been on producing high quality resources to promote best practice in Cymraeg as well as on progression.

March to September

Series of ‘**Challenges**’ prepared for F/Phase and KS2 primary children to encourage use of Welsh whilst at home during the initial lockdown period. Given that children only hear Welsh at school in the majority of families, the focus for the team was to ensure the activities were both engaging, fun and age appropriate. Informal feedback from 10 schools demonstrates these were useful and very much appreciated.. They were fun for the children and manageable for the teachers. A high proportion of the teachers working in English medium primary schools lack confidence and the skills to be able to prepare Welsh activities that are different from the normal day to day class routine. Subsequently the provision of challenges by the Welsh Team alleviated the concerns that some teachers may have had.

- Nationally prepared challenges were prepared for WM schools, focusing on the Siarter Iaith. These were disseminated to Welsh medium schools.
- Team planned and prepared 4 units of work. These included detailed teacher’s notes and supporting planned activities and resources, including sound files for a block of 4 weeks work. These were for primary teachers to utilise when children began to return to school for the ‘check in, catch up’ sessions in the summer term.

Meithrin/Derbyn:Nursery/Reception – Golchi Dwylo and Dau Gi Bach

BI 1 a 2/Yr 1&2 – Nature Sensory Walk outdoors and related activities

BI 3 a 4/Yr 3&4 – Hobbies and Food and related activities

BI 5 a 6/Yr 5&6 – Presenting Personal Information and related activities

These were planned by adapting resources already available, whilst ensuring the characteristics required for effective blended learning were included, e.g. making effective use of digital technology such as J25, Educandy, Adobe Spark. All PowerPoints included voice recordings to ensure correct pronunciation. Teacher notes for each unit were also prepared. They were organised into focused activities, with step by step guide for teachers who were less confident using Welsh. The notes took into account the need to challenge some learners, whilst making the activities accessible to all. Feedback from schools was very positive.

- The challenges and units were sent to all primary schools. Welsh medium schools could access them if they deemed appropriate for the linguistic nature of the children given a very high proportion of their learners come from homes where English is the main language e.g. 2 schools had latecomers during 2019 2020.
- WAT provided resources focusing on the alphabet with the teacher responsible for the Trochi programme at Ysgol Maes Garmon.

- Blended learning resources were adapted and created for Regional School Improvement Consortia section on the Hwb platform (SWAY). Team manager participated in weekly video conference meetings and cascaded information to neighbouring Welsh Advisory teams within the GwE region to ensure resources available reflected the language patterns and materials used in the North. WAT created 5 units of work (Cathod, Miwsli, Sami Samon, Cadw'n Heini, Salad Ffrwythau) and adapted several others to ensure a Northern version of a particular resource was available for Flintshire schools. Links to these resources have been emailed directly to schools and have been tweeted in a means to optimise the number of teachers using them. It's intended that they'll be available on Hwb for the long term and are therefore useful for all primary schools over the coming months.
- During the summer term the team responded to individual requests from teachers and schools. Each response being bespoke and tailored to the requirements of the request. Cross authority (Wrexham, Denbighshire, Conwy and Flintshire) discussions were hosted online in preparation for September with the objective of approaching online training in a consistent manner, whilst also utilising a common resource. WAT adapted training handbooks that the four authorities could use in the autumn term. Voiceovers were prepared by Flintshire for the KS2 handbook. This is an invaluable resource that will be used for the short and longer term. Voice recordings of language phrases will ensure staff using the resource can practice and ensure accurate pronunciation of common phrases with the learners. The focus of the resource is developing staff's use of everyday Welsh language – teachers and teaching assistants.
- Professional development of the WAT through Hwb webinars in preparation for the shift towards working in a more digital manner was invaluable in moving forward with implementing a different working model during the summer term and beyond, e.g. Adobe Spark, Screen Castify.

September Return

- A monthly newsletter is prepared and disseminated to all primary schools. 6 sent to date. The objective of these is to cascade relevant information linked to the work of the Service, resources available, training and updates from external partners. They're also a means of 'touching base' with all primary schools. WM schools may wish to utilise some resources normally used in English medium primary schools and vice versa, depending on the linguistic ability of cohorts.
Feedback from a member of staff: 'I have also read the Athrawon Bro newsletter and I am planning to use the resources and yard games in my lessons next week! They are really useful.'
- Another 12 units of work including teacher notes, supporting PowerPoint including sound files and further resources to support delivery for approximately 4 weeks, were being prepared for primary teachers using the blended learning model. All resources offer progression in language skills from Nursery to Year 6. This is an important factor given the varying language level that schools could potentially be working with given the on-going situation. *Recent feedback from one school: 'The Power Point – gweithgareddau gwanwyn 5 & 6 is working really well for distance learning. It's great how the children can hear the correct pronunciation of the words too. My class have enjoyed playing the games in Educandy today. Thank you.'*
- Careful planning has taken place to enable the service to deliver training online. The rollout of this has been in discussion with the Primary Head's Federation and has been carefully mapped out to ensure it complements the current day to day working of schools. This focused training began with teachers who are new to the school and who have very little

or no Welsh language skills, enabling them to use basic everyday phrases. They have been divided into 4 F/Phase and KS2, 1hr long sessions. Each session focus' on differing language phrases the teachers can then utilise during the course of the school day. The resource 'Cymraeg ar Dy Dafod' is used. 1 session carried out to date. 6 teachers attended the first online session. 100% of attendees were satisfied that the training met with its objectives. 100% also felt the resources presented were suitable for their needs. All teachers attending identified targets bespoke to their own situation.

- Regular cross-authority discussions re preparing for the Language, Literacy & Communication element within the Curriculum for Wales. Other neighbouring authorities agreed to adopt a handbook containing progressive language patterns created by Flintshire. Exemplar thematic planning models incorporating Progression Steps 1, 2 and 3 are currently being created and these will be utilised as models during forthcoming training.
- The Service has also been preparing resources that fit into current topics e.g. Black Lives Matter and Wildlife. These link into the blended learning models prepared by GwE and are available on Google Classroom.
- Collaborative working nationally with Siarter Iaith co-ordinators across the country has been maintained. The focus areas are planned collaboratively, then resources are shared, minimising duplication on a national level, e.g. Gemau Buarth, resources to support parents with the Welsh language at home. The next focus is on the Dimensiwn Cymreig across the Areas of Learning Experience in the new curriculum.
- Each member of the team has adopted a flexible method of working with schools during this period, responding to school needs as and when required.
- Welsh Cluster Model Meetings have been hosted digitally to maintain contact


Section 3 – Recommendation from Estyn Report

Indirectly supports Recommendation 1 – Improve outcomes for learners in Key Stage 4 by developing high standards of Welsh in the primary sector

Section 4 – Next Steps / Future Priorities

The work of the Welsh Advisory Team supports the key priorities in the Council Plan for 2021-22:

- Maintain support for the rollout of the revised curriculum for pupils from 3-16 which better prepares them for their future lives and employment by March 2022
- Continue to support the raising of standards at primary school level to enable onward learner progression by March 2022
- Increase the capacity and take up of Welsh medium education to achieve Welsh Government targets by March 2022
- Further Improve the Welsh language skills of staff in schools to more effectively support learners and the delivery of the curriculum by March 2022
- Continue to improve pupils' standards of Welsh in all schools to encourage greater bilingualism by March 2022



**School Improvement – Healthy Schools and
Healthy Pre-Schools
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- Section 4 Next Steps / Future Priorities**

Section 1 – Service Overview

A team of four officers are funded by Public Health Wales to support schools and pre-school settings to actively participate in both the Welsh Network of Healthy Schools Schemes (WNHSS) and the Healthy and Sustainable Preschool scheme (HSPSS). The team work to ensure that health education and promotion becomes an integrated part of the curriculum, ethos and whole school community in line with national and locally agreed targets in line with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act. Officers also coordinate a number of initiatives and grants which enhances this work and can vary from year to year depending on health priorities. For 20/21 they include:

- Welsh Government School Holiday Enrichment Programme (SHEP)
- Welsh Government Period Dignity Grant
- School Health Research Network (SHRN)
- Public Health Wales Physical Literacy Project

Section 2 – Review of 2020-2021

From February 2020 the manager of the team began maternity leave for 12 months and a member of the team acquired additional responsibility to enable the service to be suitably covered. As a result of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the Healthy Schools and Pre-Schools programmes were suspended from 19th March until 22nd June 2020 across Wales. All the team were required to work from home on a permanent basis and continue to do so. During this time two members of the team were redeployed to the initial development and roll out of the 'Test Trace Protect' (TTP) system in Flintshire.

Once the team were remobilised they began to work under the direction of the national PHW team and the three priority areas for both schools and pre-schools:

- Infection Prevention Control
- Mental and emotional health and wellbeing
- Physical activity (Active travel, outdoor learning)

A national planning group was established for developing and coordinating the adaptations to the WNHSS and HSPSS for the Covid-19 recovery phase in the Autumn Term. Further working groups were subsequently established. Key outcomes for the working groups have been the development of policies, guidance and resource directories for schools and pre-schools which are being finalised currently before distribution. Training for the team was provided with an emphasis on infection prevention control.

From March 20 – February 21 schools have paused their participation within WNHSS and assessments have been placed on hold until September 21. Visits have not been possible and in-schools coordinators have had their work redirected accordingly. Support via email and phone calls has taken place. 72 school staff have begun to access online / virtual training opportunities from the Autumn term onwards including ‘Supporting Children’s Sleep’ training from the Sleep Charity, Dealing with Loss and ‘Tremendous Trees and Wonderful Woodlands’ training with Natural Resources Wales. The School Holiday Enrichment Programme (SHEP) did not take place across Wales in 2020.

Settings participating in the HSPSS have increased their engagement during the Autumn term 2020 and many have had virtual meetings and regular communication thereafter. Uptake for the pre-school virtual training has been good with 109 pre-school staff attending to date including Wellbeing, Sleep, Dealing with Loss, Physical Literacy, Jabadeo and Natural Resources Wales. Some Assessments have also been undertaken virtually.

The Period Dignity grant was reduced for the financial year 2020/21 and schools received an allocation of the funding direct to their budgets based on the number of females within their school in Year 5 and above. Secondary schools had a larger weighting than primary schools in regard to funding. Food banks and Youth clubs also received funding direct.

Public Health Wales funded a Physical Literacy Project for pre-schools in Flintshire which involved ‘train the trainer’ training for the team over three courses with GwE. The team have since developed their own materials and delivered training for the first time virtually in January 2021 to pre-school staff. Settings will also receive resources and further training on Jabadeo to supplement physical literacy development.

In line with the Strategic Equality Plan Objectives 2020-2024 the development of a Trans policy and guidance for primary schools has been paused following legal challenge to a number of local authorities in 2020. In the absence of the Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance (which is now also on hold), we are not in a position to move forward until Welsh Government provide further clarification.

The electronic system to record and report on identity based bullying in schools has been developed and 10 schools have expressed an interest through the Headteacher Federation meetings to pilot the system, which is hosted on Flintshire workspace. This has been paused with schools currently closed, however we aim to have some feedback before the end of the summer term, with a view of launching in Sept 2021.

The School Health Research Network (SHRN) conducted their survey during the Autumn term 2019 and all secondary schools participating had their individual reports shared in April 2020. The Flintshire SHRN County report was issued May 2020. The report uses students' responses to the 2019/20 School Health Research Network Student Health and Wellbeing Survey to report on the following areas of health and wellbeing:

- Food, fitness and physical activity
- Wellbeing and emotional health
- Substance use and misuse
- Sex and relationships

6733 pupils from all 11 secondary schools in Flintshire participated in the survey during the Autumn term 2019. This is higher than the first survey undertaken in Autumn 2017 which had 6585 participants. Once schools received their reports, members of the Healthy Schools Team were able to develop one page profiles summarising each schools data and provide support in the development of action plans accordingly. The County SHRN Action Plan 2019-2024 has been updated in line with the latest data. Below is a summary of improvements made across schools within the county by comparing the 2018 data with 2020 data. Alongside this, areas of regression which require further prioritisation going forward.

Improvements made:

- Increase in students who agree teachers care about them (Fig 12)
- Reduction in bullying (Fig 21 & 22)
- Reduction in students who have ever sent someone a sexually explicit image of themselves (Fig 24)
- Increase in young people speaking to teachers about violence in relationships (Fig 28)
- Reduction in alcohol consumption (Fig 35)
- Reduction in cannabis consumption (Fig 39)
- Reduction in sexual intercourse (Fig 44)
- Increase in use of contraceptives (Fig 46)

Areas of regression:

- Reduction in exercise (Fig 6 and 9)
- Increase in sedentary behaviour (Fig 8)
- Increase in pressure felt by young people (Fig 14)
- Decrease in students who feel there is support available (Fig 15)
- Increase in young people going to bed after 11.30pm (Fig 16)
- Reduction in views about body being about right (Fig 29)
- Increase in use of legal highs (Fig 43)

Section 3 – Recommendation from Estyn Report

The actions identified below have been paused with limited engagement opportunities due to school closures and Maternity Leave however this work will be prioritised going forward into 2021.

