

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, Paul Johnson, Christine Jones and Billy Mullin

9 June 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

NOTICE OF REMOTE MEETING
CABINET
TUESDAY, 15 JUNE, 2021 at 10.00 AM

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 confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 18th May 2021.

TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING REPORTS

STRATEGIC REPORTS

4 **MERSEY DEE ALLIANCE (MDA) ECONOMIC STIMULUS PACKAGE**

(Pages 17 - 112)

Report of Chief Executive - Cabinet Member for Economic Development

Purpose: To seek support of the Mersey Dee Alliance (MDA) Economic Stimulus Package.

5 **WELSH GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER CONSULTATION - REBALANCING CARE AND SUPPORT** (Pages 113 - 134)

Report of Chief Officer (Social Services) - Deputy Leader of the Council (Partnerships) and Cabinet Member for Social Services

Purpose: To consider the White Paper, to note and support the response to the consultation response submitted by the Council and approve the report.

OPERATIONAL REPORTS

6 **END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE MONITORING** (Pages 135 - 194)

Report of Chief Executive - Deputy Leader of the Council (Governance) and Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets

Purpose: To present the Performance Outturn for 2020/21.

7 WELSH LANGUAGE ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2020/21 (Pages 195 - 224)

Report of Chief Executive - Deputy Leader of the Council (Governance) and Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets

Purpose: To receive the Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report 2020/21 and an overview of progress in complying with the Welsh Language Standards.

8 DEVELOPING CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL CARE HOME PROVISION (Pages 225 - 232)

Report of Chief Officer (Social Services) - Deputy Leader of the Council (Partnerships) and Cabinet Member for Social Services

Purpose: To seek approval for the strategic approach to developing In House Children's Residential Care.

9 UPDATE ON THE BIODIVERSITY DUTY (Pages 233 - 276)

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

Purpose: To provide an update on progress delivering the Section 6 Biodiversity Duty to date, the updated 2020 – 2023 plan and key areas of biodiversity work.

10 EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS (Pages 277 - 278)

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 commercially sensitive information belonging to a third party and the public interest in not revealing the information outweighs the public interest in revealing the information.

11 **NEWYDD CATERING AND CLEANING - ANNUAL REVIEW** (Pages 305 - 342)

Report of Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) - Deputy Leader of the Council (Governance) and Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets

Purpose: To present the NEWydd three year business plan (2021/22 to 2023/24) for consideration, review and endorsement.

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 disclosure until the contracts have been entered into.

12 **PROCUREMENT OF WELSH HOUSING QUALITY STANDARD (WHQS) ENVELOPE WORKS TO COUNCIL OWNED PROPERTIES** (Pages 343 - 366)

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

Purpose: To seek approval for the appointment of contractors to deliver the Council's Whole House Envelope programme through the Procure Plus framework.

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
18TH MAY 2021

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet of Flintshire County Council held virtually via Webex on Tuesday 18th May 2021.

PRESENT: Councillor Ian Roberts (Chair)

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Executive, Chief Officer (Governance), Chief Officer (Housing and Assets), Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy), Chief Officer (Social Services), Chief Officer (Education and Youth), Corporate Finance Manager, Enterprise and Regeneration Manager and Team Leader – Democratic Services.

OTHER MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor: Patrick Heesom.

APOLOGY:

Councillor Derek Butler

Members expressed their congratulations to Councillor Carolyn Thomas who had been successful in the recent election as a Member of the Senedd for North Wales. Congratulations were also conveyed to Councillor Andy Dunbobbin who had been successful in the election to become the North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner.

127. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

128. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th April 2021 were submitted and confirmed as a correct.

RESOLVED:

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

Councillor Roberts advised that there would be a change in the order of the agenda, with Car Parking Charges and Highways Asset Management Plan reports being considered before the other items of business.

129. CAR PARKING CHARGES

Councillor Thomas introduced the report and explained that the current suspension of car parking charges in town centres had been implemented with the intention to help town centre businesses recover after the Covid-19 pandemic.

The car park in Talacre was seen as a specific 'end destination' car park and the report sought approval to reinstate the charges in that car park.

The report also sought approval for the introduction of a charging regime on the newly developed Park and Ride car park that had been built on Deeside Industrial Park.

Councillor Banks supported the report, as did Councillor Jones who said this would help with the traffic problems in Zones 1, 2 and 3 on Deeside Industrial Park.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the reintroduction of parking charges in Talacre car park be approved; and
- (b) That the introduction of a charging structure for the Park and Ride car park on Deeside Industrial Park be approved.

130. HIGHWAY ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

Councillor Thomas introduced the report and explained that the highway network was the highest valued infrastructure asset owned by the Council, with the carriageway and footway asset alone valued in excess of £1 billion. The safe and usable condition of the network was essential to maintaining economic and social connectivity, both within Flintshire and with the wider region and the Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP) framework provided the principles for managing the network, recognising the importance of the highway infrastructure in supporting a number of the Council's key objectives.

The report provided an update on the development of the Council's HAMP and explained how the Council utilised the principles of the HAMP to guide the strategy for managing and maintaining the highway infrastructure.

The Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) explained that the allocation of funds was done based on the areas in need the most, and priorities changed due to risks on the network which were identified during assessments by area co-ordinators.

The report had been submitted to Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee the previous week, where a discussion had also taken place on a pilot that had been undertaken using recycled plastic to replace small areas of asphalt. The Committee were supportive of the trial and requested that a wider trial be undertaken. Work would be undertaken to identify any potential sites for such trials.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the content of the report, and the review of the Highway Asset Management Plan be noted;

- (b) That the current arrangements and actions of the portfolio to maintain the highway network be noted; and
- (c) That the revised policy for Highway and Car Park Safety Inspections, Intervention Criteria and Response Times to include a revised approach to highway structure inspections be approved.

131. **COUNCIL PLAN 2021/22**

Councillor Mullin introduced the report and explained that the Council Plan for 2017/23 was adopted with the purpose of setting out the key priorities of the Council for the current electoral term. The plan was subject to annual review.

The Plan for 2021/22 had been reviewed and refreshed for structure and content and took into account continued recovery in addition to the longer-term strategic objectives.

The Council Plan was published as two documents. Part 1 set out the intent, and Part 2 set out the risks, performance measures, targets and milestones against which achievement would be measured and evaluated.

The framework was built around six themes:

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

The Chief Executive explained that each of the six themes was accompanied by a strategic statement which lent themselves to Well-being objectives. The themes had been mapped against the Overview and Scrutiny Committees for reporting and accountability. The delivery of the Plan was the responsibility of the Cabinet. Part 1 had been shared with the Overview and Scrutiny Committees for review and comments; no significant change to Part 1 was required as the Committees were supportive. Part 2 had been finalised for recommendation in the confidence that Members were supportive of Part 1 as the super-structure of the Plan.

The published Plan would be available on the Council's website by the end of July.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Council Plan 2021/22 Part 1 in final form be approved for recommendation to Council; and
- (b) That the content of the Council Plan 2021/22 Part 2 be approved for addition to Part 1 for recommendation to Council.

132. TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION

The Enterprise and Regeneration Manager introduced the report and explained that smaller town centres across the UK had been facing challenging economic circumstances for many years due to changing customer behaviours. The Covid-19 pandemic had accelerated those trends although it remained too early to understand the long term impacts of the pandemic.

The report provided an update on the strategic context for town centre regeneration, the funding currently available to support it and the programmes of work underway in Flintshire. The report proposed an increased emphasis on intervention to create more sustainable use of properties within town centres.

There was an increased Welsh Government (WG) focus on empty town centre properties with a refocusing of their loans programme, with local authorities being encouraged to use their enforcement powers more fully to bring units back into use. WG would be supporting each area to develop an action plan for that work.

In order to deliver the programme effectively increased resources would need to be made available. It was anticipated that, in the short term, a suitably experienced and qualified manager role would be required to drive forward the regeneration programme together with some modern trainee support to the team to free up time for project delivery. The estimated annual revenue cost was outlined in the report.

The report had been submitted to Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee where it was fully supported.

Councillor Roberts welcomed the report and commented on the successful regeneration works that had taken place in Flint and Holywell, and he was pleased to note how vibrant Mold was. Discussions were underway on Buckley Town Centre and a masterplan was being developed for Shotton. A masterplan for Connah's Quay would also need to be developed. In addition, smaller communities needed to be considered.

The Chief Executive explained that a separate discussion needed to take place on how the Council would resource aspects included within the Council Plan. A report would be submitted to a future meeting.

Councillor Jones also welcomed the report and asked that reference to people with learning difficulties and autism be included in paragraph 1.14.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the progress in delivering the priorities for town centre regeneration agreed at the March 2020 Cabinet meeting be noted;

- (b) That the resource implications of delivering the programme be noted, and that they will be considered for inclusion in the development of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Capital Programme; and
- (c) That delegated authority be given to the Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Development to bid for external funding as it becomes available to support the approaches to town centre regeneration set out in the report.

133. WELSH GOVERNMENT ADDITIONAL SCHOOLS CAPITAL REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE FUNDING GRANT

Councillor Roberts introduced the report and explained that the Council was in receipt of an additional schools capital repair and maintenance grant from Welsh Government (WG).

The Grant, which was on a formula basis, was £2.526,501 and was for capital repair and maintenance projects within schools during the 2021/22 financial year.

The Chief Officer (Education and Youth) said the report sought approval to review and agree the draft programme in order that individual projects could be progressed with expediency. The draft programme was appended to the report.

There were two projects nominated at Ysgol Castell Alun. The first was to replace the existing All Weather Pitch (AWP) as it was currently unusable. Reinstatement of the AWP was essential for delivery of curriculum PE, particularly during the winter months. The second was the refurbishment of the music area which was a legacy of the existing Capital investment project at the school. Unforeseen extensive works to the existing music area roof had to be undertaken to make it safe and ensure it was water tight. In doing so, the project budget was insufficient to complete the proposal to refurbish the music area beneath. Provision had been made in the construction contract to add the items should funding and approval be gained. In doing so there were efficiencies in tendering and preliminary costs.

The Chief Officer provided an update on the situation at Canolfan Enfys where there was a roof failure, and Queensferry Primary School which had been affected by flooding.

RESOLVED:

That the additional repair and maintenance schools programme be approved.

134. AROSFA UPDATE

Councillor Jones introduced the report and explained that Arosfa was a well-established service providing short term breaks / respite for children with disabilities. The unused left wing at Arosfa had been refurbished to provide two additional places at the facility, and those places brought capacity to accommodate up to four children using flexible care and shared care models.

The Chief Officer (Social Services) explained that the additional service was in addition to the current short break respite provision for up to three children at any one time. Together, the plans would enable the Council to support a maximum of four children at any one time.

The provision of an additional two places for shared care respite would form part of the Council's strategic intent to reduce reliance on expensive Out of County Placements, and would enable Flintshire to support children and young people within the county. That would increase the current capacity Flintshire had to offer and more respite care provision within the vision for strategic ambition.

RESOLVED:

That the progress made at Arosfa be recognised, and the opportunity to provide additional flexible support for up to four children and their families, with the aim of keeping families together and closer to home, be supported.

135. INTER AUTHORITY COLLABORATION TO MANAGE THE SUPPLY OF AGGREGATE MINERALS IN THE NORTH EAST WALES SUB-REGION

Councillor Bithell introduced the report and explained that the Regional Technical Statement Second Review (RTS2) stated that where local authorities were unable to meet their individual indicative apportionment figures for the provision of aggregates, there was a need for all of the local authorities within that sub-region to collaborate in order to ensure that the overall sub-regional apportionments were still met to ensure that a steady supply of those minerals was secured.

The inter-authority collaboration should be agreed in the form of a Statement of Sub-Regional Collaboration (SSRC) agreed by all local authorities within the sub-regional area, which would then be used as evidence base for Local Development Plan policy making and a material planning consideration in development management decisions with respect to the sub-regional need for aggregate minerals in the North East Wales Sub-Region.

Approval of the document by all three local authorities in the North East Wales sub-region would demonstrate that the authorities were committed to inter-authority collaboration pertaining the supply of aggregate minerals in line with the sub-regional apportionment figures for sand and gravel, and crushed rock as set out in the RTS2.

It had been considered at Planning Strategy Group on 8th April 2021 where the amended draft SSRC was endorsed. Consultation had been taking place with the partner authorities of Denbighshire County Council and Wrexham County Borough Council in order to approve the draft SSRC.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the amended Statement of Sub-Regional Collaboration (Version 3, April 2021 – Appendix 2) be approved, and for it to be forwarded to the Welsh

Government and the Planning Inspectorate for consideration as part of the Examination in Public into Flintshire's Local Development Plan; and

- (b) That delegated authority be given to the Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) concerning editorial i.e. non-material amendments, to the draft Statement of Sub-Regional Collaboration should the need arise as a result of recommendations made by Denbighshire County Council or Wrexham County Borough Council following approval of the report.

136. 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

- **Community Asset Transfer, Former Llanfynydd C.P School Playing Field, Llanfynydd**
The transfer of former Llanfynydd C.P. Schools Playing Field, Llanfynydd.
- **Bagillt Bowling Green, Highfield Road, Bagillt**
To formally declare surplus to requirements the premises known as Bagillt Bowling Green, Highfield Road, Bagillt.
- **Former Pavillion, Fron Park Road, Holywell (next to the tennis courts)**
To formally declare surplus to requirements the premises known Former Pavillion, Fron Park Road, Holywell.
- **New Brighton Community Centre, Moel Fammau Road, New Brighton**
To formally declare surplus to requirements the premises known as New Brighton Community Centre, Moel Fammau Road, New Brighton in order to transfer the asset as a Community Asset Transfer (CAT).
- **Housing Benefit Overpayment**
Request to write off Housing Benefit Overpayment of £10,901.96.
- **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 is 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.

- **Business Rates Write Offs**
Financial Procedure Rules (section 9.6 – Income and Expenditure) stipulate that any individual debt between the values of £5,000 and £25,000 shall be reported to the Corporate Finance Manager / Section 151 Officer for

consideration to write off, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets.

The schedule attached to the report, which was summarised by the category of write off, involve two Business Rate accounts totalling £33,931.02 where the overall debt for the company is greater than £5,000. The write off of these debts is recommended as the companies are either no longer trading or subject to liquidation.

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.

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).

137. APPROVAL OF COSTS FOR NEW HOUSING SCHEME AT PARK LANE, HOLYWELL

Councillor Hughes introduced the report which sought approval to develop four new Social Rent homes at Park Lane, Holywell.

The report and appendices provided detailed information on the proposed scheme, including location, proposed property types, design and layout and projected build costs.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the development of four new Social Rent homes at Park Lane, Holywell be approved; and
- (b) That prudential borrowing be approved to the value stated in the report (subject to final cost and verification) to fund the proposed development at the location.

138. 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 11.20 a.m.)

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Chair

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CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 15 th June 2021
Report Subject	Mersey Dee Alliance (MDA) Economic Stimulus Package
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Economic Development
Report Author	Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy)
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In response to the unprecedented impacts of the Covid pandemic, the Mersey Dee Alliance have developed package of investment priorities for the sub region which will hopefully trigger the recovery of the economy. The package represents a bid to UK and Welsh Governments for funding to deliver on five investment priorities which are:

1. Keeping our businesses competitive
2. Decarbonising industry
3. Skilling for the future
4. Connecting our region
5. Digital connectivity

These priorities were developed in agreement with all of the MDA partners. The level of investment being sought equates to £402m, a combination of capital and revenue funding.

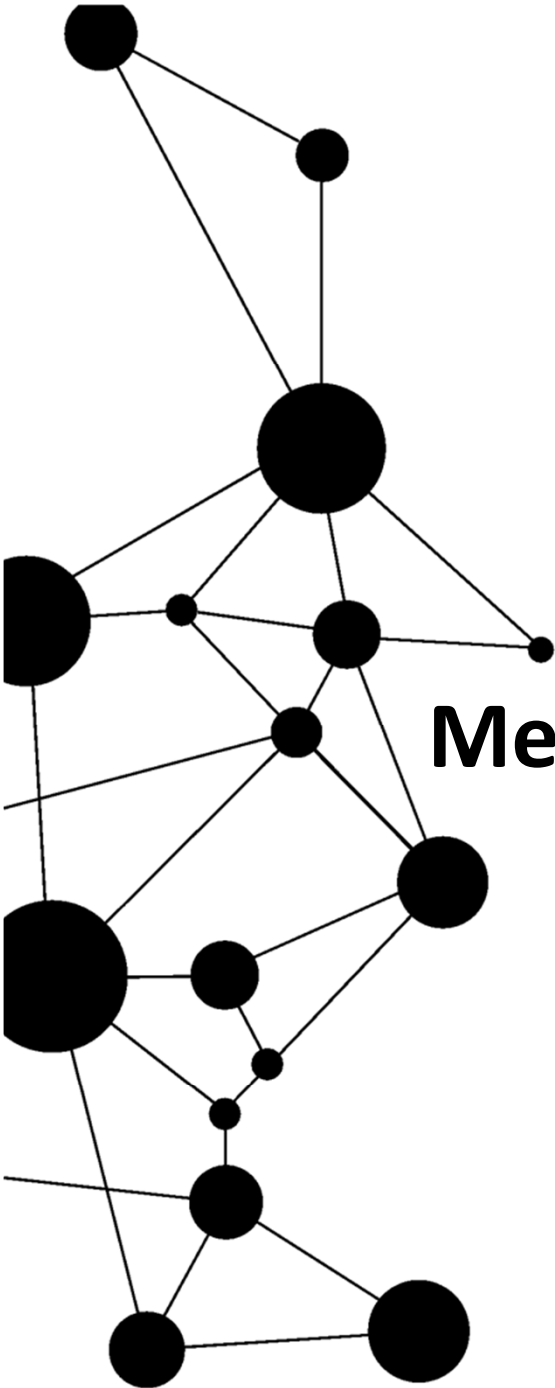
The package was developed from November 2020 to March 2021 and was the subject to a “soft launch” prior the restrictions of “purdah” being introduced. Initial feedback has been received from the then Senedd Member for the Economy and North Wales, Ken Skates and Under Secretary of State for Wales, David TC Davies.

The next steps are to undertake a fuller launch of the package which will be handled by the MDA and engage with Welsh Government and UK Government officials on the detail of the stimulus package and how it can be successfully progressed.

A powerpoint is attached which explains the background and content of the stimulus package (Appendix 1).

1.00	APPENDICES
1.01	Appendix 1 – Powerpoint Presentation Appendix 2 – Fiscal Stimulus Package Report

2.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
2.01	Contact Officer: Andrew Farrow, Chief Officer Telephone: 01352 703201 E-mail: Andrew.farrow@flintshire.gov.uk

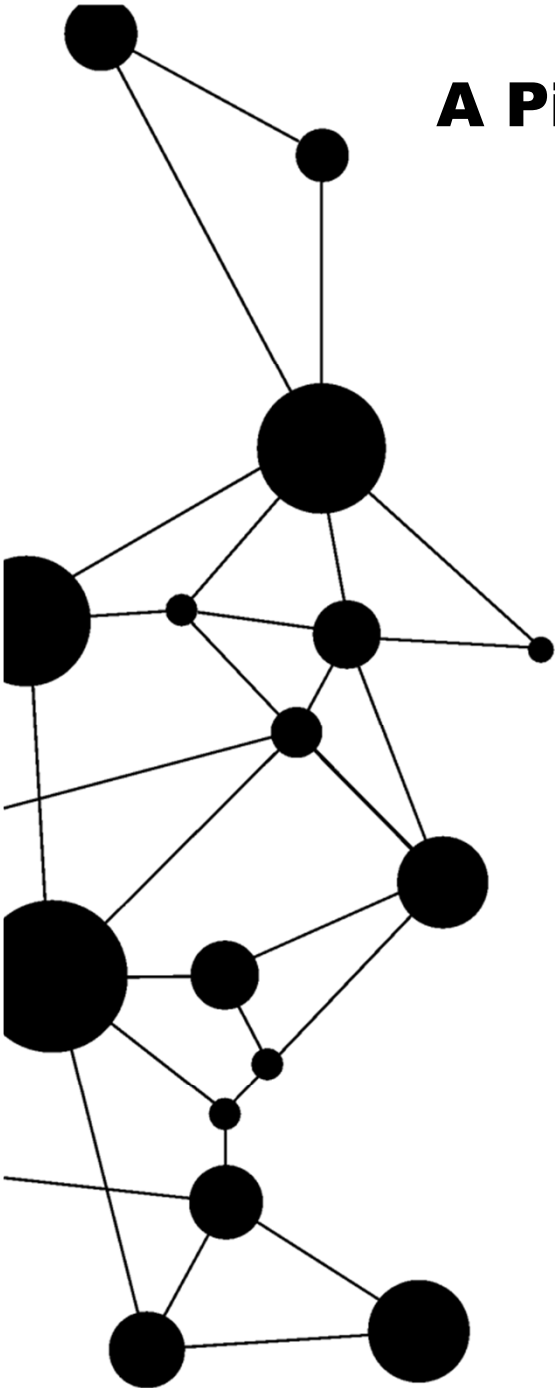


Mersey Dee Fiscal Stimulus Package Proposition Document

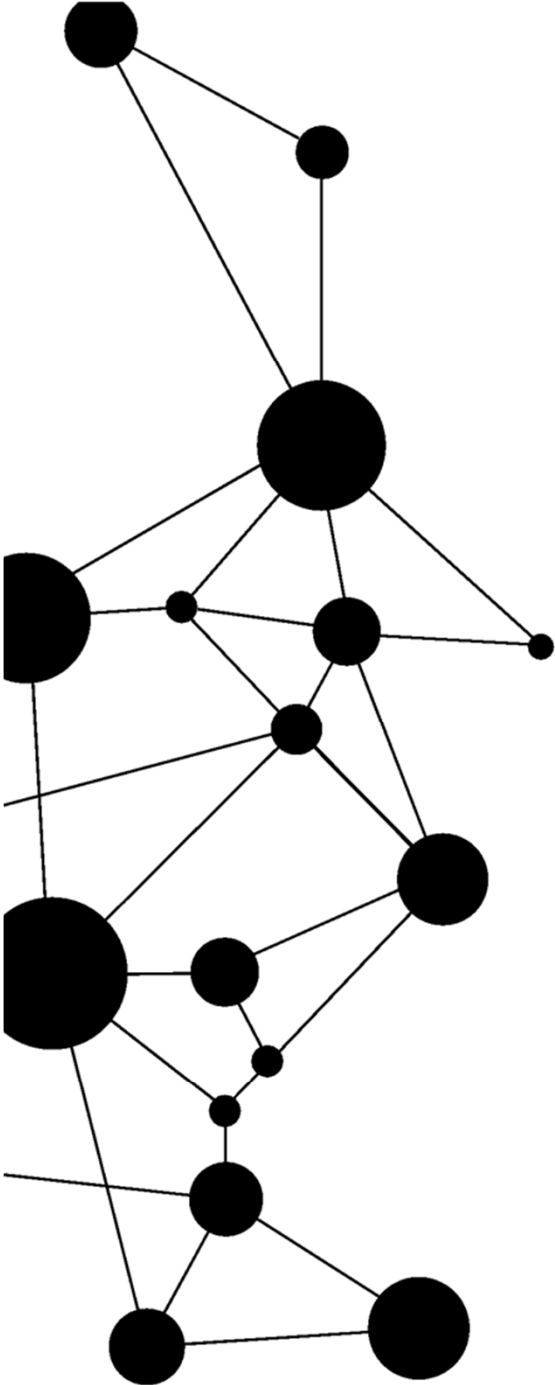
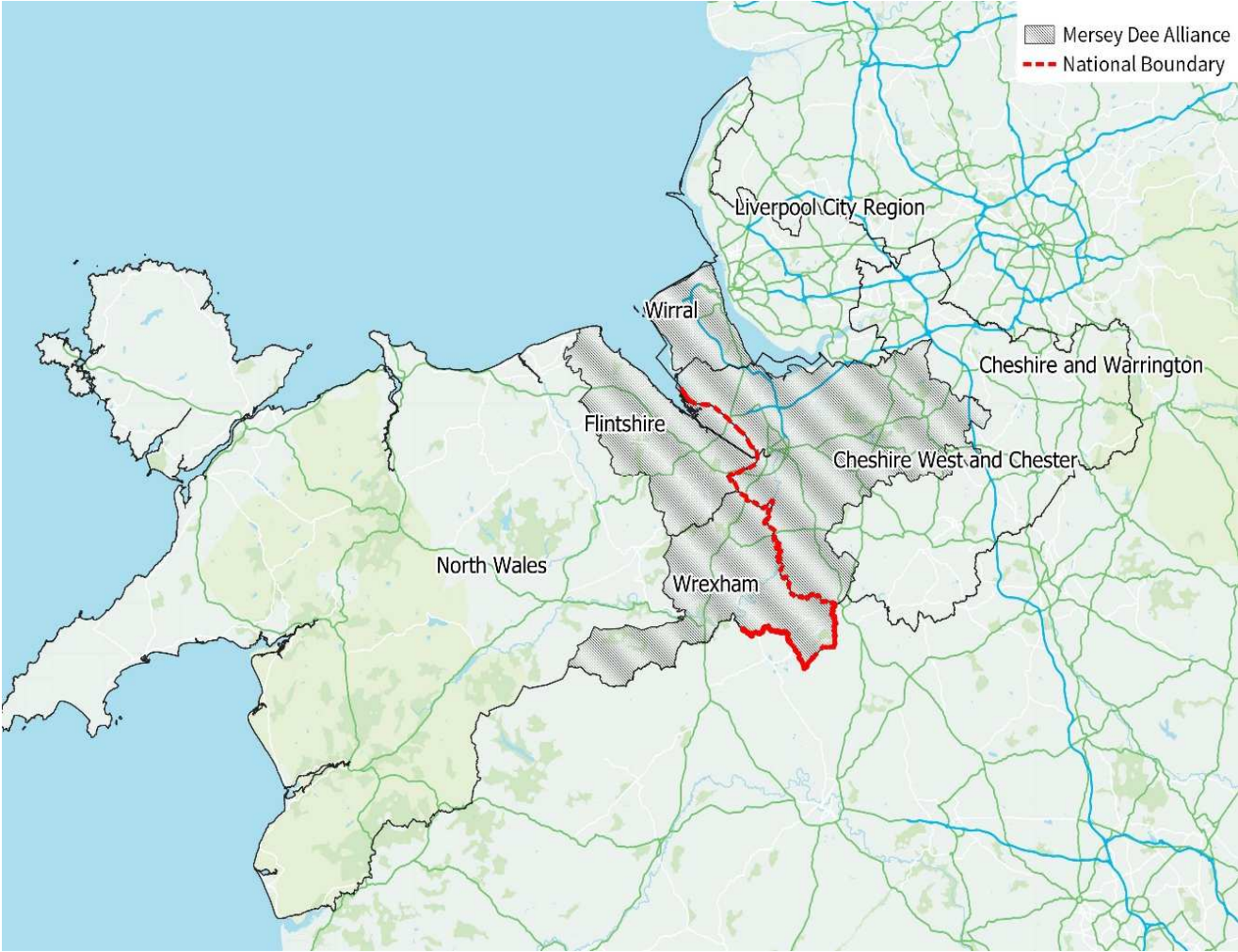
Flintshire County Council Informal Cabinet
2nd June 2021

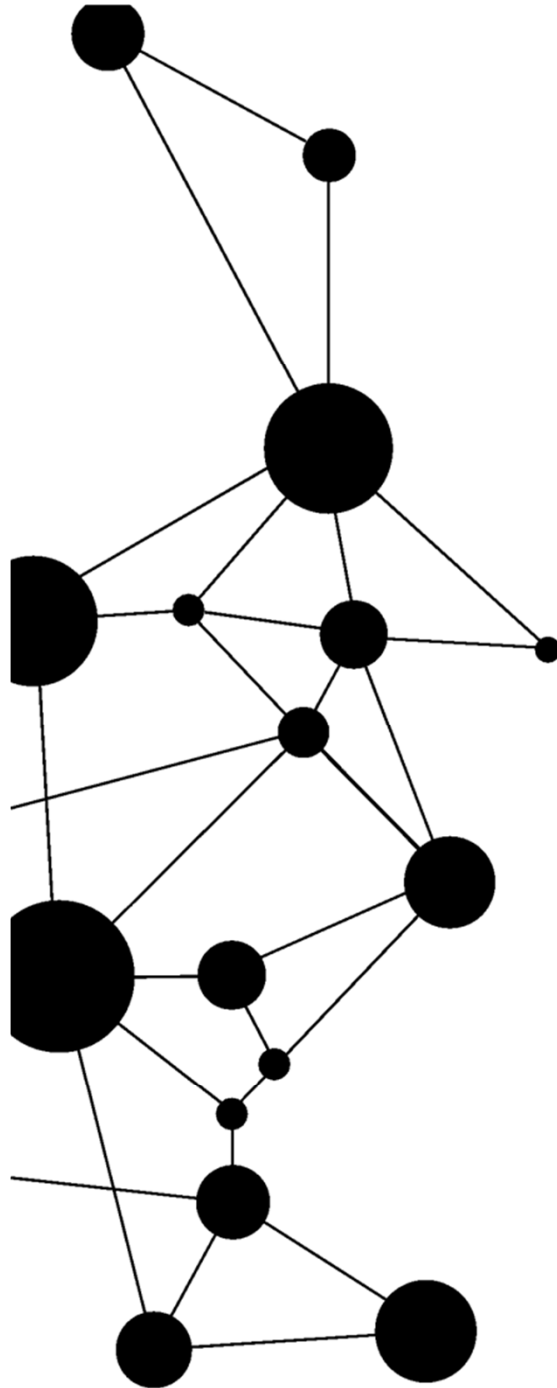
A Pivotal Location

Page 20



Mersey Dee





The Area

£22bn Gross Value Added

1 million people

413,000 jobs

2,900 companies that each turn over more than £1m per year

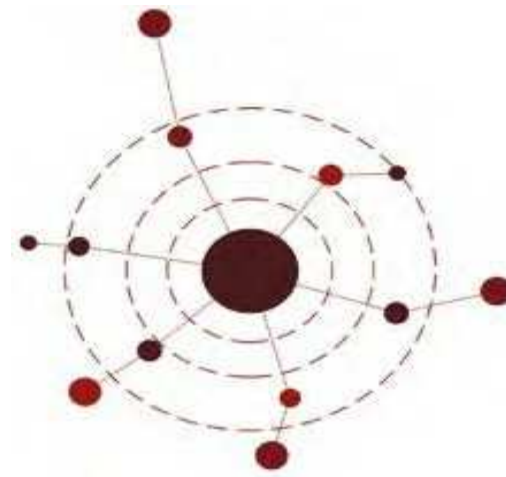
£4.5 billion manufacturing cluster

3 Enterprise Zones; Cheshire Science Corridor, Deeside Northern Gateway, Wirral Waters.

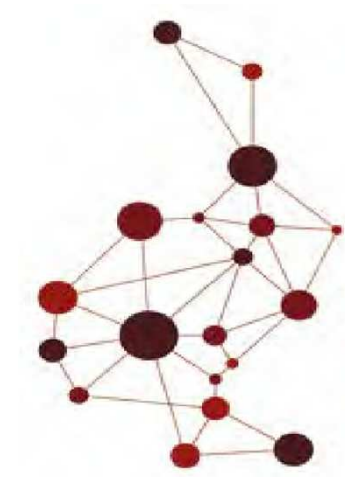
A strong diverse economy which includes aerospace, automotive, nuclear, renewables, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, financial services, food, engineering, ICT, tourism, and retail



What Makes the Mersey Dee Unique?

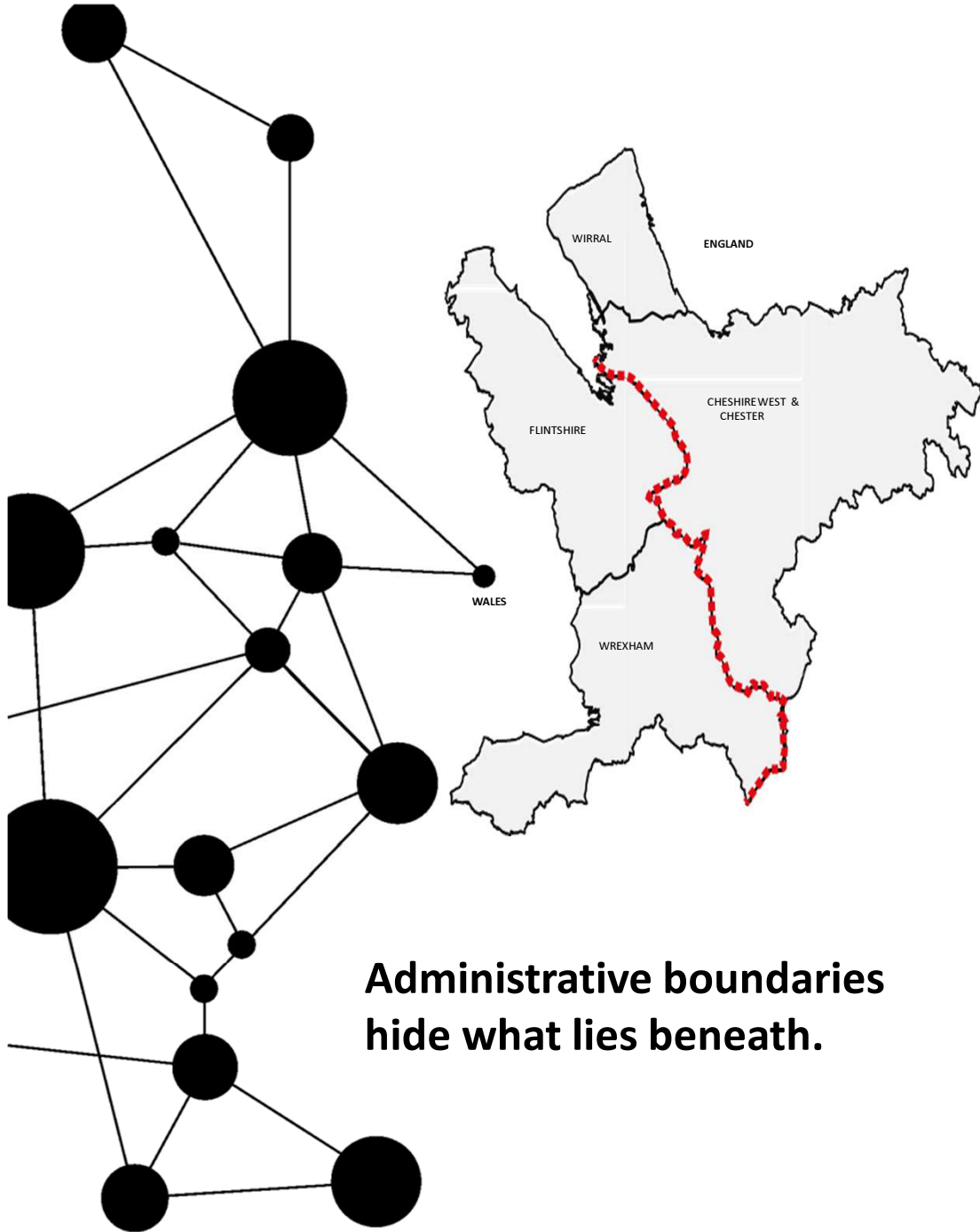


A Traditional Radial City

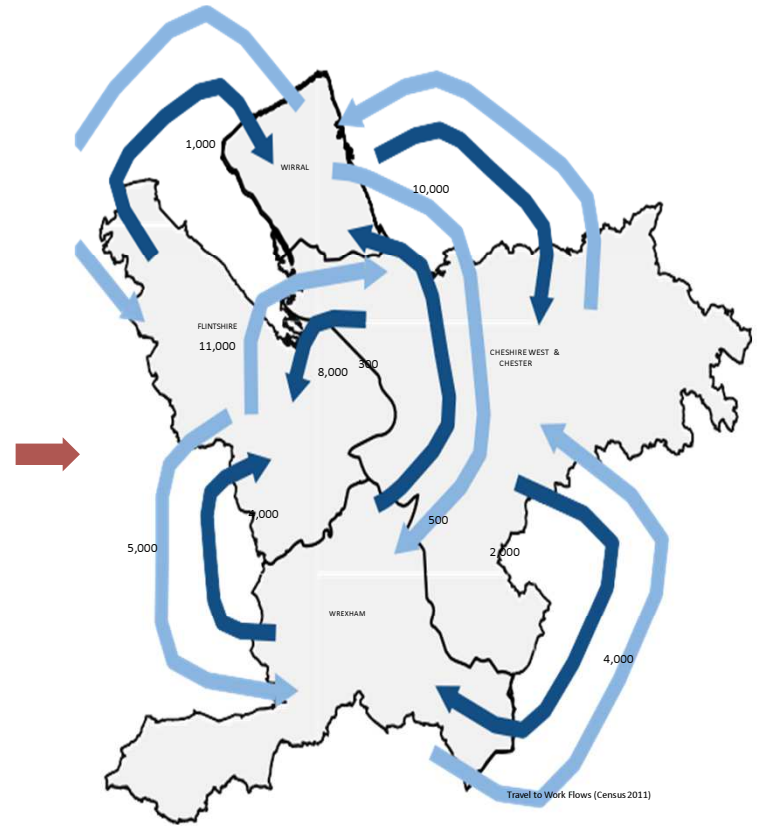


A Polycentric City

This polycentricity means the Mersey Dee area is often overlooked by the usual political frameworks.

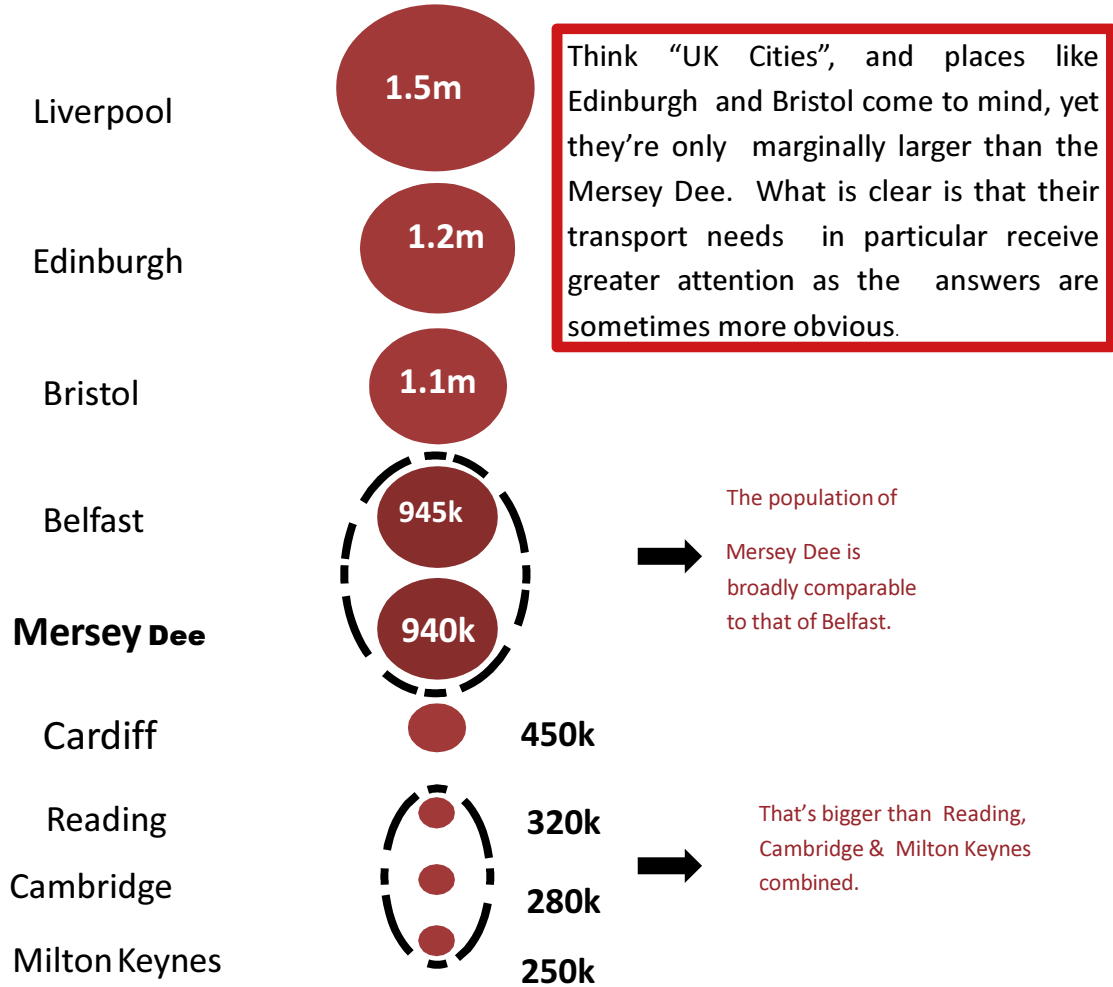
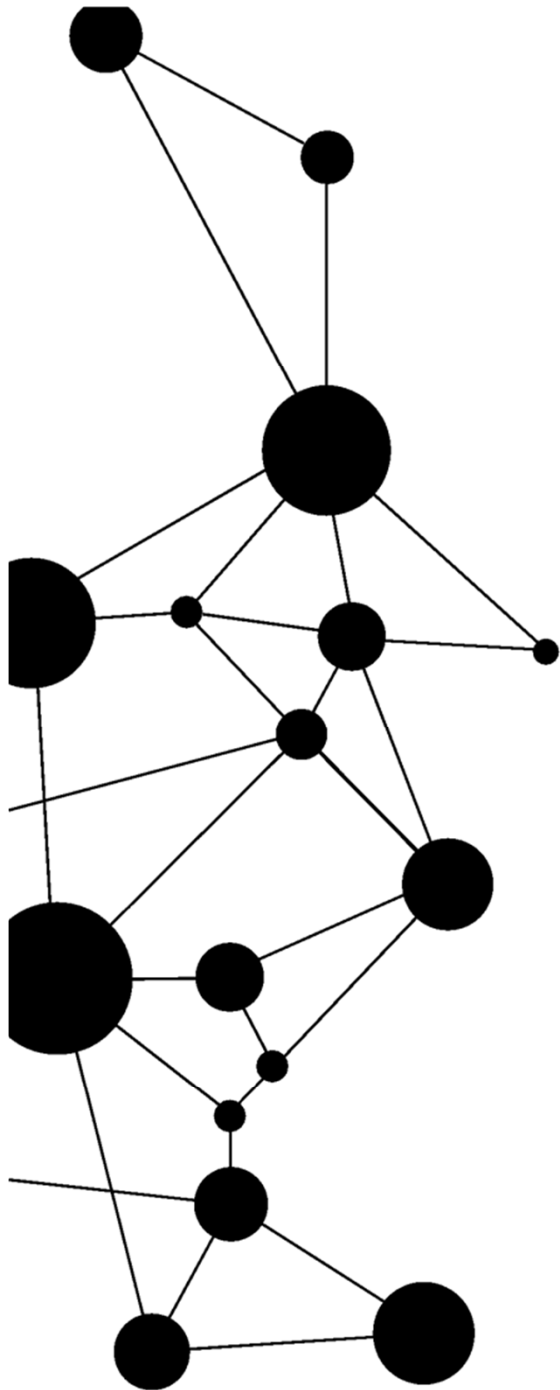


**Administrative boundaries
hide what lies beneath.**



**We have a unique cross-
border economy**

Our Population



Strategic Development Sites

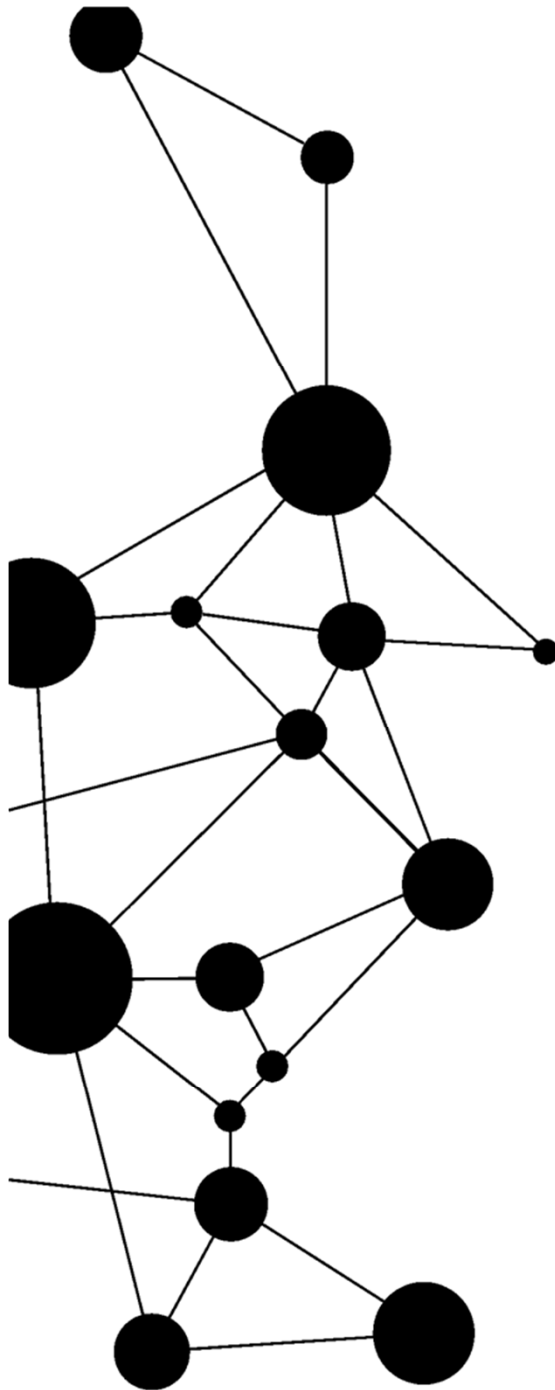
identified in the Mersey Dee Growth Prospectus