Implement the actions against the recommendations from the Estyn Inspection 2019

- Develop engagement strategy to discuss attendance issues with children and young people to hear their views on what helps and what hinders good attendance e.g. through School Councils & Youth Council.
- Review Substance Misuse Policy to better reflect current position and support appropriate consistent sanctions across Flintshire schools.

Section 4 – Next Steps / Future Priorities

- Funding confirmed from PHW for WNHSS and HSPSS 21-22 to continue to provide support to schools and preschools across a wide variety of health themes for policy, guidance and training.
- Nationally there is a priority to support The Framework Guidance on embedding a Whole Schools Approach which is to be released this spring and Flintshire are leading on the assessment tool implementation for the region. Stronger links with GwE are a priority for Wellbeing provision and a local and regional mapping for wellbeing is a key action going forward in order to better support schools implement the above guidance. This will be particularly relevant for the recovery phase and will form part of the county's wellbeing steering group work plan.
- Funding has also been confirmed for Period Dignity grant and this has been increased for 21-22 and we will continue to support schools, youth clubs and foodbanks to utilise this funding.
- Nationally SHEP funding has been increased therefore planning for summer 2021 provision will begin shortly.
- The SHRN survey will take place between Sept-Dec 2021 therefore will need to reengage secondary schools to ensure all participate in the survey alongside supporting the implementation of their school based action plans and pupil voice as part of that.
- Ongoing work in line with the SEP priority areas will continue including the pilot of the Bullying reporting system.

**School Improvement - Early Entitlement
Service
Self-Evaluation Report**

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- Section 2 Review of 2020-2021**
- Section 3 Recommendation from Estyn Report**
- Section 4 Next Steps / Future Priorities**

Section 1 – Service Overview

Early Entitlement Service: Early Entitlement Team: Team Leader
3 full time teachers
1 part time specialist support assistant (0.8)
1 part time ALNCo (0.3)

Eligible children, whose 3rd birthdays fall within relevant timeframes each academic year, are entitled to 10 hours of funded education in a registered Early Entitlement setting/school, for a maximum of 2 terms following the term in which they are 3 years old.

Early Entitlement Team (EET) aims:

Education: to support the provision of quality learning opportunities in non-maintained settings providing Early Entitlement (EE) education.

Workforce Development/Training: to keep abreast of national initiatives and directives and to disseminate relevant information/guidance to non-maintained settings through regular visits, support documentation and training.

Vulnerable Learners: to support the engagement, well-being and performance of vulnerable groups

Partnerships: to foster effective partnerships in order to deliver an integrated and effective service which will support the delivery of high quality educational provision for 3 year olds.

Section 2 – Review of 2020-2021

Education: to support the provision of quality learning opportunities in non-maintained settings providing Early Entitlement (EE) education.

Early Entitlement education has been impacted greatly by the response to Covid-19. Many non-maintained settings have struggled to remain open. In Summer 2020 the EE scheme was suspended by Welsh Government and all EE registered playgroups and a third of private day nurseries closed. No summer eligible EE children were registered with the scheme. Spring funded EE children had their places withdrawn.

The EET have been working from home since 17th March 2020. In response to the closure of settings and the focus on 'home learning' the EET created a new Facebook Page and in May, June and July 2020 used it to bilingually share a learning activity suitable for 3 year olds each day. Parents of Spring funded EE children were invited to view the EET's activity ideas directly or through 'Home Learning' sites set up by the child's setting. Parents of non EE children could sometimes access the ideas through their child's setting. The response to the Facebook Page was very positive with setting staff and parents signing up. The Page received lots of 'likes'. Direct feedback from one parent indicated that it was a very valuable resource for those supporting young children at home.

Between September and December 2020 registered EE providers were open but were operating under challenging and restrictive conditions. No 'in person' visits were made by the EET to settings- settings have no funded EE children this term and many settings' risk assessments didn't include EET members as 'essential visitors' at that time.

During Autumn 2020 and Spring 2021 the EET have supported setting staff remotely rather than in person - in the Autumn this was via a minimum 4 calls/ on screen meetings and in the Spring increased support has been provided to settings through phone calls, on screen meetings or online training sessions.

EET have followed WG and LA advice in prioritising the wellbeing of setting staff and children and have sought to support the educational work of setting staff in a balanced and appropriate way. The level of EET interaction with planning, assessing and self-evaluation work has been tailored to the unique level of challenge faced by individual settings. All settings however, have been offered bespoke support in expanding their Continuous Provision environment safely. Some settings increased their Continuous Provision areas after discussing challenges with their EE teacher. This gave the children access to a wider range of learning opportunities which would encourage the development of additional skills.

Four EE settings in an Estyn/CIW 'Progress Review' inspection category proved challenging to support and monitor. Again the challenge was balancing the setting staff's wellbeing with the work that was necessary to evidence addressing the inspection action plan. It is also difficult to monitor real improvement in a setting in a follow-up category without visiting in person. Many settings now use the 'see-saw' digital observation format and EET members, in many cases, are only able to access this through using a setting's own laptop/tablet. The challenge for EET was how to confirm that children were making good progress. The LA's feedback to Estyn in February 2021 was able to show ongoing improvement in the work of 3 of the settings. A CIW/Estyn panel will meet in March to discuss the evidence provided and to make a decision as to whether the settings can be removed from their follow-up category.

During Autumn 2020 the EET had to disseminate support paperwork electronically rather than in person. EET adapted paperwork to reduce the costs for settings in printing paperwork

themselves. However working electronically and printing documents was not possible in some settings and additional arrangements had to be made to post paperwork out. The majority of open settings indicate that they have completed baseline assessments on EE children using this paperwork. The assessments will help settings plan to move individual children on in their development.

The EE teachers report that there is evidence of ongoing commitment to the delivery of EE education within many settings but that it is difficult to confirm the degree to which the children's progress is being planned for and how effective it is without being present in the session and viewing relevant paperwork.

Being supported remotely is challenging for some of our non-maintained EE settings. These settings have very limited Wi-Fi and staff are unable to have an on-screen meeting with members of the EET during an EE session. These settings often also find it difficult to plan and assess in an electronic format and to forward paperwork electronically for the EET to review. Other EE settings have adapted to remote support well and show that there may be a place for some ongoing opportunities to support them occasionally in this way in the future.

The EE service has considered the long term impact of financially challenged settings and has tried to provide ongoing funding where possible.

Workforce Development/Training: to keep abreast of national initiatives and directives and to disseminate relevant information/guidance to non-maintained settings through regular visits, support documentation and training

During Summer Term 2020 EET members completed online courses and researched national initiatives, examples of good practice etc. to strengthen future support of settings. Umbrella support organisations for the non-maintained sector, charities and LA projects such as the Pathfinder Project have offered a high volume of quality training opportunities throughout the Covid response period and EET members have continued, whenever possible, to attend relevant online training. The EET's research and own professional development during the year has influenced the advice given to settings and will influence the focus and content of this year and next year's training programme e.g. through the EET's strengthened understanding of how to support children's language and communication difficulties.

The new ALNET Act (Wales) 2018, which is due to be implemented September 2021, is proving to be a priority in terms of training for EE settings and for the early years non-maintained sector generally. The EET is currently playing a lead role in raising awareness of the new ALN Act for the early years' non-maintained sector and in identifying, shaping and delivering training linked to the transformation of the ALN system. By December 2020 the EET had created a draft document which i) outlined features of provision to be offered under the new ALNET ACT and ii) identified elements of 'good practice' which should be seen in high quality settings. This document was then shared with other services for approval and for further input and in its final format will be integral to a number of future training courses for the wider early years, non-maintained sector within the LA.

The challenge for the EET this year has been devising training courses which can be delivered remotely. To date the 'training' has been non-interactive e.g. a 'wellbeing' PowerPoint presentation was created by EET and sent out to all EE providers in October 2020 to support the team's focus on staff and children's wellbeing. The EET also created a Welsh narrated presentation aimed at raising awareness of the new ALN Act – this was sent out alongside the

English version to all non-maintained, early years' settings within the LA. EET members have now familiarised themselves with the technology required to host remote, interactive training and will be involved in training this way in March 2021.

Vulnerable Learners: to support the engagement, well-being and performance of vulnerable groups

Disadvantaged Learners: The Early Years Pupil Development Grant (EYPDG) has been used by the EE Service since 2015 for the professional development of the EE setting workforce with a view to strengthening staff's impact on the engagement, well-being and performance of disadvantaged learners. For the 2020-21 financial year the majority of the grant has been used to enable the EET to assess the influence of EYPDG funded training and support to date and to act upon the information gained to improve future support of vulnerable learners.

EET members have conducted individual conversations with all EE settings in relation to their knowledge and understanding of the EYPDG, the ongoing impact of any training and the ongoing use of resources. The EET have collated all responses and have created an action plan to address some of the areas of weakness e.g. by creating a support document to increase setting staff's awareness of the EYPDG and its purpose, planning to increase reference to vulnerable learners in all EE training and encouraging settings to include greater reference to vulnerable learners in their annual self-evaluation or Quality of Care Report.

A proportion of this year's EYPD grant has been used to provide each non-maintained EE setting with funding to be used specifically to support the engagement, well-being and performance of disadvantaged learners. Non-maintained EE setting staff were asked to consider disadvantaged learners in their own settings, to identify appropriate resources to develop the specific skills of those learners and to inform the EET of those resources and skills. The EET approved/ did not approve each resource request and in doing so were able to gain further insight into settings which showed understanding of the challenges faced by disadvantaged learners and the methods of addressing these challenges.

Learners with Additional Learning Needs: The support provided for an EE child with developmental delays or difficulties traditionally takes place within the setting and through offering advice to setting staff on strategies etc. that they can use with the child. As many EE settings closed due to Covid for large parts of the last financial year, the EET has had to adapt the format of this support by regularly by-passing settings and staff and speaking directly to parents. The EE's ALNCo has checked on the wellbeing of EE registered children during lockdown periods and has offered parents strategies for supporting the children's development if required. Parents have expressed their gratitude for this contact and for the ALNCo's input.

The EE ALNCo's direct involvement with parents this year has highlighted the valuable insight this interaction can provide and the more rounded picture the EE service has gained of individual children.

The EE Service has also increased the EE ALNCo's level of involvement with setting staff this year and more structured approaches to offering strategies for supporting individual EE children have been put in place. Current feedback on this increased specialised input indicates that staff feel the strategies are having a positive impact on the child/children's engagement in learning. Support for children with developmental delays or difficulties is an area which the EET is focusing on in partnership with childcare services and the Inclusion Service in order to create a more

integrated, clearer process for requesting and receiving support under the new ALNET Act (Wales).

Partnerships : to foster effective partnerships in order to deliver an integrated and effective service which will support the delivery of high quality educational provision for 3 year olds.

Partnership working on a local, regional and national level has long been a strength of the EE service but during the Covid response period this has expanded much further. Video conference technology has supported an increased volume of meetings between local services/ stakeholders and highlighted the need for clear, open communication. During Summer Term 2020 the EE Team leader worked collaboratively with other services (Flying Start and Childcare Development) to create documents clarifying the Covid response in the Early Years and to appropriately place vulnerable children under the Coronavirus Childcare Assistance Scheme (CCAS).

The EET has worked in partnership with Flying Start, the Childcare Development Team and the Inclusion Service to agree an ALN training programme for the non-maintained sector and is trying to simplify and clarify the process of providing additional support for individual children within non-maintained settings. EET helped the Inclusion Service to create an initial document which would form the basis of future ALN training for the early years, non-maintained sector. Other services then provided further input (Flying Start, Childcare Development Team, Speech and Language Service, Educational Psychology Service) to create a document with agreed content.

EET have worked cooperatively with Social Services teams to identify a range of resources suitable for supporting children's speech, language and physical skills. This work was to make effective use of a Welsh Government grant given to support children's development due to the impact of Covid. The EET shared a format they had devised for allocating resource money to EE settings and this same format has been adopted by the wider group to allocate the grant funding to all childcare and education providers working within the early years, non-maintained sector in Flintshire. The EE team leader now sits on a temporary panel which will approve the resource orders made by settings.

The EE team leader also sits on a panel that approves applications for small and large grants from childcare providers across the LA and on a panel that approves sustainability grant applications from the Childcare Development Team's (Social Services) budget. The same panel is now used to agree sustainability grant applications made by EE providers to the EE Service. Being part of the work of these panels provides the EE team leader with an insight into the financial stability of EE settings and the possible level of EE provision within a setting in the future.

EET have worked in partnership with the Pathfinder Project to identify opportunities for extending good practice in Flying Start settings into EE settings- a pilot is planned to introduce Wellcomm - a speech and language screening tool - into some EE settings over the next term.

Regionally the EET continues to work in partnership with other North Wales EE Teams via termly meetings and the EE Team Leader attends regular local and regional meetings supporting ALN transformation work. On a National level EET members continue to support the work of Estyn (termly stakeholders meeting) and Welsh Government (New Curriculum working parties).