Ellesmere Port Central
Cheshire Science Corridor
Chester Central

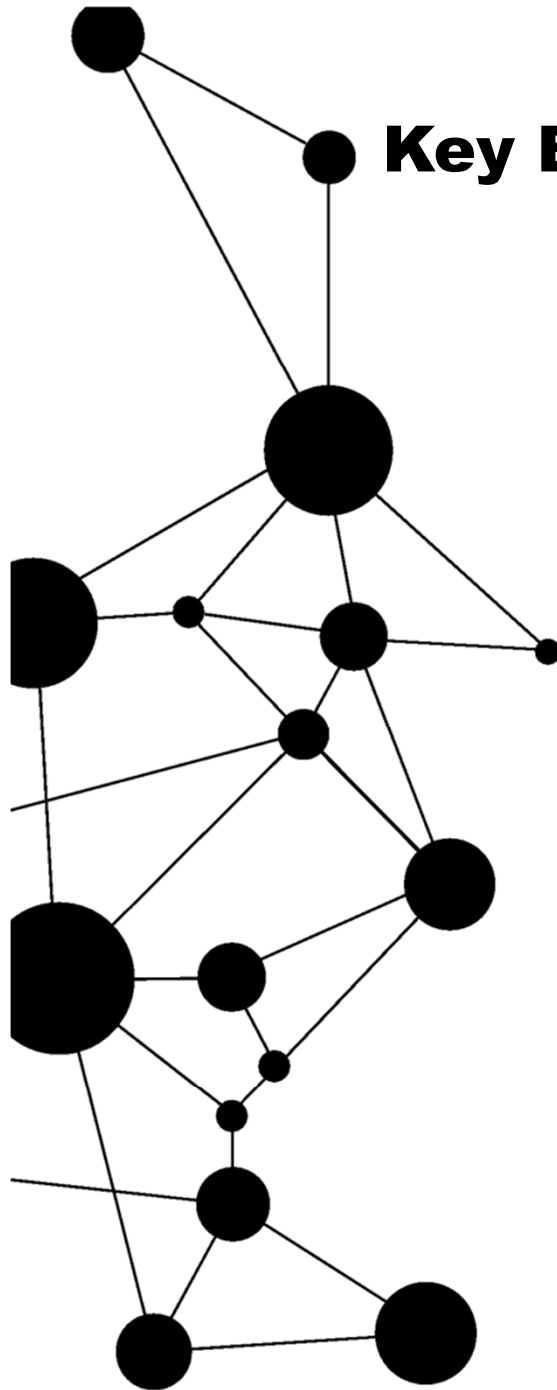
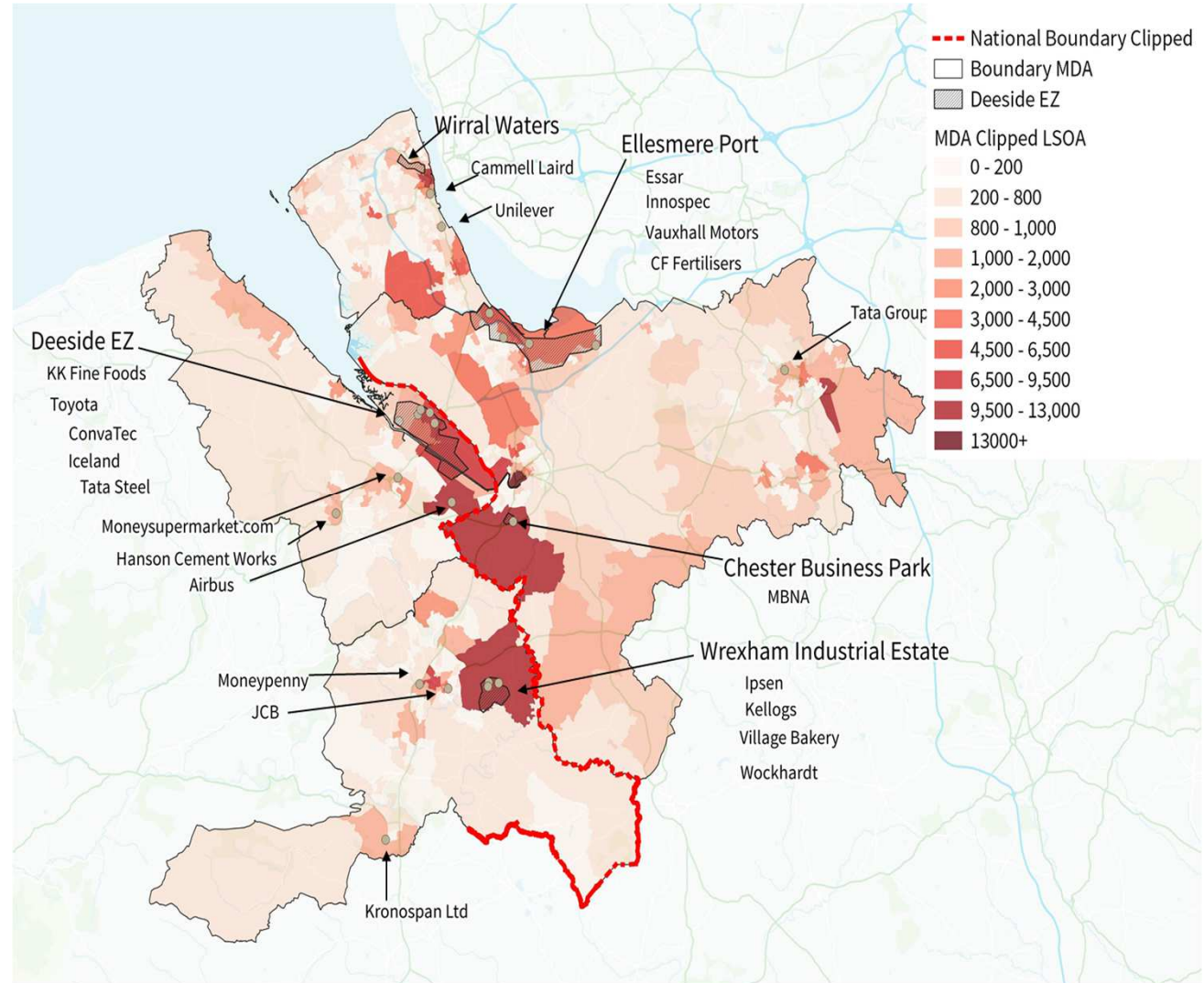
Wirral Waters
Birkenhead Town Centre
Woodside Waterfront
Wirral International Business Park

Wrexham Industrial Estate
Wrexham Town Centre
Wrexham Technology Park / Western Gateway

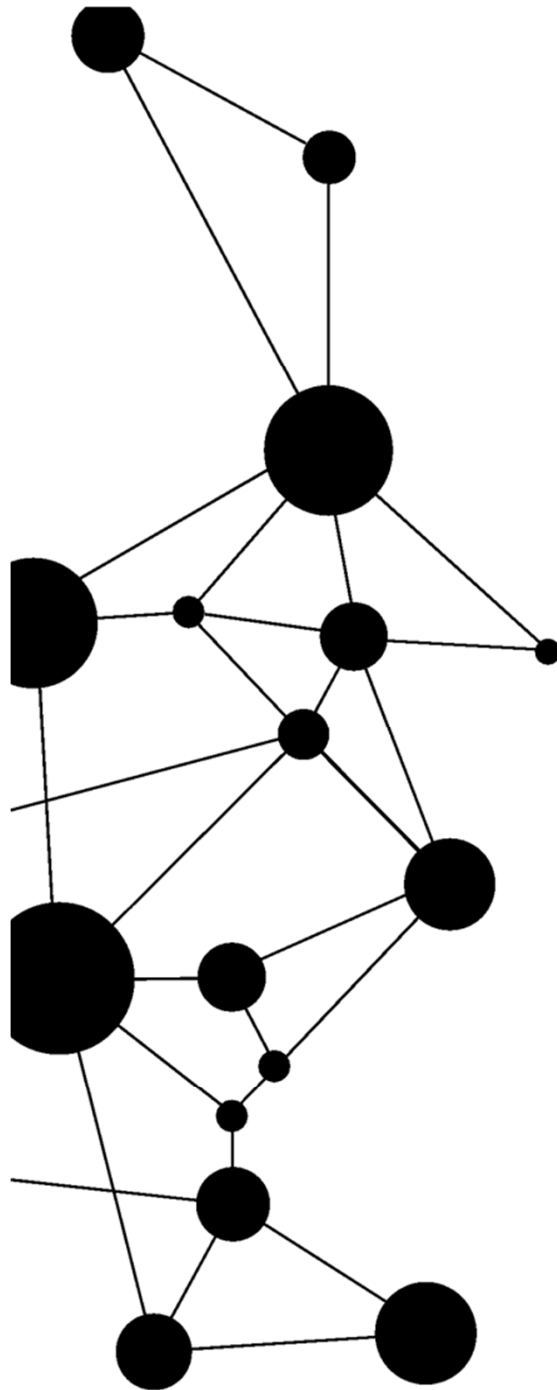
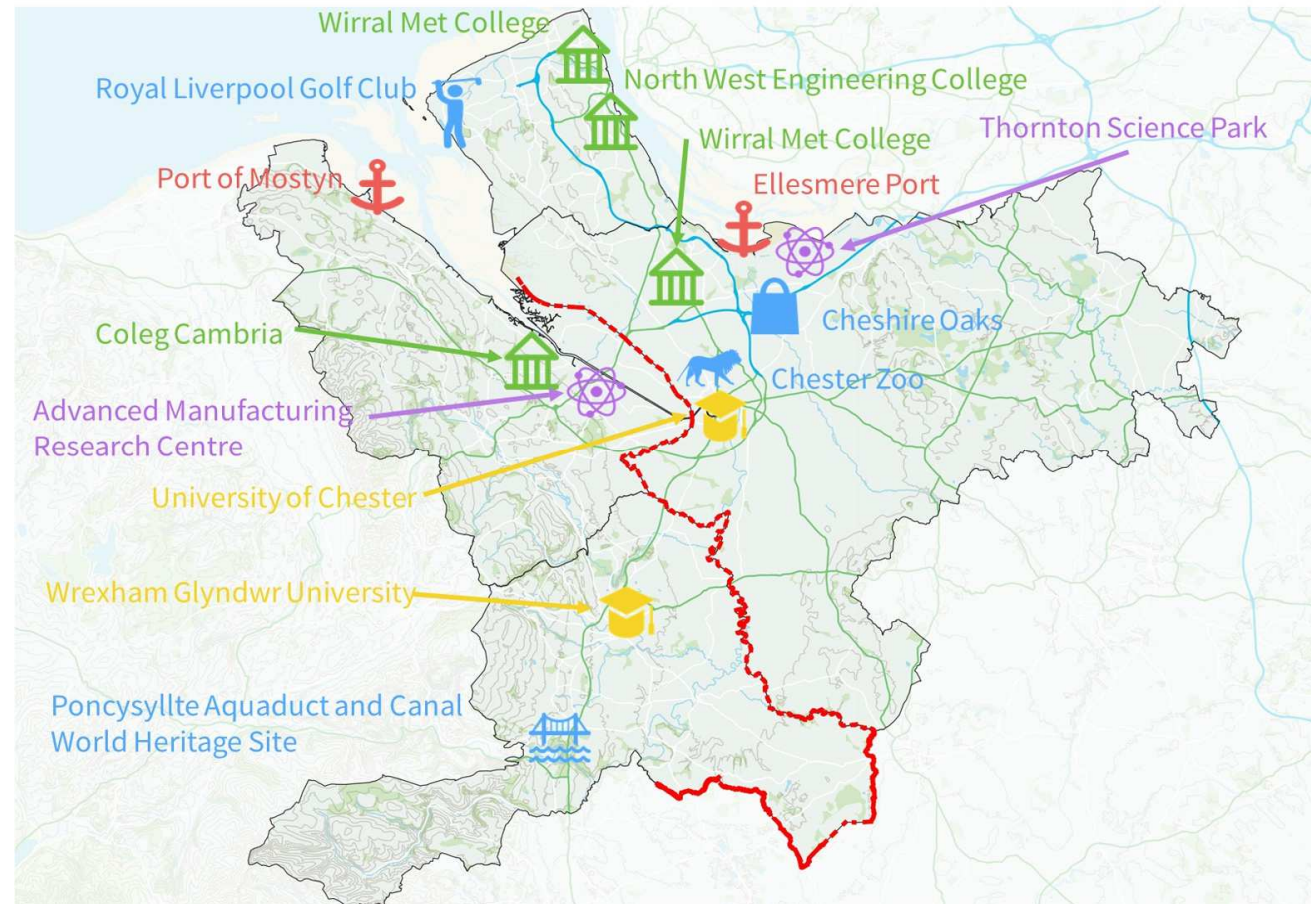
Deeside Northern Gateway
Warren Hall



Key Employers and Employment Locations



Assets in the Mersey Dee Area



Unlocking Our Potential

Our Ingredients for Growth

Diversity of Industry

Advanced Expertise

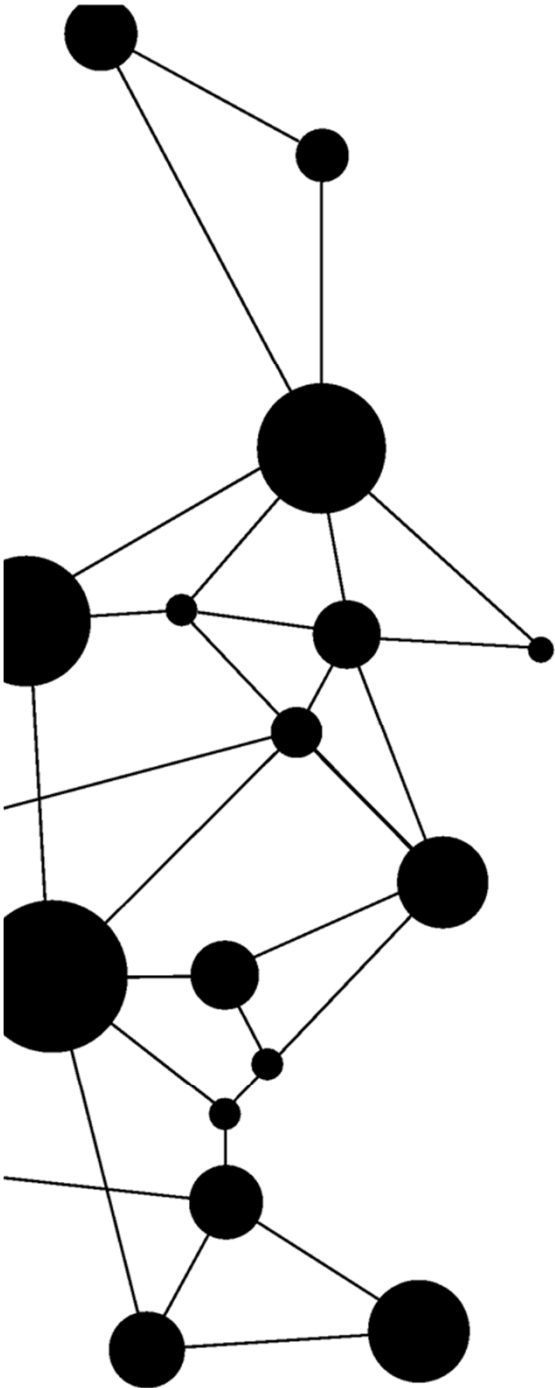
Quality of Life

Business Support

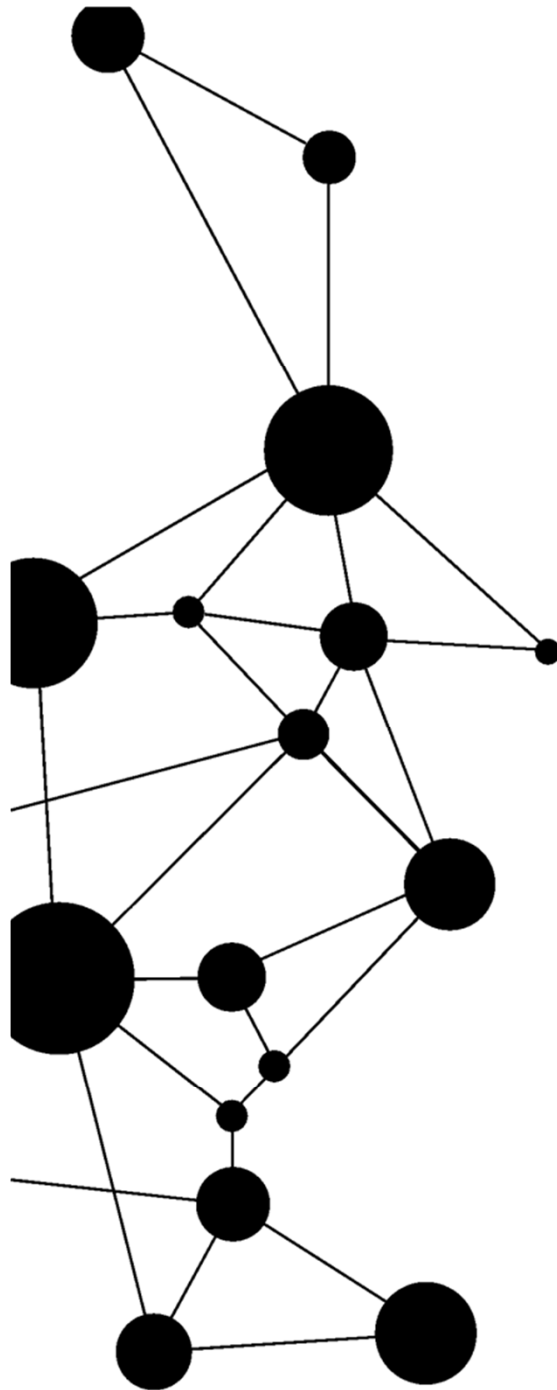
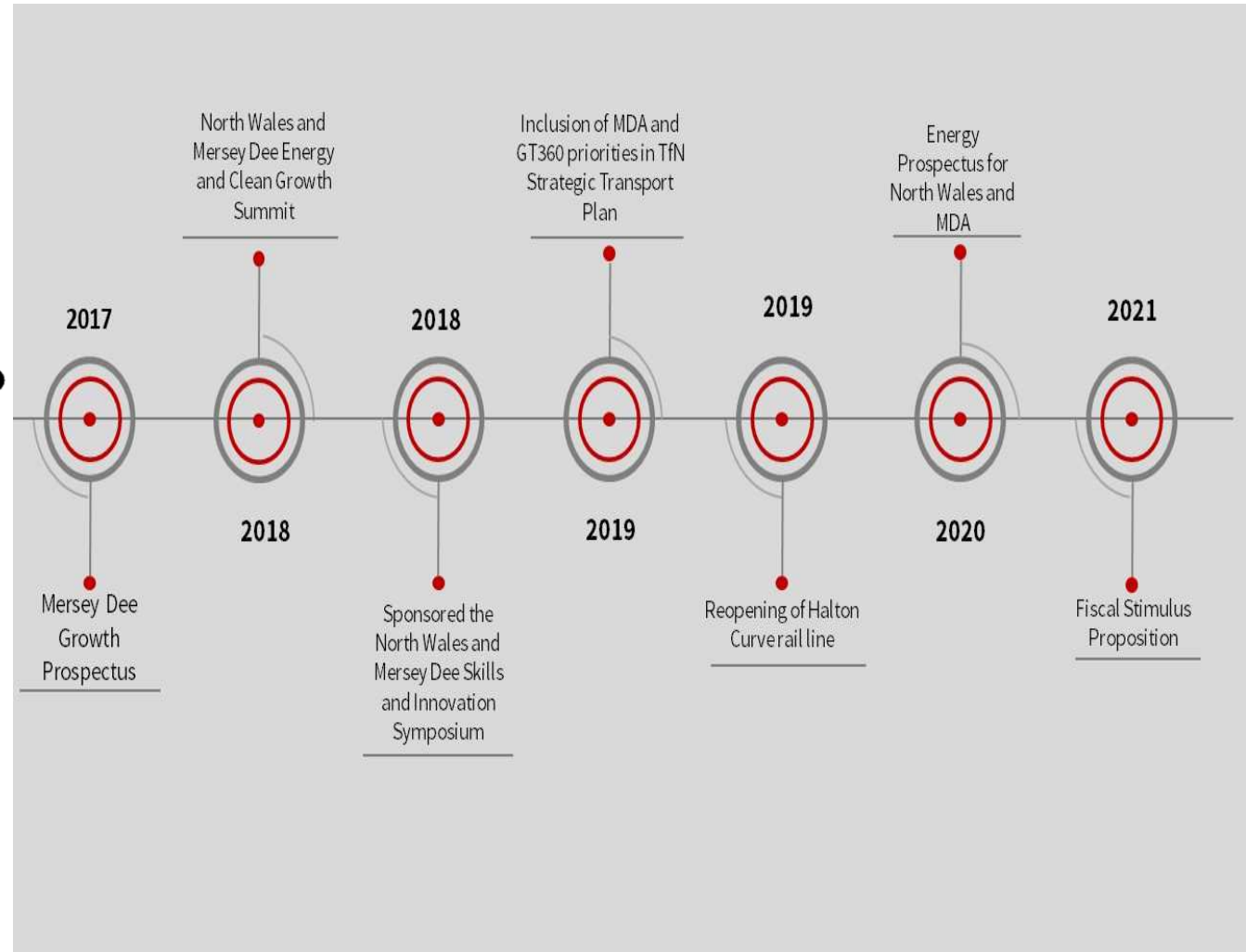
Infrastructure

Energy

Skills



The Story So Far



Mersey Dee Alliance Fiscal Stimulus Package

Our economy



1 million residents



413,000 jobs



2,900 companies with +£1m annual turnover



22 billion GVA



77% of residents live and work in the MDA area



£4.5 bn manufacturing cluster

The Need for Stimulus



£3.5bn GVA lost (-15%) in 2020



1,400 redundancies at Airbus Broughton



+1,233% business insolvencies (May- Dec 2020)

Key sectors facing challenges of **decarbonisation**



23% of the MDA within most 30% deprived part of England



£225m of unfunded rail infrastructure schemes



Dependent on EU for **exports** (80% to EU)



Only 37% Ultrafast broadband reach (54% UK)

Our Stimulus Package



£79m Business support & Skills programme to support our anchor companies to remain competitive and decarbonise



£115m Low Carbon energy programme to propel Mersey Dee to becoming a low carbon industrial hub



£30m Digital programme to raise our productivity through digital connectivity



£110m Transport programme to enable a cleaner, modern cross-border network



£75m Place programme to ensure our town and city centres are resilient and recover from the pandemic

Outcomes

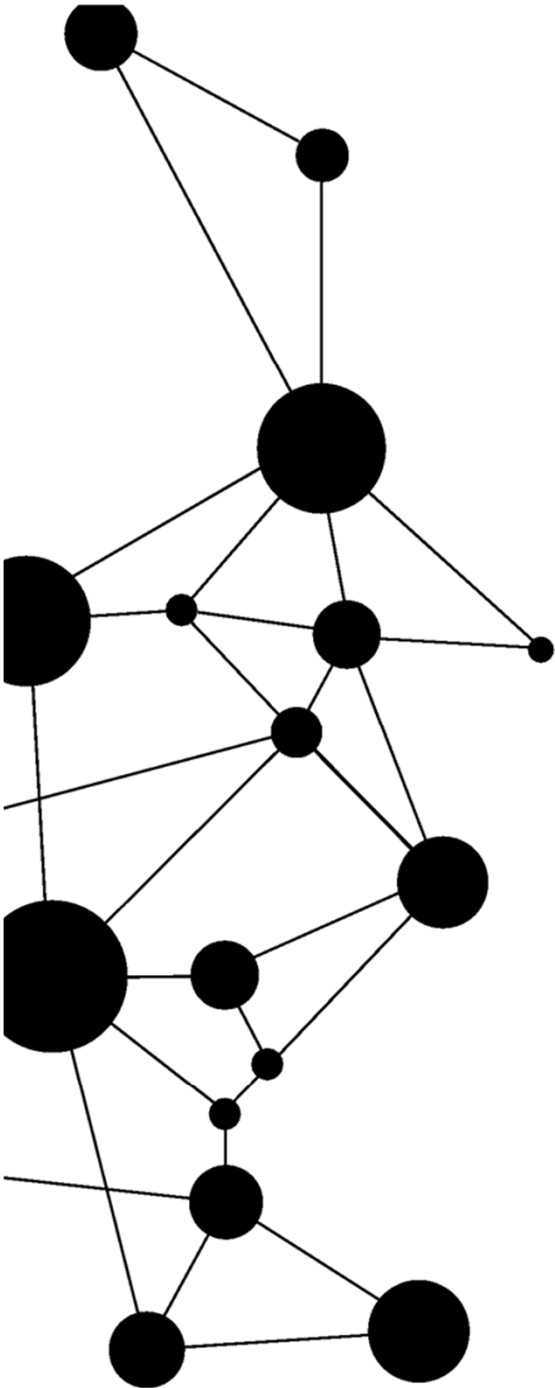
Total impact: **+£1.2bn GVA** and **5k jobs** created and safeguarded

- 300 businesses assisted
- £475m private sector co-investment
- 100km H2 pipeline, 10 hydrogen and CCUS hubs, a Hydrogen Demonstrator facility
- 100km walking and cycling infrastructure
- 130km of super-connected transport routes

Delivering on Government objectives

- Driving forward **Ten Point Plan** for a **Green Industrial Revolution**
- Tackling historic **under-investment** in infrastructure
- Grasping the opportunities from **Global Britain**
- **Levelling up** our communities

Strategic Priorities

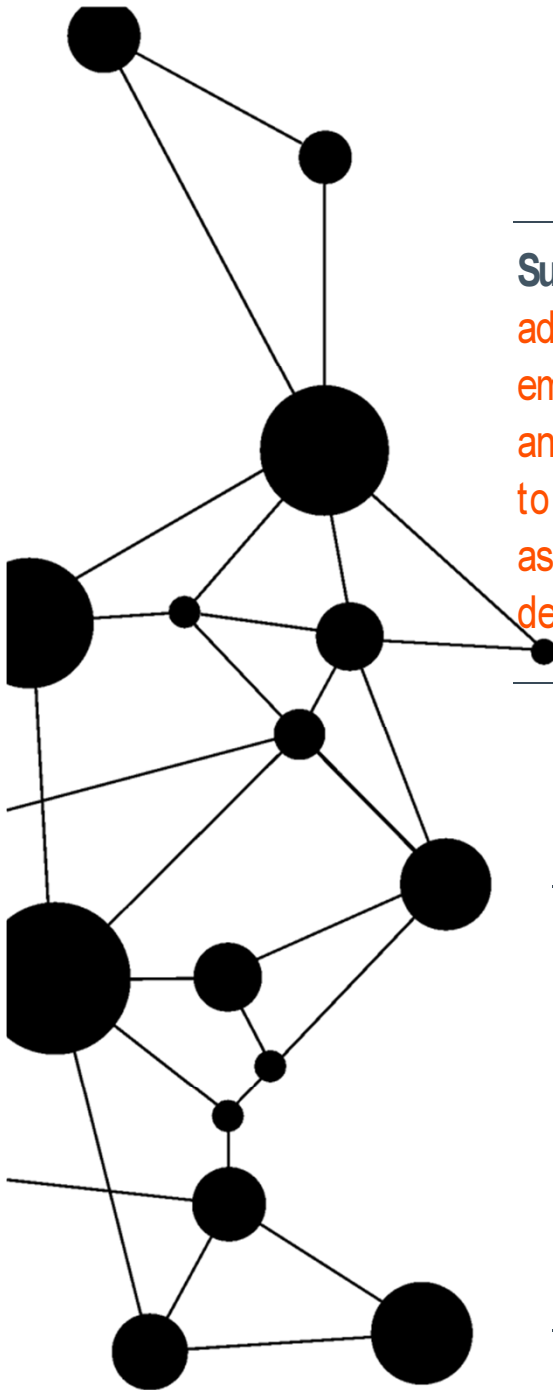


Cross Cutting Themes

Supporting cleaner growth – the UK has adopted a target of achieving net zero emissions by 2050. Our mix of industries and energy assets leaves us ideally placed to lead this ambitious transition and to act as an exemplar region for low carbon development.

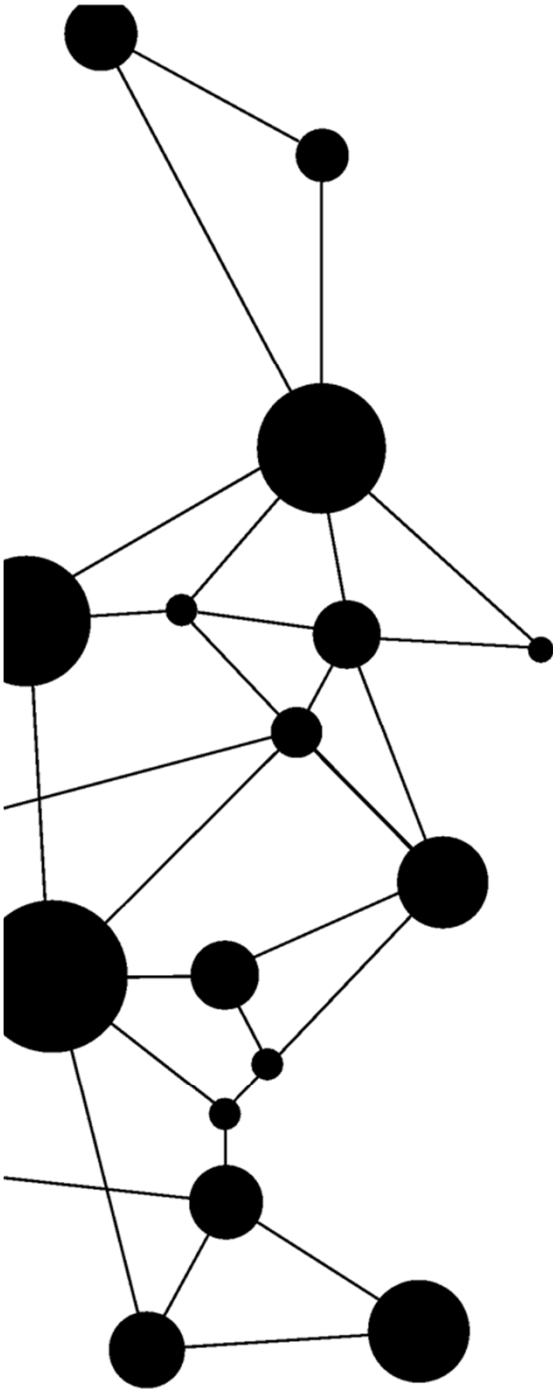
Connecting places, people and businesses – as a cross-border economy with multiple centres, the Mersey Dee area will be strengthened by improving the links between those places their business and people. Enhancing our connectivity is crucial.

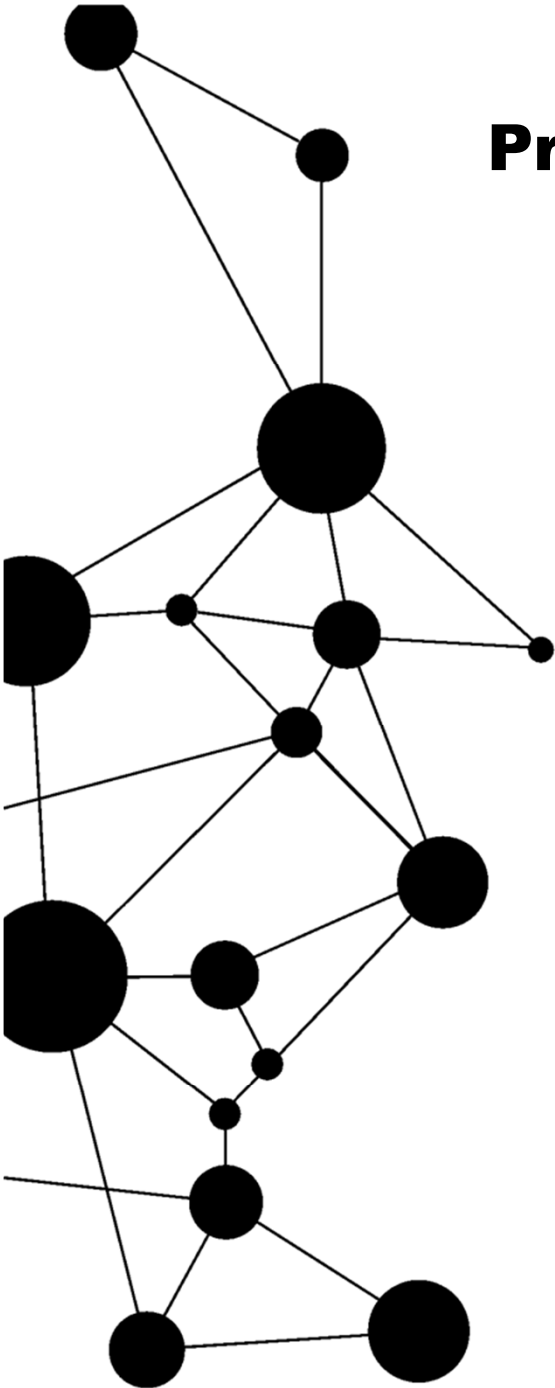
Sustainable and inclusive growth – as the region recovers from the pandemic our aim is to look beyond a simple headline level of growth. We want to ensure that everyone benefits from the region's success



5 Investment Priorities

1. Keeping our businesses competitive
2. Decarbonising industry
3. Skilling for the future
4. Connecting our region
5. Digital connectivity





Proposed Fiscal Stimulus Package

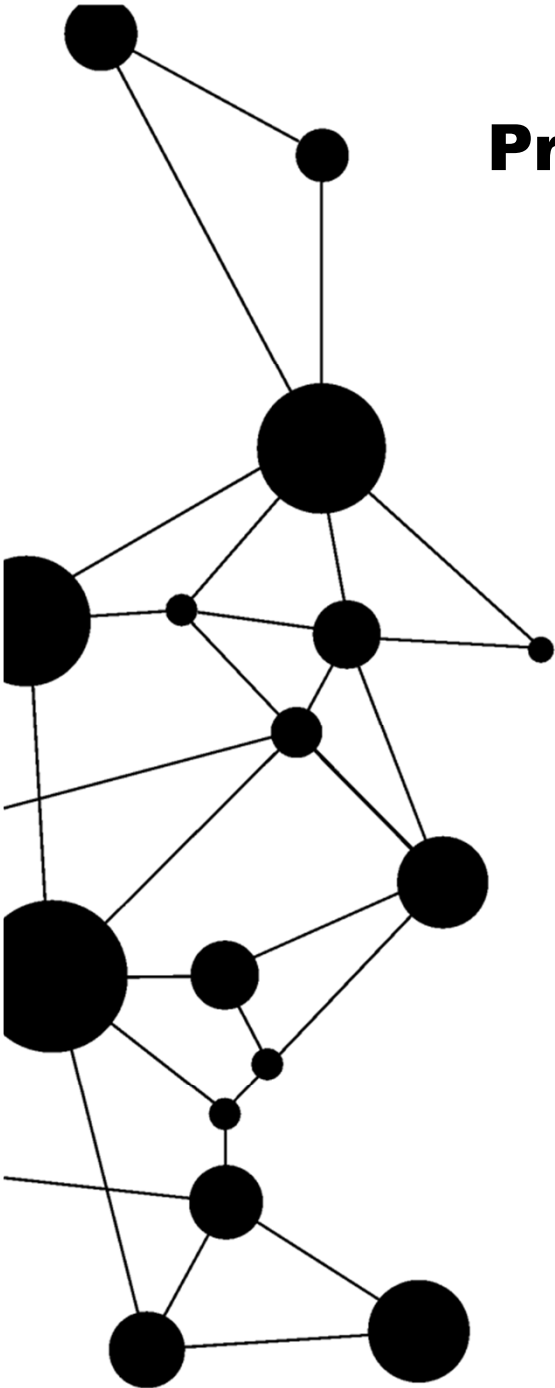
- **Skills and Business Support**

A £60m business challenge fund, targeted business support and skills/employment brokerage for firms and employees in the manufacturing sector, pump priming new skills programmes for the Green Industrial Revolution.

Capital: £70m
Revenue: £9m
Total: £79m

Outputs/Impact

£130m of private investment unlocked
300+ firms in the manufacturing supply chain supported
2,000+ jobs safeguarded
a new Business centre for Green Recovery
450,000 tonnes of CO₂ saved



Proposed Fiscal Stimulus Package

- **Low Carbon Energy Infrastructure**

Fund a strategic hydrogen demonstration facility for the UK, design and consenting for 100km blue hydrogen pipeline, development funding for hydrogen and CCUS hubs, design work for a tidal energy project on the Mersey and associated centre of excellence

Capital: £95m
Revenue: £12m
Total: £107m

Outputs/Impact

Strategic hydrogen demonstration facility
100km hydrogen pipeline
£250m private investment
5-10 hydrogen & CCUS hubs
Tidal energy project centre of excellence

Proposed Fiscal Stimulus Package

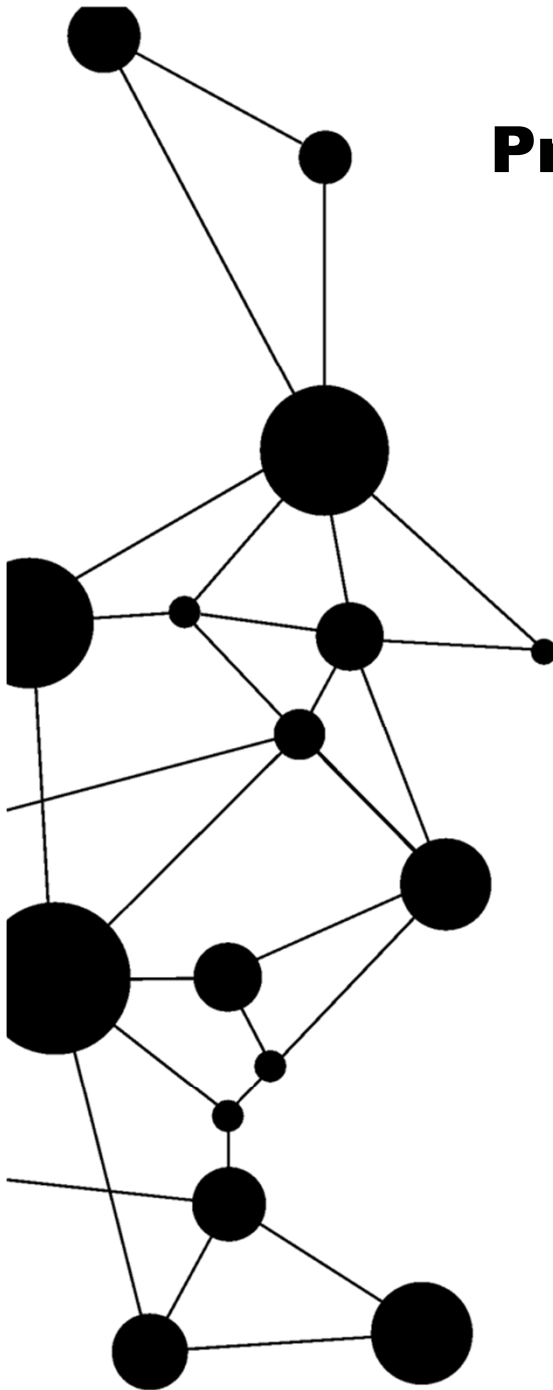
- **Transport**

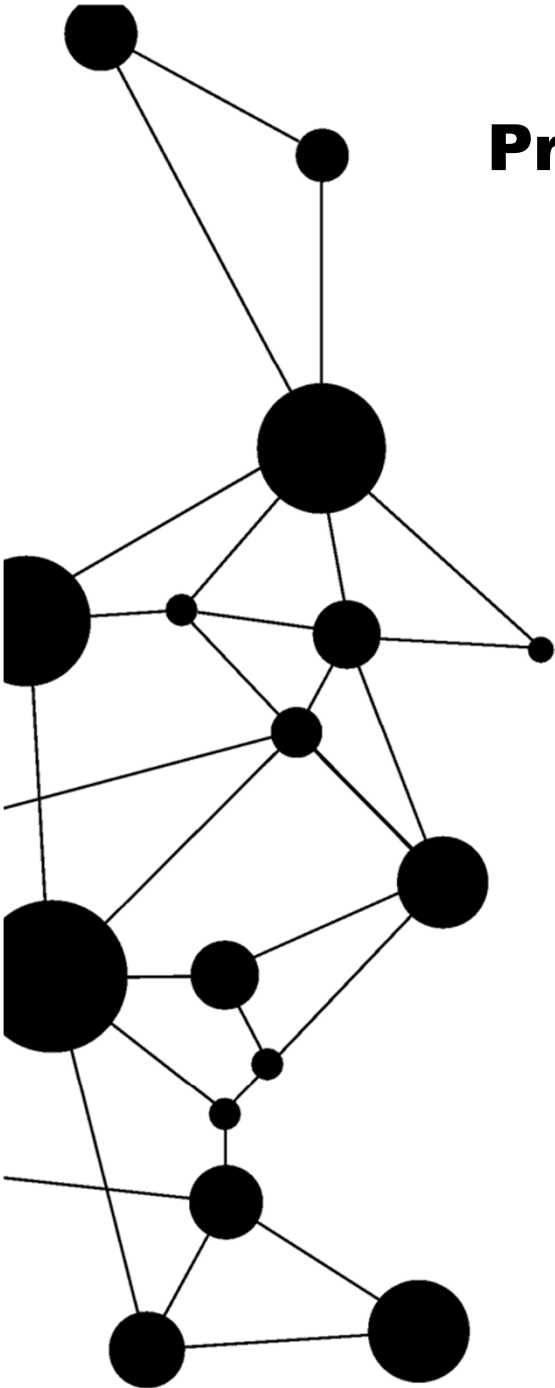
Fund a cross-border active travel network, fund the infrastructure required for cross-border integrated ticketing, development funding for a range of key cross-border rail schemes.

Capital £90m,
Revenue: £25m,
Total: £115m

Outputs/Impact

100km of high-quality cycling and walking infrastructure
New ticketing infrastructure for 20 stations, 400 buses across 50 routes and 9 operators.
3 shovel-ready rail schemes.





Proposed Fiscal Stimulus Package

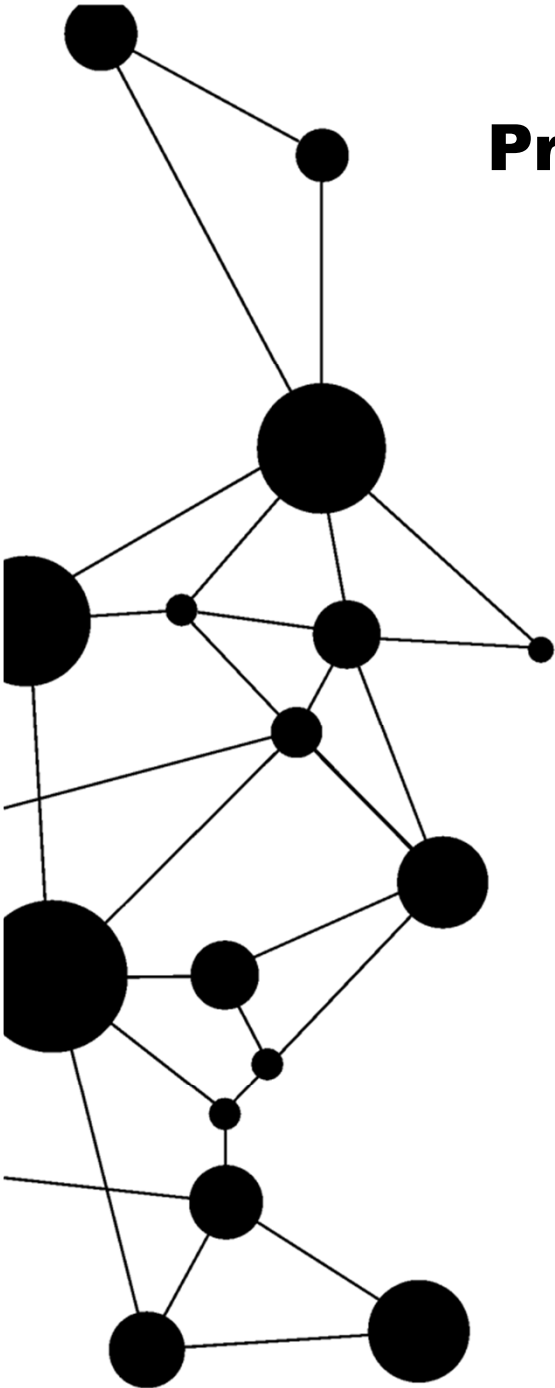
- **Place based support**

A fund managed flexibly across the Mersey Dee area will be used to support a range of areas across the MDA to support businesses and employment. Fund enabling works to the Wrexham Gateway development.

Capital: £70m
Revenue: £5m
Total: £75m

Outputs/Impact

Private sector investment of £80m
bridge works
links to active and public transport
new start-up, meanwhile and entrepreneurial space
town centre biodiversity and green space.



Proposed Fiscal Stimulus Package

- **Digital**

A fund managed flexibly across the Mersey Dee area will be used to support a range of areas across the MDA to support businesses and employment. Fund enabling works to the Wrexham Gateway development.

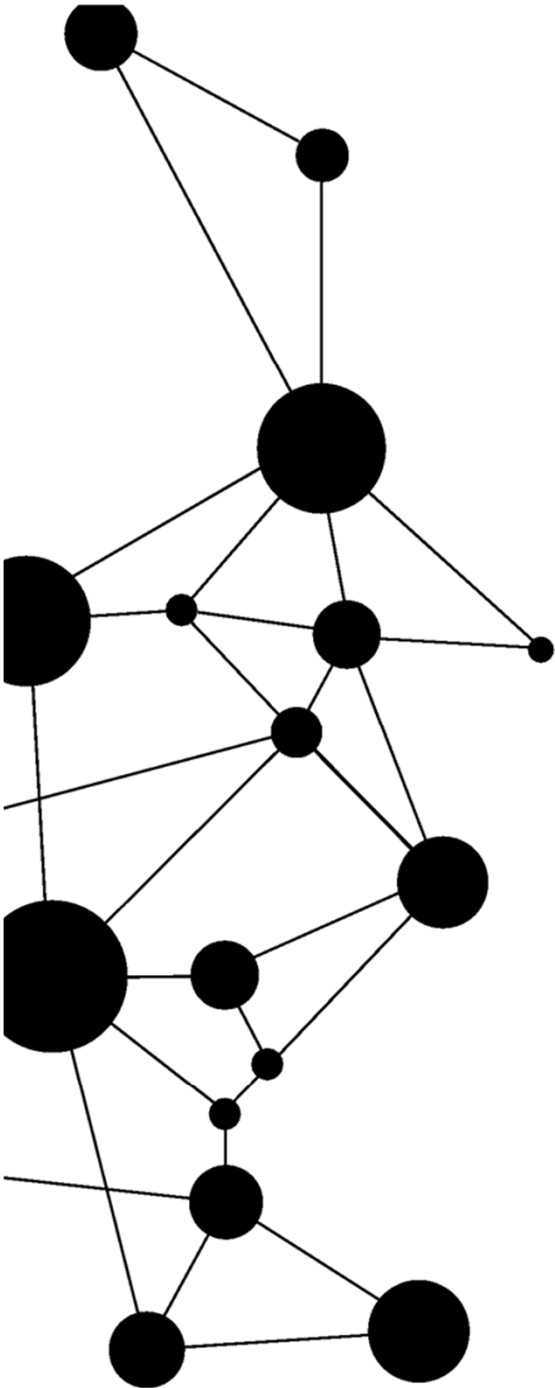
Capital: £27m
Revenue: £3m
Total: £30m

Outputs/Impact

130km of 5G and LPWAN connectivity along key transport routes
55 new deployments of 'smart town' infrastructure

Next Steps

- Approval of proposition document by MDA Board – 12th March
- Submission to UK and Welsh Governments – 16th March
- Project detail work – March to May
- Negotiation and programme development – May - Autumn



A Fiscal Stimulus Package for the Mersey Dee Economy

A Strategic Proposition



MERSEY DEE Alliance

Cynghvair **MERSI A'R DDYFRDWY**

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HATCH

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Foreword

Foreword

Foreword by Councillor Mark Pritchard, Chair of the Mersey Dee Alliance and Leader of Wrexham County Borough Council

A Call to Action for “Levelling Up” by investing in the MDA cross border economy

It has been my goal as Chair of the Mersey Dee Alliance (MDA) to bring forward a compelling case for investment in the unique, cross border, Mersey-Dee Economy. I am therefore delighted to present this Strategic Proposition to the United Kingdom and Welsh Governments for a Fiscal Stimulus Package for the Mersey Dee Alliance Economy.

My only regret is that I am doing so at a time of crisis for our economy, with thousands of jobs lost to the economic disruption of COVID-19. We also face the challenge of retaining cost competitiveness when selling into EU markets as 80% of MDA area exports go to the EU.

The MDA is offering the Welsh and UK Governments the opportunity to develop a partnership approach to the cross-border economy with co-ordinated investment and shared problem solving to realise its best performance. The MDA economy draws its workforce and supply chains from both sides of the border. A two-government approach will maximise the pace of recovery from COVID-19 and the economic returns for Wales, England and the UK.

The MDA economy will perform to its true potential with collaboration and dialogue between the two governments and their delivery agencies on strategic development frameworks, infrastructure investment (transport and digital), decarbonisation (of energy production and industrial processes), business support and skills.

This Strategic Proposition is an opportunity for governments to strengthen the UK economy and “level up” by securing the future of a high value manufacturing powerhouse. We must work together and adopt the practical common sense of local businesses and people who, as part of their everyday life, live, work and play crossing the “border” between England and Wales as if it were not there.

Who we are

The Mersey Dee Alliance represents the cross border, integrated functional economy within the borders of four local authority areas, Flintshire and Wrexham Councils in North Wales and Cheshire West and Chester and Wirral Councils in the North West of England.

The Local Authorities work in partnership with Higher and Further Education in the area (Chester and Wrexham-Glyndwr Universities and Coleg Cambria and West Cheshire College), the Local Growth Partnerships that overlap with the MDA area, (The North Wales Economic Ambition Board in North Wales, the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority which includes the Wirral and the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership which includes Cheshire West).

We maintain close relationships with local businesses and articulate their desire to see this cross-border economy recognised for the innovative, high value industrial and employment powerhouse that it is.

Working in Partnership

The MDA worked closely with neighbouring local growth partnerships, the North Wales Economic Ambition Board, the Cheshire and Warrington LEP and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority to produce this Proposition. It is our express intention to avoid duplication and to complement and extend the programmes of the North Wales Growth Deal, the Liverpool City Region Recovery Plan and Cheshire and Warrington LEP's **Strategic Economic Plan**.

These partners worked with us in workshops to develop proposals. All our partners and stakeholders believe that our economy is one where the overlap of businesses, workforces and educational institutions offers the opportunity to generate more productivity and prosperity from working together.

Why we are making a Strategic Proposition for a Fiscal Stimulus Package

The Mersey Dee Alliance economy has a GVA of £22bn, 2,900 enterprises with a turnover of more than £1m year, over 400,000 employees and a population of over 950,000. It is a centre of high value manufacturing that exports £12bn worth of goods and services. This makes the MDA cross border economy a critical economic engine for UK PLC.

COVID-19 has reduced the economic activity in the MDA by 15%, well above the national average of between 9 – 10%. Our biggest private sector employers in the Aerospace and Automotive Sectors have been hit hard by COVID-19, as has a formerly vibrant retail sector. Many thousands of jobs have been lost (with the aerospace sector alone seeing an up to 11,000 job losses nationally following a 30% cut in production at Airbus, Broughton, costing 1,400 Airbus jobs and a further 9,500 job losses in the supply chain and through induced effects). We must respond, finding ways to replace lost output for supply chain companies and to help those who lost their jobs to find new ones by improving their skills.

The MDA is a leading hub for low carbon energy generation and Research and Development. We are a centre for the development of hydrogen as a replacement for coal, oil and gas as industrial fuels. The energy sector growth in our region is an opportunity for our engineering companies currently supplying the Aerospace and Automotive sectors to diversify into the growing markets for renewable and low carbon energy.

Our industrial base uses much energy, most of which is currently from carbon-based sources. The MDA wishes to secure investment that will enable and accelerate fuel switching and decarbonisation of energy use by our enterprises. Enabling energy switching is essential for our industries to retain their **“licence to trade” in the UK net zero economy of the future.**

Brexit requires a focus on productivity and efficiency for our industrial base as 80% of exports from the MDA go to EU countries. We are home to many multi-nationals who located here to sell into Europe, utilising a skilled and motivated workforce and specialised and high performing supply chain clusters. The MDA therefore wishes to obtain funding for business innovation, research and commercialisation projects that will make our factories fiercely competitive within their companies and their European operations.

We must improve transport infrastructure and services, particularly for public transport and active travel. These investments will enable decarbonisation of transport through enhanced rail infrastructure and services, integration of rail, bus and active travel and improve health outcomes from reducing air pollution. They will also contribute to agglomeration and make our labour market larger and more dynamic by improving access to work.

Digital investment will enable the consolidation and advance of new ways of agile working and the enhancement of productivity and firm competitiveness by deploying the latest technology.

The MDA: Making a Difference

The MDA is making a big ask of £400m to address big challenges to make our economy and infrastructure greener, more productive, inclusive and innovative so that local people can have a better life. Our current proposals add up to a greater sum, but we take **the view that this offers “options to funders”** where governments and businesses can help us prioritise and direct resources to where they are most needed.

Government support and participation in shaping our proposed Fiscal Stimulus Package will be a great leap forward on the road to making our economy fit for the future. We can achieve more by working together on a cross border, cross party, collaborative and two-government basis. Together we can show what levelling up means in practice.

We are not directing our “ask” at specific funds but note that they align well with the priorities within the “Levelling Up” prospectus.

Backing the MDA is a great bet. The area is unique to have gone through the de-industrialisation of the 1970s and 1980s with the closure of coal mines in Wrexham and steelmaking at Shotton with the loss of thousands of jobs. The area built back better with a diversified, modern economy based on new, clean and highly productive manufacturing plants. With the support we ask for we can lead a new decarbonised industrial revolution for the UK and Wales that will take us from COVID-19 recession to green growth.

It is my fervent hope that the Welsh and UK governments will recognise the opportunities and true potential of the cross-border Mersey Dee area captured in this Strategic Proposition.

Thanks

I must thank my partners and colleagues in the MDA for their support in quickly pulling together the information for the Strategic Proposition in partnership with our consultants, Hatch.

The MDA is especially grateful to Ken Skates MS, Minister for the Economy, Transport and North Wales in the Welsh Government, and the Right Honourable Simon Hart MP, Secretary of State for the Office of the Secretary of State for Wales for their encouragement to bring forward this proposition.

What Next

The MDA will: -

- Engage with the UK and Welsh Governments to take forward and negotiate funding for the proposals in the Strategic Proposition, aiming to take a package through a green book development process and targeted at a future fiscal event.
- Explore where certain proposals in the package may align with immediate, collaborative **applications to “Levelling Up Funds” to speed up delivery**
- Engage with business and partners to further refine and develop our proposals
- Continue to work closely with our neighbouring Local Growth Partnerships to ensure that MDA proposals are complementary and add value to existing propositions like the LCR CA Recovery Plan, the North Wales Growth Deal and the Cheshire and Warrington Strategic Economic Plan.

Cllr. Mark Pritchard, Chair of the Mersey Dee Alliance and Leader of Wrexham County Borough Council

Supported by:

Councillor Stuart Whittingham, Vice Chair of the Mersey Dee Alliance (Wirral Council)

The Right Honourable Lord Barry Jones, President of the Mersey Dee Alliance, the Deeside Business Forum and Flintshire in Business

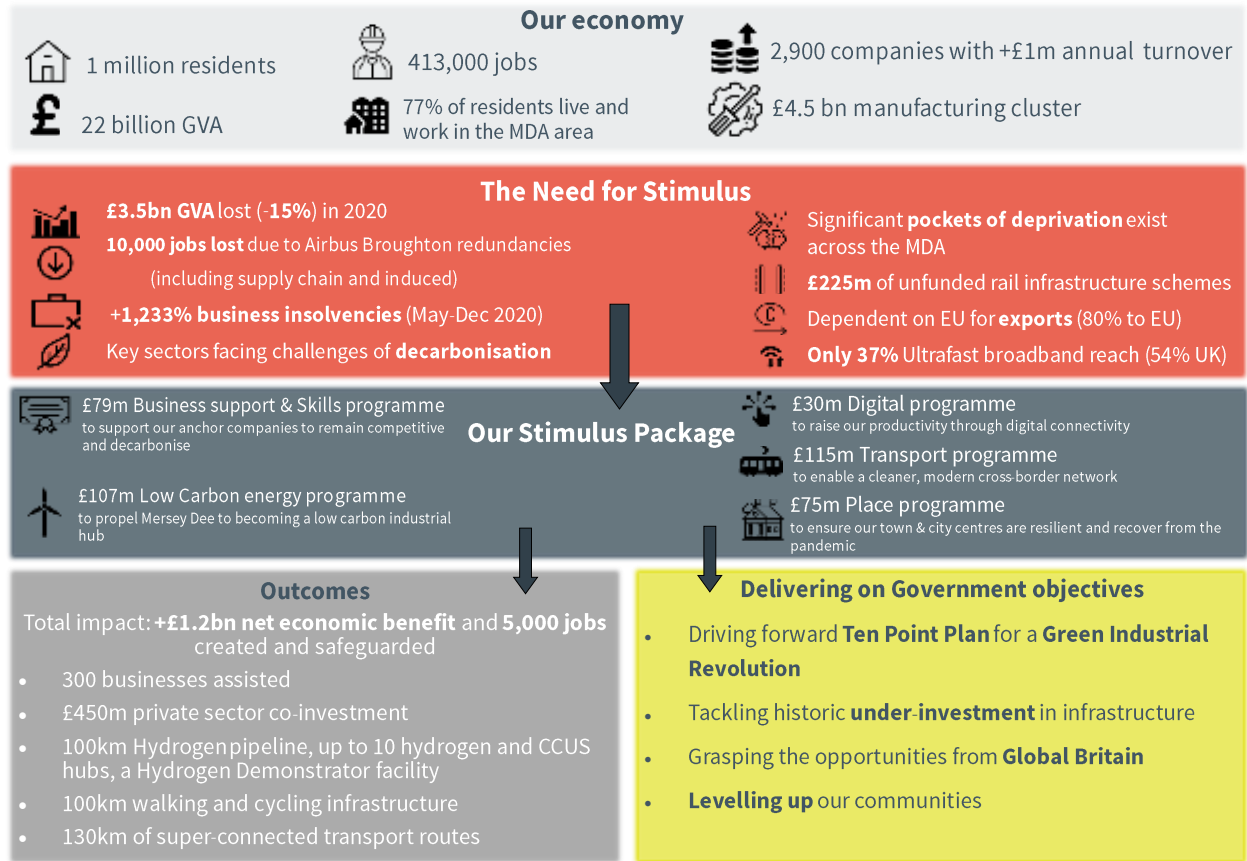




01: Our Proposed Fiscal Stimulus Package

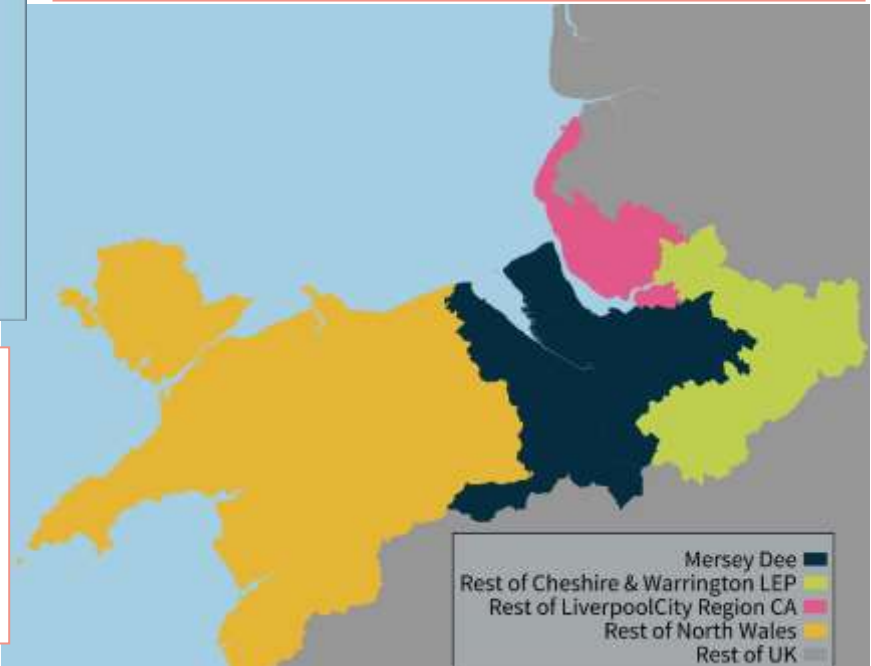
Our Proposed Fiscal Stimulus Package

Mersey Dee Alliance Fiscal Stimulus Package



The Mersey Dee Alliance represents a cross-border area covering the local authority areas of Flintshire and Wrexham in North Wales and Wirral and Cheshire West and Chester in North West England

The Mersey Dee Alliance works closely with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, Cheshire and Warrington LEP and the North Wales Economic Ambition Board



Our economy

The Mersey Dee is a unique, functional economy spanning the border between North West England and North East Wales. The Mersey Dee Alliance (MDA) is a well-established economic partnership bringing together four local authority areas: Cheshire West and Chester and Wirral in England, and Wrexham and Flintshire in Wales. We are a cross-border initiative, spanning the border of North East Wales and North West England. The University of Chester, Wrexham Glyndwr University and Welsh Government are also partnership members. We work together to enhance the profile of the region, grow its competitiveness and continue to establish it as a pivotal location in the UK.

The MDA seeks to reduce cross border complexity caused by differing policy frameworks in England and Wales. The local population and businesses do not see a border and it is the mission of the MDA to represent them. We are one of the most self-contained labour markets in the UK, with **77% of our residents living and working within the MDA area**. Census data identifies that **29,800 people travel across the national border** every day for work.

We make a very strong contribution to the national economy. **We have more residents than Reading, Cambridge & Milton Keynes combined** and **our Gross Value Added (GVA) of £22 billion is equivalent to a third of the entire Welsh economy**. Our economy is diverse, hosting nationally important firms including Airbus, Tata Group, Toyota, Vauxhall, Essar, Unilever, Kelloggs and JCB. We host nationally significant concentrations of industry in sectors such as advanced manufacturing, energy and life sciences. We are at the heart of the drive towards net zero with our renewable energy assets and opportunities, and we are set to host **the UK's first at-scale hydrogen project**. The MDA area and Deeside/Wrexham in particular are **unique in rebuilding a manufacturing economy after the decline of traditional industries**.

There are major economic opportunities for development and growth in the Mersey Dee area.

The need for this package

Our economy has been hit particularly hard by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2020, the UK economy was estimated to have shrunk by 9.9%¹, the largest fall on record and probably the biggest economic shock since the start of the 18th century. Our own modelling estimates suggest that **15% of our pre-pandemic GVA of £22.9bn (£3.4bn) was lost during 2020**. This is due to the mix of sectors that we host. Our manufacturers have been hit extremely hard, as have our town centres and the range of retail and hospitality businesses across the region. Insolvencies in the MDA area increased by 1,233% between May and December 2020. Almost 13% of the eligible workforce was on furlough in January 2021.

Alongside the impacts on our town centres, one of the most visible consequences was the **announcement last year from one of our anchor companies, Airbus, of 1,700 redundancies across the UK**. This has resulted in the announcement of 1,400 job losses and a 30% cut in production at the Broughton site. Airbus employees have subsequently voted for a Trade Union deal to implement a shorter working week when the Job Retention Scheme ends. Given the multiplier effects through

¹ ONS, December 2020, Monthly GDP estimate

companies impacted in the supply chain and through lost employee spending, **we estimate that this alone has cost the UK economy around £700 million in GVA and 11,000 job losses.** Much of this is located in the MDA area, given the locations of employees and suppliers.

Furthermore, **our anchor companies, many of which are multinationals, face increasing global competition.** This environment means that local plants need to compete internally with other global sites for continued investment. Structural shifts including our departure from the European Union and the need to decarbonise operations have intensified this competition. With 80% of our exports going to the EU, **our internationally oriented firms need to adapt to new trading arrangements and to access the opportunities from a Global Britain.**

These concerns are not theoretical or far off. At the time of writing, we are also facing the potential closure of the Vauxhall car plant at Ellesmere Port, which has been making cars since 1964. Other manufacturers may be at risk of production moving to France or Germany unless local sites remain competitive.

The long-term prosperity and competitiveness of our employers, people and places is further held back by **historic under-investment in our transport and digital infrastructure,** partly due to administrative and policy barriers created by the national border. There are a number of important infrastructure schemes in development in the Mersey Dee area that will be vital to levelling up the area, and redressing the shortfall in infrastructure investment over the years.

We must act now to safeguard our economic assets, our skills base and our places, and ensure they are positioned to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the Green Industrial Revolution and Global Britain.

Our strategic priorities

In response to these challenges, partners across our region have come together to agree **a targeted package of investments** that will stimulate economic recovery, whilst accelerating major long-term opportunities for shared, sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

Our proposition is firmly grounded in the established vision for MDA economy, with three strategic themes:

1. **Supporting cleaner growth:** the UK has adopted a target of achieving net zero emissions by 2050. With our mix of industries, renewable energy assets, the UK's first proposed at-scale hydrogen project and an industrial cluster at the forefront of decarbonisation, we are ideally placed to lead this ambitious transition and to act as an exemplar region for the green industrial revolution. This also offers major opportunities for diversification within our advanced manufacturing supply chains.
2. **Connecting places, people and businesses:** as a cross-border economy with multiple, dispersed centres, the Mersey Dee area will be strengthened by improving the links between those places, their businesses and people. Enhancing our connectivity is crucial and we have suffered long-term challenges from under-investment, in part due to the administrative border. We must accelerate and deliver the cross-border transport and digital infrastructure improvements our employers and workers need to be competitive.

3. **Ensuring sustainable and inclusive growth**: as the region recovers from the pandemic, we must look beyond a simple headline level of growth. We must ensure that everyone benefits **from the region's success** and that we level up inequalities across our region and within our communities.

Delivering on national imperatives for the UK and Wales

Our priorities and programmes have been designed to complement the existing national packages of support such as the Plan for Jobs and to directly deliver on UK and Welsh Government priorities. We will act as an exemplar for the delivery of the **UK's Plan for Growth** by:

- driving forward the **Ten Point Plan** for a Green Industrial Revolution – decarbonising our industrial cluster, driving the innovations needed and creating highly-skilled jobs for the future, including opportunities for industries and supply chains hit by the pandemic to diversify.
- **tackling historic under-investment in infrastructure**, by bringing forward the transport improvements that have been neglected partly as a result of the administrative border.
- supporting our multinational anchor companies to adapt to the new trading environment following our exit from the European Union, so that they can take advantage of the opportunities from **Global Britain**.
- **levelling up** our communities, ensuring that all parts of our cross-border economy benefit from the recovery and growth and regenerating our town centres
- **strengthening links between England and Wales** by bringing forward strategic investments in connectivity – both transport and digital – that strengthen the cross-border links that are critical for our cross-border functional economy.

We will also directly support Welsh Government objectives as underpinned by the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, and set out in the Economic Action Plan and Future Wales. The Welsh Government has inputted into the development of our package and is a key partner for the MDA. The package will deliver strongly on **the Welsh Government's priorities for decarbonisation, innovation, skills, and cohesive communities**. It will particularly help to deliver on the targeted outcomes for **Future Wales** by boosting connectivity and inclusion, reducing socio-economic inequality, supporting our towns and cities, building world-class digital infrastructure, and decarbonising the economy.

Moreover, we have consulted widely with our partners in the public and private sectors to understand the needs and market failures across the region. All of our proposals have been tested to ensure that they complement and add value to existing initiatives in both North Wales and North West England. Many of the key players have been directly involved in discussions around the MDA table. This includes the North Wales Growth Deal, the economic recovery plans in North Wales and the Liverpool City Region, and the relevant Local Industrial Strategies.

Our fiscal stimulus package

Our proposed package will deliver **£1.2 billion in net additional economic benefits, benefitting 1 million residents, creating and safeguarding at least 5,000 jobs and leveraging in £450 million in**

private sector investment. By funding or unlocking over £800 million in capital spending we will quickly support the construction sector, with **over 8,000 construction years of employment** supported to help boost economic recovery.

Our ask of Government is to support our priority projects and programmes through **£400 million** of funding.

The proposals have been designed to offer an attractive, investable set of propositions suitable for funding by a range of potential funding streams.

Our proposed package is split into five programmes.

Business support and skills

Our goal: support our businesses and workers to recover, remain competitive and to capitalise on the opportunities presented by the Green Industrial Revolution.

Key projects: A £60m business challenge fund, targeted business support and skills/employment brokerage for firms and employees in the manufacturing sector, pump priming new skills programmes for the Green Industrial Revolution.

Main Government priorities addressed: Supporting the creation of a low carbon industrial cluster by 2030, supporting productivity growth through skills and innovation, supporting the vision of a Global Britain and crowding in private investment.

Main outputs and outcomes: The business challenge fund will provide low carbon premises for 290 businesses, safeguard or create over 2,000 jobs, deliver savings in excess of 450,000 tonnes of carbon, leveraging at least £80m of private sector investment.

Our ask: £79 million (£70m capital; £9m revenue)

Low carbon energy

Our goal: propel the Mersey Dee area towards becoming a low carbon industrial hub at the forefront of the emerging global hydrogen and CCUS economy.

Key projects: A strategic hydrogen demonstration facility for the UK, 100km blue hydrogen pipeline, development of 5-10 local hydrogen and CCUS hubs in the Mersey Dee area, a tidal energy centre of excellence.

Main Government priorities addressed: Investing in net zero, accelerating adaptation, supporting the creation of a low carbon industrial cluster and generating 5GW of low carbon hydrogen capacity and capturing 10MtCO₂/year using CCUS by 2030 and crowding in private investment.

Main outputs and outcomes: The funding will deliver a new strategic hydrogen demonstrator facility, accelerate the delivery of over 100km of hydrogen pipeline, support a new tidal range energy project and centre of excellence.

Our ask: £107 million (£95m capital; £12m revenue)

Transport

Our goal: lay the groundwork for a cleaner, more modern cross-border transport network in which the car is no longer the default.

Key projects: Development funding to accelerate more than £200m of rail capital investment, building a 100km long cross-border Active Travel network linked to major employment sites and public transport and funding the infrastructure needed to support integrated ticketing across the region.

These immediate asks sit in the context of a wider set of transport infrastructure priority investments including: The North Wales Metro, the A494 River Dee crossing, the Chester-Broughton Growth Corridor, A483 junctions 3-6, and interventions on the M53 and M56.

M53 and M56 interventions – improving access to Manchester and Liverpool by improving capacity and resilience

Main Government priorities addressed: addressing historic under-investment in infrastructure, strengthening England-Wales connectivity, stimulating demand and driving productivity through infrastructure investment, connecting people to opportunity and levelling up the Mersey Dee, investing in net zero.

Main outputs and outcomes: The transport investment programme will support a 100km Active Travel network, new ticketing infrastructure for 20 stations & 400 buses covering 50 routes and 9 operators as well as preparing business cases for nearly £200m of rail capital investment.

Our ask: £115 million (£90m capital; £25m revenue)

Place

Our goal: ensure that our town and city centres are more resilient, vibrant and dynamic as we recover from the impact of the pandemic.

Key projects: Unlocking the Wrexham gateway project and helping to fund the revitalisation of town centres across the Mersey Dee area.

Main Government priorities addressed: Regenerating struggling towns, levelling up the Mersey Dee area, pursuing social value and supporting small and medium sized enterprises to grow.

Main outputs and outcomes: The place programme is expected to lever in at least £130m of private investment, and provide bridge infrastructure, green space, public realm and new workspace across town centres throughout the Mersey Dee area.

Our ask: £75m million (£70m capital; £5m revenue)

Digital connectivity

Our goal: supporting our businesses and workers to recover from the pandemic, remain competitive, innovate, retain market share through EU exports and expand into global markets, and reducing carbon emissions.

Key projects: Extending the **North Wales Economic Ambition Board's** Connected Corridors 5G project across the England Wales border, joint procurement of fibre ducting infrastructure across the Mersey Dee area and installation of new digital infrastructure in town centres.

Main Government priorities addressed: addressing underinvestment in infrastructure, strengthening the union, supporting small and medium sized enterprises to grow, stimulating short-term economic activity and long-term productivity by investing in infrastructure, enabling the vision of a Global Britain.

Main outputs and outcomes: The digital programme will deliver 130km of super connected transport routes and 55 **deployments of new 'smart town' infrastructure.**

Our ask: £30 million (£27m capital; £3m revenue)

Taking the package forward

We have operated successfully as an economic partnership since 2007 and have a strong track record in delivering major projects. We have the established structures, capacity and partnerships to deliver quickly and effectively. We do not propose, or need, to create new governance structures to deliver our fiscal stimulus package.

The MDA will provide central co-ordination of the package of investments, with Cheshire West and Chester Local Authority acting as the accountable body. Delivery will be led by the individual Local Authorities and Transport for Wales, as appropriate.

Delivering our proposed fiscal stimulus package is now our number one priority.

We are ready to deliver, and to deliver quickly.

We recognise that our proposition is the starting point in a conversation. Our package is deliberately designed to be flexible and adaptable.

We look forward to working collaboratively with Government to take this forward.

The remainder of the document is structured as follows.

- Section 2 introduces the Mersey Dee Economy, bringing out its key features and what makes it distinctive as an area to invest in
- Section 3 sets out why this package is needed, including our assessment of our priorities, split into key themes and outlining the fit with wider strategies and policies
- Section 4 details the proposed fiscal stimulus package, explaining how we developed it and the six programmes of investment
- Section 5 explains how we propose to deliver the package
- Section 6 sets out the stakeholder support our package has secured
- Finally, we conclude with our proposals for taking the package forward with Government.



02: The Mersey Dee Economy

The Mersey Dee: a unique functional economy

The Mersey Dee Alliance

The Mersey Dee Alliance (MDA) is an economic partnership spanning four local authority areas: Cheshire West and Chester and Wirral in England, and Wrexham and Flintshire in Wales. We are a cross-border initiative, spanning the border of North East Wales and North West England. The University of Chester, Wrexham Glyndwr University, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and Welsh Government are also partnership members.

The MDA seeks to **strengthen England-Wales connectivity** by reducing cross border complexity caused by differing policy frameworks in England and Wales. The local population and businesses do not see a border and it is the mission of the MDA to represent them.

The MDA was established as a strategic economic partnership in 2007, bringing together the four local authorities around a shared aim to **enhance the profile of the region, grow its competitiveness and continue to establish it as a pivotal location in the UK.**

Through this, the Alliance acts as a catalyst for business growth and innovation, and inward investment.

Mersey Dee Alliance Boundary



A leading economic location

The Mersey Dee is an important strategic and dynamic region, contributing significantly to the UK economy:

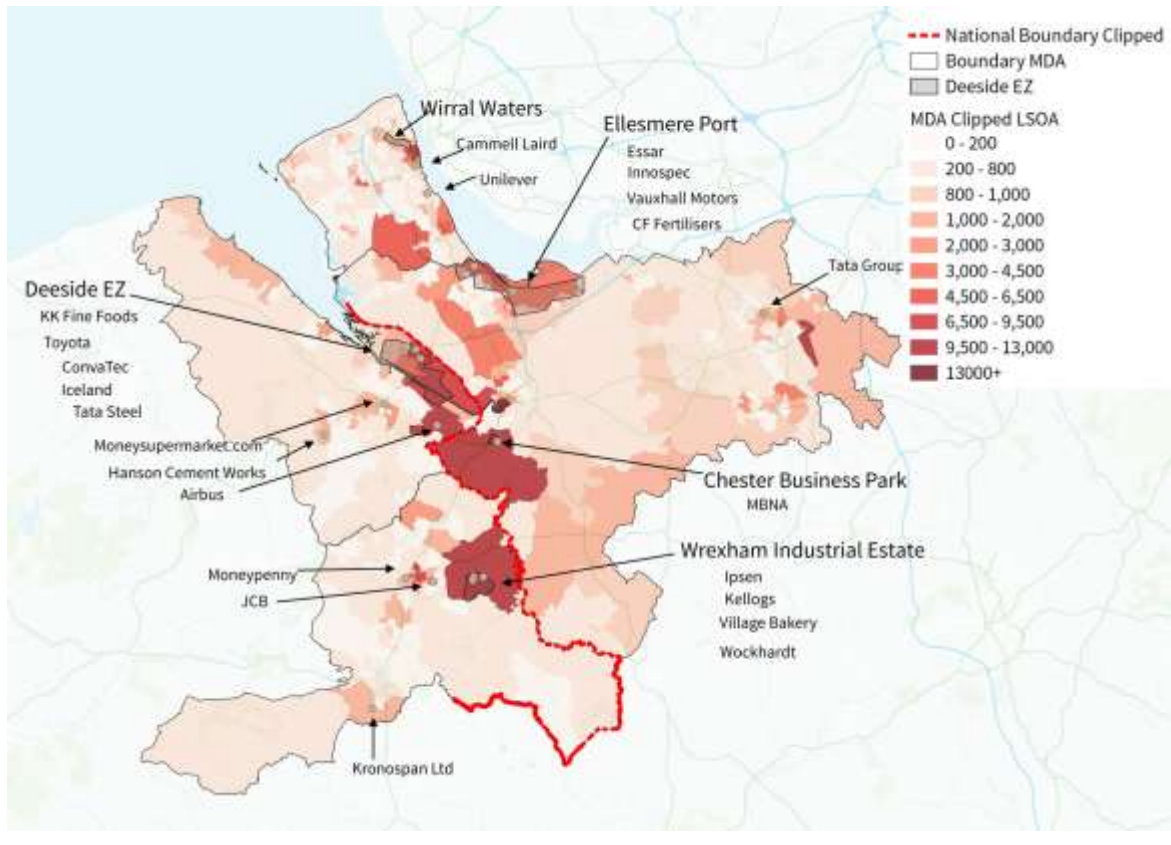
- We have nearly **1 million residents**, which is roughly equivalent to that of Belfast and larger than Reading, Cambridge & Milton Keynes combined
- We contribute **£22 billion in Gross Value Added²** annually, which is **equivalent to a third of the entire Welsh economy**.
- We are home to **32,470 businesses**, which support over **413,000 jobs**, equivalent to almost a half of all businesses in the North East of England and almost a third of all businesses in Wales. We house more jobs than Manchester, Sheffield or Edinburgh and over a quarter of all jobs in Wales.
- We have **2,900 companies** that each turn over more than **£1 million** per year.
- We host **nationally important firms and activities**, including international names such as Airbus, Essar, Tata Group, Essar, Toyota, Unilever, JCB and Vauxhall.
- We are a **high value manufacturing cluster**, producing £4.5bn in manufacturing GVA and housing 70% more manufacturing employment than the national average. Our industrial growth outperforms the rest of the UK.
- We are a **diversified economy** with key strengths in advanced manufacturing, energy, life sciences, financial services, food, tourism and retail.
- The region has significant **variations in prosperity and inclusion**

The resurgence and growth of the MDA economy as a manufacturing powerhouse follows the closure of more traditional activities in recent decades including coal (Wrexham), textiles/chemicals (Flint) and Steel (Shotton). The area lost many other engineering/industrial firms in the course of this transition. **The MDA area and Deeside/Wrexham in particular are unique in rebuilding a manufacturing economy.**

² ONS (2019) Regional Gross Value Added (balanced) by industry: local authorities by NUTS1 region

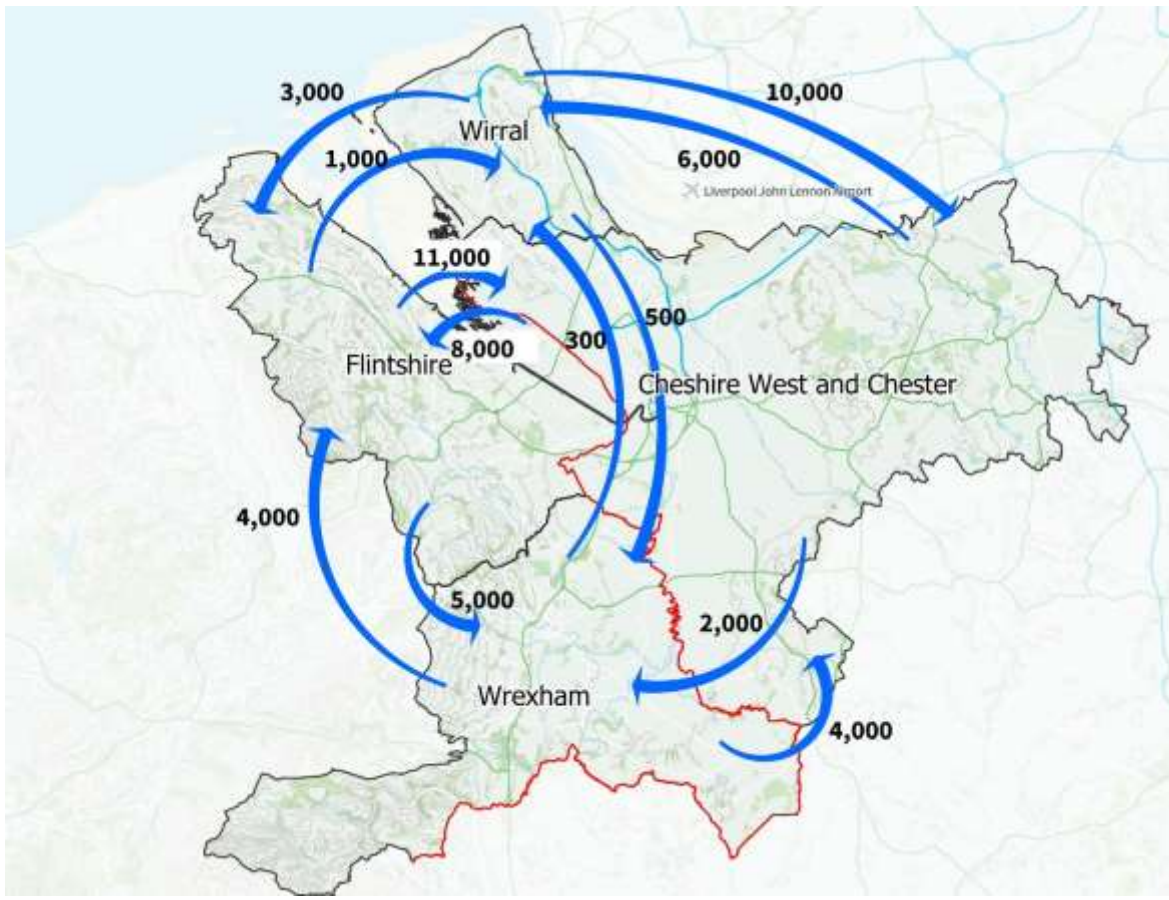
We are a polycentric region, with five main centres in Chester, Wrexham, Deeside, Ellesmere Port and Birkenhead. More than a quarter of the population resides in the three main urban areas of Chester, Wrexham and Birkenhead. We have a number of strong employment centres, including Deeside Enterprise Zone, Ellesmere Port, Chester City Centre, Chester Business Park, Birkenhead/A41 corridor, Wirral Waters, Wrexham Town Centre and Wrexham Industrial Estate. There are particular concentrations along the national borders.

Key Employment Locations



A critical feature of our economy is its **unique, integrated cross-border nature**:

Labour Force Commuting Flows



- **77% of our residents live and work within the MDA area³**, making it one of the most self-contained labour markets in the UK. We are more self-contained than Cardiff (76%), Liverpool (70%) and Cambridge (67%).
- **29,500 people travel across the national border every day for work**, illustrating the cross-border integration of our economy⁴.
- **Cross-border journeys starting in North Wales are more than 20 times greater** in number than the interregional journeys that take place from North Wales to other regions of Wales.

³ Proportion of usual residents aged 16 and over in employment at the time of the 2011 census

⁴ ONS, Census (2011), Travel to work flows

Our Key Sectors

The region offers a great location for businesses to thrive and innovate, as well as an excellent quality of life. For example, Wirral was voted the happiest place to live in the North West by RightMove in 2017. With thriving urban centres like Chester located in close proximity to the UNESCO World Heritage site of the North Wales Coastline, Snowdonia National Park, and Pontcysyllte Aquaduct, we have a unique offering that enables us to attract and retain major firms and mobile talent.

The Mersey Dee economy is home to a number of sectoral specialisms with six sectors that define the region's economy:

- **Advanced Manufacturing:** We are a manufacturing powerhouse, producing £4.5 billion in GVA and employing 54,000 people. With a Location Quotient of 1.7, the MDA houses 70% more manufacturing employment than the national average. Our sectors are relatively high productivity, with an overall GVA per FTE (Full Time Equivalent) job of £83,500, which is 2% greater than the national average for all manufacturing and 9% higher than the national average across all sectors. The sector includes leading anchor companies in aerospace, automotive and pharmaceuticals, such as Airbus, Toyota, JCB, Ipsen and ENCIRC, along with thriving research and innovation assets such as the Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (AMRC) Cymru, Thornton Science Park and **Wrexham Glyndwr University's** specialisms in optics and composites.

We house 70% more employment in advanced manufacturing than the national average

- **Energy:** The Mersey Dee is a nationally important **region in the UK's energy sector** employing 13,500 people across 1,430 businesses. We are home to a burgeoning nuclear and offshore wind industry and associated supply chain, with the Capenhurst uranium enrichment facility, and one of the largest concentrations of nuclear consulting engineering companies in Europe. ENI and Uniper are major energy anchors. We are at the forefront of efforts to decarbonise industry by generating and deploying hydrogen at scale, housing the flagship Hynet project. The Cheshire Energy Hub have devised the Energy Innovation District which provides an opportunity to deliver a new energy system in the North West.
- **Finance and professional services:** The region is home to nearly 7,000 financial and professional services businesses, accounting for 21% of all businesses and supporting 48,800 jobs. This includes 3,500 jobs at Chester Business Park, with a presence of many high profile and global brands such as MBNA Lloyds Banking Group, Bank of America, M&S Bank and Moneypenny, world leaders in offsite secretarial services and a Welsh Government anchor company.
- **Health and life sciences:** The health and life sciences sector is one of the largest sectors in the region with a GVA of £2.1bn, 48,300 jobs and a location quotient of 1.1. With the Wrexham industrial estate, one of the largest industrial sites in Europe, there is a cluster of medical and pharmaceutical companies most notably Ipsen and Wockhardt, along with Unilever in Wirral. The make-up of businesses in the sector are large employers with only 975 businesses supporting all the employment.
- **Tourism:** The region is located close to the North Wales coastline, Pontcysyllte Aquaduct UNESCO World Heritage Site and Snowdonia National Park which attracts around 4 million tourists per year. Chester Zoo receives 2 million visits per annum. The tourism sector within the Mersey Dee region is also a strength of the area with a number of nationally recognisable retail

locations and sporting facilities including the Royal Liverpool Golf Club, which hosts internationally recognised tournaments such as The Open Championship.

- **Retail:** The region boasts nationally significant retail locations with the UK's largest designer outlet in Cheshire Oaks at Ellesmere Port, which attracts around 8 million shoppers a year, alongside the major redevelopment at Northgate in Chester. Wrexham is the largest town centre in North Wales. The MDA's strong retail offering is a pivotal local economic sector employing 52,150 people (13% of overall employment) and over 3,300 businesses as well as the 3rd highest GVA producing sector in the MDA accounting for 11% of the regions total GVA.

The manufacturing sector accounts for a fifth of Mersey Dee's total GVA.

Top 10 Broad Sectors in the Mersey Dee by Gross Value Added (GVA)				
Rank	Sector	GVA (£m)	Share of Total GVA	Employment
1	Manufacturing	4,469	20%	56,000
2	Real estate activities	2,708	12%	5,450
3	Wholesale and retail trade	2,364	11%	68,000
4	Health	2,079	10%	59,000
5	Financial and insurance	1,655	8%	12,350
6	Education	1,212	6%	32,000
7	Professional, scientific and technical	1,126	5%	32,000
8	Admin and Support	1,070	5%	29,500
9	Public administration and defence	1,060	5%	18,000
10	Construction	917	4%	17,750

ONS, 2018 GVA data and Business Register and Employment Survey, 2019

Our Assets

Education

The MDA area is home to two universities: University of Chester and Wrexham Glyndwr University and three further education colleges: Wirral Metropolitan College, Coleg Cambria and Cheshire College (South and West). Our educational institutions play a strong role as partners in the Mersey Dee Alliance and in driving forward strategic economic development projects for key sectors.

The region has a strong retention rate of graduates within the key priority sectors for growth going forward. 61% of the past five years' graduates who had found employment upon graduation were employed in a priority or growth sector⁵. Overall graduate retention stands at 54%, which is notably higher than some other locations.⁶ The high level of employment in priority sectors is supported by schemes such as the Cheshire Energy Hub Graduate Scheme at Capenhurst, an industry led energy sector support organisation that has established an award-winning graduate development programme.

⁵ Study includes Wrexham Glyndwr University, Bangor University and the University of Chester

⁶ For example, Liverpool, at 37%.

We also have an expanding academic research base with the Energy Centre **at the University of Chester's** Thornton Science Park, highlighting the region's inclusive research and innovation with links between local businesses and education institutions. Wirral Metropolitan College has built a new campus in the heart of Wirral Waters Enterprise Zone. Supported by the Skills Funding Agency, the new Campus is a dedicated Built Environment, Skills and Enterprise Centre. Coleg Cambria and Cheshire College provide significant numbers of apprenticeships in the region: for example, Coleg Cambria provides the apprenticeship programme for Airbus. Wrexham Glyndwr University has very strong R&D capabilities in Optics, Composites and Hydrogen which underpin projects in the North Wales Growth Deal.