Section 3 – Recommendation from Estyn Report

N/A – No recommendations in relation to this service area

Section 4 – Next Steps / Future Priorities

- Review and adapt written policies and procedures of the EE Service. Consider these in relation to the actions within the 2020 audit report and the strengthening of current processes which aim to ensure the EE Service is cost effective.
- Review and strengthen the expectations of engagement and provision from EE setting staff –engagement and provision should be of good quality to ensure that the learning outcomes for EE children are high. RAG rating EE settings through an external, impartial format may support the work of the EE Service in identifying EE settings with low levels of engagement and low quality provision who should have the de-registration process initiated.
- Continue to work in partnership with the Flintshire Inclusion Service and other education, social and health services to create an integrated, outcome effective and cost effective process for identifying and supporting children with learning disabilities and difficulties across the 0-5 year age range within the LA, under the requirements of the new ALNET Act (Wales). The outcome of the new Act may necessitate an increase in the level of support the EE Service is required to give to individual settings and children.
- Act upon the information gained through reviewing the impact of the Early Years Pupil Development Grant within EE settings to date, to ensure future use of the grant is strengthened in terms of its effectiveness in raising the educational standards of disadvantaged learners.
- To ensure the ongoing continuous professional development of the EET, particularly in relation to the new curriculum and ALNET Act (Wales). To deliver training to EE setting staff to enable them to effectively deliver the requirements of the new curriculum and ALNET Act in relation to supporting and meeting the educational needs of EE children.



Integrated Youth Provision Service Self-Evaluation Report

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- Section 4 Next Steps / Future Priorities**

Section 1 – Service Overview

Local authorities are obliged to provide and/or secure the provision of Youth Support Services (youth services), deliver Play Sufficiency and provide a Youth Homelessness Service. Flintshire Integrated Youth Provision (FIYP) delivers on these statutory duties for Flintshire County Council. FIYP provides open access services including youth clubs and play services, detached youth work and targeted support for specific groups of young people. This includes provision which is directly delivered (e.g. youth workers in schools) and commissioned (e.g. NEWCIS to support young carers).

This provision takes place within various settings, including schools, homes and in communities. This includes dedicated provision for young people more at risk of poor outcomes such as young carers and young people with disabilities, at risk of exclusion, having unhealthy relationships and with emotional and mental health problems.

Section 2 – Review of 2020-2021

The pandemic closed youth clubs, outreach services, community-based activities and most schools. FIYP adapted quickly. FIYP introduced:

- Policies for safe digital and remote engagement with young people and staff. This was supported with staff training.
- The establishment of 'Estyn Llaw – Reaching Out'- a fully bilingual support team to offer services to young people. The service moved to make available secure digital, remote services to young people. This includes:
 - 1:1 support for young people

- Online meetings for Flintshire Youth Council and Young voices speak out
 - Online youth clubs. This includes an online youth club for Welsh language speakers (that involves 60+ young people) and Inspire (mental health hospital based youth work support) online youth clubs for young people with self-harm needs and a more targeted on line Pride club for LGBTQ+ young people led by Estyn Llaw.
 - A Facebook page to share information and advice and encourage contact
 - Facilitating access to laptops for young people at risk of digital exclusion.
 - Developing and distributing digital resources to support young people at risk as they transition from primary to secondary school.
 - Digital sexual health support provision by our Sexual Health nurse/youth worker and sexual health team
- Digital methods for FIYP staff meeting, planning and training. The pandemic response has made it significantly easier to involve part time and sessional staff in team meetings and team development.
 - Increasing the availability of youth worker support in key environments for young people. This includes:
 - Enhancing the availability of a dedicated youth worker 1 full day minimum per week every week at 5 secondary schools. When school lockdowns ease and schools can utilise these staff within schools, the service is ready to mobilise this support. This also supports effective implementation of the Curriculum for Wales.
 - Enhancing support for young people discharged from hospital for reasons of self-harm to help build resilience and wellbeing.
 - Co-locating a youth worker with social work teams that support looked after children and care leavers at risk of homelessness. FIYP has also recruited a youth homelessness prevention co-ordinator to oversee a strategic approach to the delivery of statutory duties to prevent homelessness for young people. A targeted youth worker is also employed and based within the Council's housing team.
 - Additional support for young carers and carers in partnership with NEWCIS carer organisation.
 - Working with partners operating the Duke of Edinburgh Award to facilitate an assessment method to recognise the progression of young people differently within the pandemic.
 - Informal education and play activities each day at 5 Resilience Hubs, with schools asking staff to continue working with individual children on their return to school at 11 schools. Placement of 4 play staff in to Ysgol Maes Hyfryd special provision to support the school to offer a supported place to vulnerable children.
 - Jointly delivered with partners including 28 Town and Community Councils, AURA, URDD, Kicks for Kids and DAFFODILS, a summer play scheme for children aged 5-12 at 55 sites was delivered (including 2 Welsh Medium play schemes at Ysgol Gwynedd (18 on register) and Ysgol Maes Garmon (62 on register). During 17-29 August 2020, 1,865 children participated including 30 disabled children supported by volunteer

buddies. Feedback was provided by 64 parents/carers which was all extremely positive about the benefits for children and working families (especially within the context of COVID-19) and about the quality of organisation. Local media also gave positive coverage to the summer playscheme. See <https://www.leaderlive.co.uk/news/18757183.flintshire-play-schemes-adapt-another-successful-summer/> (Flintshire play schemes adapt for another successful summer article, The Leader, 29 September 2020) and <http://www.deeside.com/flintshire-county-councils-summer-playscheme-deemed-a-success-even-with-added-setback-of-covid-19/> (Flintshire County Council's 'Summer Playscheme' deemed a success, even with added setback of COVID-19 article, Deeside.Com, 30 September 2020)

Education and Youth portfolio reorganisation now has the Youth Justice Service directly managed by the Chief Officer from January 2021. As a FIYP management team, we are also progressing plans to seek a Quality Mark for FIYP youth work in 2021. We also developed proposals for service development that were approved by Cabinet in November 2020. This includes expanding online services for young people and the availability of youth workers within environments accessed by young people (e.g. at AURA sports clubs) and having a more sustainable and safe youth club offer, once COVID-19 guidance supports the safe and phased reopening of youth clubs. The Cabinet decision includes transferring management of 8 buildings to schools or as part of community asset transfers and developing new provision at Hwb Cyfle and continuing to support the community-based Roc youth club in Mold.

The Cabinet decision generated positive media coverage. See: <https://www.leaderlive.co.uk/news/18860646.flintshire-youth-work-services-flintshire-set-provide-online-support-wake-coronavirus-pandemic/>

Section 3 – Recommendation from Estyn Report

FIYP is contributing to the delivery of Recommendation 2 - Reduce exclusions and increase attendance in both primary and secondary schools. This includes:

- Building on initial pilot work in Ysgol Treffynnon which was subject to special measures and then expanded to two other secondary schools in 2019/20, FIYP is progressively co-locating more youth workers within secondary schools to support young people experiencing barriers to engaging with education such as poor self-esteem and confidence, unhealthy relationships and bullying.
- Supporting learners that are struggling with school attendance and/or at risk of exclusion through programmes such as Forest School.
- Investing in the Inspire programme to support young people that have engaged in/at risk of self-harm. While data collection for the evaluation is currently underway, the evaluator advises that 57% of young people of school age engaging with the evaluation report that Inspire has '*helped with school or college*'.

This reinforces the positive acknowledgement by Estyn (p.7) that '*staff from the Integrated Youth Service contribute purposefully in engaging individual learners at risk of disengaging with education*'

Section 4 – Next Steps / Future Priorities

FIYP is implementing the Cabinet decision and consulting on proposals with young people, staff, parents/carers, Councillors, partner services and community members. As at 19 January 2021, feedback has been received from:

- 58 young people (of which 10 identify as LGBTQ+, 20 report having a disability and/or health and/or neurodiverse condition and 7 are young carers).
- 13 councillors
- 5 schools/college
- 20 partner agencies in the statutory and voluntary sector
- 33 parents/carers
- 20 FIYP staff members
- 11 wider community members including retired youth workers, army cadets' instructor, parent governor and a teaching assistant.

The consultation closed on 12 February 2021. The feedback will inform the development of an update report to Cabinet and the new emerging FIYP Plan for September 2021 to August 2024.

The FIYP Plan 2021-2024 will set out FIYP strategic direction aligned with core Council and Education and Youth portfolio priorities. For example, the FIYP Plan 2021-2024 will set out how FIYP will:

- further support schools and education colleagues with delivery of the Curriculum for Wales
- deliver on statutory requirements for a Youth Homelessness Prevention Service
- increase joint work with statutory and voluntary sector partners to utilise youth work approaches to prevent problem escalation for children and young people.



**Youth Justice Service & Flintshire Sorted
Self-Evaluation Report**

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Section 1 – Service Overview

The Youth Justice Service undertakes statutory functions under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to reduce offending by children and young people. The Youth Justice Service undertakes functions in the following areas;

- Prevention and diversion including administration of Out of Court Disposals (Bureau),
- Provide Court Services to youth, magistrates and Crown Court (including out of hours)
- Manage and deliver statutory Court Orders
- Provide support to victims of crime
- Manage Custodial Sentences and Remands to Youth Detention
- Support young people as they make transitions.

The YJS is required to adhere to the National Standards for Youth Justice. As part of our functions we are responsible for undertaking assessments, planning, intervention and supervision to young people which requires undertaking a holistic assessment and intervention. As part of our role we are required to ensure appropriate risk and safety and wellbeing management to support young people, victims and communities. The Youth Justice Service produces an annual Youth Justice Plan in line with its statutory requirements which details our strategic and operational objectives which is overseen by the local Youth Justice Executive Management Board and Delivery Group.

The Youth Justice Board Cymru have also created a wider strategy through a Youth Justice Blueprint which outlines a number of key priorities to create a whole systems approach to Youth Justice which;

- Develops a youth justice system which treats children with fairness and respect and helps them build on strengths and positive life choices,
- Support children live crime free, positive and healthy lives, improving wellbeing and making communities safer,
- Reduce the number of children in the Youth Justice System through effective prevention and diversion,
- Reducing re-offending and create safe environments in which children are protected from

- harm and supported to thrive,
- Deliver a bold ambitious approach which is transformative with sustainable services that provide continuity through the care system and.
- Work with key stakeholders to strengthen the integrated partnership approach to the delivery of youth justice services which promotes a child first approach.

The Blueprint aims to develop and strengthen whole systems approaches to prevention, pre-court diversion, community, custody, resettlement and transitions and system oversight.

Flintshire Sorted Young People’s Drug and Alcohol Team provide a comprehensive service to children and young people up to the age of 22-years-old and aim to minimise the risk of drug and alcohol related harm to individuals, families and the community.

Flintshire Sorted incorporate prevention work within schools and the community, as well as targeted work for those young people at increased risk of misusing substances. Furthermore, a therapeutic service is available for individuals and small groups of young people, whose substance use is having a negative impact upon daily functioning and mental health.

Flintshire Sorted work collaboratively with young people to identify individual need and tailor an intervention to best meet that need as well as aiming to improve resilience and future aspirational outcomes.

Flintshire Sorted offers consultation and guidance to young people, parents and professionals and will deliver bespoke training packages on request.

Section 2 – Review of 2020-2021

On 23rd March 2020 the Youth Justice Service suspended standard face to face provision and implemented a Operational Business Continuity Plan which supported increased remote ‘virtual’ delivery of face to face services whilst still ensuring we maintained our statutory functions. During the pandemic the YJS and Flintshire Sorted have seen a reduction in the number of referrals from partner agencies and statutory agencies such as HMCTS and North Wales Police.

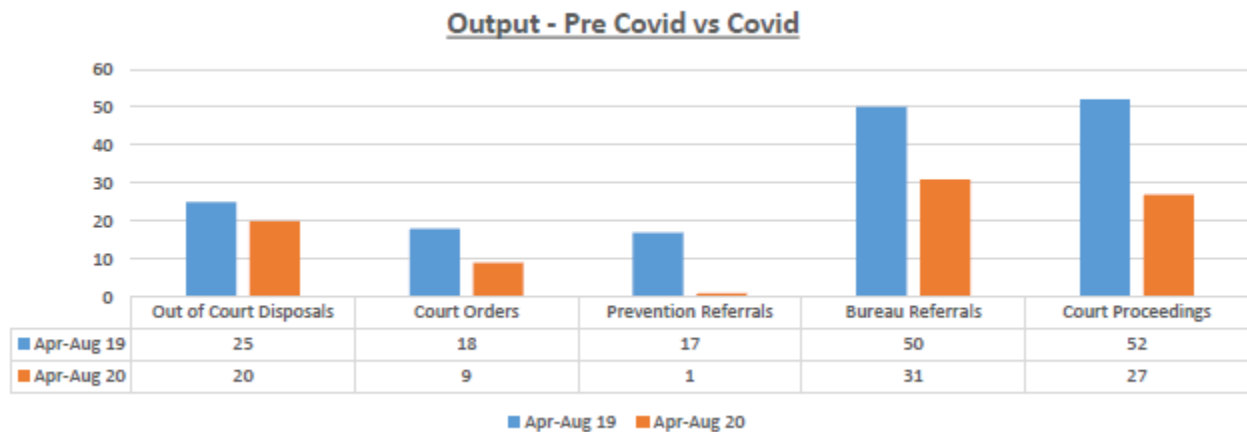


Figure 1: Comparison Referral rates between April-August 2019/2020

As part of our Business Continuity Plan the YJS increased virtual levels of contact with young people as a result of reduced face to face contact. As part of these contacts we also ensured that young people continued to access education and were referred to local Education Hubs where required.