Employment sites

The MDA area is home to a number of high employment growth opportunity areas which were expected to see around 40,000 new jobs created over a 20-year period (starting in 2018):

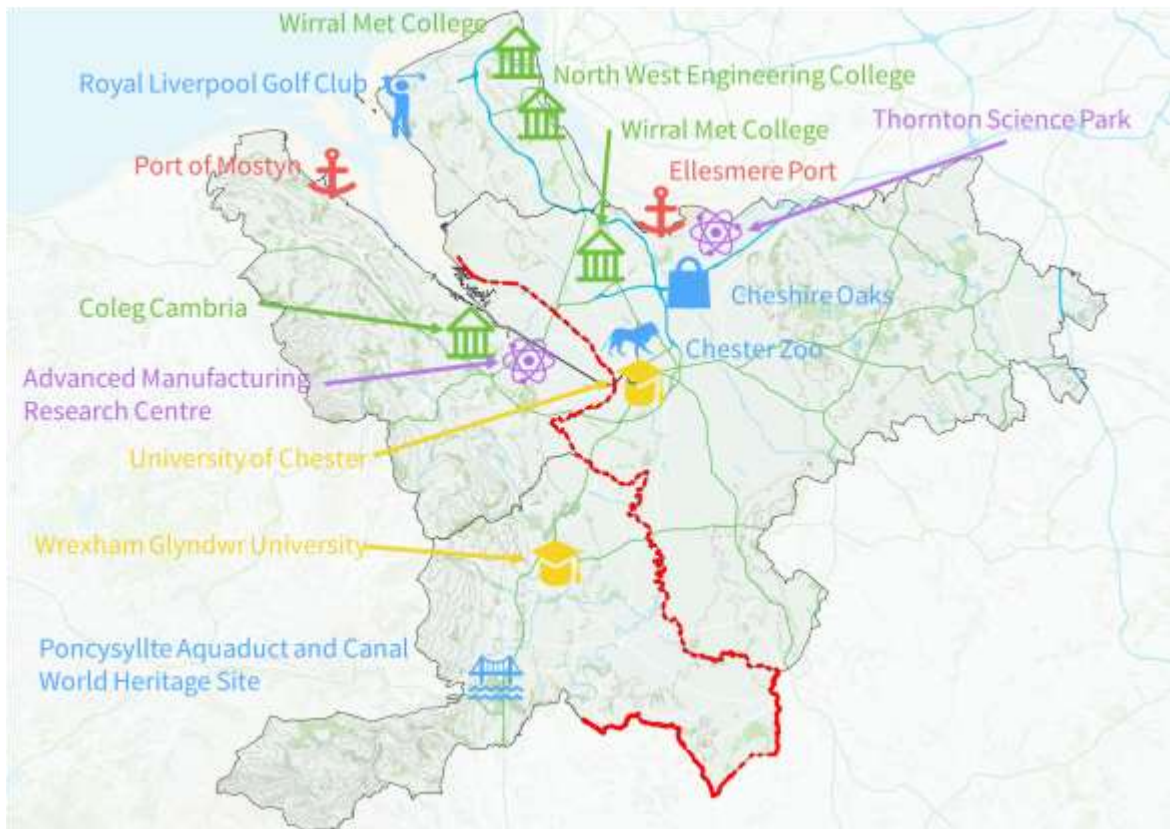
- 1) **Wirral Waters Enterprise Zone** - +20,000 jobs. This £10bn regeneration project is one of the most significant opportunities to attract investment and accelerate growth in the UK. The investment will support supply chain growth and boost the automotive and renewable energy sectors in the area, especially around focusing on the wind farm industry.
- 2) **Deeside Enterprise Zone** - +5,000 – 7,000 jobs. The Deeside Industrial Park is a 2,000 hectare site which primarily focuses on the advanced materials and manufacturing sector and is already home to a number of major international manufacturing companies.
- 3) **Ellesmere Port** - +4,450 jobs. Ellesmere Port plays a pivotal role in the energy and nuclear industry for the MDA region and will be a leading location for decarbonisation and zero/low carbon energy technologies, with plans to develop Ellesmere Port into a net zero carbon energy cluster. The town is home to a number of internationally recognised businesses in Vauxhall, Essar Oil and Urenco. Ellesmere Port has the potential to be a catalyst for regeneration by turning it into a leisure destination of regional significance given the extensive employment in retail and leisure and building on the success of Cheshire Oaks and its proximity to Chester Zoo and the international heritage city of Chester.
- 4) **Ince Resource Recovery Park** +3,250 jobs. The \$122m waste to energy project will be one of the final Advance Thermal Conversion Plants to be accredited under the UK. Government's Renewable Obligation Certification scheme. MWH constructors have outlined the use of a number of local suppliers and subcontractors from the Cheshire & Merseyside population.

Wrexham Industrial Estate is also already one of the largest industrial areas in Europe and may have the capacity to expand further, subject to planning.

Companies in the MDA area also have the opportunity to build relationships with the new Nuclear Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (Nuclear AMRC) located at Cammell Laird in Wirral and AMRC Cymru at Airbus.

The main assets across the Mersey Dee region are predominantly clustered around Birkenhead, Ellesmere Port, Wrexham, Chester and the Deeside Industrial Park (as shown in the map below).

Mersey Dee Alliance's Assets



Key employers

We have a number of employers of International importance:

AIRBUS

Airbus: The world's largest airliner manufacturer which took the most airliner orders in 2019. It is a major local employer with 5,000+ jobs at its Broughton site and +12,000 jobs in the total supply chain.

Essar: A multinational conglomerate and construction company which operates Stanlow Refinery at Ellesmere Port. It is estimated that Stanlow contributes £60million each year to the local economy and accounts for 16% of all road transport fuels in the UK.

The logo for Essar, featuring the word "ESSAR" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. To the right of the text is a stylized red and orange four-pointed star or cross shape.

TATA STEEL

Tata Steel: Is one of the most geographically diverse steel producers with operations spanning over 35 countries. The 404ha site at Shotton employs 700 people and produces 400,000 tonnes of coated steel products a year.

KK Fine Foods: Established in 1987 the company employs 500+ people across the foodservice, retail and catering sectors and are manufactures of high-quality meat, fish and vegetarian meal solutions.



FINE FOODS LTD

Iceland

Iceland: Is a British supermarket chain with its headquarters in Deeside, Wales. The company has around 25,000 employees and 5 million customers.

Vauxhall Motors: part of the Stellantis automotive group, is a British car manufacturer and the second-largest selling car brand for two decades. The plant in Ellesmere Port employs over 1,000 staff and produces approximately 187,000 units a year.



Urenco: A British nuclear fuel company and one the largest in the world. They have operated in Capenhurst since 1973 and employ more than 300 people. The site's 3 enrichment plants enable nuclear power stations globally to generate electricity. The largest of the 3 plants, E23, produces more than 80% of the facility's enrichment capacity.

Money Penny: Founded in 2000 and headquartered in Wrexham, Money Penny has grown into an international outsourced communications service that handles over 20m calls and chats annually.

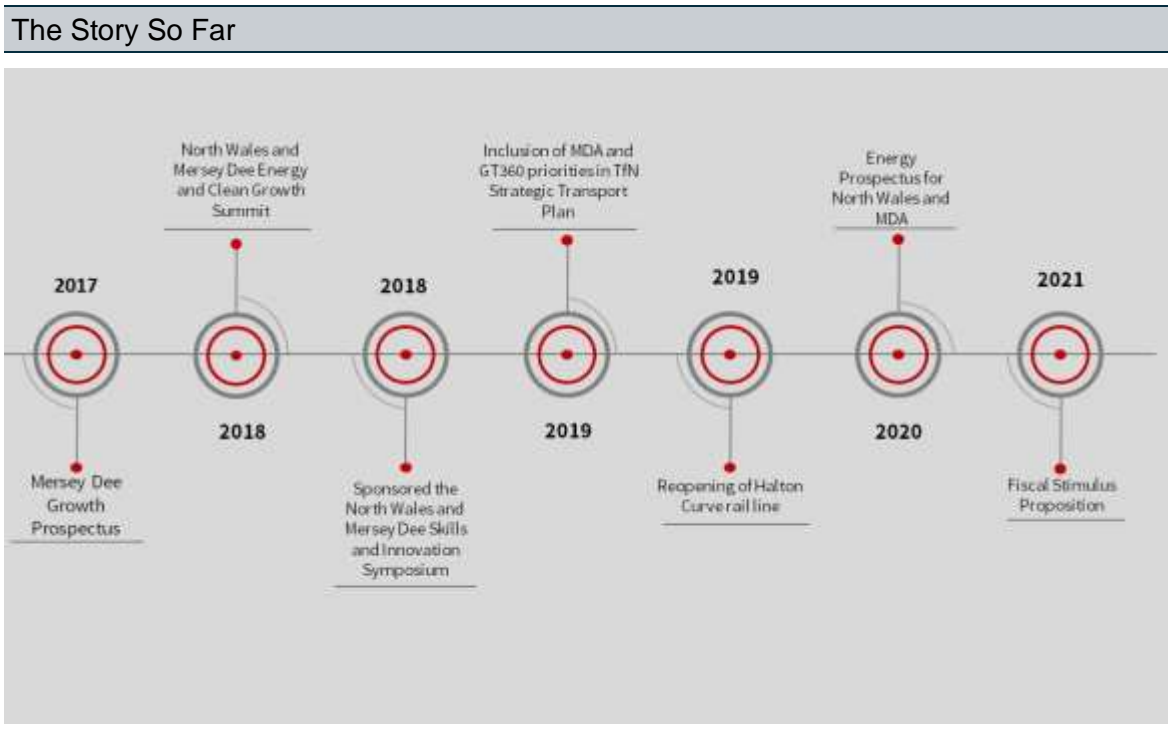


Uniper: an international energy company with about 11,000 employees. Uniper operates the Connah's Quay Power Station in Flintshire.

The Story So Far

The Mersey Dee Alliance was founded in 2007 and it has since become a successful cross-border partnership which supports economic growth across North East Wales, West Cheshire and Wirral. Throughout the last decade the partnership has sought to maintain and increase the area's competitiveness, support key business sectors alongside skills, employment and inclusive growth and has exerted its influence to bring economic infrastructure to the region. There have been numerous key contributions and achievements to date across four main areas; transport, skills and employment, low carbon and clean growth, and business support, which are explored in more detail below. On top of this the MDA has continued to work with key partners and stakeholders such as the Liverpool City Region, Cheshire and Warrington LEP, and the North Wales Economic Ambition Board.

The 2017 **MDA Prospectus** was a seminal document, bringing together a set of projects which underpinned funding bids by individual Councils in the MDA and Local Growth Partnerships of which they are members. These included, Wirral Waters which was a major development proposal in the plans of **Liverpool City Region**, the **Welsh Government took on the development of Deeside's Northern Gateway** and the Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre, while the North Wales Growth Deal incorporated schemes such as Warren Hall and the Wrexham Western Gateway.



Transport:

- **Halton Curve:** The redevelopment of the Halton Curve rail line which provides services between Liverpool and North Wales. Within the first 6 months of opening the line has accommodated around 500,000 passenger journeys.
- **Growth Track 360 (GT360):** The cross-border collaboration of the North Wales and Mersey Dee Rail Task Force has supported intraregional rail enhancements: Chester Station capacity, Wrexham to Liverpool, North Wales Mainline journey time and Crewe Hub. The Task Force produced both Growth Track 360 Rail Prospectus and West & Wales Strategic Rail Prospectus calling for investment.
- **North Wales Metro:** The MDA has supported the North Wales Metro which is developing a comprehensive integrated public transport system in North Wales and cross-border. Key Metro projects: Deeside Parkway station, Shotton Interchange, Wrexham to Liverpool and North Wales Mainline enhancements, Station Active Travel Plans and Wrexham Gateway.
- **Transport for North (TfN):** The Alliance successfully lobbied to get the Mersey Dee areas transport priorities included in the TfN Strategic Transport Plan, with Chester Station capacity improvements and Wrexham Bidston service and line improvements included.

Skills and Employment:

- **Skills and Innovation Symposium:** The MDA is committed to upskilling its residents and in 2018 the Mersey Dee Alliance, alongside the North Wales Regional Skills Partnership, sponsored the North Wales and Mersey Dee Skills and Innovation Symposium in collaboration with Wrexham Glyndwr University, Bangor University and the University of Chester, which brought together both the private and public sector. The Symposium included an Industry Panel comprising of a number of the key employers in the region including Airbus and Unilever.

Low Carbon and Clean Growth:

- **Energy Summit:** The MDA, along with NWEAB and the Cheshire and Warrington LEP, held the North Wales and Mersey Dee Energy and Clean Growth Summit, attended by Welsh Government Minister for Economy and Transport, Liverpool City Region's Metro Mayor, Parliamentary Under Secretary Wales Office, businesses and organisations representing smart, low carbon and renewable energy as well as skills and technical expertise.
- **Energy Prospectus:** The prospectus was one of the main outcomes of the Summit and was published in March 2020.

Business Support:

- **Business Networking:** The Alliance has successfully held many cross-border Business Breakfast Networking Events, 5 - 6 events are held annually with an average attendance of over 150 delegates. The events offer businesses to *“get involved in one of the most innovative and effective networks across the North Wales/North West border area”*.



03:

Why the package is
needed:

Our Investment
Priorities

Why the Package is Needed: Our Investment Priorities

The poly-centric, cross-border nature of the Mersey Dee area makes it somewhat unique in Great Britain. With a population that, in normal times, freely and regularly crosses the national border for both work and leisure, differences in English and Welsh institutions are no barrier to daily life and the boundary is invisible for most.

As we saw in Section 2, the area is consequently home to a diverse economy that includes major businesses across aerospace, automotive, nuclear, renewables, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, financial services, food, engineering, ICT, tourism and retail.

Why are we asking for support?

These close economic links mean that issues and market failures emerging in any one of our local authority areas create impacts that are felt across the Mersey Dee area. Our economy now faces the **twin challenges of recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic and to access the opportunities offered by Global Britain**. Given the nature of our economy and some of its key employers, these have been particular issues for us.

In 2020, the UK economy was estimated to have shrunk by 9.9%⁷, the largest fall on record and probably the biggest economic shock since the start of the 18th century. It has been estimated that up to 2 million people across the country may not have worked for at least six months.

In our area, our sectoral mix means that there have been some particularly damaging economic effects from the pandemic:

- Almost 50,000⁸ workers (13% of eligible staff) were on furlough in January 2021. Additionally, ONS survey data showed 21% of businesses had paused trading and did not intend to restart trading in the next two weeks (which equates to around 6,950 businesses)⁹.
- Almost 50,000 workers in the MDA area were on furlough in January 2021 (13% of eligible staff)**
- Insolvency data from The Gazette further highlights the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on businesses within the MDA with 144 businesses filing for insolvency between the months of May and December 2020. The number of insolvencies in December was 1,233% higher than that in May.

Our own modelling of the impacts of the pandemic on the Mersey Dee area has found that **an estimated 15% of our pre-pandemic GVA of £22.9bn (£3.4bn) was lost during 2020**. This is

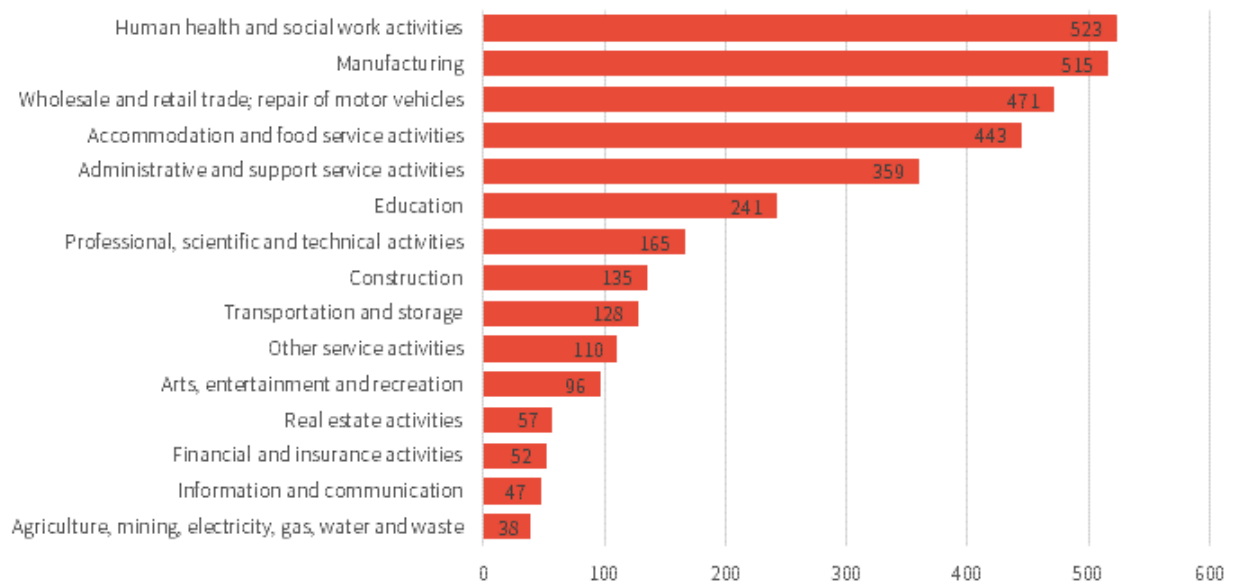
⁷ ONS, December 2020, Monthly GDP estimate

⁸ HMRC, Coronavirus Job Retention Statistics, January 2021

⁹ ONS, 2021, Business Impacts of Coronavirus, Wave 23, 11th January to 24th January

proportionally significantly higher than the fall experienced nationally. Manufacturing, and human health and social work experienced the largest losses. Wholesale and retail trade contracted as social distancing protocols were put in place and lockdowns ensued, and this is similarly the case for the accommodation and food sector.

Estimated GVA Loss by Sector (£m) for Mersey Dee Economy, 2020



Source: Hatch economic analysis

The most visible manifestations of these challenges are as follows:

- **Airbus:** One of the **Mersey Dee's** largest private sector employers announced 1,400 job losses from its site at Broughton following a 30% cut in production. Given the multiplier effects through companies impacted in the supply chain and through lost employee spending, **we estimate that this alone has cost the UK economy around £700 million in GVA and 11,000 job losses.** Much of this is in the MDA area, given the locations of employees and suppliers. This will have a major, long-term impact on our economy and its people if not mitigated.
- **Town centres:** unlike some other city regions, the Mersey Dee economy has no central node in which to focus efforts for the recovery. Multiple smaller town centres that were already facing a decline as retail destinations have been devastated by the pandemic. Whilst there is considerable uncertainty, the rise of homeworking and shift to online have probably changed the role of these town centres permanently.

Furthermore, **our anchor companies, many of which are multinationals, face increasing global competition.** This environment means that local plants need to compete internally with other global sites for continued investment. Structural shifts including our departure from the European Union and the need to decarbonise operations have intensified this competition. With 80% of our exports going to the EU, **our internationally oriented firms need to adapt to life outside the European Union,** and to what this means for their supply chains and international trade.

At the time of writing, we are facing the potential closure of the Vauxhall car plant at Ellesmere Port which has been making cars since 1964. Other manufacturers may be at risk of production moving to other countries on the continent unless local sites remain competitive.

Our strategic priorities

Partners in the region have responded swiftly to these challenges, identifying the need to develop a targeted package of support.

Our extensive engagement with stakeholders has identified a number of clear, near-term priorities in response to these twin economic shocks – but this package also looks beyond that short time horizon. Our aim is to catalyse a recovery that will create a stronger, more sustainable future for the Mersey Dee area. The themes presented below build on our established vision for the local economy, its strengths and longstanding structural challenges.

Our package confronts these challenges and builds on the corresponding opportunities for creating sustainable, inclusive growth in the Mersey Dee area across three cross-cutting strategic themes:



Supporting cleaner growth – the UK has adopted a target of achieving net zero emissions by 2050. Our mix of industries and energy assets leaves us ideally placed to lead this ambitious transition and to act as an exemplar region for low carbon development.

Connecting places, people and businesses – as a cross-border economy with multiple centres, the Mersey Dee area will be strengthened by improving the links between those places their business and people. Enhancing our connectivity is crucial.

Sustainable and inclusive growth – as the region recovers from the pandemic our aim is to look beyond a simple headline level of growth. We want to ensure that everyone benefits from the region's success

We have then identified and agreed five investment priorities for our package.

Priority 1: Keeping our businesses competitive

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit our businesses extremely hard. Whilst we have been cushioned by the range of economic support measures put in place nationally, we know that once these (especially the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme) are tapered back, redundancies among the **region's firms** may be expected to accelerate. The job losses announced by Airbus were driven by a huge downturn in the market for aircraft following the collapse of international air travel leading the firm to cut production by a third. This impact will inevitably work its way through the locally based supply chain unless those businesses are unable to diversify and adapt for new markets.

Airbus represents a major event that will have a disproportionate impact on employment and **risks the permanent loss of highly skilled engineers from the local labour market**. Yet the cost of the pandemic on jobs has also been far more widespread. Our town centres had already been suffering due to high business rates and the rise of online spending. Throughout 2020, many major retailers entered administration and social distancing regulations forced a far wider range of consumers to shift spending online. While this may spell trouble for many traditional retailers, the Office for National Statistics reported that the number of business creations in the last three months of 2020 was up by a quarter on the same period in 2019¹⁰. Surprisingly many of these were new retailers, adapting as the proportion of retail spending online soared to 35.2% in January 2021. This was the highest level on record¹¹ and shoppers are probably now forming lasting new habits. For better or worse, the pandemic has almost certainly changed the role of town centres for good and policy makers both locally and nationally will likewise have to adapt. Plus, with 11% of pre-pandemic employment¹² in the Mersey Dee area in the retail sector, the risk to jobs is high.

Despite these challenges - with some targeted support - the same strengths that brought multi-nationals like Airbus to the Mersey Dee and allowed home grown talent to flourish here will allow our businesses to adapt and thrive.

Simultaneously, **manufacturers in the region need to adapt to the new trading arrangements with the European Union**. Any additional complexity in trading with the UK potentially reduces the competitiveness of manufacturers in the Mersey Dee area and we now face the risk of production moving to other locations on the continent unless local sites remain competitive. Meanwhile, the cluster of financial services firms in Cheshire, that no longer have the same level of access to the single market, may also see jobs at risk.

This disruption to so many jobs across such a diversity of sectors risks leaving economic scars that are hard to heal. Yet the **Mersey Dee's** economic strengths also leave it uniquely placed to capitalise on some of the trends that are set to drive economic growth in the post-pandemic era. However, during periods of uncertainty most firms must face the difficult choice of putting their plans for growth on hold to ensure their survival. Indeed, across the UK business investment in the final quarter of last year was 19.2% lower than the year before - **we must seize this opportunity to keep our businesses competitive and help them to build back better**.

¹⁰ ONS, Business Demography, quarterly experimental statistics, October to December 2020.

¹¹ ONS, Retail Sales, Great Britain, January 2021.

¹² ONS, Business Register and Employment Survey, Employment, 2019

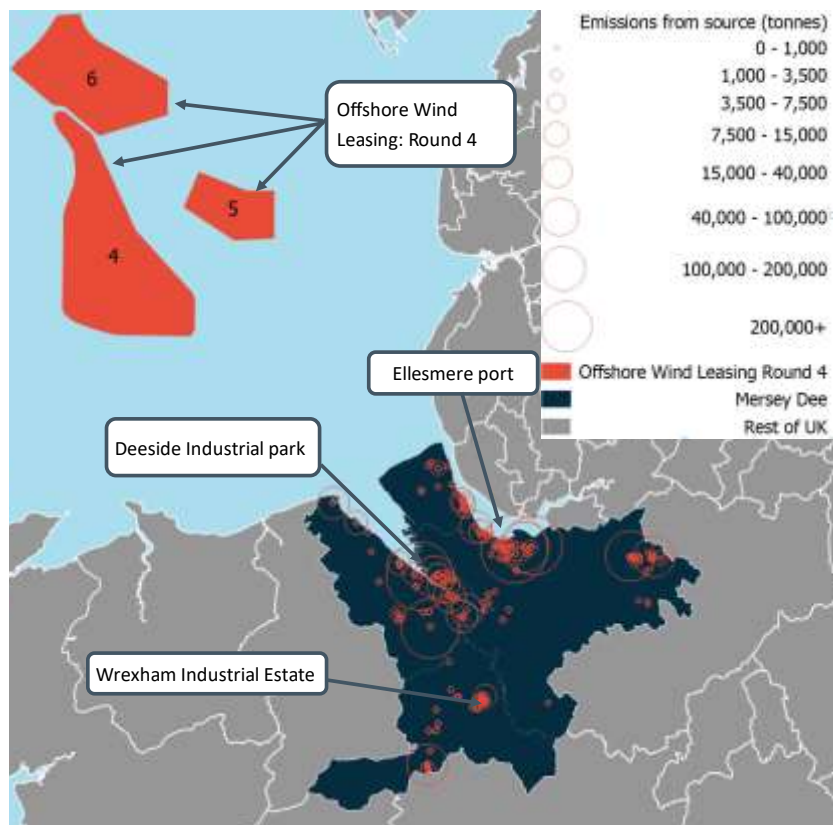
Priority 2: Decarbonising industry

The UK has set itself a legally binding target for reducing net greenhouse gas emissions to zero by 2050 and has made huge strides in reducing fossil fuel use in its production of electricity. Renewables now account for a third of electricity generation. This process means emissions from households and businesses that primarily rely on electricity for their energy needs have fallen rapidly. With renewables now typically representing the cheapest option for future electricity generation this trajectory looks set to be maintained as the UK transitions to net-zero emissions. Despite these gains two notable barriers to achieving net-zero in the timetable set out in legislation:

- Predictable power: due to their dependence on the weather conditions, wind and solar power – without storage capacity - are less predictable energy sources than traditional fossil fuelled or nuclear power stations. Other sources of low carbon power will be needed to ensure predictable electricity supply in a net zero world.
- Heavy industry: some industries have very significant needs for the generation of heat and power which are not easily electrified. These industries will not be in a position to benefit directly from the growth in cheaper renewable electricity and will need alternatives like low cost hydrogen or carbon capture and storage (CCS) to meet emissions targets while maintaining their competitiveness.

Nonetheless, the UK government's energy white paper states that by 2050, emissions from industry will need to fall by around 90 per cent from today's level¹³. This process looks most challenging for energy-intensive manufacturers and refineries.

These sectors account for 16% of UK greenhouse gas emissions and are geographically concentrated into a few industrial clusters that make up about half of the total. As major local employers, getting the transition to net zero emissions right in these clusters is essential to protect their local economies. This is especially true for the Mersey Dee area, given our cluster of heavy industry, especially around Ellesmere Port. Large industrial installations in the Mersey Dee were responsible for four times the emissions per capita than the national average.¹⁴ Indeed, total industrial and commercial emissions reached 4 million tonnes of CO₂ in 2018, and according to the National Atmospheric Emissions



¹³ BEIS, Energy White Paper, Powering Our Net Zero Future, 2020. p.118

¹⁴ Analysis of BEIS 2020, Local Authority territorial CO₂ emissions estimates 2005-2018 (kt CO₂), total emissions from large industrial installations per capita in Flintshire, Wrexham, Cheshire West and Chester and Wirral compared to UK.

Inventory, and the locations marked on the map above were directly responsible for almost 1.5 million tonnes of those emissions.¹⁵

The UK's stated long-term strategy is to let markets and carbon pricing incentivise the shift to low carbon technologies in industry - but over the next decade it is clear that upfront investment will be required to lay the groundwork for those markets to operate effectively. The impetus for achieving the net zero legislative target through this sort of investment has been given a boost with the **UK government's new Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution and UK-wide Industrial Decarbonisation and Hydrogen strategies are due to be published this year.**

The extent of potential industrial uses for hydrogen and the existence of major carbon capture, utilisation and storage (CCUS) and hydrogen projects already in place makes **the Mersey Dee area a prime opportunity to invest in rapidly achieving one of the world's first net-zero industrial clusters.** The Mersey Dee area is already home to projects that will help deliver on UK Government targets for 5GW of hydrogen to be deployed by 2030 and capture 10Mt CO₂/year using CCUS. Its location places the Mersey Dee in an ideal position to link up with other parts of the hydrogen economy across the North West of England and North Wales. Indeed, there are numerous examples of both public sector and industry-led projects across the region, including:

- **Net Zero North West** – led by industry this collaboration aims to make the North West of England home to the **UK's first low carbon industrial cluster**, creating at least 33,000 jobs and seeing over £4bn invested in the region.
- **The North West Hydrogen Alliance and HyCymru** – both the North West of England and Wales have hydrogen industry membership bodies acting to advance the hydrogen industry on either side of the border.
- **HyNet North West** – a collaboration between Cadent and Progressive Energy, the project will be capable of generating 80% of the UK's **entire** target for **low carbon 'blue' hydrogen** in Cheshire by 2030.
- **Protos** is a strategic cluster of energy generation and energy intensive industry in Cheshire; with a masterplan extending to 280 hectares. Existing infrastructure includes a 50 MW windfarm and 26MW biomass facility with the opportunity for carbon capture and storage in future.
- The **UK government's** 2021 budget announced £4.8 million for a **hydrogen hub in Holyhead** to pilot the creation of hydrogen using renewable energy and its use as a zero-emission fuel for Heavy Goods Vehicles
- The **E-Port Smart Energy Masterplan** is considering how a local low-carbon smart energy system could be developed in Ellesmere Port. The master plan will set out a ten year private sector investment programme for developing a smart grid in Ellesmere Port that could be rolled out across the UK
- The North Wales growth Deal is exploring the development of a source of green hydrogen as part of the **Deeside Hydrogen Hub** project at the Deeside Industrial Park, with possible applications for decarbonisation of public or local authority transport.

¹⁵ Emissions from Point sources as calculated for the 2018 NAEI maps, National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory, 2020

With many other important projects coming forward in the wider area and building on the research taking place at the Thornton Science Park, the Mersey Dee is positioned to become a national if not

New projects off the coast of North Wales and North West England that could deliver almost 3.5 gigawatts of energy, enough to power 3.2 million homes, were recently announced following Offshore Wind Licensing Round 4.

global leader in the hydrogen and CCUS economy. While this was always going to be necessary for the UK to reach net zero, action taken now, to stimulate this emerging sector, will have the dual benefits of protecting the labour market from economic scarring and accelerating the transition to net zero.

Moreover, the expansion of renewable energy production brings further opportunities for the **Mersey Dee's** existing engineering and manufacturing supply chain to diversify its customer base and expand into new sectors as a national and global leader in low carbon energy.

Indeed, the Offshore Wind Growth Partnership has identified the need to bring new firms into the Offshore Wind supply chain from the automotive and other industries – but there is a requirement for joint support from ‘sector supply chain organisations and growth partnerships’ **to achieve this aim**. It is critical that as new wind projects are established in the region, the engineering capabilities of the Mersey Dee’s **businesses and households** are deployed to support the **government’s ambition to raise the UK content into the offshore wind projects to at least 60%**.

Priority 3: Skilling for the future

With the pandemic likely to have permanently changed the nature of retail and the role of the office in daily life, new entrants to the workforce and those working in sectors that may now be in permanent decline will have to adapt. The speed of this change and the breadth of its impact means there is a clear role for governments, both local and national, in managing this change. **The UK Government Plan for Growth** recognises this need, and with it the requirement to provide billions in additional revenue funding for:

- Jobcentre support – e.g. doubling the number of DWP work coaches
- Kickstart – helping young people at risk of long-term unemployment with fully-funded roles
- Restart – helping the long-term unemployed access additional support

Aside from help to find existing jobs, changes in the sectoral mix and the way people work after the pandemic is also expected to create new demands on the education system, to reskill the workforce for the future. Additionally, the Mersey Dee area’s **role in a major industrial cluster creates** a pressing need for decarbonisation across many local businesses. The level of technological and regulatory change that is necessary to meet net zero targets will create commercial pressures that are likely to demand an understanding of new plant and processes. At a precarious time for businesses, **such a fundamental change creates a requirement for new Green skills at all levels from apprentices through to business leaders**.

Education is a devolved matter and as such a potential border may exist in the skills system that is not recognised in the labour market. This can mean different employees of a company operating in the Mersey Dee may not always have access to the same support because of where they live, an issue that is unlikely to be faced by employers anywhere outside of the Mersey Dee given the unique nature of the cross-border economy. While the level of provision either side of the border is not necessarily at issue, **employers across the whole Mersey Dee economic area should be able to access the equivalent standard of support**, seamlessly, regardless of their location.

Universities	Colleges
University of Chester (Cheshire West and Chester and Wirral)	Cheshire College South and West (Cheshire West and Chester)
	Coleg Cambria (Flintshire and Wrexham)
Wrexham Glyndŵr University (Wrexham)	Wirral Metropolitan College (Wirral)
	North West Engineering College (Wirral)

There are six higher and further education providers in the MDA area, including two universities and four colleges.

The table above outlines the six higher and further education providers within the Mersey Dee area, although there are also a number of Private Training Providers operating in the area and links between a number of the Universities and Colleges with other sites outside of the area. For instance, University of Chester and University of Bangor are linked in their teacher training offer, and Wrexham **Glyndŵr** also operates in Denbighshire. *While these institutions offer a wide range of subjects, the educational offer in the region is especially strong on business and technical education.*

Over time these providers and their partners in businesses, from the major anchor employers and their supply chains down to smaller local firms, will naturally take ownership of the training programmes of the future. *However, the market for education is imperfect and without coordination this process may take time to achieve the critical mass needed to support the industries of the future.* This effect is compounded by uncertainty over new green technologies that are not yet operational and managers that are, in many cases, only at the early stage of embedding the transition to net zero into business plans.

However, the moment to achieve this is now:

- The impact of the pandemic has already changed the labour market and the opportunity to make major investments in net zero has arrived at the same time.
- With £12bn already pledged nationally towards the **Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution** and major hydrogen, CCUS, tidal power and wind projects coming forward across region, new skills programmes and curricula need developing now to avoid acting as a brake on this progress.
- To ensure that green skills programmes are optimised and commercially viable under normal funding arrangements quickly will require *coordination, pump priming of new courses and capacity building for providers.*

Priority 4: Connecting our region

Opportunities for work are harder to reach for those living in disconnected communities. In parts of our region, poor connectivity and the poly-centric geography of the area can mean the cost of getting to work is prohibitively high for some lower paying jobs. Physical connectivity is limited by several major factors including:

- **Lack of integrated ticketing** between services – especially across the England/Wales border

- Lack of **connectivity between modes/services** for public transport users
- **Inaccessibility of major employment centres** to public transport, especially for shift workers
- Limited strategic cycle networks and **poor integration with public transport**

As the Mersey Dee area looks to recover following the economic collapse of 2020, the nature of work is likely to change. This may mean **digital connectivity is also an increasingly important factor in spreading opportunity across the region** as more jobs encourage working from home, at least some of the time. Parts of the Mersey Dee continue to suffer from poor virtual and in-person access to the workplace, which will cut those areas off from the benefits as the recovery takes hold. Notably, as an industrial hub, the ability for many in the region to work from home is also likely to be proportionally lower than in the more service-based economy of the UK's other city regions.

Across the Mersey Dee area and indeed further afield within North Wales, the private car is the dominant form of transport. With work trips and commuting heavily reliant on cars this is both a cause of increased pressure on the road network and the effect of under-investment in public infrastructure, especially rail. Slow journeys by car do not just cost commuters time getting to and from work but the congestion they produce has an impact on other road users. The burden on road capacity limits the ability of freight to **move freely into and out of the region's ports** and there are further hidden costs to other businesses and households.

In normal times, an estimated 12 million commuter trips took place across the England/Wales border each year and 85% of these were taken by car¹⁶. Compared to just 68% across the UK¹⁷

Active and sustainable travel

While a number of specific road improvements may still be required to unlock major new development sites, **the pandemic also creates the opportunity, and the need, to rethink the nature of transport in the Mersey Dee area.** With the right infrastructure in place, disconnected communities could be more closely linked to work opportunities without the need for putting more cars on the road. Short physical distances would make walking and cycling a viable mode of travel if only the infrastructure to link population centres to workplaces, healthcare, leisure and education opportunities or to connect to the wider public transport network were in place.

In a region so dominated by car travel, the benefits could be widespread:

- decarbonisation - the opportunity to rapidly reduce emissions from private car use
- health and well-being – for households that are at present reliant on their cars, enabling active methods of travel to become the most efficient and cost-effective route to work could make daily exercise routine.
- air pollution – active modes of transport and better public transport provision would reduce the level of air pollution from cars
- inclusive growth – the lower cost of cycling and walking could open up work opportunities to households that are unable to cover the higher cost of car travel

Each of the local authorities in the Mersey Dee area has a plan in place for increasing active travel and this is considered a priority for both the UK and Welsh Governments' transport strategies. However, for

¹⁶ Growth Track 360 analysis

¹⁷ ONS, Labour Force Survey, 2017

these strategies to work most effectively in support of the Mersey Dee economy, joining up these plans to ensure cross-border walking and cycling connectivity is essential.

Public Transport

On a larger scale, the arrival of HS2 services through Crewe and into Liverpool brings a new era of connectivity to the doorstep of the Mersey Dee area. This presents a chance to open up the economy to new opportunities across much more of the UK. However, institutions such as Transport for the North (TfN) and the Northern Transport Acceleration Council (NTAC) have been focused on larger schemes such as the Trans-Pennine route, meaning relatively small but high impact schemes at the border of England and Wales have been overlooked.

The Union Connectivity Review implicitly recognises **the importance of the UK's** cross-border areas. And as a centre of industrial and commercial activity, the Mersey Dee region might be described as a Union Powerhouse, yet it has still to be recognised as such in the planning of transport infrastructure investments. The high degree of planning for public transport in the Mersey Dee cross-border economic region presents some of the highest societal value project opportunities in the UK.

The Welsh component of the Mersey Dee region is located in the North of the nation, which is a high priority area for rail improvement by the Welsh Government. However, rail infrastructure investment is non-devolved, which requires our proposals to be a priority of the UK Government as well. Currently,

A typical journey from Wrexham to Manchester Airport takes 140 minutes by rail compared to just 50 minutes by car.

just 1% of cross border commuting is by rail, 80% less than the national average¹⁸. The geography of the railways means we require infrastructure investment on both sides of the border to realise economic benefits in the North Wales and Mersey Dee geography.

With most people in the region still dependent on their cars the public transport network still needs a major upgrade to compete. The lack of integration between services makes journeys seem inaccessible to the public and slow or irregular services make congested roads seem the more practical choice. **Improvements are required to ticketing, line speeds and service frequencies to truly enable inclusive cross-border connectivity and all the benefits that this entails.**

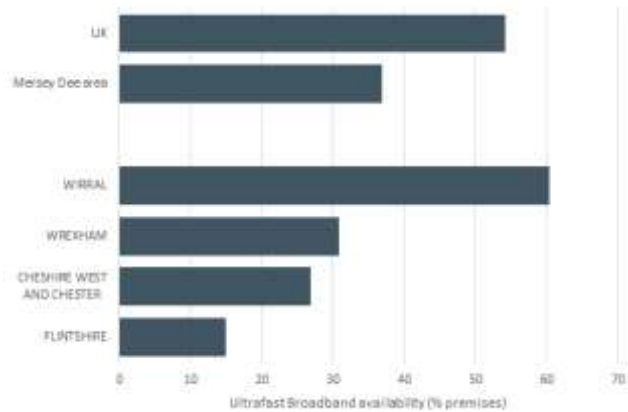
Reliance on private cars means infrastructure upgrades at industrial sites to handle electric vehicle charging or a big modal shift to public transport or active travel will be required for net-zero.

Currently there is limited public transport provision to these major employment sites creating issues over accessibility of jobs, congestion and emissions.

¹⁸ Growth Track 360

Priority 5: Digital connectivity

Digital connectivity is a nationwide challenge but even though some parts of the area, such as Wirral have above average access to Ultrafast broadband, there are particular issues around rural areas in the Mersey Dee area, and on average, the availability of ultrafast broadband is below the UK average.



Connected Corridors will support a host of potential applications including autonomous vehicles, logistics, vehicle telematics and passenger connectivity.

The North Wales Economic Ambition Board is already taking a lead on **upgrading the region's** digital connectivity. Through a combination of investment from the Welsh Government, UK Government and the local authorities, by the end of 2021 the entire public

sector in North Wales will be one of the best connected in the UK. There will be gigabit capability at almost all sites that require it to deliver high quality public services, and the North Wales Growth Deal Digital Programme intends to extend this impact to the private sector, where this opens up the opportunity for significant growth.

With the Digital Signals Processing Centre of Excellence at nearby Bangor University already a leader in its field, there is an outstanding opportunity to link this capability into the wider economy across North Wales and into the Mersey Dee Area. **The manufacturing strength of the Mersey Dee presents a host of prospective test-bed firms with the potential for digital innovation.**

The logistics networks that support those firms also stand to gain from the North Wales Connected Corridors project which will extend high bandwidth and capacity mobile coverage along key routes in North Wales. **As with most networks, the benefits of greater connectivity grow in a non-linear way.** With additional support, sitting alongside the investment brought forward by the North Wales Growth Deal, these **Connected Corridors could easily extend into England and at little additional cost could rapidly expand the pool of users that are able to benefit from the approach.**

Meanwhile, the Liverpool City Region has also started its own Digital Connectivity project to boost productivity and innovation. **The City region's plan** will:

- Build a 200+ km underground fibre network that will run through the City Regions major economic clusters, connect with **3 transatlantic cables and a supercomputer located at the Haretree Centre Daresbury.**
- Work in partnership with the private sector to develop the network. This will be partially achieved by adopting a Dig Once approach which is to install ducting at the same time as road, cycling and walking schemes are undertaken.

The marginal cost of installing duct infrastructure while roadworks are ongoing is relatively low and inconvenience to road users can be greatly reduced by combining works. Lower costs mean fibre connectivity becomes commercially viable much sooner across a wider area. The North Wales Digital Programme is also exploring a similar approach to providing publicly owned duct infrastructure to accelerate the roll out of fibre connectivity. As the Mersey Dee area partially overlaps with the

administrative areas covered by both programmes, the case for expanding procurement efforts to connect the dots between North Wales and the wider Liverpool City Region is strong.

Strategic fit and policy context

Despite the dramatic change in the economic context, the broad strategic direction for much government policy remains the same as it was before the pandemic struck. Indeed, the events of 2020 have solidified a number of policy positions. With interest rates now hitting historic lows and the economy in urgent need of fiscal stimulus – there is now a **once in a generation opportunity to invest in net zero, level up the economy and raise productivity.**

A core principle of our proposed package is that it helps to deliver on these major policy objectives and complements existing initiatives.

National	Regional:	Local:
<p>UK:</p> <p>Build Back Better: Plan for Growth</p> <p>The Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution</p> <p>Energy White Paper</p> <p>UK Digital Strategy</p> <p>Gear Change—active travel</p> <p>Union connectivity review</p>	<p>Liverpool City Region: Building Back Better</p> <p>Cheshire & Warrington LEP: Digital Infrastructure Plan, Strategic Economic Plan, Energy Plan</p> <p>North Wales Growth Deal</p> <p>Growth Track 360 West and Wales rail prospectus</p>	<p>Cheshire West & Cheshire and Liverpool City Region: Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure plans</p> <p>Wrexham and Flintshire walking and cycling plans</p> <p>Birkenhead Town Investment Plan</p> <p>Wrexham gateway masterplan</p>
<p>Wales:</p> <p>Llwybr Newydd – a new Wales transport strategy</p> <p>Transforming Towns</p> <p>Prosperity for all: economic action plan</p> <p>A Manufacturing Future for Wales—framework for action</p> <p>Future Wales: The National Plan 2040</p>	<p>Mersey Dee Alliance: Growth Prospectus, Energy Prospectus</p>	

With the vaccine rollout gathering pace, attention has turned to engineering the economic recovery in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. The **Build Back Better plan for growth**, published in March 2021, sets out how the UK government plans to drive forward the economic recovery. The plan covers **the government’s approach to developing:** infrastructure, skills, innovation, net zero, levelling up and global Britain. Welsh Government have also issued a plan for the recovery from the economic damage of the coronavirus pandemic named **Our Economic Resilience & Reconstruction Mission**. The plan restates its commitment to place-making, green reconstruction and fair work, underpinned by investment in people and digital transformation with an emphasis on developing the vision of a well-being economy and inclusive growth.

Net zero

Perhaps the most important shift in UK policy in recent years has been driven by the amendment to the Climate Change Act setting a target of reaching net zero emissions by 2050. Further weight was added to this during 2020, when a **Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution** was rolled out, alongside a new Energy White Paper. An Industrial Clusters mission was published early this year which sets out the aim to have at least one net-zero industrial cluster by 2040 and one low emission cluster by 2030. Industrial decarbonisation and hydrogen strategies are expected in 2021 to further support this aim.

Levelling up

Both governments have produced plans to tackle some of the spatial disparities that affect the two nations. Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 is the Welsh national development framework, which builds on the Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 to set the direction for development in Wales to 2040. **Meanwhile, the UK government has recently started to focus on ‘levelling up’ the country.** The objective is to raise levels of opportunity outside the more affluent regions of London and the South East. Indeed, **the Build Back Better plan states that “the UK Government’s most important mission is to unite and level up the country.”**

One of the specific issues that falls under the levelling up agenda is the role played by towns. The Future Wales plan highlights the Welsh **Town Centre First** approach, whereby development should be geared toward bringing activity into town centres. The Transforming Towns initiative in Wales funded some of these interventions directly. In England, the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) were preparing Town Deals for 101 towns across England before the pandemic hit. These are now being assessed with around half of the Town Investment Plans now having been progressed.

Transport

Both UK and Welsh government have issued transport strategies that focus on active and sustainable travel.

Llwybr Newydd or ‘New Path’ sets out **the Welsh Government’s** vision and 20-year ambitions for how transport can contribute to the wider social, environmental, economic and cultural well-being of people in Wales. Notably, right at the start of the strategy is a vision in which the private car takes a less prominent role in transport and there are fewer barriers to walking, cycling or public transport. And walking and cycling are placed at the top of the sustainable travel hierarchy.

The Department for Transport also released ‘**Gear Change**’ a vision for cycling and walking which states that the UK Government wants, and will fund, “*cities and towns across the UK to install first hundreds, then thousands, of miles of main road cycle tracks*”. This has led to local authorities producing their own Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure plans.

An aerial photograph of a city street, likely in a historic town. The street is lined with multi-story buildings, including a prominent yellow stone building with classical architectural features and a black and white timber-framed building. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is overlaid on the middle of the image, containing the text '04: Our Proposed package'. The background shows a dense urban area with various buildings and a church spire, set against a backdrop of rolling hills under a cloudy sky.

04: Our Proposed package

04 Our Proposed Package

Our proposed fiscal stimulus package has been designed to address the key themes set out in the preceding section. We believe that it offers a compelling set of investable projects that will drive short term recovery, help deliver on national priorities and be capable of being delivered quickly. It has been designed to deliver strong strategic fit and complementarity with existing initiatives, and to be attractive to a range of funding sources.

Parameters of the package

Our package is the result of an intensive and collaborative effort to develop and agree a compelling proposition.

The first step in this process was to agree a set of **key criteria / Critical Success Factors** that the package must deliver on. This was critical to ensure that our package is distinctive and fit for purpose.

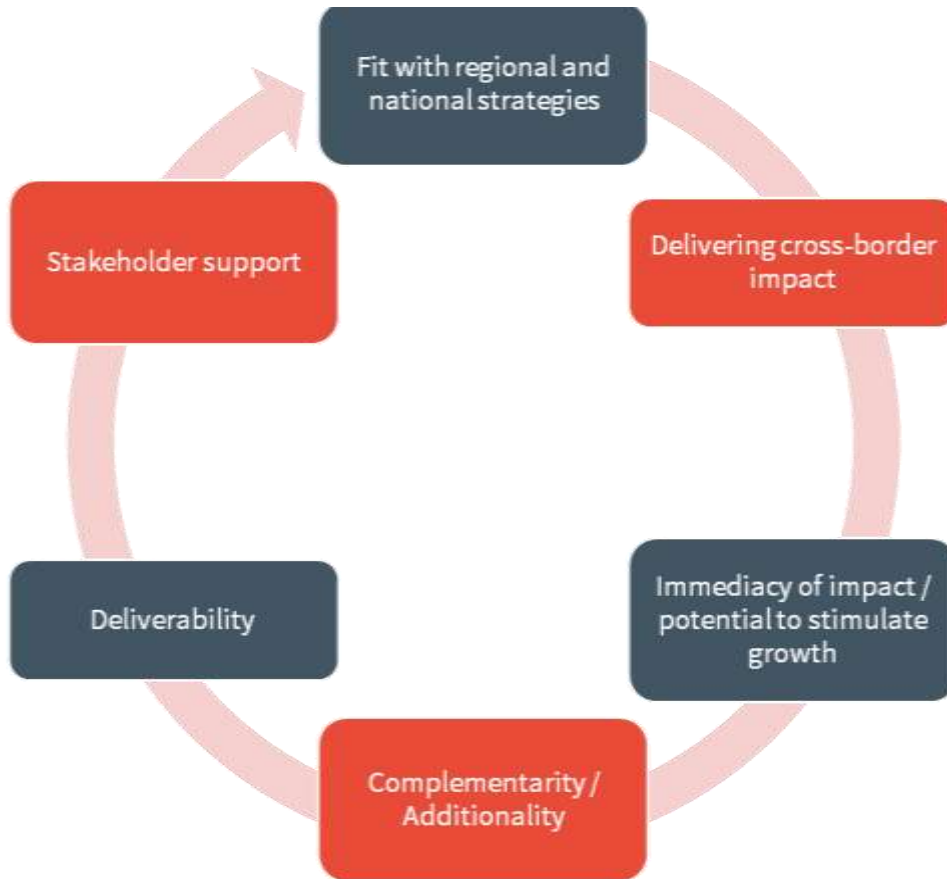
These were as follows:

1. Strategic fit. Critically, any interventions within the package must have a strong strategic fit. This means not only that they align with the wider strategy and policy landscape; they need to make a demonstrable contribution to delivering on the priorities of national and local Government.
2. Delivering cross-border impact. All of the proposed investments should serve to benefit the **MDA's cross-border** functional economy, with a significant proportion explicitly targeting cross-border issues such as transport connectivity.
3. Immediacy of impact. Whilst projects will have different trajectories, we agreed that all projects need to be able to be delivered in the current Parliament and at least some of the investment should be able to take place in the next 12 months.
4. Additionality. There must be a clear and evidenced need for government intervention, resting on an identified market failure. This means that investment needs to:

- Enable (new) projects to happen that would not otherwise have happened at all
- Enable existing projects to be significantly accelerated where they are demonstrably held back by market failure
- Significantly enhance the scale and impact of existing/planned projects.

5. Complementarity: linked to the preceding point, all interventions need to complement existing and planned projects elsewhere in the area and in adjacent locations. This includes major investment programmes such as the North Wales Growth Deal and the Liverpool City Region Devolution Deal

6. Private and public sector leverage: As a corollary of their strategic fit, projects need to have strong stakeholder support and to lever investment from the private and public sectors.
7. Deliverability. Finally, of course, it is important that projects are deliverable.



Project development

With these agreed criteria and critical success factors in place, we began an intensive and rigorous process of project development, in consultation with stakeholders. This included:

- An initial **request for projects** that fit the criteria
- A **project prioritisation process** to reduce and focus down this initial set of ideas, using the agreed criteria
- A set of **workshops and stakeholder engagement sessions** to further refine and develop the project ideas (these are outlined in Section 6). This involved all of the partner organisations, Welsh Government representatives, North Wales Economic Ambition Board representatives and representatives from the private sector.
- A parallel **consultation exercise with the private sector**, designed to collect their views on investment needs and opportunities and initial project ideas
- Sorting the projects into a set of **programmes** with common strategic drivers.

The proposed programmes

This process yielded a set of **five programmes**, each with their own distinct set of strategic objectives, linked by a golden thread of the overarching themes identified in the preceding section. Each programme contains a set of priority interventions that have been identified by partners as those that will deliver on our priorities.

Our proposed package will deliver **£1.2 billion in net additional economic benefits, benefitting 1 million residents, creating and safeguarding at least 5,000 jobs and leveraging in £450 million in private sector investment**. By funding or unlocking over £800 million in capital spending we will quickly support the construction sector, with **over 8,000 construction years of employment** supported to help boost economic recovery.

Our ask of Government is to support our priority projects and programmes through **£400 million** of funding.

The proposals have been designed to offer an attractive, investable set of propositions suitable for funding by a range of potential funding streams. However, with a need to act fast and businesses facing almost unprecedented levels of uncertainty there is a requirement for short-term revenue funding to accelerate these plans as well as the major capital investments that will cement growth in the long-term.

The five programmes are summarised below. While the projects are separated into programmes according to their primary aims, all support the high-level priorities for the package as a whole:

- To create **sustainable, inclusive growth** – levelling up the country, creating opportunity, fair work and inclusive growth
- To improve connectivity across the Mersey Dee and **strengthen England-Wales links**
- To **Build Back Better** - investing in net zero, better jobs & higher productivity.

Programme	Rationale and objectives	Key project activities	Total investment ask	Outputs / Impact
Skills and business support	Support our businesses and workers to recover, remain competitive and to capitalise on the opportunities presented by the Green Industrial Revolution.	A £60m business challenge fund, targeted business support and skills/employment brokerage for firms and employees in the manufacturing sector, pump priming new skills programmes for the Green Industrial Revolution.	Capital: £70m Revenue: £9m Total: £79m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £130m of private investment unlocked • 300+ firms in the manufacturing supply chain supported • 2,000+ jobs safeguarded • a new Business centre for Green Recovery • 450,000 tonnes of CO₂ saved
Low carbon energy infrastructure	Propel the Mersey Dee area towards becoming a low carbon industrial hub at the forefront of the emerging global hydrogen and CCUS economy.	Fund a strategic hydrogen demonstration facility for the UK, design and consenting for 100km blue hydrogen pipeline, development funding for hydrogen and CCUS hubs, design work for a tidal energy project on the Mersey and associated centre of excellence.	Capital: £95m Revenue: £12m Total: £107m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic hydrogen demonstration facility • 100km hydrogen pipeline • £250m private investment • 5-10 hydrogen & CCUS hubs • tidal energy project centre of excellence.

Programme	Rationale and objectives	Key project activities	Total investment ask	Outputs / Impact
Transport	Lay the groundwork for a cleaner, more modern cross-border transport network in which the car is no longer the default. To improve workplace accessibility and increase the number of trips by active modes for example walking or cycling.	Fund a cross-border active travel network, fund the infrastructure required for cross-border integrated ticketing, development funding for a range of key cross-border rail schemes.	Capital £90m, Revenue: £25m, Total: £115m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100km of high-quality cycling and walking infrastructure • New ticketing infrastructure for 20 stations, 400 buses across 50 routes and 9 operators. • 3 shovel-ready rail schemes.
Place based support	Ensure that our town and city centres are more resilient, vibrant and dynamic as we recover from the impact of the pandemic.	A fund managed flexibly across the Mersey Dee area will be used to support a range of areas across the MDA to support businesses and employment. £20m funding for enabling works to the Wrexham Gateway development.	Capital: £70m Revenue: £5m Total: £75m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private sector investment of £80m • bridge works • links to active and public transport • new start-up, meanwhile and entrepreneurial space • town centre biodiversity and green space.

Programme	Rationale and objectives	Key project activities	Total investment ask	Outputs / Impact
Digital	Supporting our businesses and workers to recover from the pandemic, remain competitive, innovate and to capitalise on the opportunities presented by the UK's exit from the EU and the Green Industrial revolution.	Installing high bandwidth and capacity wireless connectivity along major transport routes (5G and LPWAN), connecting logistics and transport hubs to manufacturing bases; expand the fibre network more rapidly through efficient roll out of a publicly funded duct network; expand the use of digital technology in town centres.	Capital: £27m Revenue: £3m Total: £30m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 130km of 5G and LPWAN connectivity along key transport routes • 55 new deployments of 'smart town' infrastructure.

Business support & skills

Business Challenge Fund

Our ask of the Fiscal Stimulus Package: £60m public investment

With businesses large and small in need of rapid support, to ensure the recovery does not stall as the pandemic related restrictions subside, we propose a Business Challenge Fund for the MDA area.

The fund seeks to drive immediate investment and growth by local businesses, stimulating the economy and building back better/greener whilst also supporting the long-term sustainable development of key sectors and employers and their integrated supply chains throughout the cross-border region. The ultimate aim of the Business Challenge Fund is to provide additional impetus to businesses seeking to increase their productivity and accelerating the journey to net zero at a time when the economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic means returns to private investment may appear uncertain.

In providing targeted support we will protect and grow the number of high value jobs, lever in further private sector investment and increase productivity. To achieve this the Business Challenge fund would be made up of two key pillars of activity:

- Competitive Grant funding – businesses would bid for gap funding or other financial support for investments that meet the **fund’s criteria**.
- Net-Zero Accelerator loans – 0% interest loads for applicable investment in decarbonisation.

Competitive Grant funding

To accelerate and decarbonise investment across the Mersey Dee area the grant funding will support three specific aims:

1. **Commercialisation/Scale-up of new technologies** – Accelerated support to help deliver key sector wide projects early benefitting businesses and their supply chains. Projects must facilitate SME access to the assets in question and the UK leading projects that could be accelerated include:
 - Tata Steel Construction Campus - **Tata Steel’s site in the Deeside Enterprise Zone, Flintshire**, has the potential to become a Construction Centre of Excellence with space for 1.2 million sq. ft of industrial property. Using raw steel from Port Talbot in South Wales the site already produces 400,000 tonnes of coated steel products a year and is a supplier to the construction, domestic appliance and automotive industries, with 40% of this exported from the UK. The plans **could potentially also incorporate AMRC’s Centre of Excellence ‘Design for Modular Assembly’**.
 - National Centre for Packaging and Innovation - an AMRC/Wales & CPI multi-site development in Wirral & Flintshire. This centre for sustainable packaging research would accelerate commercialisation of sustainable packaging from materials and consumer/industrial packaging, through to full lifecycle management and traceability. Potential Industrial partners in the Mersey Dee area include Unilever, Iceland, EconPro, Food & Drink Federation, KK Fine Foods.
 - Sustainable Aviation Research Park led by AMRC - linking locally based international aerospace manufacturing to R&D **(beyond wing developments) to ‘pilot’ projects utilising local airport, hydrogen production and port facilities**. Potential partners include Aerocare, Airbus, Magellan, ElectroImpact and Raytheon.

2. **Commercial Sites & Premises** – Enabling low carbon premises for local companies through new developments or re-purposing of existing premises. Grant funding targeted only at project elements that enable a market leading low carbon, operational base for businesses e.g. incorporating low carbon construction, renewables onsite generation, EV installation etc.
3. **Reshoring of Supply Chains** – Gap funding to help secure the reshoring of up to 15 suppliers to the region, delivering productivity and net zero benefits for their key anchor customers in the cross-border area whilst boosting jobs, investment and GVA. Funding would be focused on specific connecting infrastructure (e.g. substations, digital connectivity etc...) **for the commercial sites in question, where a major employer has a prospect for reshoring a major part of its supply chain but the commercial site in question needs additional accelerated investment to make it ‘supplier ready’.**

Net-Zero Accelerator loans

Where businesses in key sectors and their cross-border supply chains, have an evidence-based case for investments that will aid their efforts to decarbonise they will be supported by 0% interest loans to make those investments.

How this supports the cross-border economy:

The Challenge Fund will allow locally led investment to get to those of our businesses that are able to drive forward the recovery, decarbonising their operations and supply chains and linking them to the accelerated delivery of world class R&D / commercialisation facilities in the region. By ensuring the parameters of the grant fund are set to lever in private sector funding and that loans are targeted at green investment – we will not only ensure good value for the taxpayer but also match UK and Welsh **government’s** commitment to:

- **Build back better** – by investing in net zero and supporting the Ten Point plan for a Green Industrial Revolution
- **Strengthen England-Wales links** – we will boost the cross border labour market
- **Support levelling up** – by rapidly disseminate funds to the areas that need it most.

The Challenge Fund is expected to provide low carbon commercial premises for 290 businesses, to safeguard 1,800 jobs and decarbonise and accelerate **key projects such as Wrexham’s Food Technology Park**. The Net-Zero Accelerator loans programme will also drive productivity and deliver savings in excess of 450,000 tonnes of Carbon, leveraging at least £80m of private sector investment and supporting 270 jobs.

Skills and other business support

Our ask of the Fiscal Stimulus Package: £19m public investment

The energy sector has long been identified as a local strength in the Mersey Dee and the infrastructure to build up a net-zero industrial cluster is now falling into place around the existing energy assets in the North West. However, there is a long road ahead to meet the net-zero target. To jointly combat the current downturn in demand for key sectors through diversification and to ensure businesses get ready for net-zero we propose acting quickly, with appropriate revenue funding to deliver:

- Technical Business Centre for Green Recovery – the project aims to upskill and reskill the workforce in the MDA area with relevant industry-led clean growth skills for the green industrial revolution to service the rapidly developing low carbon cluster (particularly what may become one of or the world's first Net Zero Industrial Cluster). It will assist with upskilling the advanced manufacturing supply chains in the area aiding diversification. Utilising existing funding streams such as Apprenticeships and Skills Boot Camps the project would aim to be self-sufficient beyond a pump priming period
- Offshore Energy Alliance (OEA) – the OEA would like to offer 30 companies who supply the aerospace sector and were directly impacted by the Airbus/aerospace sector decline, a chance to go through the Fit for Offshore Wind Programme. A further programme of business support activities to support the offshore wind sector in procuring local suppliers would also be developed. This would include supply chain capability mapping; employment and skills; networking events; supply chain meet the buyer events; supply chain qualification programmes etc.

- Fit for the Future – this programme will offer short-term additional support to businesses and employees in affected priority sectors. The programme will offer business diagnostic services, enhanced skills and employment brokerage across the border and clear signposting to existing services. The aim is to ensure consistent provision, without gaps between areas for those in at risk sectors. For those individuals made redundant or at risk of redundancy via the change in demand from Airbus and other anchor employers a skills assessment and training plan will be provided. Provision will be developed where appropriate training is not readily available and a brokerage service will be developed to bring these individuals to emerging opportunities.

How this supports the cross-border economy:

We will coordinate activity to intensively support businesses in some of the region's priority sectors to diversify into other areas, especially clean energy. This will help the successful role out of some of the other low energy investments proposed in this package as well as the **UK's own** net-zero ambitions in the **Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution**.

The management and business support to be provided here will further **build on the UK government's Plan for Jobs**, including the Help to Grow programmes, only with renewed focus on the specific strengths and needs of the Mersey Dee economy and its unique cross-border structure.

All of which will speed the recovery, build a more resilient economy and help us develop world-leading, exportable Green energy capability to boost growth nationwide.

Place

Our ask of the Fiscal Stimulus Package: £75m public investment

While we recognize the value of the work being delivered in both England and Wales in relation to the issues facing town centres nationwide – the Town Fund and Transforming Towns programmes, respectively – we propose an additional funding stream for the Mersey Dee area to support holistic improvement of a number of the places that have not been able to access existing funds.

While it is acknowledged that each town centre is individual in character, common challenges include:

- Vacant floor space
- Poor quality retail premises
- Declining footfall in town centres
- Lack of quality housing and urban living opportunities
- Lack of affordable commercial space
- Economic inequality
- Lack of affordable commercial space
- Unattractive and underutilized public realm

A key objective of the scheme will be to connect new start-ups and entrepreneurs with improved, viable spaces within town centres. Targeted acquisitions of property, new green space and biodiversity projects will add vibrancy and help manage the transition of some of the region's town centres from fading retail hubs towards more vibrant locations as cultural, residential and employment hubs. **Coordinating this funding across four highly connected local authority areas** will boost the effectiveness of its management and the movement of

consumers and businesses across borders within the MDA region justifies a central coordination of the overall scheme administration, monitoring and learning.

Meanwhile, the Wrexham Gateway project is first transport linked transforming towns pilot in Wales. Ensuring seamless access to key city core sites has been identified specifically as a chance to transform the gateway into Wrexham town centre. There is an existing masterplan that is poised to regenerate Wrexham General Station, link to improved rail connectivity/active travel schemes, and maximise the regional impact of the Racecourse Football Stadium, which has been hosting international football matches since 1877. The proposed infrastructure works will de-risk the project for and lever in private sector investment of over £60m.

How this supports the cross-border economy:

The Wrexham Gateway investment will include bridge works, road access, walkways, cycleways, hard and soft landscaping, street lighting and street furniture and will unlock around £80m of private sector investment.

The wider funding package will support growth and sustainability across the **Mersey Dee area's multiple** centres as the economy and the role of the town centre adjusts to life after covid. This flexible pot of funding will allow local leaders to coordinate their interventions across the functional economic geography to meet the specific challenges faced by the region. We expect businesses will be able to provide match funding.

This will enable stakeholders within the small, independent business sector and creative industries all of which have been hit hard by the pandemic and will increase the vibrancy of our town centre spaces post-covid.

Low carbon energy infrastructure

Our ask of the Fiscal Stimulus Package: £115m public investment

The North Wales-North West England cross border area aims to be one of the first Hydrogen-CCUS large scale deployment areas in the world. With additional funding the Mersey Dee area is perfectly located to capitalise on the growing hydrogen and CCUS economy.

HyNet

Additional public funding to advance the design stage and secure consents for Phase 3A of the HyNet pipeline would accelerate access to blue hydrogen for a larger range of businesses across the MDA – particularly in North Wales.

HyNet could also develop and build a new UK strategic product testing facilities/demonstration facility linked to the Thornton Science Park.

Without a cheap and reliable source of hydrogen manufacturers are unable to run full machine tests on potential new equipment. This will hold back advances in the type of technology that will be essential to providing low carbon alternative solutions and drive the UK toward net zero. The facility is intended to be open access to all manufacturers and if the capital requirements for the following items can be publicly funded – equipment manufacturers are likely to bear the cost of hydrogen used for testing purposes:

- Hydrogen upgrading facility
- Pipeline
- Demonstration facility

Hydrogen Hubs

A further £40m fund will be made available to address the market failures that hold back the deployment of newer green technologies such as hydrogen and CCUS.

An advanced candidate is the **Deeside Hydrogen Hub** project, being brought forward under the North Wales Growth Deal. This aims to develop a hydrogen hub around the Deeside Industrial Park in Flintshire as a new location for the production of green hydrogen. Although the project is initially being developed by the North Wales Economic Ambition Board, once a hydrogen source has been established further public sector investment will complement the proposal, by accelerating deployment and commercialisation of new technologies such as:

- Heavy goods vehicles.
- Local authority fleet
- Passenger transport vehicles

Tidal

There is potential for a 3GW Tidal Range project in the Mersey and given the extensive benefits this project could hold for local manufacturers over many years the Mersey Dee Alliance would like to support the Liverpool City region in funding the next phase of the front end engineering and design work as well as providing development funding to progress a potential North West Tidal Energy Centre of Excellence.

How this supports the cross-border economy:

The proposals above will assist with enabling the UK Government's 2030 ambitions to support:

- the creation of a low carbon industrial cluster
- generating 5GW of low carbon hydrogen capacity
- capturing 10MtCO₂/year using CCUS

The direct investment in design and consenting work for HyNet pipeline will unlock around £250m of private sector investment and deliver around 100km of new pipeline, creating further opportunities to develop skills locally.

Transport

Active Travel

Our ask of the Fiscal Stimulus Package: £85m public investment

We want to rapidly accelerate provision of a single network of active travel routes across the Mersey Dee area by 2025. This will facilitate convenient access by bike and by foot to and from key employment, leisure, commercial and educational facilities.

- The major employment sites that would be opened up to increased access via the Active Travel network include: Birkenhead, Wirral Waters, the A41 corridor, Ellesmere Port, Ellesmere Port Industrial Area, Chester, Deeside Industrial Park, Wrexham Industrial Estate and Broughton.
- The proposals are also designed to improve access to and use of the public transport network. The Active Travel network will link to the Borderlands (Wrexham-Bidston) rail line which allows onward connections from North Wales through to Liverpool and proposed new stations e.g. Deeside Parkway.

The proposals would create a cross-boundary network of high-quality routes designed in accordance with rigorous standards set out in the Department for Transport and Welsh Government's guidance. The project will bring together and coordinate the four local authority members of the Mersey Dee Alliance to progress their own plans, with support from Transport for Wales as a local transport development & delivery body with specialist Active Travel team/expertise.

How this supports the cross-border economy:

We have identified a network of around 100km of cycling and walking infrastructure within the **plans of the Mersey Dee Alliance's four local authority members**. Both UK and Welsh government transport priorities recognise the significant value of walking and cycling to our residents and our economy. UK government estimates that:

- Health - Physical inactivity costs the NHS up to £1bn per annum, with further indirect costs calculated at £8.2bn
- Wellbeing - 20 minutes of exercise per day cuts risk of developing depression by 31% and increases productivity of workers
- Congestion - new cycle routes in London are moving 46% of the people in only 30% of the road space
- Local businesses - Up to 40% increase in shopping footfall by well-planned improvements in the walking environment
- Environment - doubling cycling and increasing walking could lead to savings of £567 million annually from air quality alone and can help reduce the

In the context of this Fiscal Stimulus Package, investing in this low cost transport infrastructure is especially important for open up additional opportunities to residents and improve access to major employment sites. Connecting more people to better jobs is the best way to foster inclusive growth throughout the region. The labour market will function better, reducing potential periods of unemployment and facilitating better matching between employers and potential employees.

Public transport

Our ask of the Fiscal Stimulus Package: £30m public investment

The Mersey Dee area has long suffered from underinvestment in public transport infrastructure and a range of important capital spending projects that are under development urgently need capital support to move forward. However, in order to meet the immediate needs of our fiscal stimulus package two short-term investments are required:

- £20m in revenue to fund development work that will enable up to £225m of potential rail capital projects to advance
- £10m in capital to fund the infrastructure and technology platforms required to institute cross-border integrated contactless ticketing

How this supports the cross-border economy:

The revenue funding package would enable North Wales Mainline and Borderlands enhancements to be expediated by Transport for Wales over the next 3 years. This will enable 3 shovel-ready schemes Deeside Parkway Station, Shotton and Chester Station (i.e. Stage E Plan of Works/GRIP 5/Full Business Case) and a further 6 schemes to be taken forward to single option selection and Preliminary Design (Stage C Plan of Works/Outline Business Case). Not only will this accelerate much-needed public investment in new rail infrastructure, helping to level up the region. By increasing the certainty of future rail investment will inspire confidence for private investors into the MDA.

Meanwhile, integrated ticketing across modes and operators would both boost access to jobs for people across the MDA over the longer term.

The funding outlined here will provide integrated ticketing across:

- 20 train stations
- 400 buses
- 50 routes
- 9 operators

By creating better integrated transport links we will also allow a better integrated labour market. This means improved matching of those who have lost their jobs due to the pandemic with new educational and work opportunities.

Wider strategic transport infrastructure projects

The long-term prosperity and competitiveness of our employers, people and places has been held back over time by under-investment in our transport and digital infrastructure. These immediate asks of the Fiscal Stimulus Package sit in the context of a wider set of transport infrastructure priority investments including:

- The North Wales Metro – a capital investment programme must follow the development work above to realise these benefits
- The A494 River Dee crossing – this vital river crossing that carries more daily trips than the Severn bridge needs replacing
- The Chester - Broughton Growth Corridor – improve access to Chester City centre and unlock development sites
- The A483 junctions 3-6 – an expansion of **one of Wrexham's key** employers is dependent on these congestion relieving works
- M53 and M56 interventions – improving access to Manchester and Liverpool by improving capacity and resilience

Digital

Our ask of the Fiscal Stimulus Package: £30m public investment

The physical and digital connectivity of the Mersey Dee is not as good as it could or should be to support the **region's** households and businesses.

The North Wales Growth Deal, Liverpool City Region and the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership have all begun work on separate digital connectivity programmes that will address those issues across the Mersey Dee area. The connected nature of the Mersey Dee economy means there is ample opportunity to expand on these programmes, adding real value in joining up the work across three major areas:

- Connected corridors – the North Wales Growth deal will develop high bandwidth and capacity mobile coverage (5G and LPWAN) on major transport networks. With additional funding these connected corridors could be continued across the England/Wales border towards Manchester and Liverpool.
- Fibre duct installation – both the Liverpool City Region and North Wales Economic Ambition Board intend to use public funds to accelerate roll out of the fibre network. With innovation around the installation of ducting required for future fibre installation across a broader range of locations network can be made accessible to commercial operators. With additional funding to join up this effort across the Mersey Dee area, growth of the network could be better coordinated, and procurement options explored over this much larger geography.

- Town centre digital - the project will enable business communities and place managers to better understand the performance of their High Streets and to make investment decisions based on robust and dynamic data sets. Digital technology will be installed in Town Centres across the Mersey Dee area and resources deployed to ensure procurement of technology and uptake of relevant insights from the data collected are efficient.

How this supports the cross-border economy:

The Mersey Dee area is a recognised economic geography covering an area which overlaps the administrative boundaries of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board, the Cheshire and Warrington LEP and the Liverpool City Region. This package means Mersey Dee Alliance members have the opportunity to coordinate digital infrastructure provision across those boundaries, **building a network of connectivity that is bigger than the sum of its parts.**

In the aftermath of COVID-19, with opportunities to work from home increasing, greater digital connectivity across the border will help the Mersey Dee economy overcome some of its physical connectivity challenges. Further afield, expanding the benefits of ongoing investment in **5G connectivity further along transport corridors holds huge potential for logistics firms and manufacturers**, in particular as they adapt to new customs requirements for trade with the EU. Indeed, as a consequence of this expansion in digital infrastructure and the close proximity of the Digital Signals Processing centre of excellence at Bangor University we hope to **facilitate the role of advanced manufacturing businesses for example in the food processing sector to act as test-beds for further 5G innovation.**

A photograph of a high-speed train at a station platform. The train is white with a red stripe and has its doors open. The platform has a corrugated metal roof and a sign with the number '1' and an arrow. A semi-transparent brown box is overlaid on the train, containing the text '05: How we will deliver'.

05: How we will deliver

How we will deliver

05

We have the established structures, capacity and partnerships to deliver quickly and effectively. Our partnership has a strong track record in the effective and efficient delivery of major projects.

We do not propose, or need, to create new governance structures to deliver the fiscal stimulus package. The MDA will provide central co-ordination of the package of investments, with Cheshire West and Chester – as the lead authority for the partnership - acting as the accountable body. Individual projects would be delivered by a range of lead partners including our member local authorities, Transport for Wales and we will contract with the private sector as appropriate.

Our existing governance structure is summarised below:

- MDA Board comprises seven partners: Flintshire, Wrexham, Wirral and Cheshire West and Chester Councils, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, University of Chester, Wrexham Glyndwr University, Welsh Government. The representatives are Local Authority Leaders and Cabinet Members, Vice Chancellors/Dean of Business School, Welsh Government Minister.
- The North Wales Mersey Dee Business Council acts as advisor to the Board.
- The Directors Group, comprising senior officers, from all partners, reports to and supports and advises the Board.
- The Strategy Group, comprising lead officers and Welsh Government officials reports to the Board and the Directors Group. This group oversees, monitors and directs work as agreed by the Board. The Secretariat supports the Board, the Directors Group and the Strategy Group.
- Growth Track 360 is the collaborative body for the MDA leading on cross border transport connectivity.

Mersey Dee Alliance Governance Structure



Local Growth Partnerships



06: Stakeholder support



Stakeholder Support

06

We have been working intensively and collaboratively with our partners in the region to develop our fiscal stimulus proposition. This has been done through a process of consultation, a series of listening exercises and interactive workshops to gather views, test ideas and refine proposals.

As a consequence, our package has strong support from key public and private sector organisations in our region.



Bwrdd Uchelgais Economaidd Gogledd Cymru
North Wales Economic Ambition Board

“Our vision for North Wales recognises the value of our cross border economies and the relationships we have with neighbouring areas. We welcome any bid by cross border partners that attracts investment. This added investment will deliver better infrastructure, skills and employment opportunities for people on both sides of the border, and further afield. The Mersey Dee Alliance have drawn on insights and learning from North Wales with specific focus on building investment proposals that extend and complement what is already committed within the North Wales Growth Deal. This joined up way of working is essential to ensure we deliver fairly against our shared economic priorities.”

Cllr Dyfrig Siencyn

“Mae ein gweledigaeth ar gyfer y Gogledd yn cydnabod gwerth ein heconomiâu trawsffiniol a'r perthnasau sydd gennym gydag ardaloedd cyfagos. Rydym yn croesawu unrhyw gais gan bartneriaid trawsffiniol sy'n denu buddsoddiad. Bydd y buddsoddiad ychwanegol hwn yn cyflawni gwell isadeiledd a chyfleoedd cyflogaeth a sgiliau i bobl naill ochr i'r ffin, ac ymhellach. Mae Cynghrair Merswy Dyfrdwy wedi tynnu ar fewnwelediadau a gwersi a ddysgwyd gan y Gogledd gyda ffocws penodol ar adeiladu cynigion buddsoddi sy'n ymestyn yr hyn sydd eisoes wedi'i ymrwymo o fewn Cynllun Twf Gogledd Cymru, ac sy'n cyd-fynd â hynny. Mae'r ffordd gydlynol hon o weithio yn hanfodol i sicrhau ein bod yn cyflawni'n deg yn erbyn y blaenoriaethau economaidd yr ydym yn eu rhannu.”

Cllr Dyfrig Siencyn



**LIVERPOOL
CITY REGION**
COMBINED AUTHORITY

METRO MAYOR
LIVERPOOL CITY REGION

“The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority is happy to offer its support for a fiscal stimulus package for the Mersey Dee Alliance. We are only too aware of the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on our cross-border economy and it is vital that the Government steps in to provide immediate, targeted support. The Mersey Dee area has shown its resilience and resourcefulness in the past, rebuilding a strong, modern manufacturing economy after traditional industries declined. A stimulus package would not only support the existing business base but would also enable our cross-border economy to take a lead in the industries of the future, such as hydrogen and tidal energy, as well as boosting physical and digital connectivity, and encouraging sustainable and inclusive growth.”

Steve Rotheram, Metro Mayor of the Liverpool City Region



“Cheshire & Warrington LEP actively supports this outline proposition for a fiscal stimulus package. There is a clear need for additional short term and quickly delivered stimulus in the MDA. Business leaders wrote to the Prime Minister at the height of the pandemic to raise their concerns about the especially large impact on the MDA economy as a consequence of the area straddling places subject to a number of different sets of restrictions. Additional support to restore the health of this key cross border economy is therefore essential.”

AIRBUS

“Airbus is a global leader in aerospace, defence, space and related services. We are the largest aeronautics and space company in Europe and a pioneer of cutting-edge technologies and products for our global customer base. It’s vital for our business to nurture talent, skills, research and development and strong supply chain relationships across the English / Welsh border and beyond.

Funding for the region has the potential to significantly accelerate key investment for research, innovation and skills and help reinforce local supply chains for Airbus and the wider advanced manufacturing sector in the cross border region. This would be something very much welcomed by us. ”



“Vauxhall Motors, based in Ellesmere Port, who are part of the wider Stellantis automotive group, strongly support the Mersey Dee Alliance proposition for the Fiscal Stimulus Package. The recent impact of the coronavirus pandemic on business in the area has been significant and hugely detrimental to the lives of people and businesses, resulting in many closures and subsequent job losses. A stimulus package to improve transport links, connectivity and green energy could not come at a better time for the area to promote a resurgence of confidence for the local economy.”

TATA STEEL

“The Steelworks at Shotton has been an integral part of Deeside for 125 years. We are proud to be part of the Mersey Dee business community and care passionately about its future and the opportunities it can bring to the area. We wholeheartedly support the Mersey Dee Alliance Fiscal Stimulus Package”



“As a major local employer in the area, we welcome this key initiative. Driving the longer-term agenda for a sustainable future, along with significant investment, into our region will further enable it to compete on the global stage.”



“Essar backs the fiscal stimulus package proposed by the Mersey Dee Alliance and urges the Government to support investment in raising the region’s profile, growing its competitiveness and continuing to promote it as a pivotal location in the UK. It is clear that businesses in the area have faced significant challenges as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic and a stimulus package will be crucial taking advantage of the major opportunities for the development and growth of a low carbon and sustainable economy in the Mersey Dee region.”



“Encirc fully supports the proposed Fiscal Stimulus Package for the Mersey Dee Economy. Businesses of all sizes and sectors have been informing us about the challenges they are facing following the Coronavirus outbreak and the significant adjustments they have made following the end of the Brexit Transition Period on 31st December 2020.

It is crucial that the region delivers a stimulus package that will enable businesses to overcome these challenges and drives them forward as the UK moves into a new trading era and towards a sustainable and carbon neutral future.

“At Encirc we stand at the forefront of the container glass industry globally in our efforts to decarbonise meet the Government’s net zero target. It is essential that we have strong regional businesses and partners so that we can work together to tackle sustainable goals collectively. The proposed stimulus package will be an important element in achieving that.”



“Urenco UK Limited supports this bid for a fiscal stimulus package. The need for additional short-term financial support for the cross-border area in key sectors is clear. We have a diverse labour market and an integrated supply chain locally, and during COVID-19 we have seen a number of companies in our supply chain suffer economic challenges. This funding will enable the Mersey Dee Alliance to deliver immediate key sector cross border investment, over and above what is currently planned nationally and in Wales, which is of critical importance to recharge the local economy.”



“Net Zero North West is the cluster representative body for all industrial decarbonisation activity in the North West of England. We see collaboration with key industrial energy suppliers and energy intensive manufacturers in North Wales (and particularly the Mersey dee region), as pivotal to the future low carbon energy mix of North West England. We are fully supportive of the proposed Fiscal Stimulus Package bid and believe it to be crucial to future growth for the Mersey Dee Economy”.



“We are delighted to support this application for a fiscal stimulus package for the Mersey Dee Economy. The regions focus on clean, sustainable and inclusive growth fits seamlessly with the core values of our organisation. The regions ambition for improved cross border connectivity through improved digital infrastructure fits perfectly with our operational focus.”



“The West Cheshire and North Wales Chamber of Commerce fully supports the proposed Fiscal Stimulus Package for the Mersey Dee Economy. Businesses of all sizes and sectors have been informing us about the challenges they are facing following the Coronavirus outbreak and the significant adjustments they have made following the end of the Brexit Transition Period on 31st December 2020.

It is crucial that the region delivers a stimulus package that will enable business to overcome these challenges and drives them forward as the UK moves into a new trading era and towards a sustainable and carbon neutral future.”



“As the regional umbrella body for the private sector, the North Wales Mersey Dee Business Council supports this outline bid for a fiscal stimulus package. The need for additional short term and quickly delivered stimulus for the cross-border area key sectors is clear. Our cross-border economy, labour market and integrated supply chains linked to major employers on or near the border, has meant during the economic impacts associated with COVID we have lost substantial business growth and thousands of high value jobs. The special nature of the Mersey Dee economy means that delivering immediate targeted additional cross border investment, over and above that at national UK and Wales levels, is an absolute imperative.”



Over the past year Wirral Chamber of Commerce has supported and encouraged businesses throughout and Wirral and the wider region. It is both clear and essential that within this time period, and the months ahead, there is a greater need than ever to target and address the economic challenges ahead both nationally and internationally. Through discussions with business leaders and cross border representatives there is a collective agreement that fundamental action is required to deliver investment, crucial for job creation and protection, through a business package bringing strong support to offer competition and growth to businesses facing challenges as the UK goes forward in a new trading era.

A number of other stakeholders in the Mersey Dee area have also contributed time and resources to help develop the Fiscal Stimulus proposition:



HyNet North West



A photograph of a high-speed train at a station platform. The train is silver and blue with a yellow stripe. A red signal light is visible on the left. The number '20' is on the side of the train. The background shows trees with autumn foliage.

07: Taking the Package Forward

Taking the Package Forward

Our proposed fiscal stimulus package has been designed to address the urgent need to stimulate economic recovery in the Mersey Dee economy. We believe that our proposed programmes provide a compelling set of investment propositions that will drive short term economic recovery whilst delivering on national objectives for low carbon transition and growth, levelling up opportunity and developing skills and capabilities for the future. Our proposals will also help strengthen England-Wales connectivity.

Our partners in the public and private sectors are fully behind the package and recognise the urgent need to deliver.

We recognise that this is the starting point in a conversation. The proposals have been designed to offer an attractive, investable set of propositions suitable for funding by a range of potential funders.

The MDA will:

- Engage with the UK and Welsh Governments to take forward and negotiate funding for the proposals in the Strategic Proposition.
- Use the election period for the Welsh Senedd to engage with business and partners to further refine and develop our proposals, for example the Business Innovation and Challenge Fund
- Continue to work closely with our neighbouring Local Growth Partnerships to ensure that MDA proposals are complementary and add value to existing propositions like the LCR CA Recovery Plan, the North Wales Growth Deal and the Cheshire and Warrington Recovery Plan.

We are ready to deliver this quickly and to work with Government to make this happen.

We welcome feedback from Government on our proposals, and we look forward to working collaboratively to take this forward.

For more information, please contact us below.

Mersey Dee Alliance

Email: mda@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Telephone: 0151 356 6567

HATCH





CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 15 th June 2021
Report Subject	Welsh Government White Paper Consultation - Rebalancing Care and Support
Cabinet Member	Deputy Leader of the Council (Partnerships) and Cabinet Member for Social Services
Report Author	Chief Officer (Social Services)
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Welsh Government were seeking Local Authority views on proposals to introduce new legislation that addresses the complexity of current local commissioning processes and refocuses priorities for the commissioning of care and support.

From the case for change, three critical areas emerge where Welsh Government believe focused action is needed to deliver system-wide improvement to secure the vision for social care:

- refocusing the fundamentals of the care market – away from price towards quality and value;
- reorientation of commissioning practices – towards managing the market and focusing on outcomes; and
- evolution of integration mechanisms – focusing on joint planning and delivery.

Through actions in these three areas, the White Paper seeks to rebalance the care and support market based on a clear national framework where services are organised regionally and delivered locally. In doing so they aim to rebalance social care so that there is neither an over reliance on private sector, nor a monopoly in the other direction.

The proposals outlined in the White Paper are intended to strengthen the arrangements of the Social Care sector and improve quality of care. They are based on analysis of the weakness in the market for care and support, and limitations in current partnership structures. They aim to reduce complexity, increase sustainability and strengthen integration. The focus is on the way the system is arranged, but the clear purpose is achieving the vision for social care through improving outcomes for people who need care and support and carers who support them.

The overarching issue is whether what is proposed in the white paper will achieve the intended outcomes and it is felt that this is not the case. Further change is needed but not the change that is being suggested in the White paper. We feel that there should be a commitment to resources rather than funding towards new structures. There is the need for major, sustainable investment in social care, from a revenue and capital perspective. Increased investment would enable some of the identified challenges to be addressed without any of the significant changes proposed. The inadequacy of the current funding model has been well known and there is a real need to invest time and resources to bring coherence to the long-term funding question and to design a system which is able to effectively meet any new and the additional demands which social care will face in the future.

The White Paper needs to be explicitly underpinned by a focus on ensuring the workforce are paid fairly and appropriately within all sectors. This will need additional funding. Lack of availability of resources and funding the true cost of quality care can often hinder service improvement. Protected funding invested into the social care market will enable innovation and quality service improvement.

The creation of a national office for care could unintentionally create more bureaucracy and cost more. It is unclear what level of responsibility and accountability RPB's would have from the White Paper. We need to consider how we keep local accountability and fulfil our statutory duties when elements of the process will be managed on a national or regional footprint.

The focus should be on how we best deliver integrated health and social care systems rooted in local communities, developing more integrated community-based arrangements could deliver real benefits including efficiency, a focus on holistic wellbeing approach, prevention and early intervention as well as delivering outcomes. Building on this we believe that the focus needs to be on developing future models of community based care which take a whole person approach, addressing peoples physical health, mental health and social needs together.

Democratic accountability is believed to be a strength of the current system and must be retained. There remains a need for us to preserve a social care system which is led, commissioned and delivered close to local communities, enabling decisions taken about funding to be made with local people meaning that what is commissioned is what really matters to people.

Finally the paper does not consider the role of direct provision (which is not covered by commissioning) and should grow as part of Welsh Government current policy and local authority intentions/local market needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That members consider the White Paper, note the consultation response submitted from Flintshire (see appendix 1) and approve the report.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	REBALANCING CARE AND SUPPORT WHITE PAPER – The case for change
1.01	<p>The purpose of the paper is to examine the effectiveness of social care arrangements in the context of current and future challenges, and to develop proposals about how the system can be strengthened to achieve the vision set out in the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.</p> <p>At its broadest, the term care and support market refers to the context within which local authorities, the NHS or individuals purchase care and support to meet an individual’s needs and help them achieve their personal well-being outcomes and providers of care and support seek to win contracts or otherwise arrange to provide care and support for those individuals. The social care market is diverse, reflecting the wide range of care and support needs and the many ways in which they may be met.</p>
1.02	<p>The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 is still relatively new, and its implementation, including the shift to a new way of working to support people to achieve well-being, continues to be a journey.</p> <p>The Welsh Government’s evaluation of the Act findings suggest that the ethos and principles of the Act are supported and have led to real change in social care, even despite austerity, but it is still very much regarded as an ongoing process. Often progress in achieving the vision of the Act can be inconsistent.</p> <p>Care and support should build on people’s strengths to support them to achieve their well-being outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For older people this means living longer, healthier and happier lives, being able to remain active and independent, in their own homes, for as long as possible. • For adults this means being able to exercise control over their lives and participate in work and other activities that are important to them. • For children and families this means being supported to stay together, where this is in the best interests of the child.
1.03	<p>The case for change sets out important challenges facing care and support in Wales:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population change and increase in need • The funding challenge • The care and support market • Commissioning and complexity • Workforce sustainability • Children • Public services working together • Prevention
1.04	<p>From the case for change, Welsh Government has identified three critical areas for action, drawing on framework set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and A Healthier Wales. These areas are:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refocusing the Fundamentals of the care market – away from price-orientation market structure and towards a value measure based upon service quality and overall cost • Reorientation of commissioning practices – away from task management and towards managing the market and focusing on outcomes, and social based commissioning. Establishing a common framework to enable a greater degree of joint commissioning; progressing towards a diverse provider based and rebalancing the market by supporting alternative models of care; and encouraging small providers to work together • Evolution of integrating mechanisms – simplifying joint planning and delivery by reducing barriers. Strengthening the current design of RBP functions to enable them to better facilitate integrated working.
1.05	<p>Through action in these three areas, this White Paper seeks to rebalance care and support. The White paper defines ‘rebalancing’ broadly as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Away from complexity, towards simplification. • Away from price, towards quality and social value. • Away from reactive commissioning, towards managing the market. • Away from task-based practice, towards an outcome-based practice. • Away from an organisational focus, towards more effective partnership. • To co-produce better outcomes with people.