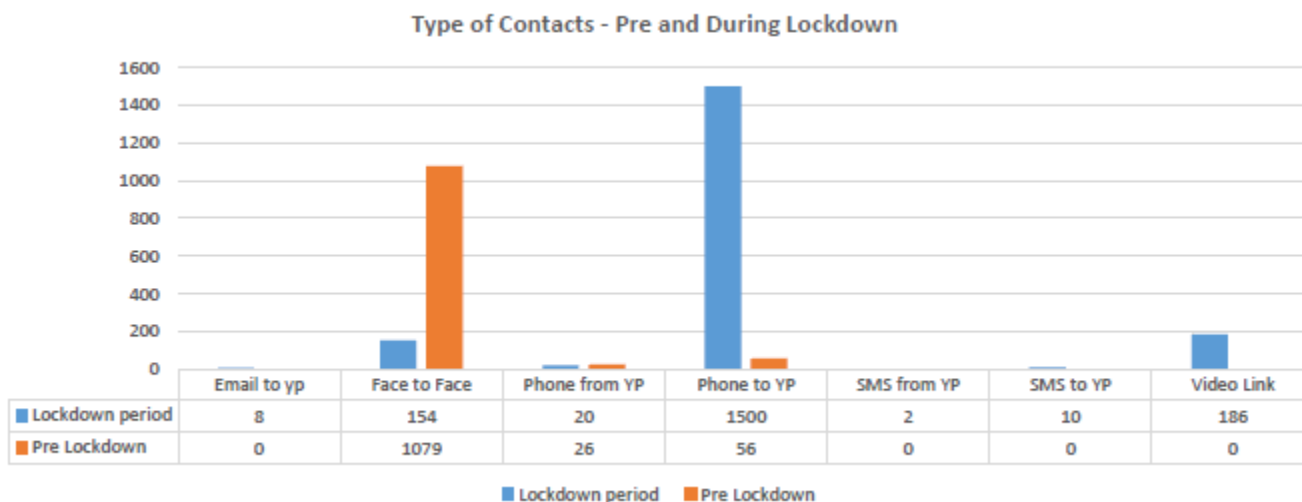


Figure 2: Comparison contact type (August 2020)

In order to support our young people assessed as most at risk of re-offending, serious harm to others or presenting with safety and wellbeing concerns we implemented a Risk Register which was reviewed weekly by the YJS Management Team and enabled the YJS to undertake face to face doorstep visits where required.

HM Courts and Tribunal Services (HMCTS) suspended all routine Court work during the initial phases of the pandemic, however, the YJS was able to list priority cases where such hearings were required to manage risk or safety and wellbeing. The YJS continued to track and monitor Court work during the pandemic through weekly Court Team Meetings.

Out of Court Disposals and Referral Order Panels continued virtually during the pandemic, however, all face to face reparation (Unpaid Work) activities were suspended and practitioners were encouraged to explore with families projects that could be completed within their home environment.

Multi-Agency Risk Management Meetings and the Flintshire Missing Exploited and Trafficked Panel (MET) have continued virtually during the pandemic.

Flintshire Sorted (Young Person’s Drug and Alcohol Team) also suspended face to face work during the initial phases of the pandemic, however, were able to offer door step visits in line with our Business Continuity Plan. Flintshire Sorted continued to offer Education Hubs access to targeted virtual drug and alcohol support to vulnerable learners.

The YJS was required to devise and submit a Covid Recovery Plan to the Youth Justice Board which has been supported and reviewed by the YJS Executive Management Board. Our YJS and Sorted Covid Recovery Plan outlines a phased approach to re-commencing services. Currently the YJS is in phase 2 of recovery which requires following risk assessment and adherence to public health guidance;

- Increased face to face contact with high risk or vulnerable young people or young people commencing assessment with YJS or Sorted,
- Increased one to one face to face Sorted support for young people in schools,
- Commence a project to re-commence small scale outdoor Unpaid Work projects in the community,
- Ability to map community tensions and anti-social behaviour issues and explore Community Engagement activities.

Following the new Welsh Lockdown, some of these activities have continued in Phase 2 of our Recovery, however, we have also curtailed aspects where increased contact has not been assessed as essential.

During the first phase of the pandemic the YJS assessed the following challenges and successes;

Challenges;

- Limitations to quality of assessment and interventions due to the absence of face to face or home visits.
- Providing in person staff / young person / victim and family support.
- As lockdown restrictions eased the YJS were notified of an increase in anti-social behaviour and the use of Dispersal Orders in some communities.
- Delivery of unpaid work and reparation activities was curtailed.
- Delays in Court hearings resulting in a backlog of Youth cases.
- Unable to utilise WhatsApp messaging due to confidentiality.

Success;

- Staff have adapted and responded quickly to new ways of working.
- Improved oversight of high risk cohort and increased frequency of supervision with young people.
- Some young people and families have preferred alternative methods of service delivery.
- Staff have developed new interventions and been creative in how they fulfil requirements of orders and outcomes.
- Improvements in multi-agency staff representation at risk and safety and wellbeing meetings due to new technology platforms.
- Progress has still been made against YJS Delivery Plan.

As a result of the lessons learnt, the YJS has continued to work towards increasing face to face contact even following further lockdowns. We have also reviewed our methods of communication and have sought agreement following revision to our safeguards for the increased use of WhatsApp as a means of communication for young people over 16 years of age. We have also ensured that there continues to be multi-agency monitoring of community anti-social behaviour issues and a pro-active offer of YJS support where young people have been identified (through

Police Yellow Cards) as at risk of engaging in further offending, anti-social behaviour or substance misuse. The YJS has also seen an increase in the number of Community Safeguarding and Public Protection Incidents (CSPPI's) in respect of concerns regarding young people's emotional and mental health. The YJS has a Critical Learning Policy with all of its partner agencies in order to capture best practice and lessons learnt to inform future practice.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, the YJS staff have adapted to the challenges and come together as a workforce. The YJS Executive Management Board and Delivery Group have continued to meet regularly and progress has been made against our annual Youth Justice Plan. During the pandemic the work related to the Youth Justice Blueprint has been suspended and has recently re-commenced. Much of this work is being co-ordinated through the YOT Managers Cymru team.

Section 3 – Recommendation from Estyn Report

The contribution of the Youth Justice Service is focused on Recommendation 2: Reduce exclusions and increase attendance in both primary and secondary schools.

During the pandemic the YJS were successful in recruiting an Education Officer and we reviewed our transition agreement with the Education Department. This allowed for greater focus on our cohort to (i) ensure that young people had the necessary plans in place to support a return to education (ii) any support required to reintegrate back into education was identified and (iii) those young people assessed as NEET or not accessing their full education entitlement were highlighted. The YJS continued to attend the local EOTAS Panel to highlight the needs of vulnerable YJS learners.

All children and young people referred to the YJS are co-allocated to our YJS Education Officer who will triage the case with respect to education. This process requires liaison with schools and ensures that information is shared with school and education department with the YJS. The triage assessment also identifies any current plans / assessments currently in place and ensures cases have been elevated to the Inclusion Service where attendance is an issue. The YJS continued to attend the local EOTAS Panel to highlight the needs of vulnerable YJS learners.


The YJS also undertook a local restructure and appointed a Senior Manager for Youth Justice & Flintshire Sorted in order to build on the strengths of the Senior Management Team within the Education and Youth Portfolio. Such an appointment will support the portfolio on making further progress against ESTYN Post Inspection Action Plan.

Section 4 – Next Steps / Future Priorities

- As part of our Youth Justice Plan the YJS is keen to explore with the Head Teachers Federation amendments to the Exclusion Policy & Substance Misuse Policy which aims to prioritise diversionary activities with the YJS and Flintshire Sorted in respect of substance misuse and possession of offensive weapons.
- Continue to strengthen the profile of learners open to the YJS who are not accessing

their full education entitlement.

- Complete the review of the Flintshire Missing, Exploited and Trafficked Panel, strengthen data analysis with North Wales Police and Partners and strengthen partnerships with schools and education.
- Work to be undertaken between the YJS and Inclusion Service to improve monitoring of exclusion and attendance of the YJS cohort and provide this information to the YJS Executive Management Board.



School Governance Support Service Self-Evaluation Report

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Section 1 – Service Overview

The governor support role within the Education portfolio is part of the role of a Senior Manager. The portfolio does not have a dedicated full time staff resource for governor development. The part time provision and support provided to governing bodies however, is enhanced by access to the dedicated resource and help line provided by the national Governors Cymru web service.

The key priorities of the service relate to supporting governing bodies during ‘schools causing concern’ procedures; federations; Education Improvement Boards; training and development; Flintshire Governors Association; appointment of council governors to governing bodies, Schools Budget Forum and Education, Youth & Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Section 2 – Review of 2020-2021

As a result of the Covid pandemic, face to face training sessions for school governors have not taken place since March 2020. However, the Council remains compliant with the statutory duty to provide the regulatory school governor training programme as the Welsh Government statutory governor training modules are available on line via www.e-learning-governors-in-wales.org.uk

The wider local authority governor training programme delivered in previous years to reflect changing national, regional and local priorities cannot currently be replicated on-line. However, a training module was commissioned by the six north wales authorities during the summer term 2020 to develop an additional, non-statutory on-line module in support of the strategic role of governors.

Use of the on-line training portal continues to be very good with 661 completion certificates issued during calendar years 2016/19 and 193 issued during 2020. This suggests a good level of engagement during the pandemic with training being completed on Induction; role of Chair; role

of Clerk; understanding school data and complaints handling. There are approximately 1250 governor positions within the Authority.

The network of North Wales Governor Support Officers have continued meeting virtually each term with the GWE leads for Governor Support. The network has been able to continue to share approaches and resources to support governor development during the pandemic. GwE also continues to offer support to individual governing bodies, when requested, through their professional learning offer for 2020/21 including development support for school governors on Wellbeing, Curriculum for Wales, Additional Learning Needs and welsh language.

Administration of the Flintshire Governors Association continues to be provided by the Council. The Forum has proven to be an effective, regular consultative platform and a timely vehicle for providing updates on key national and local issues. Over a third of schools were regularly represented at the meetings. However, whilst no meetings have been possible during the pandemic, an alternative termly newsletter has been set up to keep governing bodies updated on national/local developments. In addition, meetings of the Schools Budget Forum and the Welsh Education Strategic Form are currently held virtually and there remains consistent representation by governors.

Schools still continue to have subscription access for 2020/21 to the Governors Cymru web based support service. Access to the Governors Cymru helpline and web based resources provides an effective additional resource for governors and has been of particular support to governors during the pandemic.

The Council continues to administer the nomination of Local Authority governors to school governing bodies. This process has not been adversely affected by the pandemic. Vacancies on governing bodies remain at a consistent level and no major concerns relating to 'resignations' arising from the pandemic have been reported.


Section 3 – Recommendation from Estyn Report

There were no specific recommendations relating to governor development.

Section 4 – Next Steps / Future Priorities

The service priorities in the short /medium term:

- the commissioning and delivery of a safeguarding module for governors
- consideration of commission through PSOW bespoke complaints handling training
- development of the Flintshire Governors Association newsletter as an interim process to full meetings;
- consideration of how/what future training and development should be before return to any face to face sessions



**School Planning & Provision Service
Self-Evaluation Report**

Contents

- Section 1 Service Overview**
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Section 1 – Service Overview

The School Planning & Provision service oversees the planning of school places and asset management through the Council's Capital programme and the Welsh Government capital schemes for School Modernisation & 21st Century Schools. The service is responsible for the Council's School Admission policy and practice and School Transport policy, and is client to the Integrated Transport Unit.

Section 2 – Review of 2020-2021

School Modernisation

Despite significant challenges brought about by the pandemic, the School Modernisation Team have made significant process in the School Modernisation Programme.

The Programme has been maintained and delivered in anticipated timelines/budgets by adapting working methods and by the use of technology. In addition, projects have been brought forward within the programme to ensure appropriate delivery and offset potential delays i.e. where proposed projects and or areas required statutory consultation that could not be appropriately progressed during the pandemic.

Lixwm Primary School

In March 2020, post consultation, Cabinet agreed with the proposal to change the designation of Lixwm Primary School from a County Primary (CP) to a Voluntary Aided (VA) school. The change in designation came into effect 1st September 2020. Subsequently, the Governing Bodies of Ysgol yr Esgob VA, Caerwys, and Lixwm VA Primary School agreed to undertake a consultation

on a proposal to establish a federation between the two schools.