2.00	PROPOSALS and CONSULTATION RESPONSE
2.01	<p>National framework for care and support</p> <p>A national framework for commissioning care and support for children and adults will be developed to rebalance the market of provision with the aim of improving quality. It aims to set fee methodologies, develop more standardised commissioning processes, and increase transparency of service performance.</p> <p>The paper suggests that Local authority commissioning functions will continue to be accountable locally however based on the proposals in the paper, in future local authorities and local health boards will exercise these functions in accordance with the national framework, ensuring the full and fair use of its methodologies.</p>
2.02	<p>Flintshire’s Response</p> <p>A National Framework will require significant cross agency agreement between statutory bodies and an acceptance from providers to agree with these principles.</p> <p>Our experience of National Frameworks in social care has at times been challenging with complications at a local level when looking at implementation. Examples include lack of appropriate placements, lack of ability to develop and integrate new providers, existing providers wanting to increase fees to the maximum framework price, responsibility and accountability for monitoring quality and our ability on a local level to work with providers to develop local services close to home.</p>

Fee methodologies at a national level don't take into account limitations at a local level with the funding formula which is currently used. This is of a particular issue for Flintshire being one of the low funded Council's in Wales. What is more important is a long term strategic reliable funding formula for social care for both children and adults and specifically for care homes. If the funding formula is underpinned by regional methodologies then that could be useful.

As well as the above, regionally care fees vary to such an extent that it is difficult to conceive how the difference might be justified by 'size and location and the resourcing of providers at the different stages of their own business cycle' it appears that historical payment levels / funding availability must play a role rather than actual cost.

Lack of availability of resources and funding the true cost of quality care can often hinder service improvement. Protected funding invested into the social care market will enable innovative and quality service improvement. The focus should be on how we best deliver integrated health and social care systems rooted in local communities, developing more integrated community-based arrangements could deliver real benefits including efficiency, a focus on holistic wellbeing approach, prevention and early intervention as well as delivering outcomes. There is a risk that policy and legislative drivers will again be narrowly focused on social care and the duties of local government instead of utilising the capacity across our public services.

If all services are based on a National Framework this could result in pooling of budgets, which may offer a solution to challenges faced at present, but would also still raise issues about the correct allocation of responsibility in order to ensure that partners to the pooled fund contribute the appropriate level of funds/enough funds to meet their obligations. There is the need for major, sustainable investment in social care, from a revenue and capital perspective. Increased investment would enable some of the identified challenges to be addressed without any of the significant changes proposed. The inadequacy of the current funding model has been well known and there is a real need to invest time and resources to bring coherence to the long-term funding question and to design a system which is able to effectively meet any new and the additional demands which social care will face in the future.

Consideration needs to be given to how we achieve a workforce who are truly valued, have parity of esteem with NHS workers and are appropriately rewarded for the invaluable work that they do including remuneration and career opportunities/progression. This will need additional funding.

Improving quality of care starts at the local level due to local variation in the markets and local needs. It should build on the strength of local authorities in their role in place and community, addressing the needs of individuals and families, building resilience and focusing on wellbeing. Local authorities commissioning services has worked very well and by allowing more local control it provides clearer accountability to deliver care services.

	<p>There is a risk of losing very locally based providers if we move towards a large national model, small business may miss out on opportunities that are available. We would need to make processes proportionate and appropriate. We would be concerned that a National Framework would limit innovation at a local level and prevent third sector / social enterprise delivery of care and support, especially given that this is a fundamental part of the Social Services and Well-being Act.</p>
2.03	<p>A National Office for social care</p> <p>The paper proposes that a national office for social care should be established to develop the national framework. This may be either through developing a function within government, or setting up a small arms-length body of the Welsh Government. In both options, the paper proposes that governance arrangements will ensure full engagement with local authorities, health boards, the independent sector and other key partners.</p> <p>It is proposed that the national office will maintain an overview of the stability of the market for care and support, and be a basis for driving national policy initiatives. It will consolidate activity of some national fora, including the National Commissioning Board, working with Social Care Wales, the workforce regulator with responsibility for supporting service improvement in Wales.</p>
2.04	<p>Flintshire's Response</p> <p>We are not convinced there is a case for a national office due to the fantastic role of current civil service delivered at national, regional and local levels.</p> <p>It is not clear how the vision in the white paper will link in with and support local delivery and increase accountability. Local Authorities have evidenced they can be trusted to deliver and it has been necessary to respond and innovate at the local level in order to reflect the circumstances and needs of local communities.</p> <p>We are not confident that proposals being put forward will build on current strengths and may add further complexity to the social care sector. The creation of a national office for care could unintentionally create more bureaucracy and cost more. It is unclear in relation to where the Care Inspectorate Wales and Social Care Wales role would fit into a proposed, national office for social care.</p>
2.05	<p>Regional Partnership Boards (RPBs)</p> <p>RPBs will be provided with a sharper set of tools to deploy to deliver their core aims of jointly assessing and planning for population needs. This responds to external reviews, and to the feedback from RPB members about how the current configuration of these partnership arrangements can sometimes limit their ability to act collectively and decisively. Specifically, it is proposed that RPBs should be established as corporate legal entities. Re-shaped RPBs, with functions to employ staff and hold budgets, would be expected to undertake significant joint health and care commissioning and more directive market shaping.</p>

2.06	<p>Flintshire's Response</p> <p>It is unclear what level of responsibility and accountability RPB's would have from the White Paper. We need to consider how we keep local accountability and fulfil our statutory duties when elements of the process will be managed on a national or regional footprint.</p> <p>There is a chance formalising RPB's would add another level of bureaucracy and contribute to further complexity in the system. We need to be minded we are not setting up a new system that becomes overburdened by bureaucracy and administration, it needs to be agile and flexible to the nature of change and the continued complexities that come with all services and needs. How would this body be swift and agile in a large Region with a significant number of partners, in North Wales there would be 7 statutory partners before adding any additional structures.</p> <p>Like any partnership – the differences are made by the individuals who support and work within it.</p> <p>Further change is needed but not the change that is being suggested in the White paper. From a resources point of view, having a sustainable financial plan will make more difference and have a greater impact.</p> <p>We feel that there should be a commitment to resources currently in place rather than funding towards new structures. The White Paper needs to be explicitly underpinned by a focus on ensuring the workforce are paid fairly and appropriately within all sectors. This will need additional funding.</p>
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3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	<p>The Welsh Government is preparing an integrated impact assessment on the proposals outlined in this White Paper, including the social, economic, cultural and environmental effects represented in the Well-being Goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. A Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) will also be developed and this consultation is being used to gather evidence to inform that assessment.</p> <p>Annex 1 (page 37) of the consultation document includes a summary of some of the impacts of the proposed changes on people, the workforce and social care services in Wales.</p> <p>https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2021-01/consultation-document.pdf</p>

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	<p>The consultation period has now closed and the full response is attached in (appendix 1). Senior managers from Social Services were consulted with to develop this response. The summary and response was also shared with Chief Officer Team, Social Services Programme Board and Informal Cabinet prior to submission.</p>

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Council Consultation Response.
5.02	Appendix 2 – WLGA Draft Response to White Paper.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2021-01/consutation-document.pdf

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Dawn Holt/Katrina Shankar Telephone: 01352 702128/01352 701469 / 07789934125 E-mail: dawn.holt@flintshire.gov.uk / katrina.shankar@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	<p>Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) - The inspectorate for Care and Social Services formally known as Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW).</p> <p>Commissioning - The process of specifying, securing and monitoring services to meet people's needs at a strategic level.</p> <p>Commissioning of Services - The development of service provision that includes the specifying of requirements and procurement of organisations other than the Council to deliver services.</p> <p>Contract Procedure Rules (CRP) - Rules and procedures that ensure that contracts are awarded based on open and transparent competition</p> <p>Co-Production - An asset-based approach that enables people providing and people receiving services to share power and responsibility, and work together in equal, reciprocal and caring relationships.</p> <p>Direct Payments (DP): Is a payment made by a local authority social services department to an individual who has been assessed as having care and support needs who wish to arrange their own care and support services</p> <p>North Wales Population Needs Assessment - This report is an assessment of the care and support needs of the population in North Wales, including the support needs of carers. It has been produced by the six North Wales Councils and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board</p>

(BCUHB) supported by Public Health Wales, to meet the requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014.

North Wales Regional Partnership Board (NWRPB) - the Board was established to meet the requirements of Part 9 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 to oversee Partnerships and Integration of Services. The North Wales Regional Partnership Board was established in April 2016 and met in shadow form until the Board became fully operational in September 2016. Flintshire is represented by the Cabinet Member for Social Services and the Chief Officer for Social Services.

Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWA Wales) - The latest Act which is a national driver for social care service delivery and service commissioning shaping.

Statutory Duty - This is something the Council must do by law.

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 - The well-being of Future Generations Act requires public bodies in Wales to think about the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other, and to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change.

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Appendix 1 - Consultation response form

**Consultation
Response Form**

Your name:

Organisation (if applicable): Flintshire County Council

email / telephone number:

Your address: Ty Dewi Sant

Question 1: Do you agree that complexity in the social care sector inhibits service improvement?

Agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree or disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/>
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Please explain your answer

- There is complexity in the social care sector however we do not believe it inhibits service improvement. Local initiatives such as our Progress for Providers Programme demonstrates the ability to develop service improvement across a range of settings. If provider’s and commissioners are willing to work together to make improvements complexity in the system doesn’t necessarily hinder progress.
- Lack of availability of resources and funding the true cost of quality care can often hinder service improvement. Protected funding invested into the social care market will enable innovative and quality service improvement.
- Local authorities commissioning services has worked very well and by allowing more local control it provides clearer accountability to deliver care services.
- Complexity in the system can create complex demands upon services. A balanced approach needs to recognise these demands and processes need to be developed to avoid duplication, inter agency disagreement and all agencies must agree to the principles of funding
- Regional approaches to areas such as Escalating Concerns has been positive whilst allowing a consistent co-ordinated approach with local implementation and accountability across a range of partners.
- Regional commissioning can be more complex and time consuming due to the number of partners’ co-ordinating regionally.
- A national standard could potentially help to make things clearer and more consistent across Wales.

Question 2: Do you agree that commissioning practices are disproportionately focussed on procurement?

Agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree or disagree <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/>
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Please explain your answer

- There can be an over emphasis on procurement within commissioning practices, however as an Authority we are able to overcome this by using more flexible and partnership ways of working.
- Procurement regulations can often be seen to limit the development of innovative solutions with trusted local providers including the third sector and social enterprise sector. Where long standing, positive relationships and outcomes are consistently being met we risk losing this partnership working and service development by having to go out to tender for contracts due to procurement regulations. This is often against the wishes of users and conflicts with the co-production process. We need more flexibility to work locally with trusted providers in sectors where often they are not experienced in writing complex bids and tenders and end up being at a disadvantage in the process.
- Contract Procedure Rules are often not tailored to social care and support contracts.
- When the market is limited e.g. Children's Services, often the opportunity to follow procurement best practice is limited, and as such commissioning practices focus on the specialist service required and level of needs.
- There is a risk of losing very locally based providers if we move towards a large national model, small business may miss out on opportunities that are available. We would need to make processes proportionate and appropriate.
- The procurement process can often have an impact on the services that are selected, for example, some being chosen based on finances rather than quality.
- The procurement regulations often contradict choice and control.

Question 3: Do you agree that the ability of RPBs to deliver on their responsibilities is limited by their design and structure?

Agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree or disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/>
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Please explain your answer

- No we do not agree as it is about culture and trust rather than design and structure.
- Progress is more about who (on an individual basis) is involved rather than the design and structure. Having capacity to take things forward on behalf of all partners and from a governance perspective the authority and accountability is key. Clarity on responsibilities is an essential element and the new structures could be a duplication of current structures within LA's. We need to consider how we keep local accountability and fulfil our statutory duties when elements of the process will be managed on a national or regional footprint.
- It is unclear what level of responsibility and accountability RPB's would have from the White Paper.

- In North Wales there are 6 local authorities and a large Health Board and a one size fits all approach does not work for local elected member of local councils.
- If Welsh Government is looking to sharpen the role of the RPB a key role could be the population needs assessment and market stability oversight, but would not include holding budgets or undertaking a commissioning role this must remain within the gift of a the local authority .
- Like any partnership – the differences are made by the individuals who support and work within it. Flintshire takes these roles seriously in terms of regional leadership and plays a pivotal role across North Wales – an example being our portfolio member for social services in Flintshire taking on a regional role as autism champion.

Question 4: Do you agree a national framework that includes fee methodologies and standardised commissioning practices will reduce complexity and enable a greater focus on service quality?

Agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree or disagree <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/>
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- A National Framework will require significant cross agency agreement between statutory bodies and an acceptance from providers to agree with these principles.
- Our experience of National Frameworks to date is that on paper it looks very positive however there are complications at a local level when looking at implementation. Examples include lack of appropriate placements, lack of ability to develop and integrate new providers, existing providers wanting to increase fees to the maximum framework price, responsibility and accountability for monitoring quality and our ability on a local level to work with providers to develop local services close to home.
- Fee methodologies at a national level don't take into account limitations at a local level with the funding formula which is currently used. This is of a particular issue for Flintshire being one of the low funded Council's in Wales. What is more important is a long term strategic reliable funding formula for social care, both children and adults and specifically for care homes. If the funding formula is underpinned by regional methodologies then that could be useful.
- Complexity will not be reduced in the first instance as it will take a great deal of unpicking of current arrangements to feed into the National Framework. Once established for a period of time this could ease.
- The creation of a national office for care could unintentionally create more bureaucracy.
- It is unclear in relation to where the Care Inspectorate Wales and Social Care Wales role would fit into a proposed, national office for social care.
- Work to develop consistent service specifications etc. can be difficult and we have concerns regarding a one size fits all approach.

Question 4a: - What parts of the commissioning cycle should be reflected in the national framework?

- It would be difficult to isolate any part of the commissioning cycle to be included in a National Framework as a stand-alone element. Wider population

needs assessments and market stability reports could form an element however other parts of the cycle require a localised approach. As an example relinquishing responsibility for certain elements of the commissioning cycle such as quality monitoring poses a risk to the Local Authority as we have a duty of care that placements are safe and of good quality. If we do not have assurance processes in place with local oversight and management we may be at risk of failing on these duties or not responding in a timely manner.

Question 5: Do you agree that all commissioned services provided or arranged through a care and support plan, or support plan for carers, should be based on the national framework?

Agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree or disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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- We would be concerned that a National Framework would limit innovation at a local level and prevent third sector / social enterprise delivery of care and support, especially given that this is a fundamental part of the Social Services and Well-being Act.
- Regionally care fees vary to such an extent that it is difficult to conceive how the difference might be justified by 'size and location and the resourcing of providers at different stages on their own business cycle;. It appears that historical payment levels/funding availability must play a role rather than the actual cost.

Question 5a- Proposals include NHS provision of funded nursing care, but do not include continuing health care; do you agree with this?

- No – there needs to be an honest and transparent dialogue about Continuing Care and Continuing Health Care which remains an unresolved area in the field of joint commissioning.
- Direct Payments – as one of the leading authorities in Direct Payment, this approach would limit our ability innovate with this service.
- There is significant work required to improve future practice, and the experiences of children and young people who require the support of Continued Healthcare Funding. There needs to be a clearer commitment and focus on an equitable solution between health and social care and this needs to be clearly articulated in the Paper.
- Pooling budgets may offer a solution to some challenges faced at present, but would also still raise issues about the correct allocation of responsibility in order to ensure that partners to the pooled fund contribute the appropriate level of funds/enough funds to meet their obligations.

Question 5b- Are there other services which should be included in the national framework?

- As stated above we do not think there should be a national framework.
- Current experiences when using National Frameworks have not always been positive. Local examples include information on the framework not being up to

date, providers not responding to referrals through the framework, providers requesting elevated fees due to the framework fee methodologies and concerns and issues not being dealt with appropriately. Adding further services when the existing ones are not working correctly would be a concern.

Question 6: Do you agree that the activities of some existing national groups should be consolidated through a national office?

Agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree or disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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- **No** - We are not convinced there is a case for a national office due to the fantastic role of current civil service delivered at national, regional and local levels.

Question 6a- If so, which ones?

N/A

Question 7: Do you agree that establishing RPBs as corporate legal entities capable of directly employing staff and holding budgets would strengthen their ability to fulfil their responsibilities?

Agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree or disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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- What legal statutory responsibilities would they be given and how does that coincide with our local liability.
- It is unclear if the RPBs would have powers to supersede Local Authority determinations in the identification of services and what budget would this constitute.
- LAs in North Wales have ensured personnel are there already to support RPBs so it could be seen as duplication and costs which are not required.
- There is a chance that this would add another level of bureaucracy and contribute to further complexity in the system.
- How would this body be swift and agile in a large Region with a significant number of partners? In North Wales there would be 7 statutory partners before adding any additional structures.

Question 7a- Are there other functions that should be considered to further strengthen regional integration through RPBs?

- **No**

Question 8: Do you agree that real-time population, outcome measures and market information should be used more frequently to analyse needs and service provision?

Agree	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree or disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
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- We feel we should be aspiring to a live market system that will provide real time data and allow us to respond rapidly to a changing situations e.g. COVID-19. A real time system could also support providers with more opportunities.
- Any use of such demographic and population information provides a base line to developing service provision with appropriate funding.

Question 8a- Within the 5 year cycle, how can this best be achieved?

- We feel a 5 year cycle is limiting and the ideal would be a live real time system.

Question 9: Do you consider that further change is needed to address the challenges highlighted in the case for change?

Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree or disagree	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
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- We need to be minded we are not setting up a new system that becomes over burdened by bureaucracy and administration, it needs to be agile and flexible to the nature of change and the continued complexities that come with all services and needs.
- Further change is needed but not the change that is being suggested in the White paper. From a resources point of view, having a sustainable financial plan will make more difference and have a greater impact.
- Community services in North Wales are arranged on a local or sub-regional (area) basis. A focus on more regional services is more challenging for a large region. We need to retain the flexibility to deliver services that blend local, area and regional approaches.

Question 9a- what should these be?

- These need to be driven by excellent local knowledge about services and trends and patterns of need to the local area.

Question 10: What do you consider are the costs, and cost savings, of the proposals to introduce a national office and establish RPBs as corporate entities?

Agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree or disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/>
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- It is unclear from the white paper what the costs may be to implement its proposals. It would be beneficial to receive a fully costed document which sets any cost benefit analysis.
- We currently contribute to regional structures and it is unclear whether this will be a cost saving or whether we would need to contribute more to the new system.
- Is the expectation that certain functions within local authority would be reduced or redundant which will be used to pay for the structures?
- We feel that there should be a commitment to resources currently in place rather than funding towards new structures.

Question 10a- Are there any particular or additional costs associated with the proposals you wish to raise?

- The new proposals could incur infrastructure costs that could take away from the front line work.
- Is the premise that the creation of the a National Framework and delivered by the RPBs will result in cost saving outcomes, by creating a new system we are more likely to create new costs for its function and staffing and as noted in the point above is there a cost benefit analysis available.

Welsh language

Question 11: We would like to know your views on the effects that a national framework for commissioning social care with regionally organised services, delivered locally would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favorably than English.

What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

- Local Authorities are currently working towards the current Welsh Language policy, we would hope the effects would be neutral.

Question 12: Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy to develop a national framework for commissioning social care with regionally organised services, delivered locally could be formulated or changed so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

- There would be more consistency across Wales through the use of one system.

This box is provided for any other comment(s) you wish to make about the proposal to develop new legislation. Please enter here:

- There needs to be a clearer focus on a shared partnership agenda relating to children, young people and families and how their care and support needs are met.
- The White Paper needs to be explicitly underpinned by a focus on ensuring the workforce are paid fairly and appropriately within all sectors. This will need additional funding.
- The White Paper discusses the contribution care providers can make to reducing carbon emissions. Large scale investment in carbon reduction technology will require future funding certainty so that providers are able to raise finance and borrowing.

Responses to consultations are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please tick here:



ADSS Cymru

Yn arwain Gwasanaethau
Cymdeithasol yng Nghymru
Leading Social Services in Wales

Rebalancing Care and Support – A consultation on improving social care arrangements and strengthening partnership working to better support people’s well-being

ADSS Cymru Key Issues Paper

Overview

ADSS Cymru is responding to the consultation on the Welsh Government White Paper to ensure that the voice of professional leadership in social care contributes to the thinking around the proposals in this document, offers a view as to what needs to be done and how it should be delivered. This is a significant opportunity to influence the direction of some big strategic issues in the delivery of social care, and the outcome of this work will potentially set the scene for the foreseeable future.

In addition to the ADSS Cymru paper summarising the consultation document the purpose of this paper is to set out the key issues which we will need to discuss and provide a response to. There are standard questions which we need to answer but this is also an opportunity to offer additional views where needed, based on our experiences of the challenges in delivering social care services and what would make the big differences if we are to shape the future.

What does the Welsh Government want to do?

The Welsh Government believes that the changes in our population profile with a growing number of older people living longer with different needs, the public finance challenges and pressure of austerity, the fragility and nature of the care market, and the complexity of commissioning are some of the reasons why Ministers believe there is a case for change.

In their view three critical areas emerge where action is needed to deliver improvement:

1. refocusing the fundamentals of the care market – away from price towards quality and value
2. reorientation of commissioning practices – towards managing the market and focusing on outcomes
3. evolution of integration mechanisms – simplifying joint planning and delivery.

The actions set out in the White Paper will be in these three areas, with the aim of rebalancing the care and support market based on a clear national framework where services are organised regionally and delivered locally. There are clear concerns about the complexity of the market, and the intention is to reduce the risk of an overreliance on any one sector.

The intended outcome by will be a system that is:

- More simplified
- Based on quality and social value, and not on price
- More managed, and not reactive

- Outcome based, and not task based
- Rooted in effective partnership and integration, and not on organisational focus

How does the Welsh Government intend to deliver it?

Essentially the plan is to introduce a new law which creates a new national body to oversee the delivery of a national framework to commission services for children and adults, and places Regional Partnership Boards (RPBs) on a statutory footing, able to hold budgets and employ staff. There is no intention to make structural changes to health boards and local authorities.

Key issues to consider

As a leadership body ADSS Cymru wants to support and influence how reform is taken forward and in doing so offer its' expertise and experience to place social care on a more stable footing as we plan for the future.

In addition to the standard consultation questions which we encourage you to answer (in the table below) there are some issues which ADSS Cymru members might want to consider as we formulate a response to the consultation, such as:

1. Whether we agree with the case for change - has the government missed anything which ought to be included, and are the policy objectives likely to make a big difference to the challenges they have set out?
2. If we were identifying the three biggest strategic issues to resolve for the next 5 to 10 years what would they be and are they covered in the Welsh Government's proposals as set out in the summary paper?
3. The paper talks about delivering an integrated health and care system – what does integration mean, has it been correctly articulated and essentially what should it look like?
4. If you agree that the market needs to be rebalanced, to reduce the risk of the over reliance on one sector, and to ensure that services are better planned are there other ways to do it, other than through a national commissioning route?
5. Partnership working is strongly referenced in the document. If partnership working is essential, is the RPB the vehicle to deliver this, or is there an alternative model that ought to be articulated?
6. Finance – the proposals appear to be about making better use of existing resources, unless more money is available through a specific social care tax for example. With changes to our demographic picture, and the demands placed on services, what view would ADSS Cymru members argue.

Standard questions – please answer as many of these questions as you can and refer to the summary paper for the background.

Question 1	Do you agree that complexity in the social care sector inhibits service improvement?
Question 2	Do you agree that commissioning practices are disproportionately focussed on procurement?

Question 3	Do you agree that the ability of RPBs to deliver on their responsibilities is limited by their design and structure?
Question 4	Do you agree a national framework that includes fee methodologies and standardised commissioning practices will reduce complexity and enable a greater focus on service quality?
Question 4 a	What parts of the commissioning cycle should be reflected in the national framework?
Question 5	Do you agree that all commissioned services provided or arranged through a care and support plan, or support plan for carers, should be based on the national framework?
Question 5 a	Proposals include NHS provision of funded nursing care, but do not include continuing health care; do you agree with this?
Question 5 b	Are there other services which should be included in the national framework?
Question 6	Do you agree that the activities of some existing national groups should be consolidated through a national office?
Question 6 a	If so, which ones?
Question 7	Do you agree that establishing RPBs as corporate legal entities capable of directly employing staff and holding budgets would strengthen their ability to fulfil their responsibilities?
Question 7 a	Are there other functions that should be considered to further strengthen regional integration through RPBs?
Question 8	Do you agree that real-time population, outcome measures and market information should be used more frequently to analyse needs and service provision?
Question 8 a	Within the 5 year cycle, how can this best be achieved?
Question 9	Do you consider that further change is needed to address the challenges highlighted in the case for change?
Question 9 a	What should these be?

Question 10	What do you consider are the costs, and cost savings, of the proposals to introduce a national office and establish RPBs as corporate entities?
Question 10 a	Are there any particular or additional costs associated with the proposals you wish to raise?
Question 11	<p>We would like to know your views on the effects that a national framework for commissioning social care with regionally organised services, delivered locally would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.</p> <p>What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?</p>
Question 12	Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy to develop a national framework for commissioning social care with regionally organised services, delivered locally could be formulated or changed so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.



CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 15 th June 2021
Report Subject	End of Year Performance Monitoring Report
Cabinet Member	Deputy Leader of the Council (Governance) and Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets
Report Author	Chief Executive
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Flintshire County Council Reporting Measures 2020/21 were identified by portfolios and approved by Cabinet in September 2020. This report presents the annual out-turn of performance against those measures identified for 2020/21.

This out-turn report for the 2020/21 Reporting Measures shows that 67% of the performance indicators have met or exceeded their targets. Where performance can be measured against last year there has been a 52% downturn in trend, with 43% of measures improving on last year's performance and 5% maintaining stable performance.

This report is an exception-based report and concentrates on under-performance against target.

Recommendations

1.	To note and review the overall performance of indicators against the agreed Reporting Measures at the end of year point.
2.	To be assured by explanations given for underperformance, which in the main are explained by the interruption of the pandemic.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE PERFORMANCE AT END OF YEAR 2020/2021
1.01	<p>The end of year performance monitoring reports provide explanation of the progress being made toward the agreed measures set out in the Flintshire County Council Reporting Measures 2020/21.</p> <p>These measures were approved by Cabinet after targets for 2020/21 were re-assessed for forecasted performance due to the disruptions caused during the response phase of the pandemic.</p>
1.02	This report is an exception-based report and concentrates on under-performance.
1.03	<p>Monitoring our Performance</p> <p>Analysis of performance against the performance indicators is undertaken using the RAG status. This is defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RED - under-performance against target. • AMBER - where improvement may have been made but performance has missed the target. • GREEN - positive performance against target.
1.04	<p>Analysis of current levels of performance against target shows the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 41 (67%) have achieved a green RAG status • 12 (20%) have an amber RAG status • 8 (13%) have a red RAG status
1.05	<p>The eight performance indicators (PIs) which show a red RAG status for current performance against target are:</p> <p>Streetscene & Transportation</p> <p>Developing the number of bus quality partnerships on the core network</p> <p>The ongoing development of the Quality Bus Partnership has been put on hold. Transport For Wales are undertaking a Network review across North Wales with a report due in May 2021.</p> <p>Undertake post completion inspections of utility works</p> <p>Every Highway Authority is required to inspect 10% of all repairs before the end of this guarantee period, but the Council inspect more than required to promote best practice and avoid future costs. If any defects are identified during the inspection the Utility are required to carry out the required remedial works, preventing the Authority from being burdened with the future repair costs. During the pandemic Streetscene Officers have continued to deliver services throughout. The percentage of inspections has reduced during this period, however the number undertaken is still significantly higher than the</p>

statutory requirement and these inspections have been complemented with an appointed contactor carrying out additional technical inspections. Inspections are allocated on a weekly basis, and therefore in order to provide a meaningful and reflective report, the data provided for quarter four are inspections generated in quarter three.

Housing & Assets

The number of Council homes completed or under construction through the Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme (SHARP)

Whilst the target has not been achieved for this measure, we have delivered 149 properties and over half of these are family homes. This is a great achievement considering the difficulties with ensuring COVID site safety throughout the year and the impact of lockdowns.

The percentage of council houses that meet the Welsh Housing Quality standards within our annual programme

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, many of the Contractors the Council had procured to deliver the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) Capital Programme were furloughed. This delayed the completion of the 2019-2020 financial years' work (Year Five) and the commencement of the 2020-2021 financial years' work (Year Six). We were able to commence and mobilise WHQS Programmes of work from July and as a result we started to receive hand overs for completed works in quarter three of the 2020-2021 financial year.

Planning, Environment and Economy

Total number of individuals supported to access learning and work opportunities

This has been a challenging year for the Communities for Work (CFW) programme, which saw Pathway programmes put on hold limiting the options available to participants to access the relevant training opportunities. Teams have delivered the programme virtually by working from home and have supported mentoring scheme participants to gain E-Learning, Customer services and construction skills qualifications. The teams have also supported participants into employment opportunities within the care, retail and construction sectors.

Average time taken to determine "major" applications in Days

Quarter one and quarter three are significantly higher than the target. Action needs to be taken to ensure the overall length of such application is reduced by effective case management.

Average time taken to determine planning applications

Target not met and double the time taken or more. This reflects the impact of the pandemic throughout 20/21 and the reduced capacity within the service to 30% at times. The majority of applicants agreed to extension of times with understanding of delay of the whole process such as inability to display statutory notices (in accordance with Welsh Government advice) and the back log of cases which developed whilst service transferred to electronic working from home.

Chief Executives Team - Corporate Finance

Percentage of income target achieved

	A review of fees and charges was undertaken in October 2020 and increases implemented where possible. The impact of the pandemic on Council Services has meant that there has been a reduction in levels of income this year.
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	There are no specific resource implications for this report.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT														
3.01	<p>Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Long-term</td> <td rowspan="5">Throughout all of the End of Year Monitoring Report there are demonstrable actions and activities which relate to all of the Sustainable Development Principles. Specific case studies will be included in the Annual Performance Report for 2020/21.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prevention</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Integration</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Collaboration</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Involvement</td> </tr> </table> <p>Well-being Goals Impact</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Prosperous Wales</td> <td rowspan="7">Throughout the End of Year Monitoring Report there is evidence of alignment with the Well-being Goals. Specific strategic and policy reports include impact and risk assessments.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Resilient Wales</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Healthier Wales</td> </tr> <tr> <td>More equal Wales</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cohesive Wales</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vibrant Wales</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Globally responsible Wales</td> </tr> </table> <p>Council's Well-being Objectives</p> <p>The Council's wellbeing objectives will be included in the Annual Performance Report for 2020/21. We have reviewed and updated our Well-being Objectives in throughout the development of the Council Plan 2021/22.</p>	Long-term	Throughout all of the End of Year Monitoring Report there are demonstrable actions and activities which relate to all of the Sustainable Development Principles. Specific case studies will be included in the Annual Performance Report for 2020/21.	Prevention	Integration	Collaboration	Involvement	Prosperous Wales	Throughout the End of Year Monitoring Report there is evidence of alignment with the Well-being Goals. Specific strategic and policy reports include impact and risk assessments.	Resilient Wales	Healthier Wales	More equal Wales	Cohesive Wales	Vibrant Wales	Globally responsible Wales
Long-term	Throughout all of the End of Year Monitoring Report there are demonstrable actions and activities which relate to all of the Sustainable Development Principles. Specific case studies will be included in the Annual Performance Report for 2020/21.														
Prevention															
Integration															
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Resilient Wales															
Healthier Wales															
More equal Wales															
Cohesive Wales															
Vibrant Wales															
Globally responsible Wales															

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
4.01	The Reporting Measures are monitored by the respective Overview and Scrutiny Committees according to the priority area of interest.
4.02	Chief Officers have contributed towards reporting of relevant information.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1: End of Year Performance Monitoring Report 2020-21

6.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
6.01	Flintshire County Council Reporting Measures 2020/21 Jay Davies, jay.davies@flintshire.gov.uk 01352 702744







7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	Reporting Measures: The document which sets out the performance indicators of the Council. This document provides a set of measures to support recovery and selected portfolio measures.
7.02	An explanation of the report headings
	<p>Measures (Key Performance Indicators - KPIs)</p> <p><u>Baseline Year</u> – As a new indicator, a target has not been established. This will be monitored and targets established for the following year.</p> <p><u>End of Year Target</u> – The target for this end of year as set at the beginning of the year.</p> <p><u>Current RAG Rating</u> – This measures performance for the year against the target. It is automatically generated according to the data. Red = a position of under performance against target, Amber = a mid-position where improvement may have been made but performance has missed the target and Green = a position of positive performance against the target.</p> <p><u>Trend</u> – Trend arrows give an impression of the direction the performance is heading compared to the previous year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 'downward arrow' always indicates poorer performance regardless of whether a KPI figure means that less is better (e.g. the amount of days to deliver a grant or undertake a review) or if a KPI figure means that more is better (e.g. number of new jobs in Flintshire). • Similarly an 'upward arrow' always indicates improved performance.

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End of Year Report 2020/21



Key for Report Performance

Performance	Shown as	Trend	Shown as
Off Track (Red)		Downturned (Red)	
Monitor (Amber)		Maintained (Amber)	
On Track (Green)		Improved (Green)	

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What we mean by Performance RAG

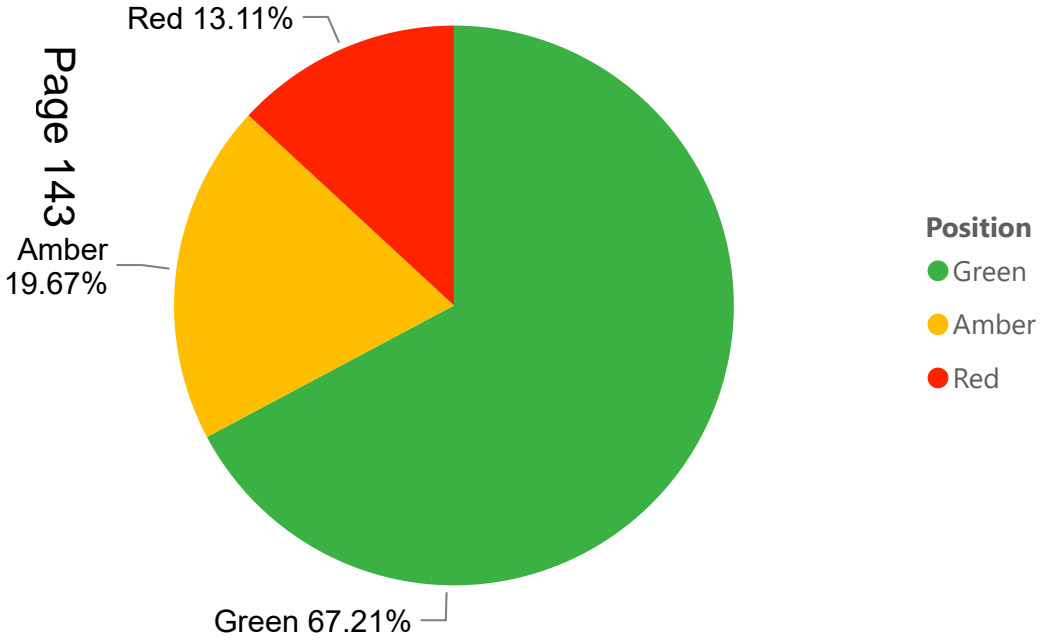
The Performance RAG is generated by assessing current performance against the target. This outcome is then illustrated in the report using the images above.

What we mean by Trend

The Trend is generated by assessing current performance against last years performance. This outcome is then illustrated in the report using the images above.

End of Year Reporting Analysis - Progress Against Target RAG

Progress against Target RAG



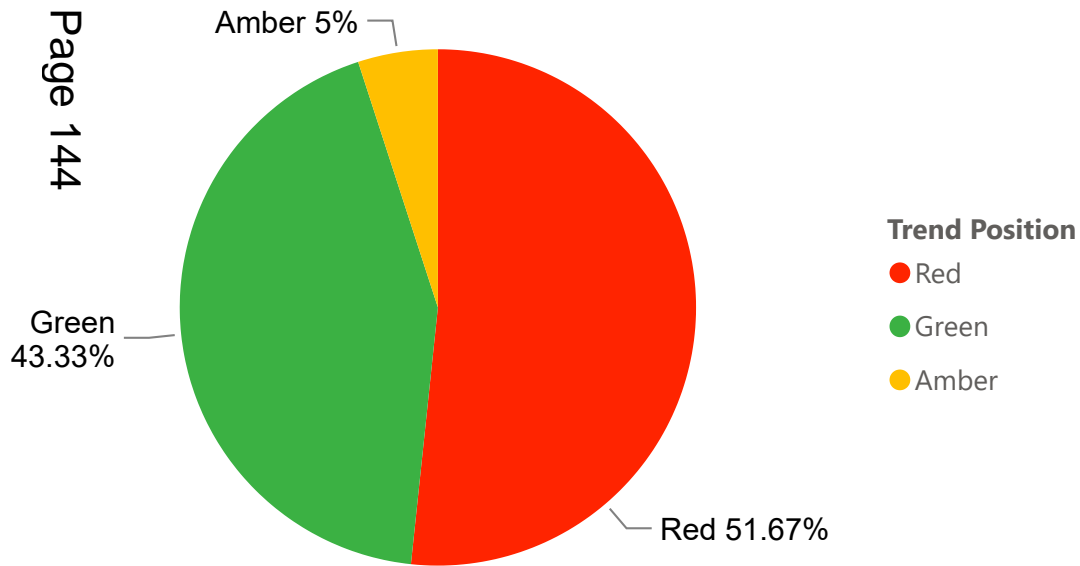
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Measures off track

Title	Current RAG Rating
Average time taken to determine "major" applications in days	❖
Average time taken to determine planning applications	❖
Developing the number of bus quality partnerships on the core network	❖
Percentage of Income target achieved	❖
The number of Council homes completed or under construction through the Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme (SHARP)	❖
The percentage of council houses that meet the Welsh Housing Quality standards (WHQS) within our annual programme	❖
Total number of individuals supported to access learning and work opportunities	❖
Undertake post completion inspections of utility works	❖

End of Year Reporting Analysis - Trend Status

Trend Status



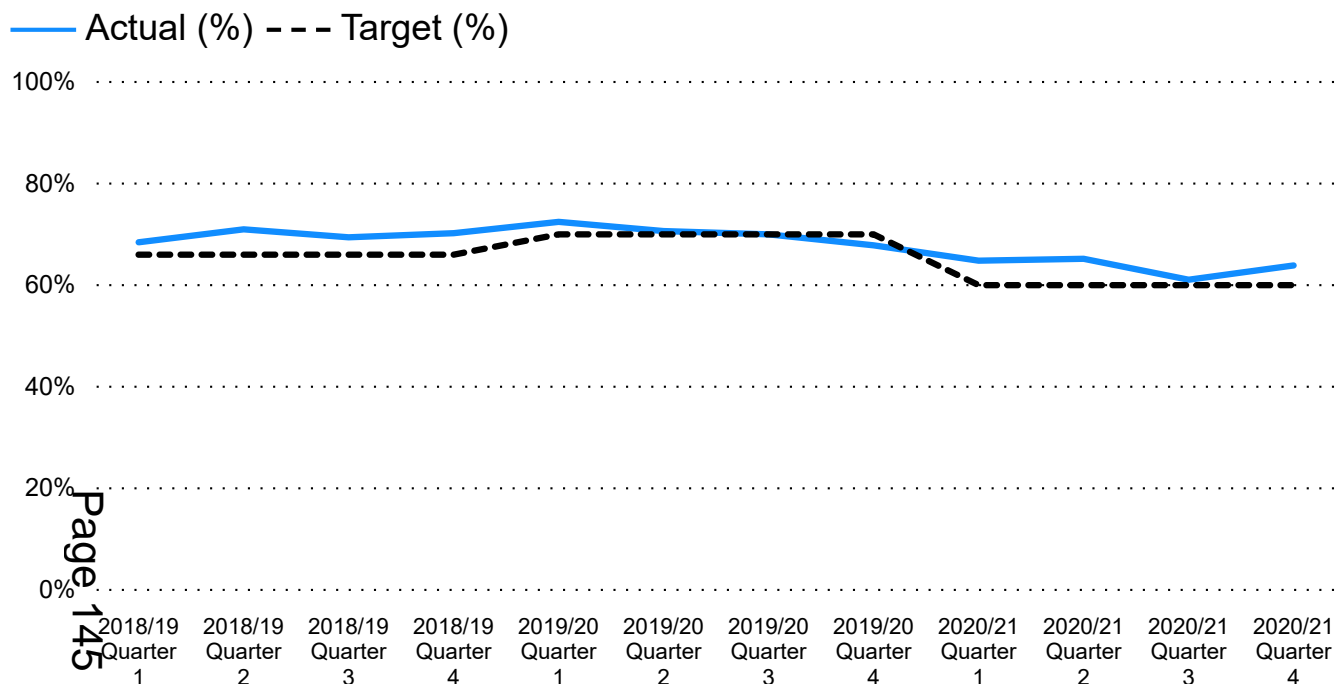
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Measures with a downturn in performance

Title	Trend
Average number of calendar days taken to deliver a DFG (Large Adaptations)	↓
Average recycling rate across all HRC sites	↓
Average time taken to determine "major" applications in days	↓
Average time taken to determine planning applications	↓
Council Tax 'in-year' collection levels	↓
Increase in attendance of managers and employee Stress Management training	↓
Increase supply and variety of affordable homes	↓
Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) 'in-year' collection levels	↓
Number of new foster carer approvals in the year	↓
Number of referrals to the Family Group Meeting Service	↓
Number of Special Guardianship Orders made	↓
Number of targeted environmental educational campaigns	↓
People with a learning disability accessing Project Search to improve their employability skills	↓
Percentage of A roads in overall poor condition	↓
Percentage of all planning applications determined in time	↓
Percentage of B roads in overall poor condition	↓
Percentage of C roads in overall poor condition	↓
Percentage of Food Establishments that meet Food Hygiene standards	↓
Percentage of Income target achieved	↓
Percentage of waste reused, recycled or composted	↓
Provide Local Travel Arrangements (LTAs) in geographical areas of the County	↓
Rent Income/Arrears – Arrears as a % of Rent Yield	↓
The number of affordable homes completed or under construction through the Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme (SHARP)	↓
The number of apprentices that complete the programme with a positive outcome	↓
The percentage of children who were reported as having run away or gone missing from home who had a return interview	↓
The percentage of council houses that meet the Welsh Housing Quality standards (WHQS) within our annual programme	↓
The percentage of reviews of children on the Child Protection Register due in the year that were carried out within the statutory timescales	↓
The percentage pre-birth assessments completed within timescales.	↓
Total number of energy efficiency measures delivered to reduce fuel poverty	↓
Total number of individuals supported to access learning and work opportunities	↓
Undertake post completion inspections of utility works	↓

Streetscene and Transportation - Recovery Measures

Percentage of waste reused, recycled or composted

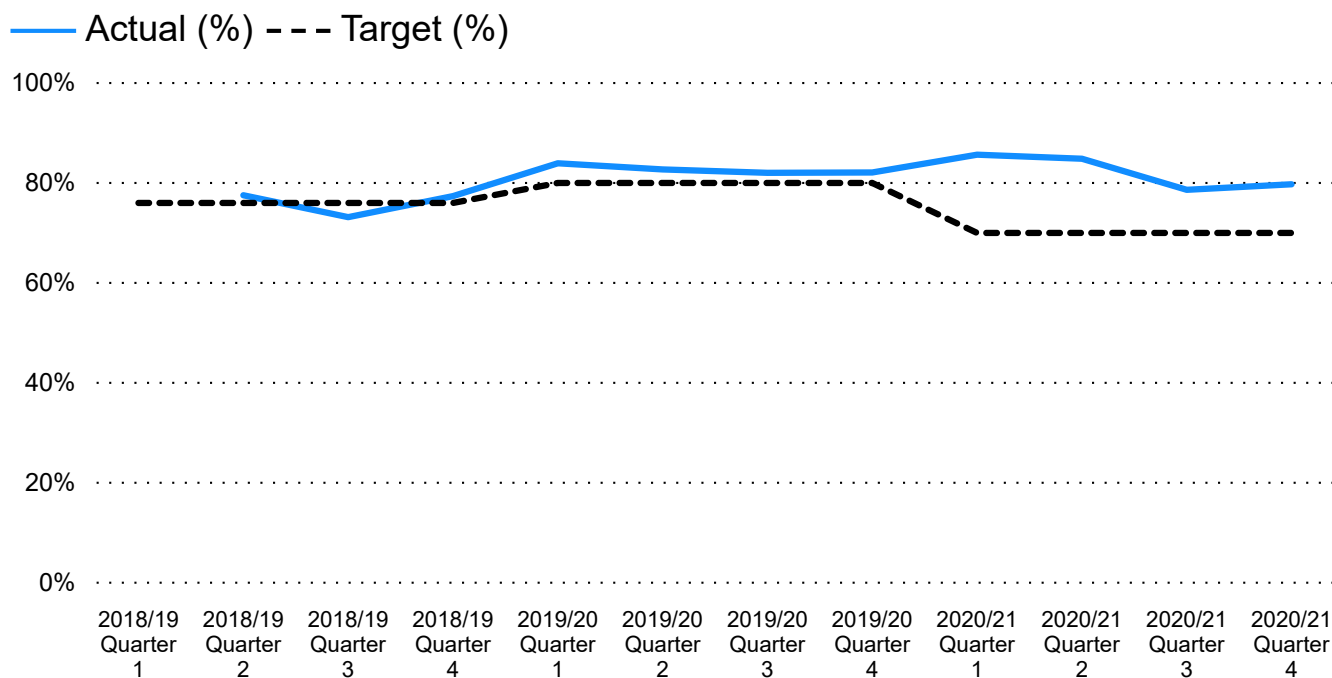


End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
63.74%	60.00%	↓	●

Comment

Welsh Government statutory target has been achieved. Due to COVID restrictions, and the increase in working from home, including home refurbishments, waste and recycling tonnages have increased overall. However the increase in residual waste has offset any benefit from increases in recycling. Also, the impact of the Household Recycling Centres being closed during lockdowns has adversely impacted performance.

Average recycling rate across all HRC sites



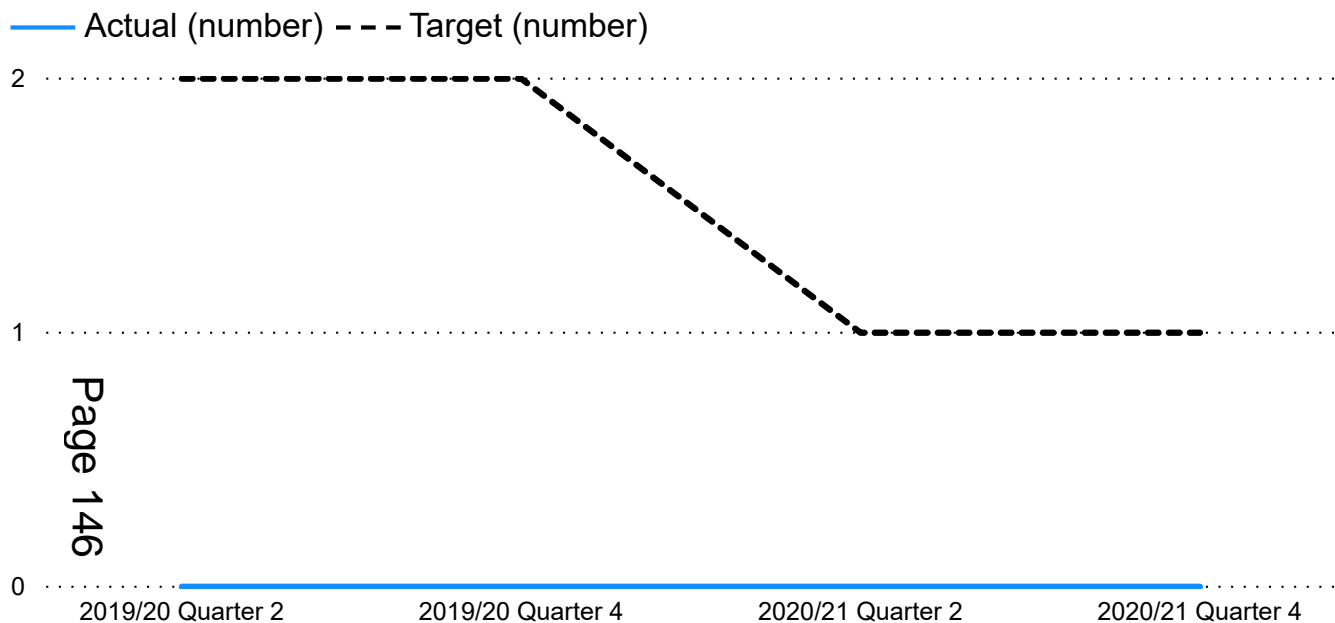
End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
82.22%	70.00%	↓	●

Comment

National lockdown measures meant non-essential journeys were discouraged. Household Recycling Centres remained open when possible with appropriate measures. A decrease in footfall in January and February meant less waste brought to site.

Streetscene and Transportation - Recovery Measures

Developing the number of bus quality partnerships on the core network



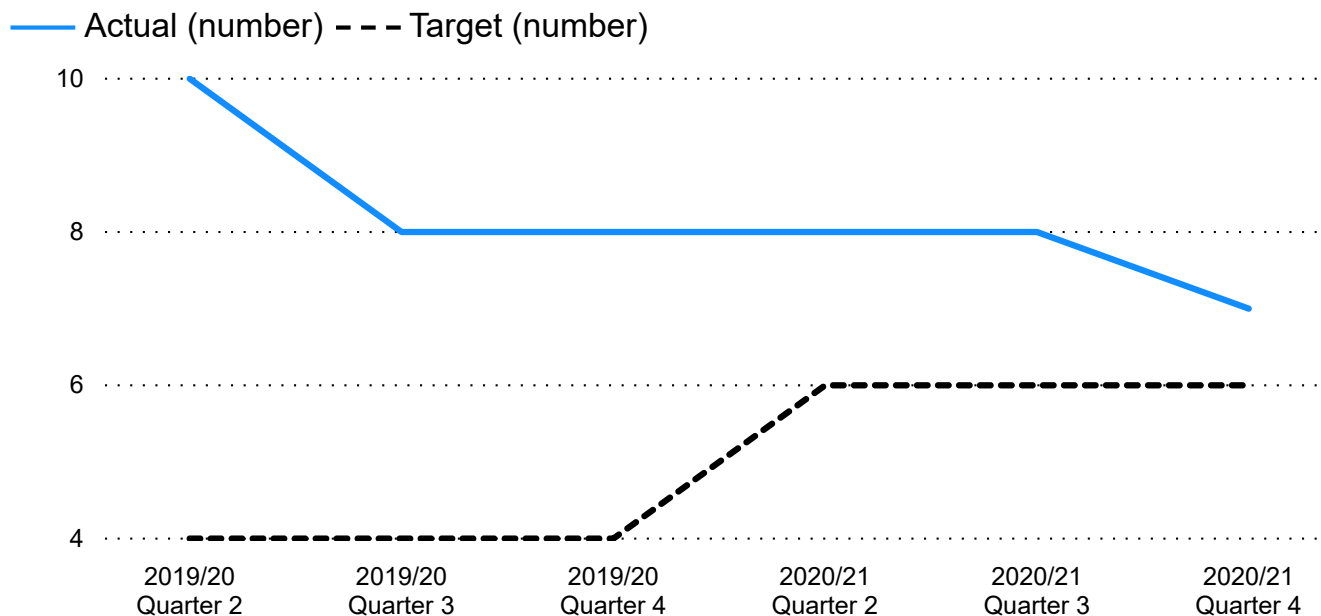
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End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
0	1.00	→	◊

Comment

The ongoing development of the Quality Bus Partnership has been put on hold. Transport For Wales are undertaking a Network review across North Wales with a report due in May 2021.

Provide Local Travel Arrangements (LTAs) in geographical areas of the County



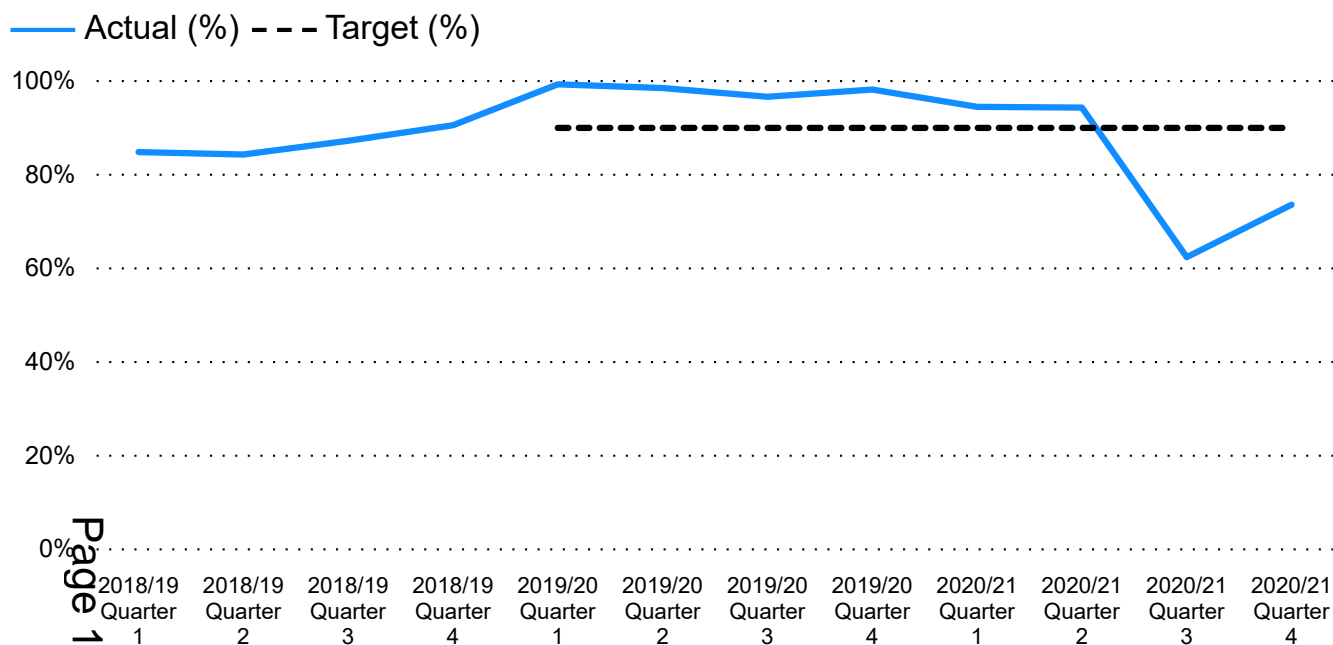
End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
7	6.00	↓	●

Comment

The Councils progress on the revision of LTA's has unfortunately been hindered by the recent COVID-19 pandemic and therefore, it has not been possible to obtain representative patronage data. That said, following the easing of the initial travel restrictions work has recommenced to review the current LTA's in place. The current LTA arrangement in Holywell will be replaced with a Fflecsi service in May 2021.

Streetscene and Transportation - Recovery Measures

Undertake post completion inspections of utility works



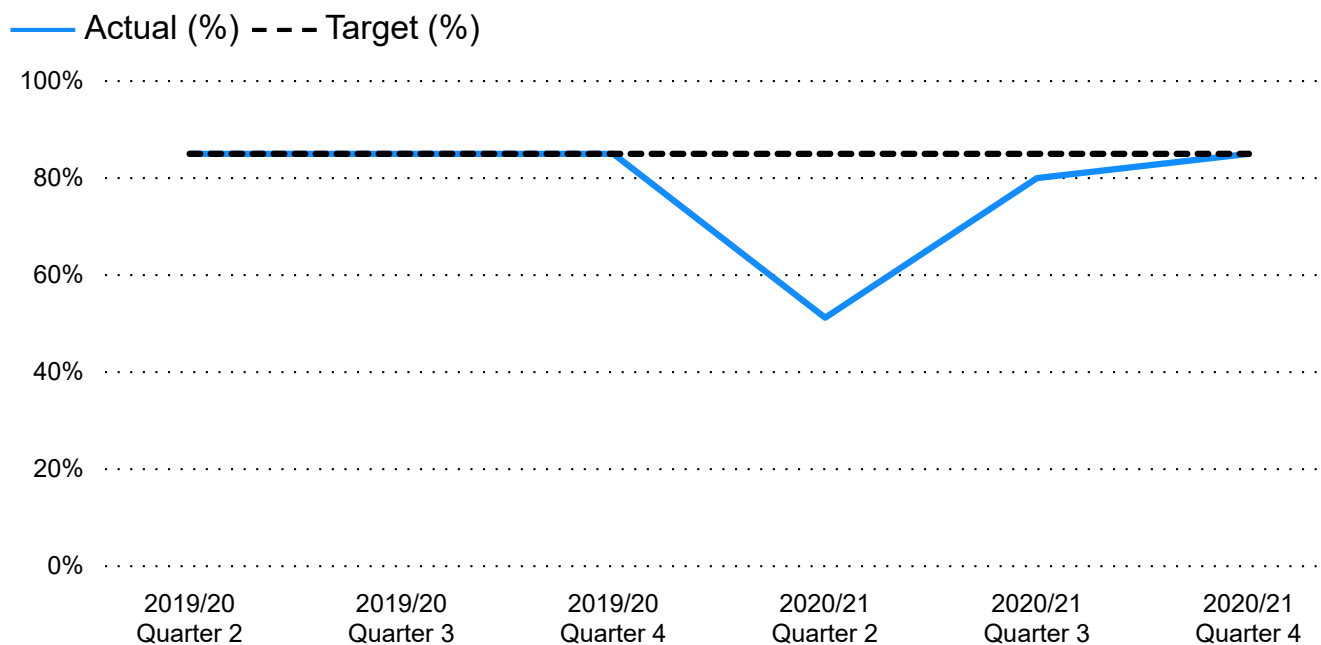
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End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
81.21%	90.00%	↓	⬢

Comment

Every Highway Authority is required to inspect 10% of all repairs before the end of this guarantee period, but the Council inspect more than required to promote best practice and avoid future costs. If any defects are identified during the inspection the Utility are required to carry out the required remedial works, preventing the Authority from being burdened with the future repair costs. During the pandemic Streetscene Officers have continued to deliver services throughout. The percentage of inspections has reduced during this period, however the number undertaken is still significantly higher than the statutory requirement and these inspections have been complemented with an appointed contactor carrying out additional technical inspections. Inspections are allocated on a weekly basis, and therefore in order to provide a meaningful and reflective report, the data provided for quarter four are inspections generated in quarter three.

Achieve minimum level of agreed Streetscene standards



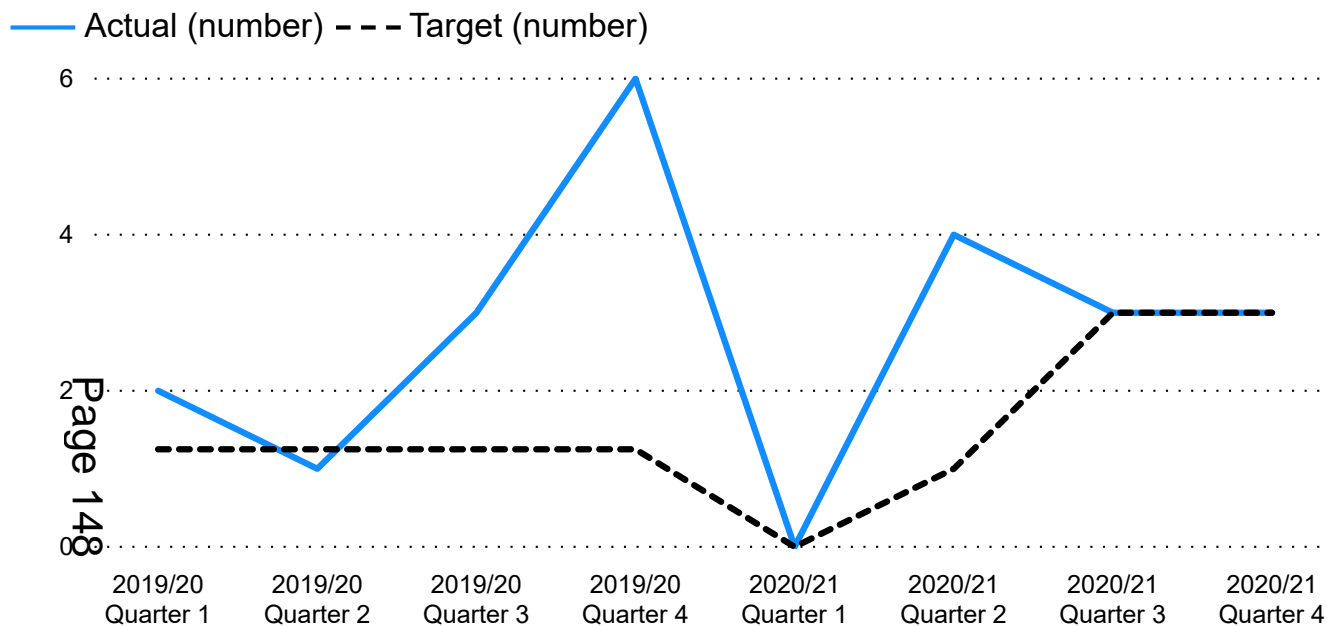
End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
85.00%	85.00%	→	●

Comment

Essential frontline services continued to be delivered throughout the pandemic, some services such as grass cutting, garden waste collections and household recycling centres were suspended in the early period of response. All services were resumed in early summer 2020 and have continued to operate throughout the rest of the year.

Streetscene and Transportation - Recovery Measures

Number of targeted environmental educational campaigns



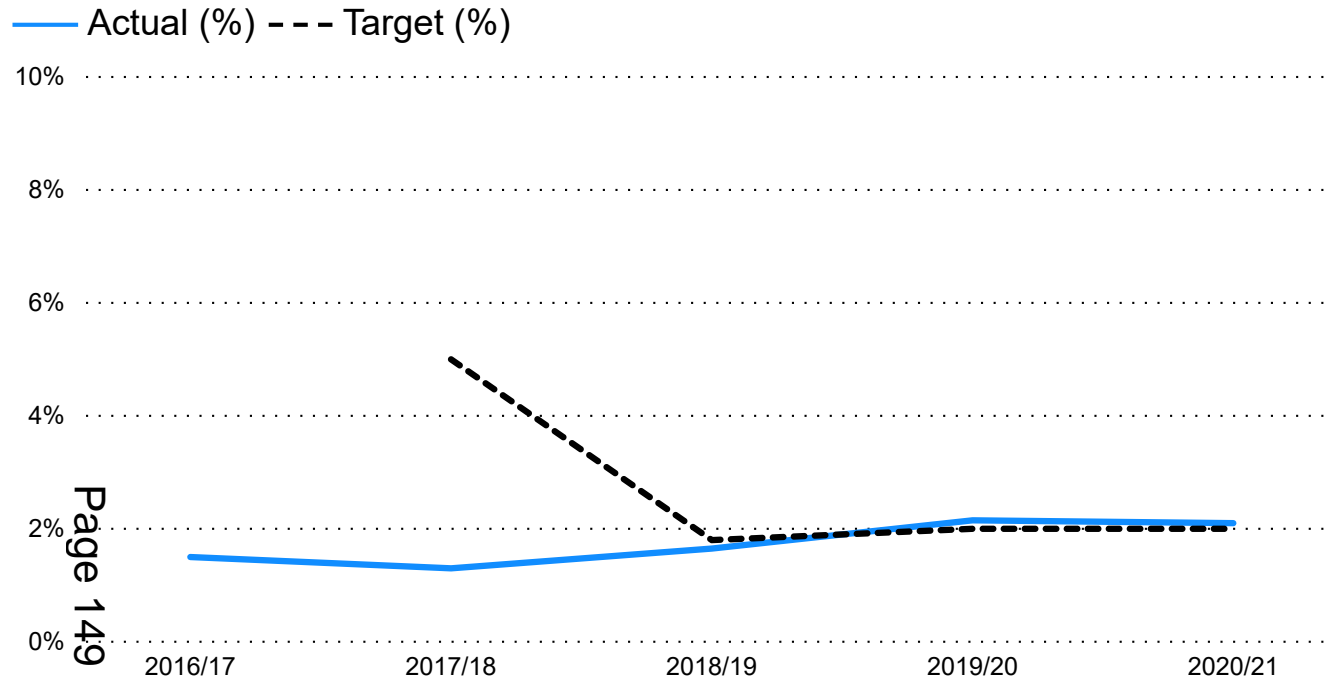
End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
10	3.00	↓	●

Comment

Due to the increase in dog fouling a press release was issued in February to raise awareness of the issues and a reminder about the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices. Campaigns were carried out in the following areas, Muirfield, Linderick Sunningdale and Aberllanch (Buckley), these were completed in January 2021. Since January 2021 foot patrols in all areas across Flintshire have been increased and officers are speaking with owners/residents on a daily basis and are carrying stickers and dog bags for distribution. Data is being collated and shared regarding hot spot areas, number of weekly visits and details of how many interactions with owners.

Streetscene and Transportation - Portfolio Measures

Percentage of A roads in overall poor condition



End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
2.10%	2.00%	↓	▲

2.10%

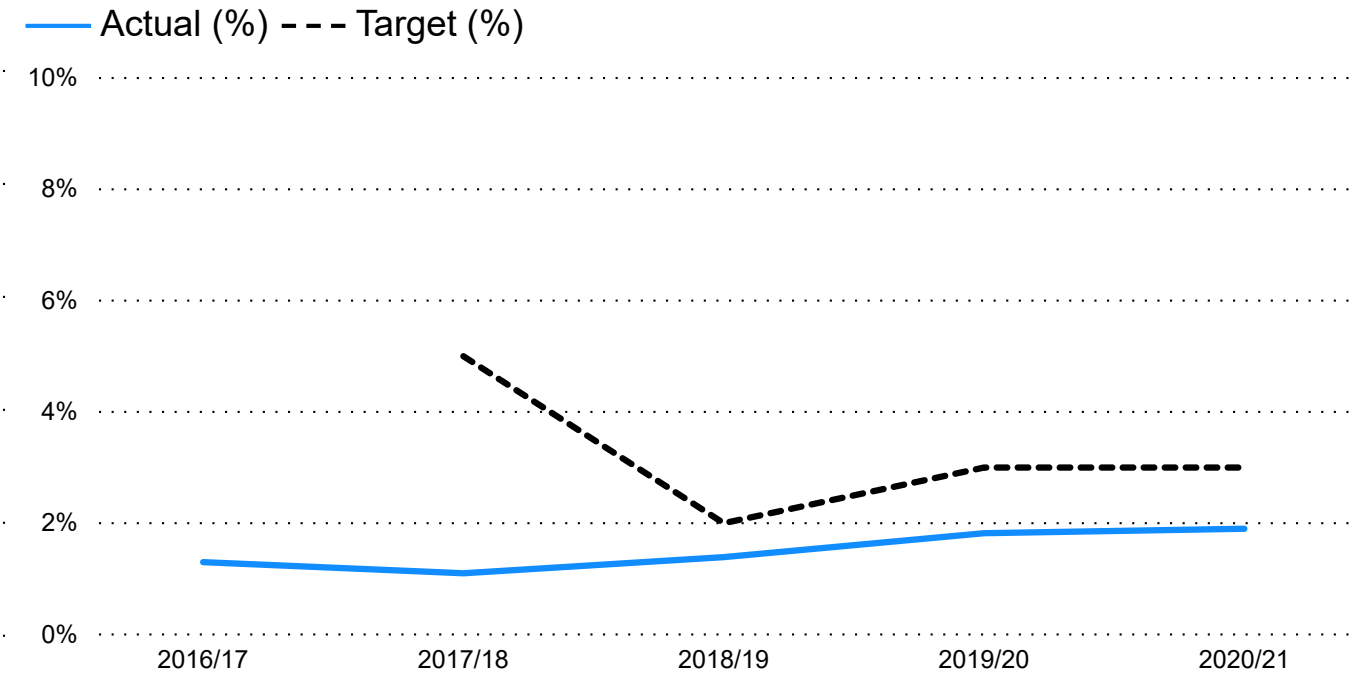
2.00%



Comment

Welsh Government Scanner Data received in September 2020 shows a similar level of the length of 'A' roads deemed to be in a poor conditions to the previous year. This may be as a result of reduce usage during the initial period of the pandemic, and the annual level of investment in the highway network being below the level required to maintain a steady state. However, national data continues to show that the roads within Flintshire have one of the lowest proportion in poor condition.

Percentage of B roads in overall poor condition



End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
1.90%	3.00%	↓	●

1.90%

3.00%

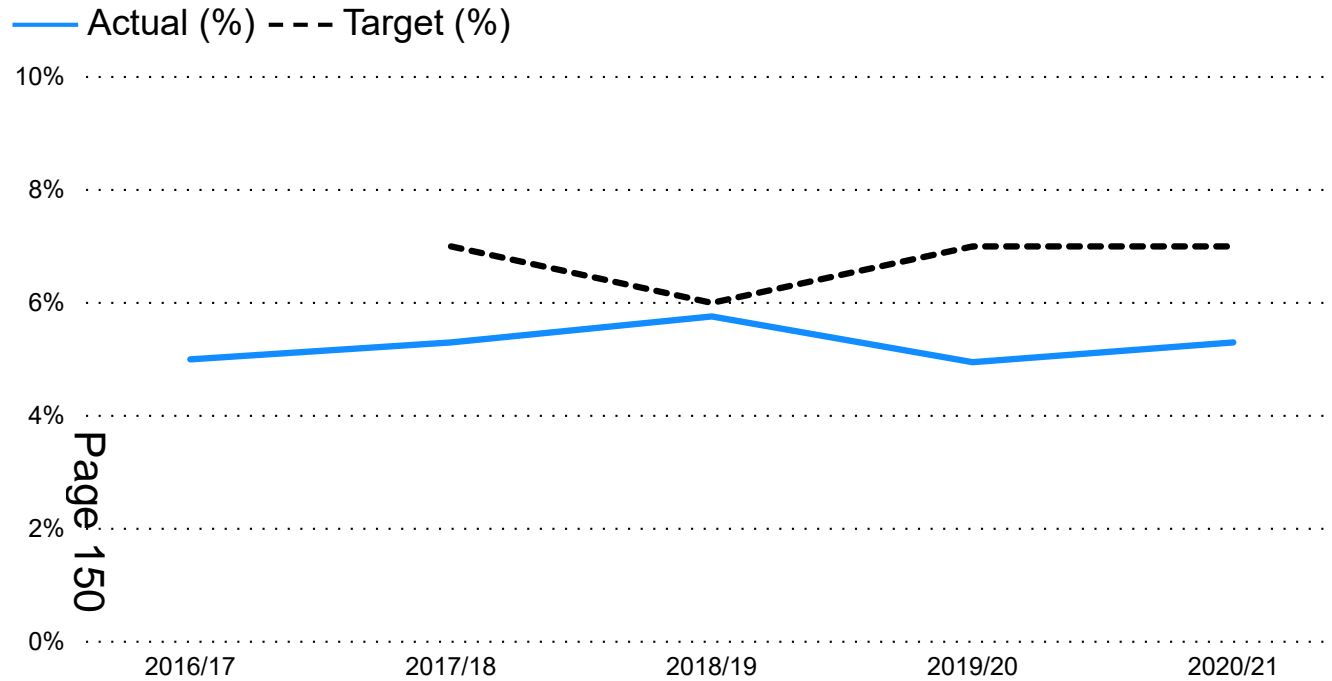


Comment

Welsh Government Scanner Data received in September 2020 shows a similar level of the length of 'B' roads deemed to be in a poor conditions to the previous year. This may be as a result of reduce usage during the initial period of the pandemic, and the annual level of investment in the highway network being below the level required to maintain a steady state. However, national data continues to show that the roads within Flintshire have one of the lowest proportion in poor condition.

Streetscene and Transportation - Portfolio Measures

Percentage of C roads in overall poor condition



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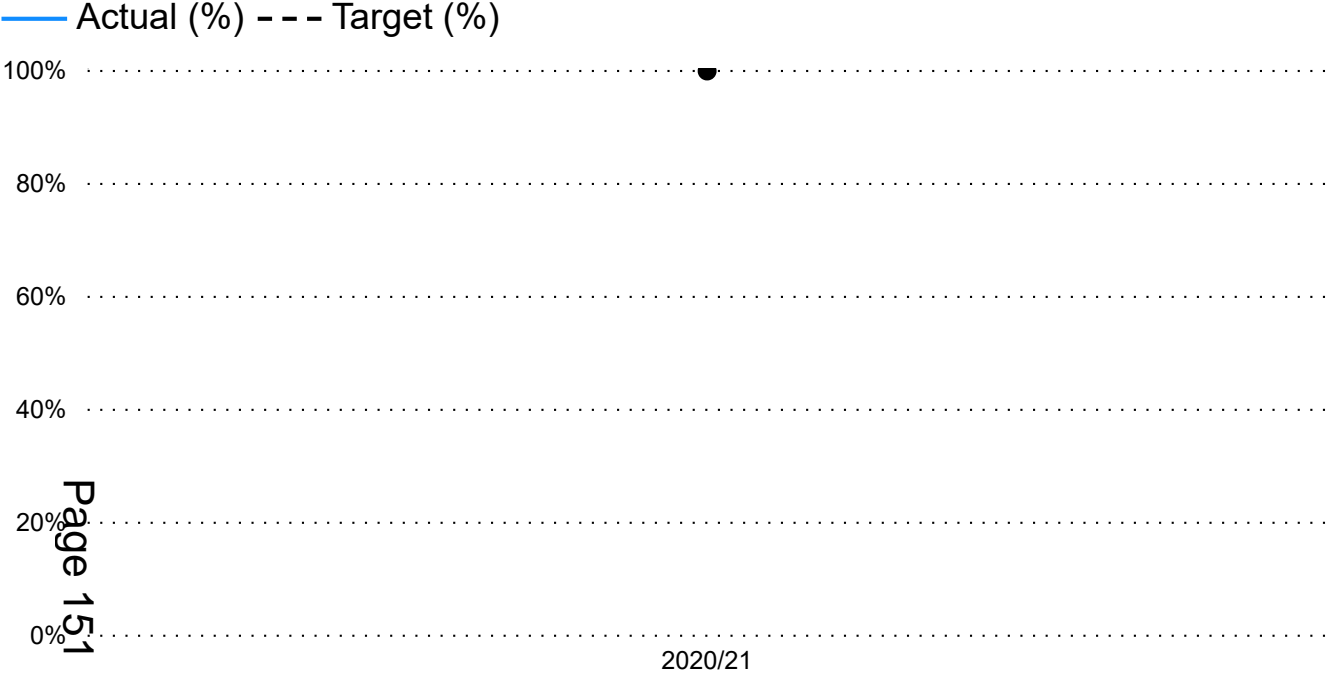
End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
5.30%	7.00%	↓	●

Comment

Welsh Government Scanner Data received in September 2020 shows an increase in the length of 'C' roads deemed to be in a poor conditions. This is a result of the annual level of investment in the highway network being below the level required to maintain a steady state, despite any reduction in the usage during the initial stages of the pandemic. However, national data continues to show the roads within Flintshire have the lowest proportion in poor condition.

Education and Youth - Recovery Measures

All schools adopt 'Ask Ceri' resource



End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
	100.00%		

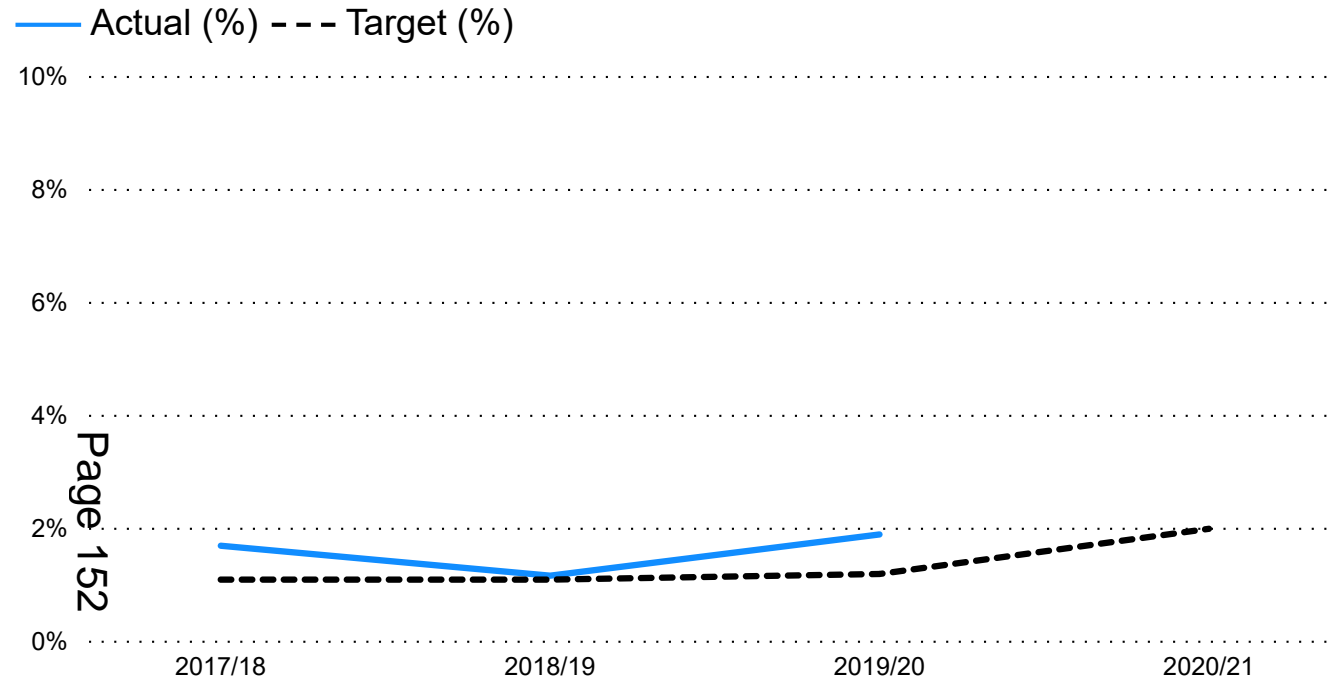
100.00%

Comment

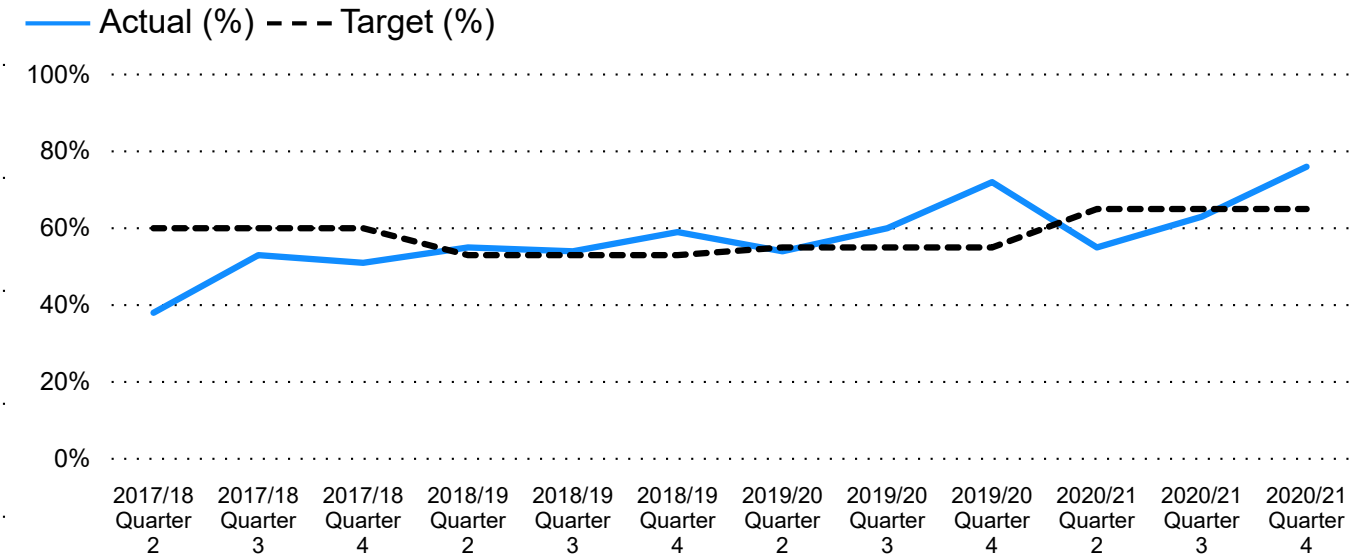
As a result of the COVID pandemic, it has not been possible to follow this up with schools beyond the training provided in March 2020. This will now move as an action to the 2021-2022 plan.

Education and Youth - Portfolio Measures

Percentage of year 11 leavers not in education, training...



The percentage of young people aged 16 – 18 in the youth justice system offered education, training or employment



End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
	2.00%	▼	

2.00%

End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
64.67%	65.00%	↑	●

64.67%

65.00%



Comment

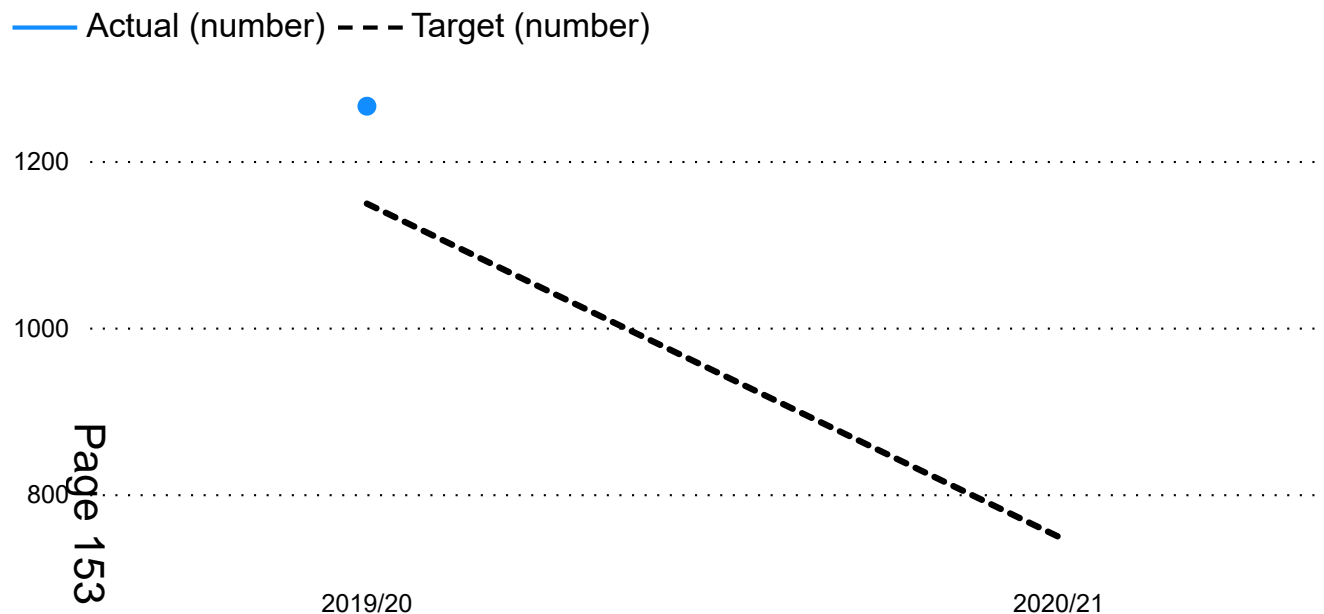
The pandemic has adversely impacted education, employment and training opportunities for young people leaving statutory education in 2020. Officers have paid particular attention to mental health and wellbeing, offering a range of support to individuals and their families. A broader range of alternative education packages have been sought to promote engagement and the development of relevant skills to facilitate the successful transition into further education, training or employment.

Comment

Of the 45 young people above school age open in the quarter, the majority were offered Education, Training and Employment. 65% were accessing more than 16 hours per week. The Youth Justice Service has an Education worker who supports all young people who are not accessing the full provision, and is able to offer alternatives to mainstream school or college through training courses and apprenticeships. This ensures that all young people referred to the services are assessed in terms of their educational provision at the point of entry.

Education and Youth - Portfolio Measures

The number of pupils who receive fixed term exclusions from school



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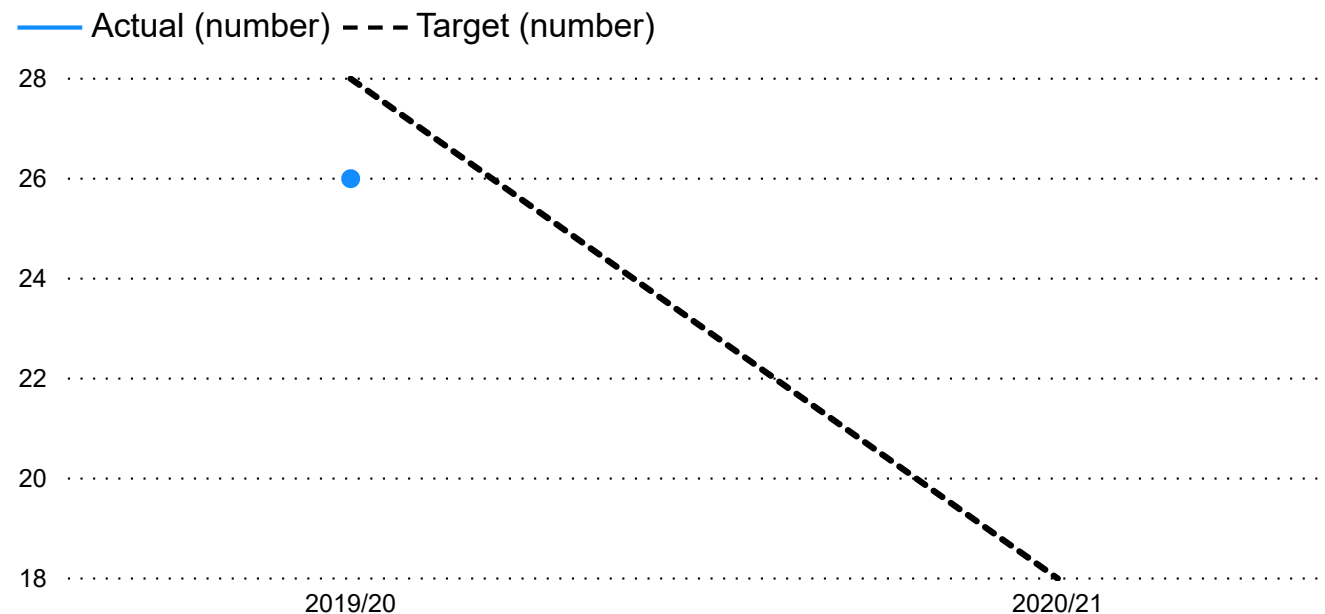
End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
	750.00		

750.00

Comment

Attendance in schools was limited due to the COVID restrictions which has naturally impacted on the levels of exclusion from schools. Work has continued to support an overall reduction once pupils return to school. This includes changes to central services and processes to support earlier identification and intervention for pupils and increased capacity for the Counselling Service. Schools have also been offered a range of training to support an increased focus on wellbeing and engagement.

The number of pupils who are permanently excluded from school



End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
	18.00		

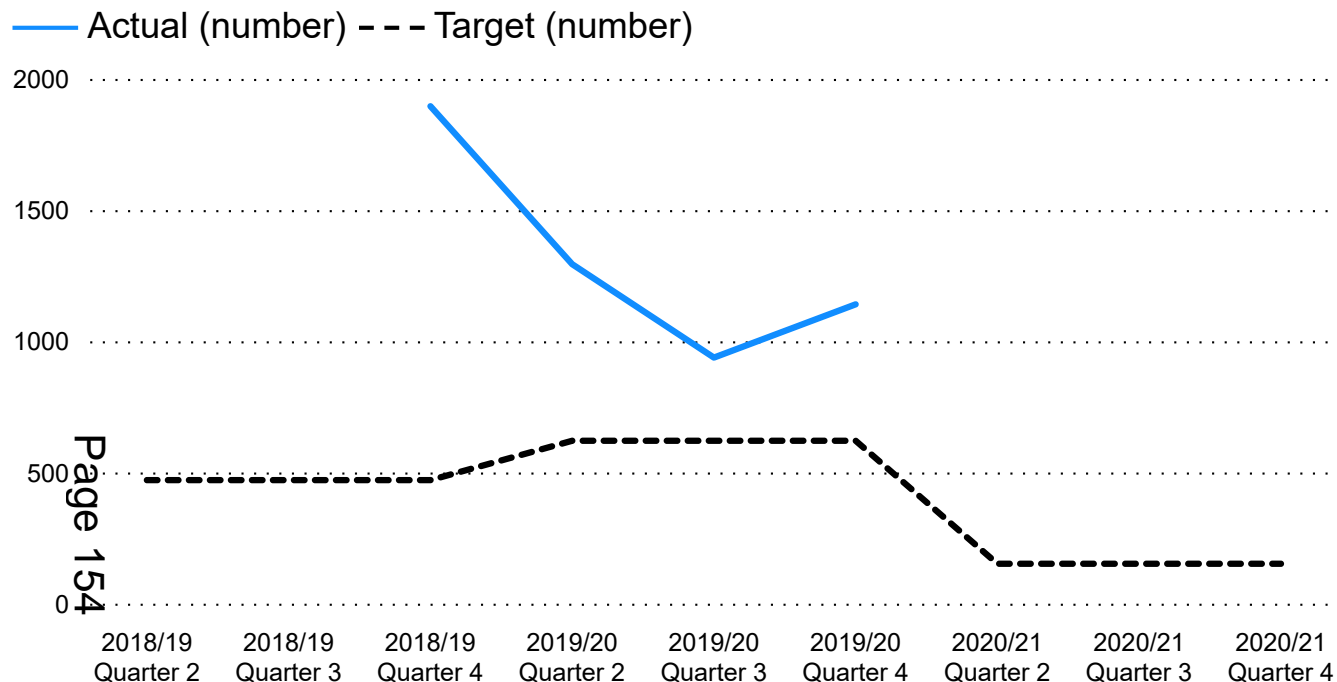
18.00

Comment

The level of permanent exclusion has reduced overall due in essence to the closure of schools during the pandemic. There were a number of pupils who had been permanently excluded just prior to periods of lockdown and officers ensured that they were allocated educational provision pending the resumption of the statutory processes which were paused by Welsh Government.