The consultation, with which the Council assisted, was progressed in accordance with the Federation of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations (2014). Consultation commenced 16th November 2020 and closed 18 December 2020. As with all consultations of this nature, a version of the consultation document was produced for children and young people who were likely to be affected by the proposal.

The governors of Ysgol yr Esgob VA, Caerwys, and Lixwm VA Primary School have agreed to proceed, therefore, the schools will formally federated on 7 June 2021, following the statutory cooling off period.

Childcare Programme

The Welsh Government made capital grants available to councils for the purposes of childcare provision across Wales. The objective of the programme is to provide 30 hours of government-funded early education and childcare for up to 48 weeks of the year to all three and four year olds of eligible working parents. The 30 hours will be made up of the existing minimum 10 hours of Foundation Phase Early Education (Early Entitlement) and up to 20 hours of childcare with a registered provider. The Council was successful in being awarded £4,890,000 through this initiative

A key policy driver for the Welsh Government is that the 30 hours offer is as clear and easy as possible for working parents to understand and children to access. The primary purpose of the capital programme is, therefore, to facilitate and support the co-location of the Foundation Phase and childcare provision wherever possible. This is in line with our Prosperity for All commitment to “introduce a new model of Community Learning Centres, providing extended services with childcare, parenting support, family learning and community access to facilities built around the school day”.

Social Services led on the Childcare Strategy and the production of a comprehensive Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) that looked at;

- i) the supply of childcare in Flintshire including: type, quantity of provisions, location, costs, places available, choice and
- ii) the gaps in childcare including: location choice, barriers to take up provision, places unavailable.

The CSA was the basis of the successful bid to Welsh Government for early years’ capital.

The Council made a strategic decision to package up the projects within the Childcare Programme for purposes of efficiency, for effective programme management, use of resources, best value (economies of scale) and procurement. To support this approach the client/operational role for the delivery of the Childcare Grant schemes was transferred from Social Services to the School Modernisation Team within Education and Youth. The Chief Officer for Education and Youth assumed the role of Senior Responsible Officer for the programme in June 2020. The construction programme is being managed through the School Modernisation team.

The programme includes different capital funding packages to maximise investment in a number of school sites and is formed from the following funding streams: WG Childcare Grant, WG Welsh Medium Grant, 21st Century schools, Flying Start and Flintshire County Council’s own Capital funding. The programme also includes a Flying Start project at Aston Family Centre; the Council

funded capital project at Ysgol Brynford and the project at Ysgol Croes Atti, Glannau Dyfrdwy.

In January 2021 Cabinet approved the following projects within the construction programme:-

- Ysgol Bro Carmel, Carmel
- Ysgol Derwen, Kinnerton,
- Westwood CP School, Buckley
- Ysgol Yr Esgob, Caerwys.
- Ysgol Maes Y Felin, Holywell,
- Ysgol Sychdyn
- Aston Family Centre (WG, Flying Start Grant)
- Ysgol Y Llan, Whitford
- Ysgol Glan Aber, Bagillt.
- Ysgol Croes Atti, Glannau Dyfrdwy (WG 21st Century/Childcare)
- Ysgol Merllyn, Bagillt
- Ysgol Brynford (Council's Capital Programme)

It has been challenging of managing a complex programme with multiple WG funding streams with differing criteria and funding limitations. The construction contract will now start as soon as it is feasible in early 2021.

Ysgol Croes Atti, Glannau Dyfrdwy site (WM)

Proposed project funding through the Welsh Government Childcare Grant and Welsh Government 21st Century school investment programme forms part of an extended package which will see an investment of £1.1m in the Glannau Dyfrdwy site, improving provision for Welsh medium education in the Shotton area - an important strand of the Council's Welsh in Education Strategy. This project is anticipated to start in summer 2021.

Ysgol Glanrafon, Mold (WM)

The project at Ysgol Glanrafon is funded primarily via external Welsh Government funding through the Childcare and Welsh Medium Grants with the balance secured through the Council's Repair and Maintenance allocations, S106 contributions and a small amount of Salix finance through the Council's energy team to support energy efficiency measures, creating a £4.2m investment programme. Construction commenced on site November 2020 with the anticipated completion being February 2022.

Ysgol Brynford

This is a council funded project but from a contractual perspective is included in the extended construction package for the Childcare Programme. This proposed project will see an investment of £1.090m in the Ysgol Brynford site with an anticipated start during March 2021.

Welsh Government Infants Class Size Grant

The £2.7m project, part funded by the Council, at Ysgol Glan Aber, Bagillt to increase capacity and improve facilities was completed as planned in March 2020.

Hope, Ysgol Castell Alun

The £7.6m project will construct a new build three storey Art and Design Technology (DT) & classroom block, relocated next to the sports hall which enables the removal of mobile classrooms, the demolition of the current DT block and the creation of a new car park.

The constructors mobilised in October 2020 and the anticipated project completion is November 2021. The project remains on track.

21st Century schools Investment Programme - Band B

The Phase 2 remodelling of Connah's Quay High School was completed in November 2019 and this completed a total investment of £11m on this site.

Queensferry Campus Project

The Queensferry Campus Project is a positive example of the Council's ability to work in multi-agency approach to secure community engagement and collaboration.

This project will provide new a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) to bring virtually all elements of the current provision onto one site and to address the significant issues around the variety of accommodation currently in use for Plas Derwen. The project also includes investment in Queensferry CP School to address a number of suitability issues and the final legacy issues associated with the facilities shared with the former John Summers High School. Following the successful bid for an additional stream of Welsh Government funding for communities, the Council was successful in bidding for funding for a community learning project worth £2.5m which will be called Ty Calon. The site will also include upgraded rugby facilities Shotton Rugby Club, funded by the Welsh Rugby Union. Additionally, colleagues in Social Services have secured WG Flying Start Funding.

Finished off with the landscaping of the remaining green open spaces, this significant investment will complement the Adult Day Care centre, Hwb Cyfle, and provides a final masterplan solution for the former John Summers High School site.

The constructors started on site in November 2020 and remain on schedule. It is anticipated that the full project will be completed by February 2022 with anticipated handover of the different elements as follows:-

- Plas Derwen – September 2021
- Ty Calon Community Hub - September 2021
- Queensferry CP – October 2021

Proposed 3-16 Campus – Mynydd Isa

In March 2020, Cabinet agreed to amend the Council's nominated Mutual Investment Model (MIM) project to the proposed 3-16 school for the Mynydd Isa area and provided a mandate to officers to engage with Welsh Government's Strategic Partner for MIM. This process began in Autumn 2020. The proposed 3-16 school at Mynydd Isa is notable as the first MIM school project in Wales.

The Council, Argoed High School, Mynydd Isa Primary School and education officers are now

engaged in client engagement meetings with the Welsh Education Partnership Team to develop the new project build. Subject to successful navigation through Council, WG business case and MIM processes, the new 3-16 campus is anticipated to be completed by September 2023.

Admissions

School admissions have continued to be managed in accordance with the WG Admissions Code and the vast majority of parental preferences continue to be met (96%). Despite the pandemic deadlines for the offer of places for September 2020 were met and assistance was provided, where necessary, for Voluntary Aided Schools as the deadlines fell within the first period of school closures.

Lockdown restrictions brought about changes to the school appeals processes and since May 2020 all appeals have been conducted in accordance with both the School Appeals Code and the Education (Admission Appeals Arrangements)(Wales)(Coronavirus)(Amendment) Regulations 2020. All appeals have been determined on the basis of written submissions and support has been provided as appropriate for appellants and panel members. Procedures have been drawn up to ensure that all parties are able to fully present their cases and the appeal is determined fairly and transparently.

In the next 12 months, it is anticipated that the current in-house online system for applying for school places will be replaced which will enable procedures to be streamlined. This will also allow direct access by schools to admissions information which will assist with their forward planning.

Section 3 – Recommendation from Estyn Report

No recommendations from the Estyn Report related to School Planning and Provision

Section 4 – Next Steps / Future Priorities

- Completion of projects started in Band B investment programme and progression of projects not yet agreed individually by Cabinet into the development pipeline.
- Outline priority projects for 21st Century School Band C Investment Programme.
- Purchase and implementation of Admissions IT Module
- In accordance with the School Appeals Code, recruitment and training of new independent appeal panel members



Leadership
Self-Evaluation Report

The Council benefits from strong leadership with an effective working relationship between professional officers and elected members, led by the Chief Executive and Leader. This is demonstrated through the portfolio structure within the Council where Cabinet Lead Members and Chief Officers work closely together to successfully achieve corporate priorities - as exemplified in key committee documents such as the Council Plan. Cabinet reports, Overview & Scrutiny reports, Performance Monitoring reports and Risk Registers are jointly owned. Programme Boards for each portfolio provide a purposeful platform for informing strategic direction and performance oversight. A robust and transparent Scrutiny process ensures that there is continuous challenge of performance and periodic evaluation of performance and impact. There is strong corporate and political support for Education and Youth Services across the Council. Political and officer leadership of Education is innovative and pragmatic. Education priorities are exemplified in corporate and portfolio level plans and commitments.

The leadership structure and hierarchy of accountability within the Council, both from an Elected Member and an Officer perspective is clearly articulated and understood. Roles and responsibilities are clearly documented. Professional and political leadership is used effectively to manage the Council’s core business of providing quality and responsive public services and this has been clearly evident in the highly effective response of the Council to the Covid-19 health emergency.

Officers and elected members have a track record of working together constructively and this embedded, collaborative approach enabled the Council to respond swiftly and cohesively to the challenges brought about by the pandemic. Establishing a vision for a strategic approach to managing the health emergency which included clearly defined tactical groups led by Chief Officers, under the overall direction of the Chief Executive, ensured that the Council’s response was well coordinated and focused on the right priorities at the right time.

Within the context of delivery of services to children and young people the Council prides itself on its moral commitment to deliver quality provision which supports learners to achieve their potential in an inclusive and nurturing way. A key driver is to reduce the impact of potential barriers to learner progress and the pandemic focused the Council’s attention on particularly mitigating the impact of poverty. This was exemplified in the way the Council made provision for families entitled to free school meals from the start of the lockdown when the funding mechanism for claiming back expenditure was not fully established by Welsh Government – decisions were made based on the needs of ‘people first, money second’.

It was also reflected in the speedy provision of digital devices to enable pupils to access the blended learning offer that was a significant feature of schools’ delivery models following the return of pupils in September. This was instrumental in maintaining learning

through the Autumn and Spring Terms when the virus was at its peak in Flintshire, resulting in high numbers of pupils having to self-isolate and then a second period of face-to-face learning being suspended for most children, which has only just come to an end. The focus on developing the digital skills of staff and pupils to enable them to access learning remotely became one of the portfolio's key priorities and this was achieved very successfully through the close partnership working with the regional school improvement service, GwE, who delivered a massive programme of professional development. As noted by Estyn, the capacity of schools to provide distance learning developed at an 'impressive pace' during the autumn term and continues to evolve.

The onset of the pandemic, which resulted in the suspension of statutory education and the provision of emergency childcare hubs from March to July 2020, created an unprecedented change in the way schools and the Council operated. Many of the usual approaches to supporting school improvement and raising standards of pupil achievement were paused and the efforts of officers refocused on providing support and guidance on managing a Covid response within the context of national restrictions, emergency legislation and ever-changing operational guidance based on scientific and health advice in an atmosphere of extreme anxiety. Nevertheless, leaders have maintained a clear focus on supporting pupil learning and wellbeing.

The strength of the relationships between senior Council officers of the portfolio and its school leaders ensured that there was confidence in the decisions taken during the emergency response phase to repurpose education and to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of the school workforce and pupils. Effective joint working to support the safe operation of childcare hubs and the provision for vulnerable learners and the children of critical workers was a strength of the Council's response which has been acknowledged by Estyn in the thematic review it undertook of all local authorities on behalf of Welsh Government (see Appendix 2).

Another exemplification of the strong leadership within the Education portfolio was the manner in which it supported the reopening of schools for the 'check in/catch up' sessions at the end of the Summer Term and then a full reopening in September. All school provision and support services were in place to ensure a smooth start to the new academic year with all the necessary risk assessments and covid-secure measures in place, resulting in good levels of staff, pupil and parent confidence. These processes have been robustly tested as schools have needed to flex in response to the different stages of the national emergency where their face-to-face provision has had to step down and step up. This also reflects the strong leadership of Headteachers and their senior management teams in Flintshire schools.

The overall focus on the wellbeing of children and young people throughout the pandemic set the strategic vision for the education portfolio from the outset. The provision for the most vulnerable children in Flintshire schools during the pandemic has been highlighted by Estyn as a significant strength of the Council's response and demonstrated the effectiveness of its partnership approach across departments and with external agencies. Within the well-established leadership framework, officers had the space and the

autonomy to develop new ways of working to support children and families which resulted in needs being identified and met in a timely fashion. This has been confirmed by schools and families in their feedback to officers and also to external bodies such as Estyn.

Elected members played an important role in reviewing and challenging the response and the management of risks, but also provided support and encouragement to officers in their endeavours to continue to deliver services, often in new and innovative ways, to protect and support the residents of Flintshire. The Council's approach to strategic leadership is underpinned by public service values and this has certainly come to the fore over the last twelve months. It provides a secure platform for the next stage of recovery.



Flintshire Schools Contextual Data 2020-21	Number	% of FCC	Avg % Wales*
Total Number of Primary Schools overall	64		
Number of Welsh medium primary schools	5		
Number of Faith primary schools	13		
Number of Foundation primary schools	1		
Total Number of Secondary Schools overall	11		
Number of Welsh secondary schools	1		
Number of Faith secondary schools	1		
Number of Foundation secondary schools	0		
Total Number of Specialist Schools	2		
Number of Specialist primary schools	1		
Number of Specialist secondary schools	1		
Total Number of PRU	1		
Pupil Data (All Ages & excluding EOTAS)			
Total number of pupils	23,406		
Total number in Primary	13,798	58.95%	57.83%
Total number in Secondary	9,396	40.14%	36.50%
Total number in Specialist	212	0.91%	1.10%
Total in faith schools	2,652	11.33%	
Total in Welsh medium schools	1,419	6.06%	
Total number of Looked After Children (Jan 2020 LAC)	206	0.88%	1.42% **
Total pupils eligible for Free Schools Meals	4,051	17.31%	18.24%
Total Gypsy Traveller Pupils	133	0.57%	
Total English as Additional Language pupils	1,527	5.62%	6.36%
Total number of pupils with SEN overall	4,360	18.63%	20.79%
Total number of Statemented pupils	669	2.86%	2.88%
Total number of School Action pupils	2,526	10.79%	10.82%
Total number of School Action Plus pupils	1,165	4.98%	7.10%
EOTAS and Elective Home Educated Pupils			
Total EOTAS including PRU	159		
Total pupils Electively Home Educated (Jan 2020)	124		
Welsh National Index of Multiple Deprivation 2014			
Number of Lower Super Output Areas in Flintshire	92		

% LSOAs in most deprived 10%		2.20%	
% LSOAs in most deprived 20%		12.00%	
(see next page) Welsh National Index of Multiple Deprivation 2014 (continued)		% of FCC	Avg % Wales*
% LSOAs in most deprived 30%		19.60%	
% LSOAs in most deprived 50%		34.80%	

*Where comparative data available

**No longer part of PLASC figures, this figure is from the Children's Services report on Stats Wales

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Dear Colin Everett

During the early autumn term, the Welsh Government asked us to undertake a review of local authorities work in supporting their learning communities in schools and pupil referral units (PRUs) during the period from March to October 2020.

This letter outlines the outcome of this work in Flintshire local authority. The content of the letter is based on virtual meetings with officers, the cabinet lead member for education and a sample of schools and PRUs. We have also considered the supporting documentation provided by the local authority and the feedback from surveys of school/PRU leaders, governors, teachers and support staff, parents and pupils. We have referred to the outcomes of the surveys where relevant, although the surveys were mainly be used to inform the national report which was published on our website on 15 January. Here is a [link](#) to that report.

We would like to thank your staff for giving of their time to discuss their work with us and for providing additional information on request.

Yours sincerely



Meilyr Rowlands

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector

The local authority's work to support its schools and PRUs from March to August 2020

Leadership and collaboration

Very early in the spring of 2020, Flintshire established a vision for a strategic whole authority approach to working through the crisis. A series of tactical groups were established to co-ordinate and direct the Council's services in all key areas including education, each chaired by a Chief Officer. Frequent meetings ensured strategic decisions were discussed, understood and agreed by all senior managers and could then be disseminated to all services. This shaped their processes for identifying and meeting needs and ensured that all leaders understood their roles and responsibilities in relation to the situation. The portfolio's risk register and mitigations statements have been subject to review and challenge by the Education Scrutiny Committee. This shared, collaborative response has been a notable feature of the authority's work. It has enabled the education service to work more proactively with a broad range of council services, such as Health and Safety, Transport, Information Communication Technology (ICT), Free School Meals, Human Resources, Childcare, Safeguarding, Additional Learning Needs and Youth Services. This collaboration enabled senior education officers to work with teams of staff to shape key areas of support for provision in schools and PRUs, such as meeting the needs of vulnerable learners. The collaborative strategic leadership that the local authority established at the outset of the crisis has been and continues to be highly influential. It has supported schools and PRUs to focus on their core business of developing quality provision for the children and young people within their schools.

During the first week of lockdown, all schools were open to provide childcare for key workers. By the second week, childcare hubs were created to serve clusters of schools. The local authority provided transport for pupils and also used contracted school transport to distribute food to those eligible for free school meals. The most vulnerable pupils, including those with special educational needs, received support at home, upon request. For example, the Language and Speech Service (known as CLASS) provided remote support to parents to deliver interventions and supplied resources for use at home.

The local authority provided clear leadership and guidance for schools in relation to opening for the check-in, catch-up, recover session in July. Support was given to assess risks and develop models for opening in collaboration with headteachers. Schools and PRUs also received clear guidance about how to set up learning areas and guidance about important issues such as what to do in the event of an outbreak of COVID-19 in schools. On a practical level, schools and PRUs received additional support, for example from the council's 'Street Scene' department to set up one-way systems on their premises. This paved the way for schools and PRUs to open with increased confidence in September for all learners.

Local authority officers identify that they have developed a strong understanding of the difference that their work makes to the provision for learners. In particular, they reflect on the effectiveness of partnership working across agencies and identify clearly, the many benefits that this approach brings. This understanding of the benefits of collaboration across departments is a piece of key learning that the local

authority has drawn from its work throughout the crisis and it is something that it is keen to develop further.

Throughout the spring and summer, Flintshire officers worked well with the regional consortium (GwE). They have developed a shared understanding of roles, responsibilities and expectations in relation to achieving strategic goals in the context of the COVID-19 crisis, for example in developing distance learning resources and providing professional support to enable teachers to offer digital learning for pupils. Through our consultation with schools, it is apparent that they generally feel well-supported as a result of this collaboration. In addition, the local authority, in partnership with GwE continued to support schools causing concern, for example by working with them to produce post inspection action plans.

Promoting learning

In the initial stages of the pandemic, the local authority responded swiftly to provide childcare hubs for vulnerable learners and for children of key workers. They worked well with school leaders to develop and implement a vision for this provision, for example by identifying a lead school in a cluster as the location for the hub and establishing health, safety and staffing arrangements. This ensured that the authority offered a continuation of childcare and learning to those most in need of the service at that time. In addition, the local authority engaged with schools and GwE to support an offer of distance learning.

With regard to developing new approaches to teaching and learning, the local authority worked well in collaboration with GwE to identify the most appropriate ways to support schools and PRUs. This included pastoral engagement with school leaders by local authority and regional officers, the development of guidance to support distance learning, provision of professional learning, and ICT equipment and infrastructure for learners and staff. Feedback from schools indicates that this support was timely and helpful.

When thinking about distance learning in the context of school and PRU closures, the local authority was committed to supporting schools and PRUs to focus on learners' wellbeing. The local authority believed that schools were best placed to develop a wellbeing curriculum for learners so they did not provide detailed curriculum guidance. However, officers actively promoted wellbeing provision, such as regular outdoor and physical activity.

A strength of the collaboration between the local authority and GwE appears to have been the way they have facilitated school-to-school support.

Cameo: Promoting collaborative cluster work

The local authority has worked in partnership with GwE to promote school-to-school support by identifying opportunities to share practice across and between clusters of schools. This approach has enabled schools to broaden and adapt their provision for learners. For example, clusters of schools have collaborated to improve logistical arrangements such as the deployment of staff and shared the

learning experiences they offer for children, including when working in the outdoors. A very few have also collaborated to share a curriculum based on learners' wellbeing and to provide shared lessons via live streaming.

The local authority identified challenges to supporting learners that attended Welsh medium primary schools, whose first language is English. They recognise that replicating immersion in a Welsh language rich environment is difficult. As a result of this experience, they are working to develop additional support materials for schools should the need for distance learning arise again.

In secondary schools, the local authority, via its partnership with GwE, has supported schools to develop their distance learning approaches. Regular meetings between officers and headteachers ensure a shared understanding of schools' approaches to distance learning and enabled schools to access support if needed. This has supported schools to offer continuity in their pupils' learning. Levels of learner engagement have generally been positive. However, it has been an ongoing challenge to engage with a core of disengaged pupils.

The local authority, in partnership with schools and GwE, made rapid progress in upskilling staff to use digital learning resources and strategies. This contributed significantly to the capacity of schools and initially this supported schools to stay in touch with learners to monitor their wellbeing. This partnership evolved quickly into a conduit for continuity of learning for pupils through a range of learning platforms. These enabled teachers to provide support and feedback for learners and facilitated interaction with parents. A very few schools used live streaming to provide lessons. They were reluctant to use this approach initially due to potential safeguarding concerns. Overtime, the authority ensured that schools received appropriate Welsh Government guidance.

Supporting vulnerable learners

From the outset of our engagement with the local authority and its schools, it was evident that supporting wellbeing for all learners, through unprecedented circumstances, was the top priority for all within the education service. The local authority was mindful of the impact that matters associated with the pandemic were beginning to have on learners' wellbeing and mental health and of the potential for a continued challenge in meeting learners' needs overtime. In response, the local authority provided guidance and support to schools and PRUs on how to support learners' wellbeing and mental health during the period of closure. In addition, the local authority's officers have been accessible to schools and PRUs to offer personalised support. The local authority also targeted training for its own teams such as the Young Person's Counselling Service to ensure that support to pupils could be delivered remotely. Overall, schools and PRUs have appreciated the local authority's support greatly.

The local authority worked with schools/PRUs to agree criteria and processes to identify vulnerable learners. This was important as it highlighted the broad range of

provision that the local authority would need to offer or facilitate. In turn, this helped officers to tackle issues strategically, for example by deploying teams of staff to specific tasks or through collaboration with agencies such as social services.

Cameo: Inclusion services for English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners and Traveller children

Senior leaders within the local authority identified the strategic importance of a collaborative approach to the provision of inclusion services. They established networks between key agencies such as the benefits agency and Flintshire county council education inclusion services. They also ensured that heads of service and strategic leads for inclusion understood their roles clearly and that more importantly, they felt empowered to work proactively to make sure that the strategic vision for support became a reality on the ground. This approach is exemplified in the local authority's work to support EAL learners and their families, and learners and families from the Traveller community.

Local authority inclusion services built on strong pre-existing relationships with schools to make sure that they knew where the EAL learners and learners from the Traveller community were and to identify specific needs. They ensured that learners had opportunities to continue to learn through the pandemic by supporting them to attend childcare hubs or by providing work at home. In a few instances, this meant home visits. Inclusion services staff supported schools to make this work accessible for learners and families for example by using staff able to communicate in the families' home language when necessary. They also provided a wider network of support by helping families to access benefits such as free school meals to support the health and wellbeing of learners at a challenging time.

Senior leaders have worked with leaders of the education service and strategic leads for inclusion to keep the effectiveness of their work to support inclusion under review.

The range of need is considerable and the authority's response extensive. It has included allocating vulnerable learners to an appropriate learning hub, providing specific support for groups of learners such as those from the Traveller community, continuing to support pupils with special educational needs and supporting those learners disadvantaged by poverty or other exceptional circumstances.

The local authority's educational welfare officers have provided valuable support to schools, for example by checking up on learners that were not engaging with the learning on offer. Strategies to provide learning tools such as laptops were well received by schools and PRUs although according to schools, levels of engagement with digital learning remained variable among disadvantaged learners. Schools and PRUs, with support from the local authority have also been able to provide support beyond education for disadvantaged learners, for example food vouchers, food parcels and help with housing issues. Schools and PRUs have been complementary about the support received to work with very hard to reach learners.

It is apparent that collaboration has developed as a strength in response to the pandemic. Local authority officers cite numerous examples of how renewed, refreshed or newly formed alliances have strengthened as a result of recent challenges. Examples of proactive collaboration include but are not exclusive to CAHMS, school nurses, Team around the Family and the inclusion and sensory teams. Individually and in combination, these agencies are supporting vulnerable children and those learners with special educational needs effectively in many ways.

The local authority has maintained a strong focus on meeting special educational needs and the needs of other learners requiring extra support. It has adapted its work successfully, for example by using a virtual panel to support statutory assessment processes. This has ensured continuity of support, for example that all Year 7 transfers have been supported to access the specialist provision they required. The local authority has continued to work with schools, for example to facilitate cluster ALN meetings and to review the allocation of support. Officers have worked with schools and PRUs to support learners with statements of special educational needs and those that are likely to require a statement in the future.

It has been a challenge for the authority to ensure that educational provision for pupils with SEN complies with the needs outlined in their statements because these pupils have not been able to attend schools and PRUs each day to receive the specialist input that they normally would, either from teachers support staff or specialist agencies. However, they have provided a range of support material and online sessions for pupils with speech and language difficulties as well as for visual impaired children. In addition, they provided specialised ICT equipment and prepared digital lessons using sign language for learners with hearing impairments. This has been valuable in maintaining specialist skills and services, to support the wellbeing of pupils, their families and staff.

Leaders from Flintshire's PRUs are complementary about many aspects of the local authority's work. They have received helpful support to interpret and implement Welsh Government guidance. The local authority has supported pupils' transition into PRUs successfully through a digital process. The local authority ALN team guided the PRU on how to undertake online reviews. This enabled the PRU to carry out all annual reviews.

PRU leaders highlight the benefits of aspects of multi-agency work, for example with CAMHS and particularly about the role of the local authority Progression Team. The team, supported by Careers Wales, have worked well to successfully place nearly all leavers from key stage 4 into provision in the local further education college. This team has also worked proactively to monitor the progress of EOTAS pupils. PRU leaders were slightly less positive about requirements for duplication of risk assessments for the authority and the regional consortium. In one instance, the same information was requested twice but the PRU was asked to submit it in different ways for different audiences.

The local authority has also shared bereavement guidance for children, young adults, parents and staff.

Cameo: Bereavement Support

As part of its overall strategic vision to support school communities through the COVID-19 pandemic, Flintshire County Council education services drew heavily on its understanding of well-established strengths and partnerships.

Through effective collaboration between the authority's educational psychology service and its pupil referral unit provision, Flintshire provided guidance for all schools and offered training for staff to help them to work with children, families and communities that had encountered bereavement. This sensitive approach aligns with the authority's wider approach to supporting health and wellbeing. Many of the schools that have contributed to this thematic report speak positively about the availability of guidance and the value of training, which places them in a better position than they were in previously to cope with very challenging circumstances should they arise.

Overall, the local authority has worked strategically to support learners' wellbeing and meet the needs of vulnerable learners. It has been flexible and adapted its provision as required to ensure that families receive the support they need from schools and central services. Schools and PRUs have indicated consistently that they feel the support for vulnerable learners provided by the local authority has been available and beneficial in relation to most aspects of their work.

The local authority has been proactive in supporting young people through its youth work strategy.

Cameo: Youth outreach work during a pandemic

Flintshire's 'Estyn Llaw' or 'Reaching Out' team was set up as part of the authority's Integrated Youth Provision response to the COVID-19 pandemic and began its work immediately after Welsh Government announced the first lockdown. The team includes specialist youth workers and a sexual health nurse specialist and is able to provide a bilingual service.

The team has specialist workers based in the Youth Justice Service and Children's Services. The Participation Team's work is guided by the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UNCRC). Their priority is to focus on all areas of engagement and participation and they are committed to involve and have representation from all young people in Flintshire. The team works in partnership with the Flintshire Youth Council and the 'Young Voices Speak Out' group.

The team has supported these groups to identify key areas of need for young people during the COVID-19 restrictions including mental health and educational support. They have also worked with them on key tasks, for example, responding to local and national consultations about online safety.

The team has provided online school transition resources for young people who have missed the valuable work that normally takes place at school during the

spring and summer terms. This aims to prepare learners both emotionally and physically for the next stages of their education. They also provide advice and signpost young people to information relating to sexual health and relationships, online safety, debt, health and careers information/advice, for example about Flintshire County Council's Modern Apprenticeship Scheme. The team have also offered 'Forest School' experiences to support vulnerable learners to transition back in to education.

The local authority's work to support its schools and PRUs from September

Leadership and collaboration

Leaders across the local authority have benefitted from and built on the strong foundations laid through the spring and summer terms. They have, through collaboration with schools and partner agencies, such as GwE, put in place processes and procedures to support schools and PRUs to reopen successfully for pupils.

Since reopening, the local authority has worked with schools and PRUs to emphasise the importance of prioritising the wellbeing of pupils, families and staff. Officers have continued to liaise regularly with school and PRU leaders, for example through engagement with the headteacher federations, to gain an accurate picture of what is working well as well as an understanding of the challenges that schools face. They take good advantage of these opportunities to share strategy with school and PRU leaders and to provide them with information about new resources as they develop, for example, relevant professional learning resources that have been developed by GwE. They continue to provide schools and PRUs with clear and timely advice to support them to deal with issues that arise, for instance when they need to close specific classes or year groups.

The local authority continues to keep the effectiveness of its work under review. Arrangements to share information across the authority and opportunities to provide additional support or challenge are in place, for example through the work of the education scrutiny committee who have kept aspects of the authority's provision, such as the impact of youth work under regular review. These processes ensure that leaders at all levels are empowered to act in the best interests of learners and that there are appropriate arrangements to seek assurances that their work is making a difference.

Promoting learning

The local authority's schools and PRUs have received useful support to ensure continuity of learning throughout the COVID-19 crisis. The local authority has drawn upon strong, established relationships with school leaders, communities and service

providers to ensure that a learner's experience is as normal as it can possibly be against the backdrop of current challenges and restrictions.

The local authority has supported schools and PRUs to think about solutions that enable them to provide a learning offer that builds on prior experiences. It has also provided schools with the confidence to adapt learning experiences, for example by offering more learning in the outdoor environments or by supporting the use of online resources. Overall, schools and PRUs indicate that the return to school-based teaching has been relatively smooth and very positive for learners.

Across the local authority, the capacity of schools to provide distance learning has developed at an impressive pace. The local authority, in partnership with GwE, has played a pivotal role in supporting schools to develop this provision, for example through beneficial exemplar materials. This has supported schools, to provide continuity of learning for pupils at times when they cannot physically be at school. A consistent message from schools is that the development of these approaches and the considerable improvement in staff skills are positive outcomes from a challenging time. However, local authority officers and school leaders have raised some concern about the limitations of band width in some schools where the infrastructure is unable to cope with the volume of digital traffic, for example during the 'firebreak' lockdown when large proportions of pupils were accessing lessons from home.

Through its partnership with GwE, the local authority has provided a flexible professional learning offer that helps schools respond to the challenges of the current situation. For example, useful 'how to' videos and webinars have supported foundation phase staff to adapt their pedagogy and provision.

All of the schools that we engaged with feel supported by the local authority in their plans for using the additional funding through Welsh Government's 'Recruit, recover, raise standards: the accelerated learning programme'. This support has given them confidence that most schools are using the funding appropriately, for example to appoint additional staff to develop learners' basic skills. In a few instances, schools have indicated that they have used this money to cover financial shortfalls while others have expressed concerns about a perceived requirement to spend the money quickly without really thinking through their strategy.

Through our engagement with schools, we have received consistent messages about the valuable support provided by the local authority's human resources department. This support has helped schools to respond to issues appropriately, as and when they arise. A few schools have indicated that they have found it challenging to maintain staffing levels at times, for instance when members of staff have been in isolation. They also identify difficulties with covering teachers' planning preparation and assessment time.

Supporting vulnerable learners

The local authority's inclusion team has continued to work diligently to support schools and PRUs to meet the needs of vulnerable learners. Through continuous liaison with agencies within and beyond the authority, they have supported

vulnerable learners to re-engage with learning at their school or PRU, for example by providing transport services.

Since returning to school in September, to a large extent, meeting the basic needs of vulnerable learners has been easier than it was through the lockdown period. This is largely due to the fact that learners are at school and are therefore able to access services such as free school meals, directly. The authority has also drawn on its experience through lockdown to respond quickly to the need to provide funding for free school meals to pupils that cannot attend school due to COVID-19 related reasons.

The inclusion team has continued to provide valuable support for EAL pupils to enable them to access learning. It has also been proactive in supporting families from the Traveller community to re-engage with education after the summer break. Through discussions with schools, it is evident that schools feel well supported to meet the needs of looked after children.

The local authority is in regular contact with schools and PRUs regarding pupils with SEN. It has appropriate arrangements to monitor the progress and wellbeing of learners that moved to a new school or PRU in September. Arrangements to hold review meetings with schools and parents follow the same procedure that was established in the spring and summer terms as this proved effective at that time. A few schools have had difficulties in accessing the educational psychologists when they need them due to a lack of current capacity in this part of the authority's service. The local authority is aware of this issue and is taking steps to address it.

PRU leaders have found the services of the North Wales TRAC team beneficial. They identify instances where this support has made a positive difference to learners. They also point out that this team provides a once-only support package meaning that if a learner has received support from this agency at an early point in their education that they become ineligible for further support. PRU leaders find this a little frustrating.

In a few instances, PRUs have found that classroom sizes have limited the amount of time that learners can spend at the PRU because the rooms are too small to cope with social distancing measures.

The inclusion team has developed new ways of working in partnership with agencies, to support learners. For example, speech and language specialists undertake assessments online to identify learners' needs. This approach in combination with the associated professional support for school staff prevents delays to learners receiving the support they need.



CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 20 th April 2021
Report Subject	Town Centre Regeneration – Property Intervention
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Economic Development
Report Author	Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Town centres face escalating economic challenges and the current patterns of property ownership hamper attempts to help them to adapt. This report acts as the first stage in a process of developing an ambitious but deliverable programme of interventions to support the reinvention and regeneration of town centres in Flintshire.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That the role of the Council in regenerating town centres through property-focussed interventions is discussed and agreed.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION
1.01	<p>There are a number of challenges facing all small towns in the UK:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing customer behaviour, which has accelerated during the Covid pandemic, has dramatically reduced expenditure through high street shops. It is not expected that this will return fully to pre-Covid levels leaving towns with more shops than they can sustain. • Many units are owned remotely by national or international property, finance companies or speculative investors with little interest in their effective management and no stake beyond their investment in the success of the town centre. • Smaller, more marginal shopping centres are struggling to remain viable with a major collapse of property values and considerable difficulties in attracting tenants. • Although there is a relatively low proportion of vacant retail units in Flintshire town centres there is considerable underused space above the ground floor and weak business resilience is believed to mask the true picture which manifests in gradually declining building condition and lack of investment. • There are a small number of longer-term vacant properties in towns which can have a blighting effect on their locality. • Land banking of property in and around town centres by regional and local property developers contributes to the detrimental effect on local amenity.
1.02	<p>Cabinet approved a refreshed strategic approach to town centres in March 2020 which included a commitment to intervene in town centre property issues. A number of interventions are already underway and it is proposed that this approach is accelerated and the ambition of the Council increased in line with the scale of the challenges facing town centres.</p>
1.03	<p>The intention of the programme is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce the number of long-term empty properties in town centres; • reduce the overall quantum of retail provision in town centres by repurposing units on the fringes; • find more sustainable uses for retail units and increase community enterprises on the High Streets; • plan to repurpose less viable shopping centres; • develop starter units for new retail enterprises in town centres; • encourage private sector investment in town centre properties; and • co-ordinate and support other FCC portfolio interventions to maximise the regenerative effects of investment and resource.
1.04	<p>The projects within the programme are proposed to include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide a one-to-one support service to businesses with investment proposals for High Street properties (underway). 2. Offer business loans to incentivise investment in High Street properties (underway, WG funded). 3. Offer business grants to incentivise investment in High Street properties (starts 1 April 2021, WG funded but limited scale).

	<p>4. Use the Council's enforcement powers to bring long term empty properties back into use (ready to start, WG funding available).</p> <p>5. Develop a community ownership model that enables town centre units to be acquired through grant and then vested in a local delivery vehicle to ensure their effective management for the benefit of the town centre and local people. Scoping is currently underway on this to better understand both the commercial property market (in Holywell as a pilot) and learning from similar projects elsewhere. There will be a significant challenge in establishing a new enterprise with a sufficiently skilled board to successfully run the project.</p> <p>6. Select blocks of properties in town centres for repurposing and undertake gradual acquisition over time with end uses to include demolition for alternative uses, including housing or green space. They would, though, require an ongoing management regime for the period between acquisition and redevelopment which could be several years. Units acquired in this way could be rented on a shorter-term basis as starter units or community enterprise work space.</p> <p>7. Create redevelopment plans for the less viable shopping centres with options to include: a) refurbishment and management; b) redevelopment into new uses including housing and contemporary retail spaces; and c) demolition and conversion into green or amenity space. This is a growing area of intervention for local government with 38% of all shopping centre purchases last year being made by local authorities. Welsh Government are eager to take an active role in the process and are offering support.</p>
1.05	<p>It will be necessary to develop light touch plans for each town centre to show funders how the package of property (and other) interventions fit together into a coherent whole. These will only transition into masterplans where a major site requires detailed consideration to get the maximum regeneration benefit.</p>
1.06	<p>The next steps have been identified as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update on towns programmes to E&E OSC in May 2021. 2. Complete scoping of community ownership model and, if viable, start project development. 3. Start empty property intervention project to tackle long term vacant properties in June 2021 – WG training, development of light touch action plan, targeting early-win properties. 4. Identify resources and risks associated with managing town centre properties. 5. Identification of target blocks of properties for intervention as part of overarching high level plans for town centres (phased roll out) and prepare acquisition strategy. 6. Develop masterplan for first shopping centre and proactively engage other shopping centre owners to scope their position and interest in joint working. 7. Engage locally to highlight the direction of travel and help available (PR campaign).

	<p>8. Engage regionally to understand the contemporary actions being undertaken in other areas and share our own findings.</p> <p>9. Engage internally to promote co-ordination between portfolios to ensure effective use of limited resources.</p> <p>10. Work with colleagues to ensure efficient use of knowledge, experience and skills already within our organization and map the gaps that require external procurement.</p>
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	To be determined at subsequent stages.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	<p>Experience and capacity</p> <p>The Council does not have considerable experience in some of these work streams or much surplus capacity to deliver it which will limit progress. The regeneration team is currently recruiting additional posts which will help with capacity and use will need to be made of consultancy support to bring in both expertise and capacity to move the programme forward and to ensure that risks are effectively managed. Welsh Government are also looking to support the process regionally through sharing learning and expertise. However, the team still has a limiting shortfall of capacity and expertise in town centre property development as well as more junior supporting staff to deliver projects and engage stakeholders.</p> <p>Capital resources</p> <p>The main Welsh Government capital programme for town centres (Transforming Towns) will be available to all Flintshire towns from 1 April 2021 but remains a small fund (£8m pa) that is likely to be oversubscribed. However, Welsh Government are eager to see ambitious plans for property intervention in the town centres and may make further funding available. Where risks can be effectively managed the Council could consider investing its own capital resources through borrowing although it is expected that this would be to support the social outcomes arising rather than in expectation of a significant return on investment. The Council holds £1.5m of repayable WG funding to use for its own property projects in town centres. Further funding is available to support private sector projects. In addition, UK Government are starting to make capital resources available for regeneration which may be a source of future investment.</p> <p>Revenue costs arising from property portfolio</p> <p>Maintaining any form of portfolio of town centre properties will bring revenue pressures in terms of officer time and management costs (rates, maintenance, legal costs etc). It is not possible to quantify these at this</p>

	<p>stage but this will need to be factored into any decisions on the strategic approach in town centres.</p> <p>Political</p> <p>Resources will not allow the Council to do everything everywhere and viable property interventions will not be present in every town. Managing expectations will be key in the process. Interventions that change the form and function of towns may not always be popular locally. Where significant change is proposed then the development of masterplans allow for extensive local consultation and discussion on options.</p>
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4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	None at this stage.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None.

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Niall Waller (Enterprise and Regeneration Manager) Telephone: 01352 702137 E-mail: niall.waller@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	None.

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EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS - DECISIONS TAKEN REPORTED TO CABINET – 20.04.21

Streetscene and Transportation

- **Street Works Fees and Charges for 2021/22**
The fees and charges levied for various licenses and applications issued within Street Works have been reviewed and the proposed charges for 2021/22 are set out in the report.
- **Proposal to Construct Sinusoidal Humps and Flat Top Raised Tables/Junctions on King George Street, Mostyn Street, Plymouth Street and Woodland Street, Shotton**
To advise of the objection received following the advertisement of the Proposal to Construct Sinusoidal Humps and Flat Top Raised Tables/Junctions on King George Street, Mostyn Street, Plymouth Street and Woodland Street, Shotton.

Housing and Assets

- **Council Rent – Application to Write Off Tenancy Arrears**
Financial Procedure Rules (section 5.2) stipulates that individual bad and irrecoverable debts in excess of £5,000 are considered for write off in conjunction with the relevant Cabinet Member. The decision to write off in respect of one tenant who is subject to a Debt Relief Order (DRO). Rent arrears of £6,210.08 are included in the DRO which are now irrecoverable as a result of the award of the DRO.

Education and Youth

- **Local Authority Appointed School Governors**
Appointment of Local Authority Governor(s) representatives on school governing bodies in accordance with The Government of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2005.

Copies of the Delegated Powers reports are retained by the Team Leader – Committee Services and available to view on request by Members.

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**FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME ITEMS
COUNCIL, CABINET, AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE & SCRUTINY
1 April 2021 TO 30 September 2021**

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
April					
Flintshire County Council	1/04/21	Chief Executive's	Recruitment of Chief Executive To seek approval to recruit to the role of Chief Executive following the recent notice of intention to resign given by the current post holder and to agree the recruitment process and remuneration package.		
Flintshire County Council	1/04/21	Governance	Petitions received at Council To inform Council of the outcomes of petitions which have been submitted over the past year.		
Flintshire County Council	1/04/21	Governance	Review of Protocol for Meeting Contractors To undertake a rolling review of the Protocol to ensure it is still up to date and pertinent.		

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Flintshire County Council	1/04/21	Governance	<p>Update on the Implementation of the Local Government & Elections Act 2021</p> <p>To apprise the Council of ongoing implementation of the Act.</p>		
Flintshire County Council	1/04/21	Governance	<p>Family Absence for Members of Local Authorities (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2021</p> <p>To inform the Council of the increase in adopter's absence entitlement for Members.</p>		
Flintshire County Council	1/04/21	Governance	<p>Appointments of Independent Members to the Standards Committee</p> <p>To present details of the preferred candidates for the Independent Member vacancies on the Standards Committee for approval.</p>		

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Flintshire County Council	1/04/21	Governance	<p>Review of the Terms of Reference of the Audit Committee</p> <p>To seek approval to amend the name of the Council's Audit Committee and to include new functions to the current Terms of Reference of the renamed Committee.</p>		
Cabinet	20/04/21	Education and Youth	<p>Education & Youth Self Evaluation Report 2020/2021</p> <p>To provide details of the Portfolio's review and evaluation of services during 2020/2021.</p>	Operational	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education
Cabinet	20/04/21	Planning, Environment and Economy	<p>Town Centre Regeneration – Property Intervention</p> <p>To consider the role the Council could play in helping towns to adapt to a changing economic situation through direct intervention in acquiring, redeveloping or managing properties.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Economic Development

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Cabinet	20/04/21	Chief Executive's	Graphic Design and Print Framework To seek approval for a new Dynamic Purchasing System framework.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets
Cabinet	20/04/21	Chief Executive's	Revenue Budget Monitoring 2020/21 (Month 11) This regular monthly report provides the latest revenue budget monitoring position for 2020/21 for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account. The position is based on actual income and expenditure as at Month 11, and projects forward to year-end.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Finance
Cabinet	20/04/21	Housing and Assets	Approval of Costs for New Housing Scheme at Duke Street, Flint To approve the development of two new Social Rent homes at Duke Street Flint.	Strategic	Cabinet Member for Housing
May					

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee	12/05/21	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking (Env & E) To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee and to inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings.</p>	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Countryside
Page 127 Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee	12/05/21	Planning, Environment and Economy	<p>Access Team Performance 2019/20 and 2020/21 To inform members of progress of the Access Team over the last two years and highlight their performance in managing and maintaining the network and developing access opportunities for health and wellbeing and outdoor recreation.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Economic Development
Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee	12/05/21	Planning, Environment and Economy	<p>Ash Dieback surveys update To receive a progress report</p>	Operational	

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Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee	12/05/21	Planning, Environment and Economy	Town centre regeneration To update members on the current challenges facing town centres and to set out regional and local responses being put in place.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Planning and Public Protection
Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee	12/05/21	Streetscene and Transportation	Highway Asset Management Plan To receive an update on how Flintshire County Council manages the maintenance of its highways to fulfil its statutory obligations.	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Countryside
Cabinet	18/05/21	Planning, Environment and Economy	Town Centre Regeneration The report will provide a review of the major economic challenges facing small towns and an update on the work undertaken so far to deliver the strategic approach to regenerating town centres agreed at Cabinet on 17 March 2020.	Strategic	Cabinet Member for Economic Development

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Cabinet	18/05/21	Social Services	<p>Developing Children's Residential Care Home provision</p> <p>To seeking members agreement for our strategic approach to developing In House Children's Residential Care.</p> <p>As part of our ambition to support children within their communities we are working to establish Registered Children's Home provision in Flintshire. This report sets out our ambition and associated progress.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Social Services
Community, Housing & Assets Overview & Scrutiny Committee	19/05/21	Housing and Assets	<p>NEWydd Cleaning and Catering</p> <p>To provide an update on the impact the emergency situation has had on the Business Plan for NEWydd Cleaning and Catering Services</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets

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Community, Housing & Assets Overview & Scrutiny Committee	19/05/21	Housing and Assets	Commencement of the Socio-economic Duty To update Overview and Scrutiny of our preparedness for the commencement of the socio-economic duty	Operational	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets
Community, Housing & Assets Overview & Scrutiny Committee	19/05/21	Housing and Assets	Empty Homes To provide an overview of the work undertaken by the Empty Homes Service, and outline the new approach Welsh Government is promoting in respect of this area	Operational	Cabinet Member for Housing
Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	27/05/21	Social Services	North Wales Adoption Service Update To receive a progress report	Operational	Cabinet Member for Social Services
Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	27/05/21	Social Services	Directors Annual Report To consider the draft report prior to consideration at Cabinet	Operational	Cabinet Member for Social Services

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	27/05/21	Overview and Scrutiny	Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking (S & H) To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee and to inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Social Services
June					
Governance and Audit Committee	2/06/21	Finance	Certification of Grants and Returns 2019/20 To inform Members of the grant claim certification by Audit Wales for the year ended 31 March 2020.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Finance
Governance and Audit Committee	2/06/21	Governance	Internal Audit Annual Report To inform members of the outcome of all audit work carried out during 2020/21 and to give the annual Internal Audit opinion on the standard of internal control, risk management and governance within the Council.	All Report Types	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets

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COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Governance and Audit Committee	2/06/21	Governance	Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 To endorse the Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 to be attached to the Statement of Accounts for adoption.	All Report Types	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets
Governance and Audit Committee	2/06/21	Governance	Test for Gov & Audit Ctte x	Operational	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets
Governance and Audit Committee	2/06/21	Governance	Internal Audit Progress Report To present to the Committee an update on the progress of the Internal Audit Department.	All Report Types	
Governance and Audit Committee	2/06/21	Governance	Audit Committee Action Tracking To inform the Committee of the actions resulting from points raised at previous Audit Committee meetings.	All Report Types	
Governance and Audit Committee	2/06/21	Governance	Forward Work Programme To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Internal Audit Department.	All Report Types	

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Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee	8/06/21	Overview and Scrutiny	Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee and to inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings.	Operational	
Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2021-22 133	8/06/21	Overview and Scrutiny	Year-end Performance Indicators for Recovery, Portfolio and Public Accountability Measures To review the levels of progress in the achievement of activities, performance levels and current risk levels as identified in the Council Plan.	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Countryside
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	10/06/21	Overview and Scrutiny	Forward Work Programme To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee.	Operational	

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	10/06/21	Overview and Scrutiny	Action Tracking To inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings.	Operational	
Community, Housing & Assets Overview & Scrutiny Committee	16/06/21	Overview and Scrutiny	Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking (CH & E) To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Community Housing & Assets Overview & Scrutiny Committee and to inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Housing
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	10/06/21	Overview and Scrutiny	Year-end Performance Indicators for Recovery, Portfolio and Public Accountability Measures(CROSC) To review the levels of progress in the achievement of activities, performance levels and current risk levels as identified in the Council Plan.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Community, Housing & Assets Overview & Scrutiny Committee	16/06/21	Housing and Assets	Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) To provide an update on the ongoing work to improve the service	Operational	Cabinet Member for Housing
Community, Housing & Assets Overview & Scrutiny Committee	16/06/21	Overview and Scrutiny	Year-end Performance Indicators for Recovery, Portfolio and Public Accountability Measures(CH&A) To review the levels of progress in the achievement of activities, performance levels and current risk levels as identified in the Council Plan.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Housing
July					
Education, Youth & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee	1/07/21	Education and Youth	Commencement of the Socio-economic Duty To update Overview and Scrutiny of our preparedness for the commencement of the socio-economic duty	Operational	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	1/07/21	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Year-end Performance Indicators for Recovery, Portfolio and Public Accountability Measures(S&H) To review the levels of progress in the achievement of activities, performance levels and current risk levels as identified in the Council Plan.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Social Services
Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	1/07/21	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking (S & H) To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee and to inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Social Services

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Education, Youth & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee	1/07/21	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Year-end Performance Indicators for Recovery, Portfolio and Public Accountability Measures (EY&C)</p> <p>To review the levels of progress in the achievement of activities, performance levels and current risk levels as identified in the Council Plan.</p>	Operational	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education
Education, Youth & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee Pages 137	1/07/21	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking (EY&C)</p> <p>To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Education Youth & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee and to inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings.</p>	Operational	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee	6/07/21	Overview and Scrutiny	Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking (Env & E) To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee and to inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings.	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Countryside
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	8/07/21	Overview and Scrutiny	Forward Work Programme (CROSC) To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Corporate Resources O & S Committee	Operational	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	8/07/21	Overview and Scrutiny	Action Tracking (CROSC) To inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings	Operational	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Cabinet	13/07/21	Social Services	Social Services Annual Report The Statutory Director of Social Services is required to produce an annual report summarising their view of the local authority's social care functions and priorities for improvement as legislated in the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and the Regulations and Inspections Act (Wales) 2015.	Strategic	Cabinet Member for Social Services
August					
September					

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