Education and Youth - Portfolio Measures

Number of children who access the Childcare Offer



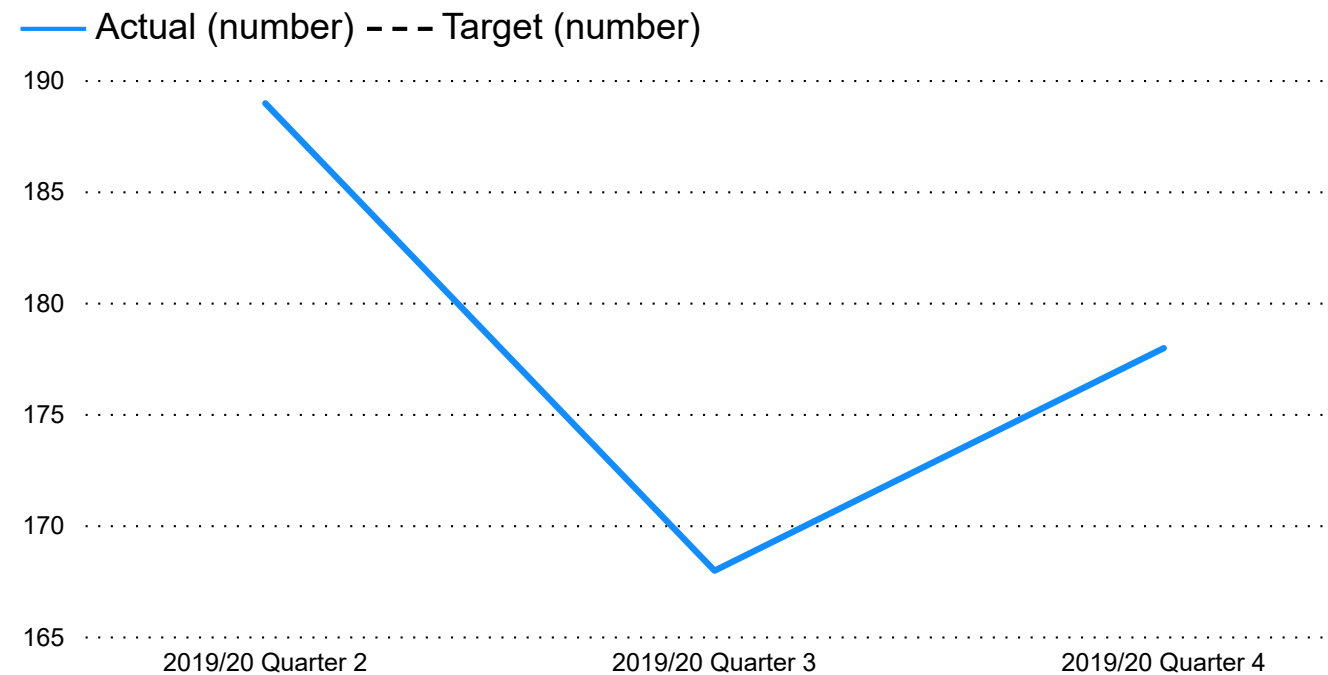
End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
	625.00		

625.00

Comment

In line with Welsh Government COVID-19 guidance, the childcare offer was suspended. The funding has been used to support pre-school children of keyworkers, identified vulnerable children or those with additional needs, and also to support 5-8 year olds in summer play schemes.

Number of childcare providers



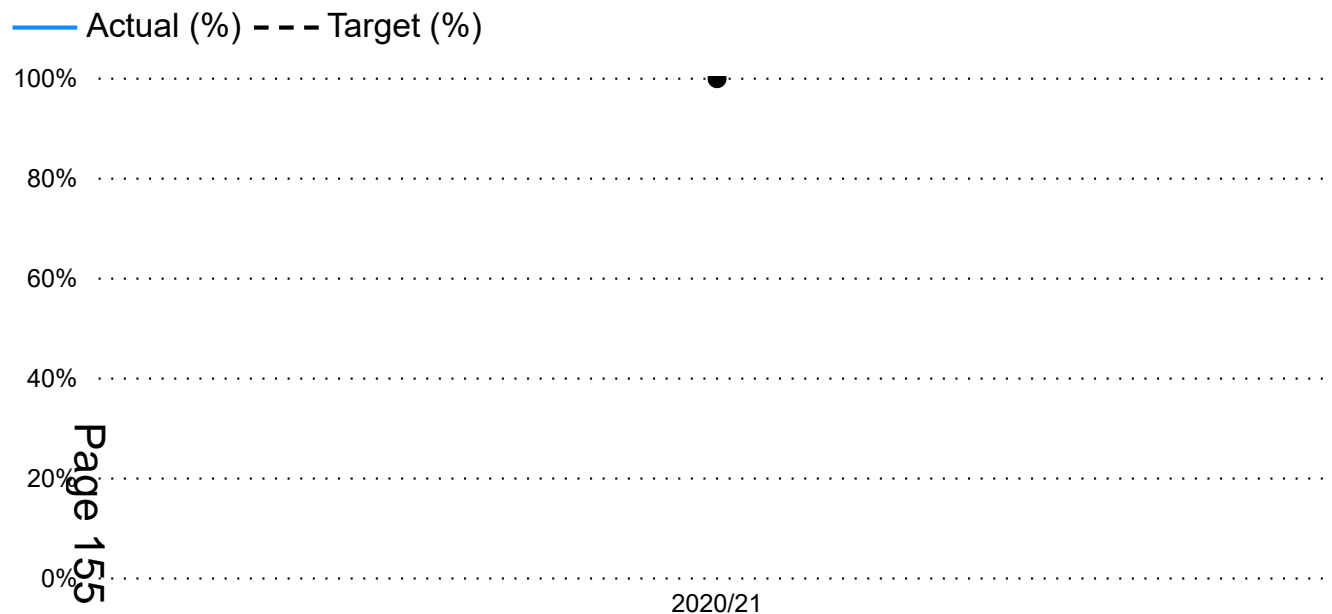
End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating

Comment

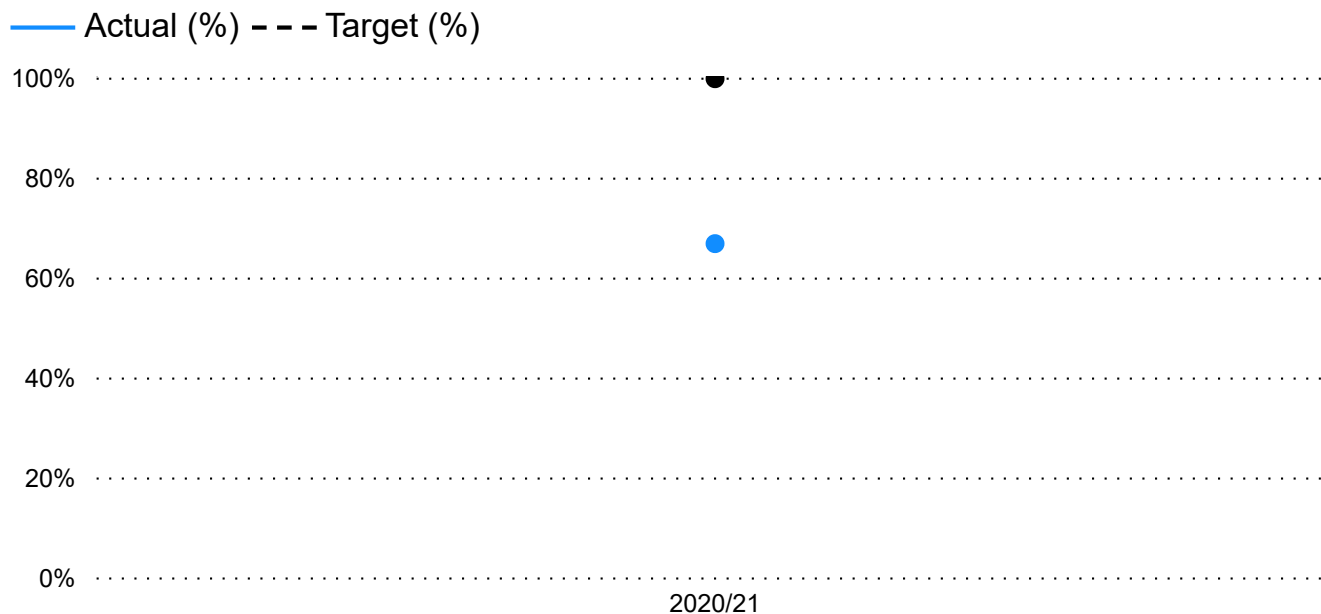
No target set - Due to the suspension of the scheme, no providers contributed to the childcare offer.

Education and Youth - Portfolio Measures

All schools maintain progress against key milestones in implementation of the new curriculum



All schools maintain progress against key milestones in the ALN reforms



End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
	100.00%		

100.00%

End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
	100.00%		

100.00%

Comment

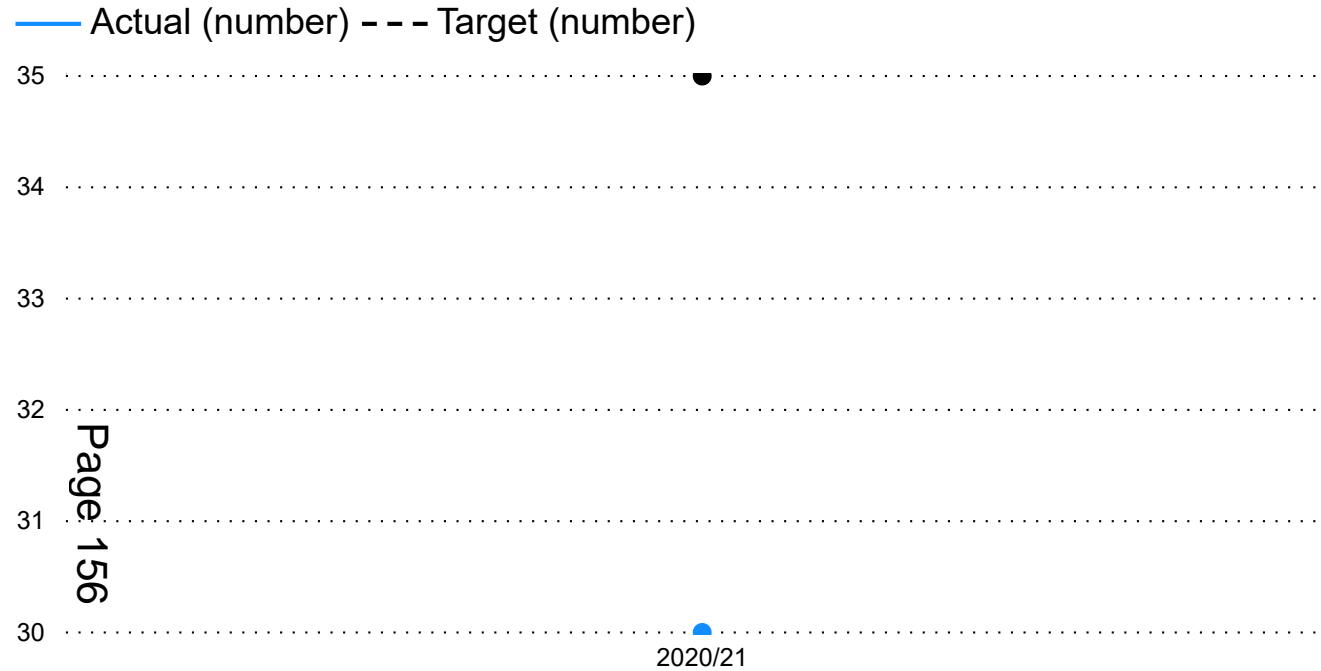
Whilst the pandemic has resulted in significant disruption to education over the last twelve months, schools in Flintshire have continued where possible to access professional development and plan for the implementation of the new curriculum. The summer 2020 INSET day set aside for planning for the new curriculum was however cancelled. Secondary schools can now also use the summer 2021 curriculum INSET day for work related to centre determined grades for GCSE and A Level qualifications.

Comment

The additional workload pressures placed on schools by the pandemic has affected the level of progress recorded against the milestones. The level of engagement from schools in the training and Additional Learning Needs Transformation cluster and Forum meetings indicates a higher level of preparedness than the percentage indicates. The recent publication of the operational Code (April 2021) will enable the Council and schools to finalise their approaches ahead of implementation in September 2021.

Education and Youth - Portfolio Measures

First time entrants into Youth Justice Service



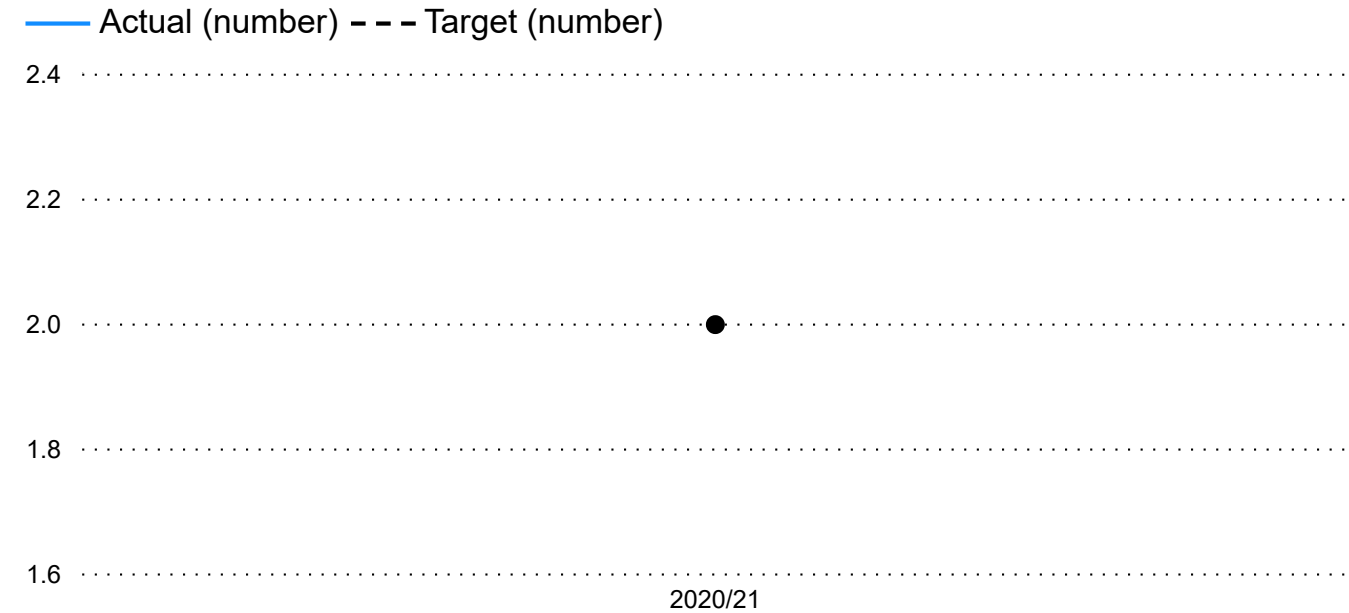
Page 156

End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
30.00	35.00		●

Comment

The number of First Time Entrants to the criminal justice system in Flintshire has fallen in 2020. There is a robust early intervention process that supports young people who are at risk of offending. Young people who have come to the notice of the police for low level anti-social behavior are referred to the Youth Justice Service, and they and their families are contacted with an offer of support. The use of Out of Court disposals enables a full assessment and bespoke intervention to be carried out. This approach diverts young people away from the courts process and deters further offending.

Number of Immersion Youth Workers in secondary schools



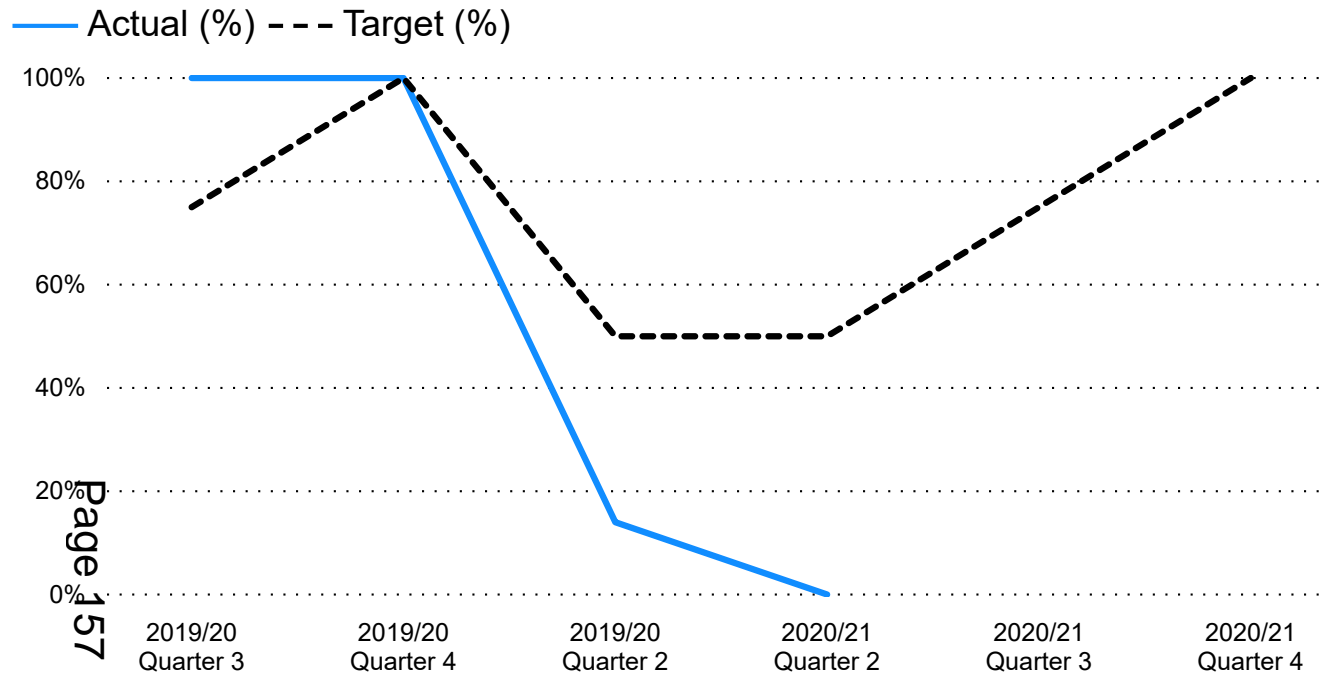
End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
	2.00		●

Comment

Youth Service are developing plans to increase this number during 2021/22 but numbers are not yet confirmed.

Education and Youth - Portfolio Measures

Access to sanitary products in schools



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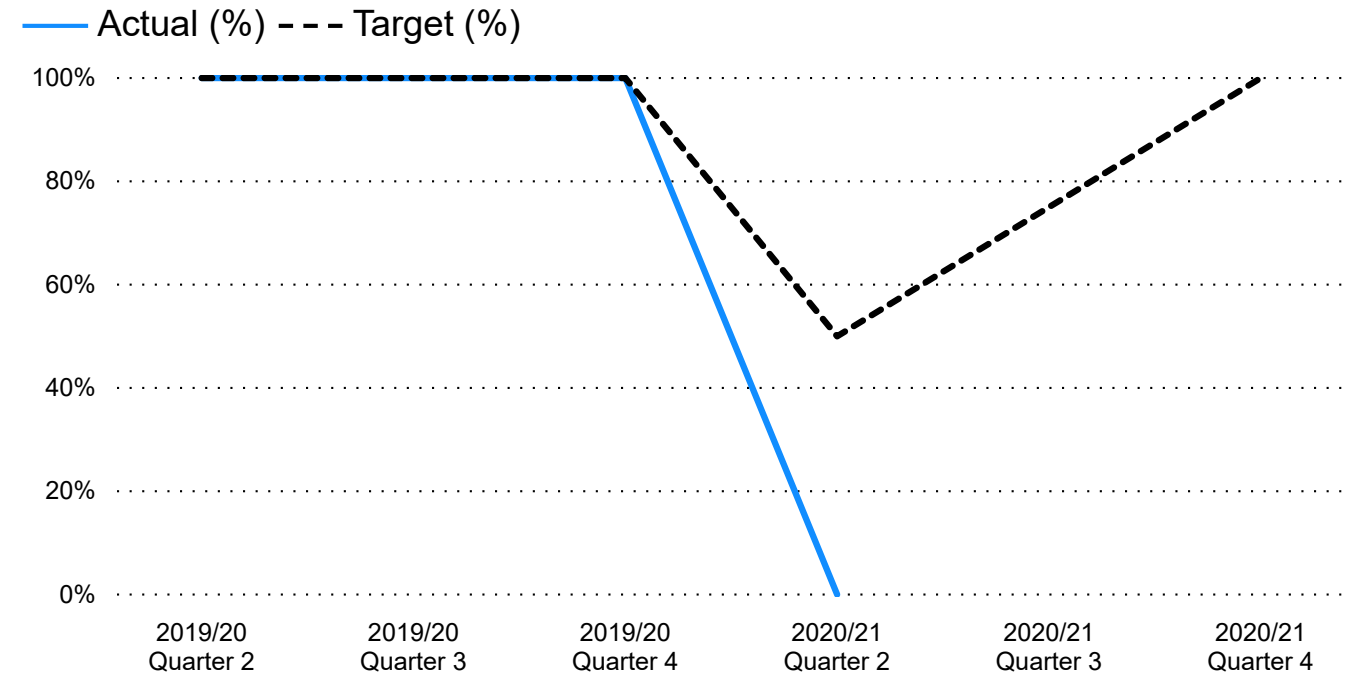
End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
	100.00%		▼

100.00%

Comment

The grant funding is monitored and audited as it is allocated to individual schools. Support is provided to ensure products are purchased in-line with grant conditions.

Access to sanitary products in youth clubs



End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
	100.00%		

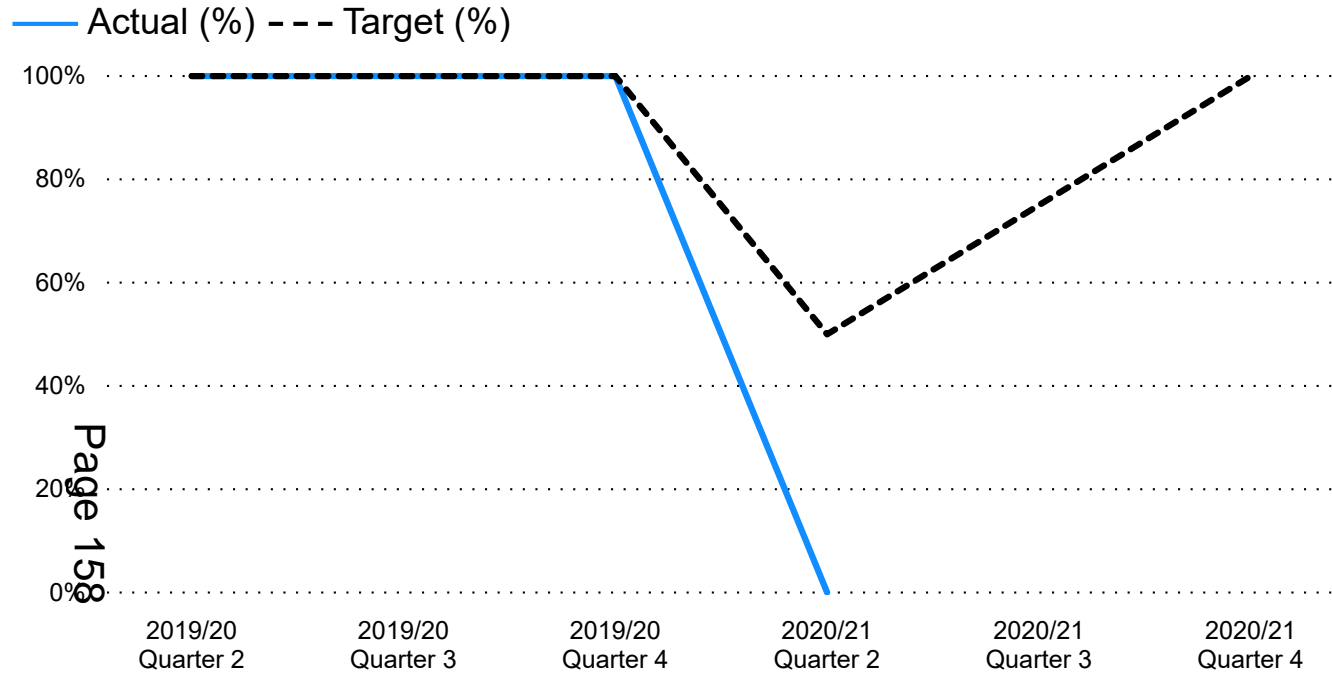
100.00%

Comment

The grant funding is monitored and audited as it is allocated to individual youth clubs. Support is provided to ensure products are purchased in-line with grant conditions.

Education and Youth - Portfolio Measures

Access to sanitary products in Foodbanks



End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
	100.00%		

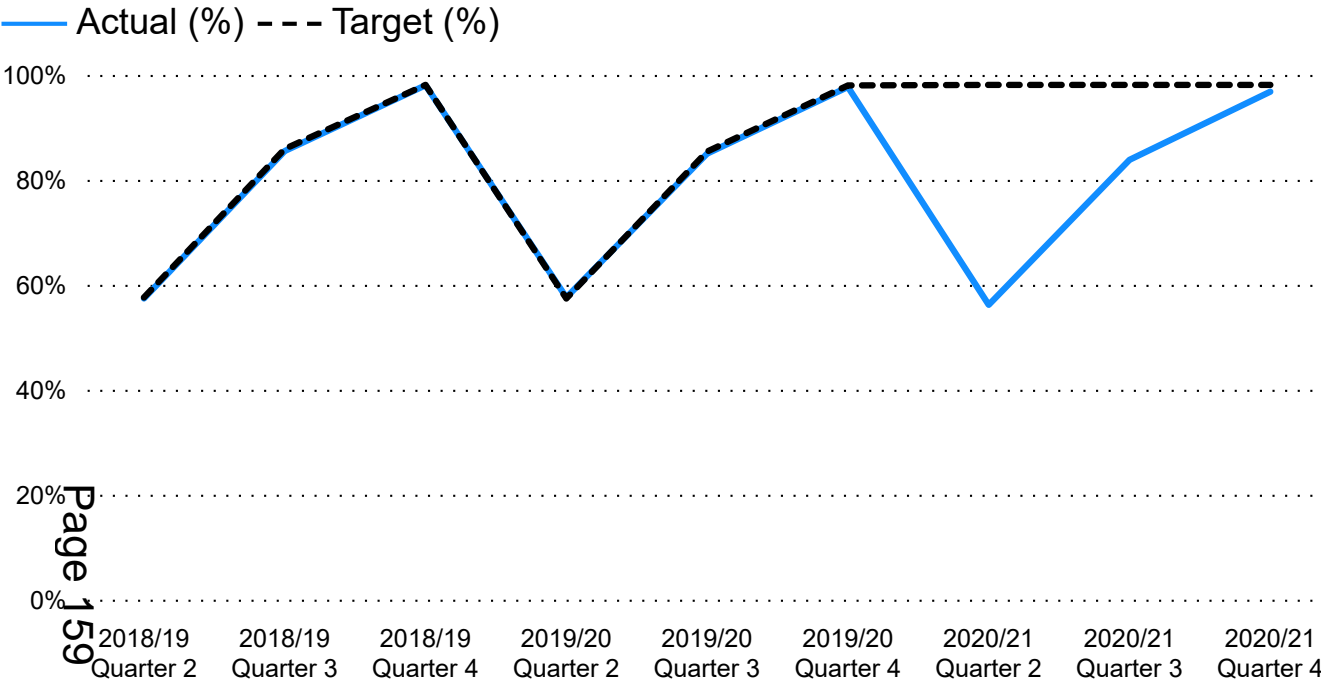
100.00%

Comment

The grant funding is monitored and audited as it is allocated to individual foodbanks. Support is provided to ensure products are purchased in-line with grant conditions.

Governance - Recovery Measures

Council Tax 'in-year' collection levels



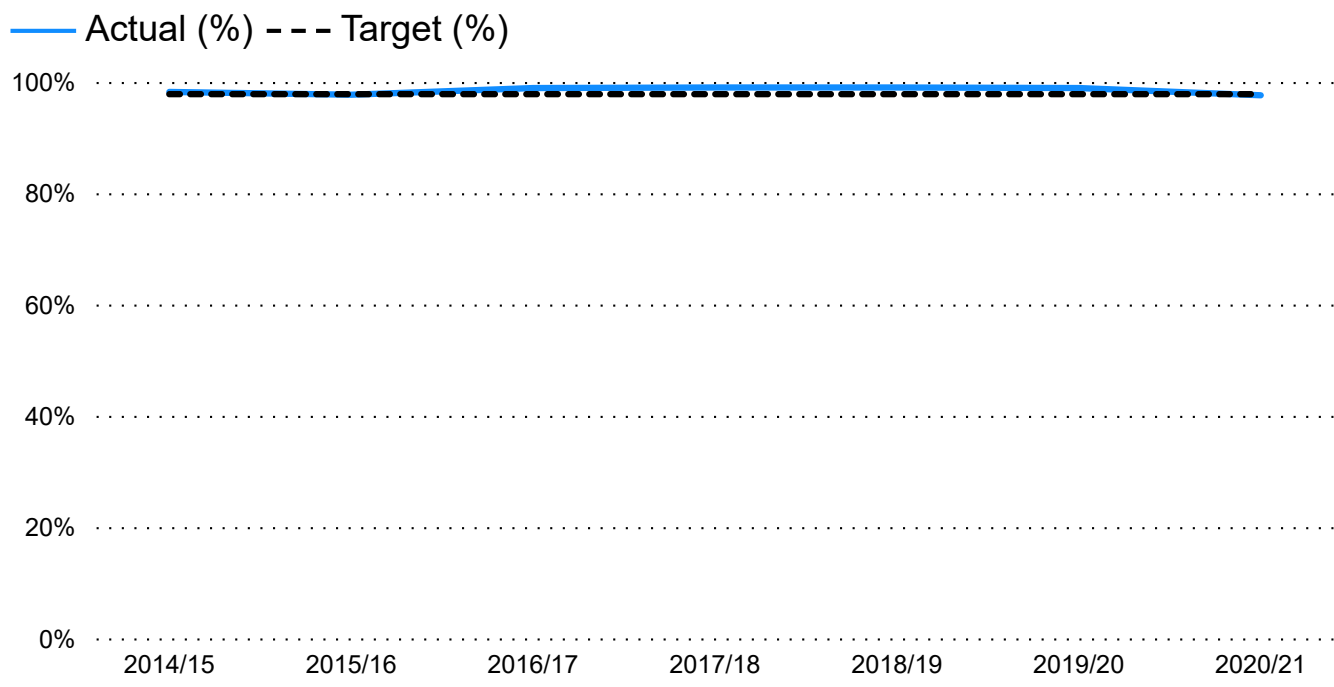
Page 159

End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
97.01%	98.30%	↓	▲

Comment

Council Tax collection levels for 2020/21 were impacted significantly by the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, in-year collection levels have fallen by 0.9% or £852k in monetary terms. To support taxpayers through the pandemic and restrictions, measures remain in place to offer longer term payment agreements and to re-commence recovery action against those residents who fail to pay or engage. Additional financial support from Welsh Government to cover the majority of in-year council tax collection losses has also helped to mitigate the financial position.

Non Domestic Rate (NDR) 'in-year' collection levels



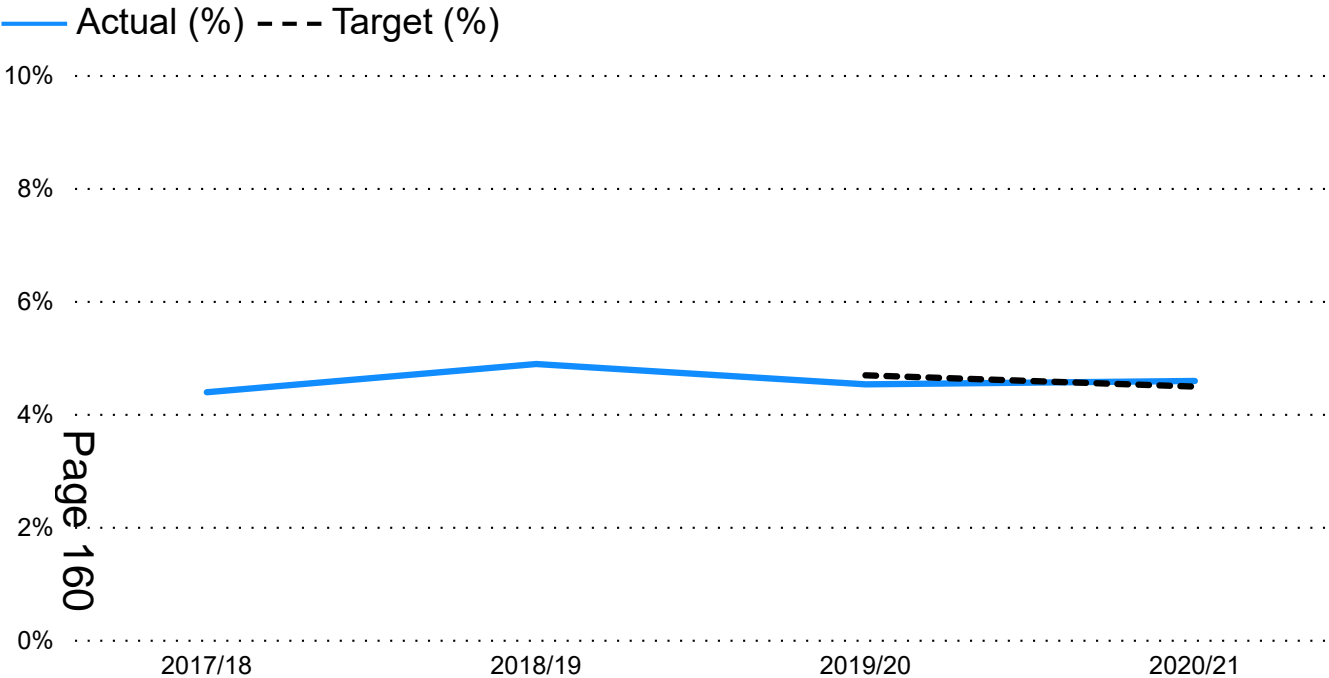
End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
97.80%	98.00%	↓	▲

Comment

NDR collection levels for 2020/21 were impacted significantly by the COVID-19 pandemic and the temporary closure of many businesses impacted by the restrictions, even though increased numbers of businesses qualified for the temporary 100% rate relief for Retailers, Leisure and Hospitality providers. As a result, in-year collection levels have fallen by 0.2% against the target. To support businesses through the pandemic and restrictions, measures remain in place to offer longer term payment agreements and to re-commence recovery action against those businesses who fail to pay or engage.

Governance - Recovery Measures

Rent Income/Arrears – Arrears as a % of Rent Yield

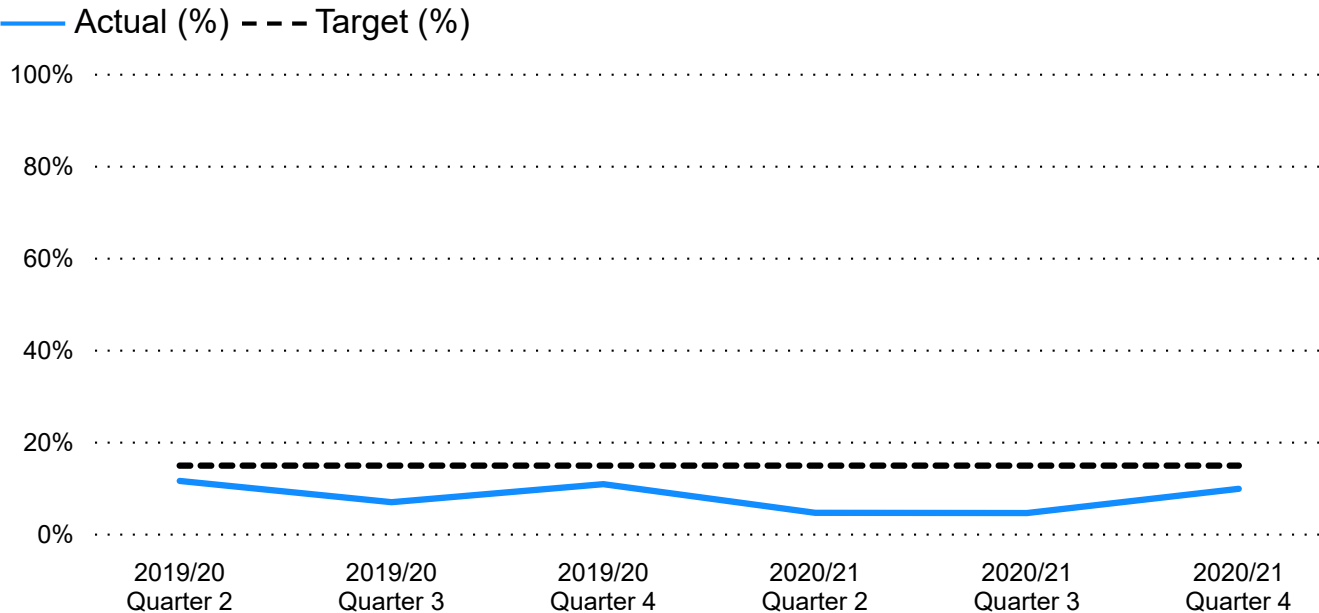


End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
4.60%	4.50%	↓	▲

Comment

Rent Collection levels for 2020/21 were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Rent arrears for 2020/21 closed at £1.854m compared to £1.815m in the previous year - an overall rise in arrears of £39k. Rent evictions remained on hold throughout the year as a result of Welsh Government Regulations to protect and support tenants. Measures remain in place to offer longer term payment agreements and to re-commence recovery action against those tenants who fail to pay or engage.

Call abandonment rate for a combined Housing and Streetscene contact centre



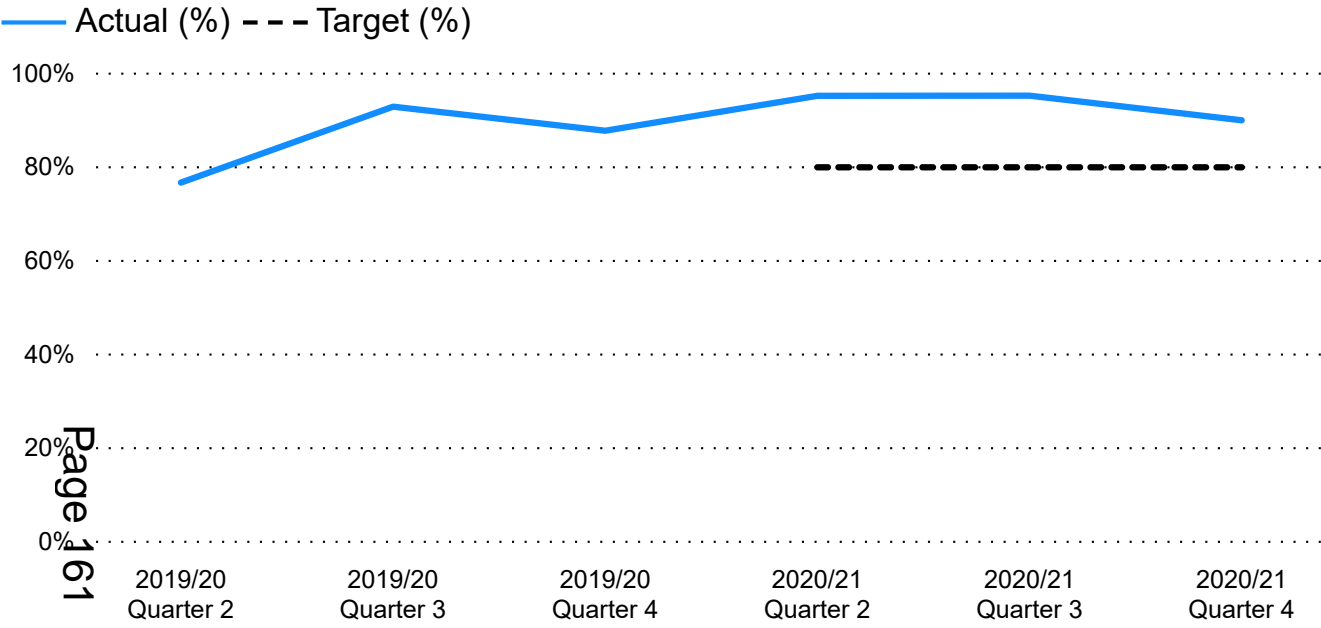
End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
6.36%	15.00%	↑	●

Comment

The abandonment rate increased in quarter four but remains below target which is positive especially given a 37.43% increase in calls offered to the service compared to quarter three. The overall annual abandonment rate is 6.36% which is an improvement on the previous year where the abandonment rate was 13%.

Governance - Recovery Measures

Call answering rate for a combined Housing and Streetscene contact centre

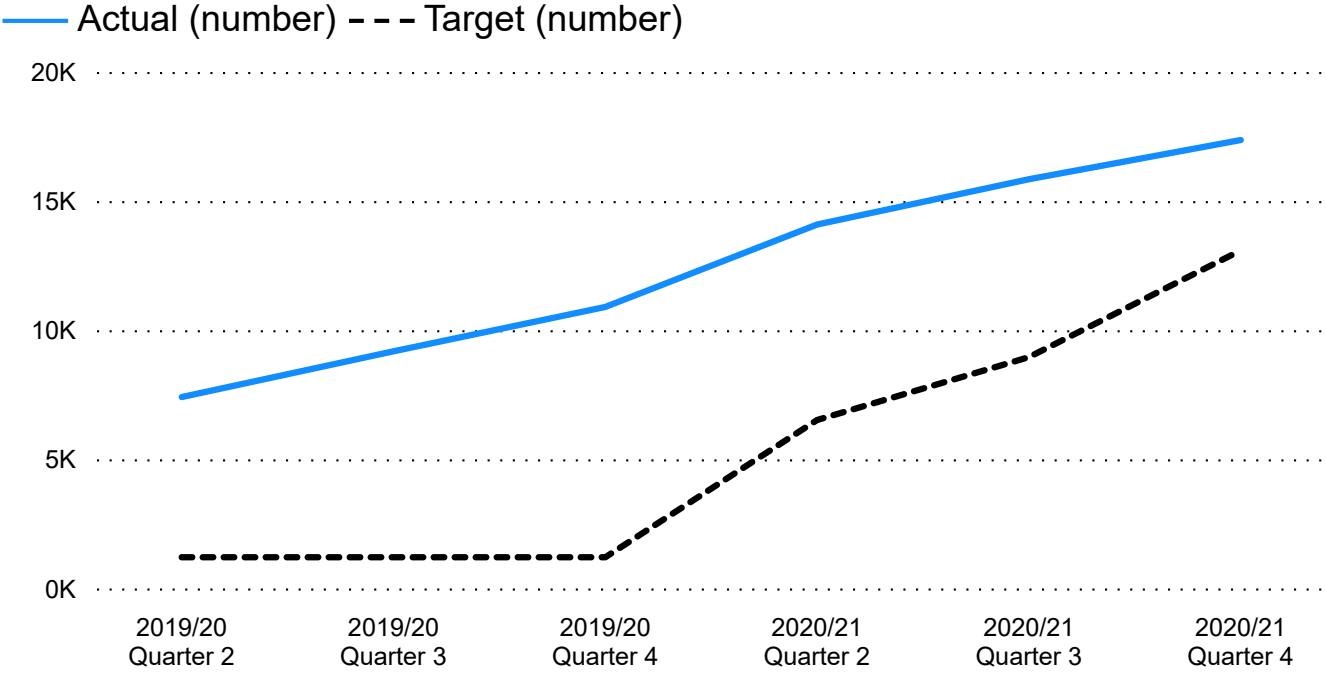


End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
93.64%	80.00%	▲ ↑	●

Comment

Despite a 29.84% increase in calls to Housing and Streetscene services during quarter four (compared to quarter three), the Contact Centre answered 90% of all calls offered which exceeds the target set. The overall call answer rate for the year is 93.64% and an improvement compared to the previous year of 87%.

My Account sign up



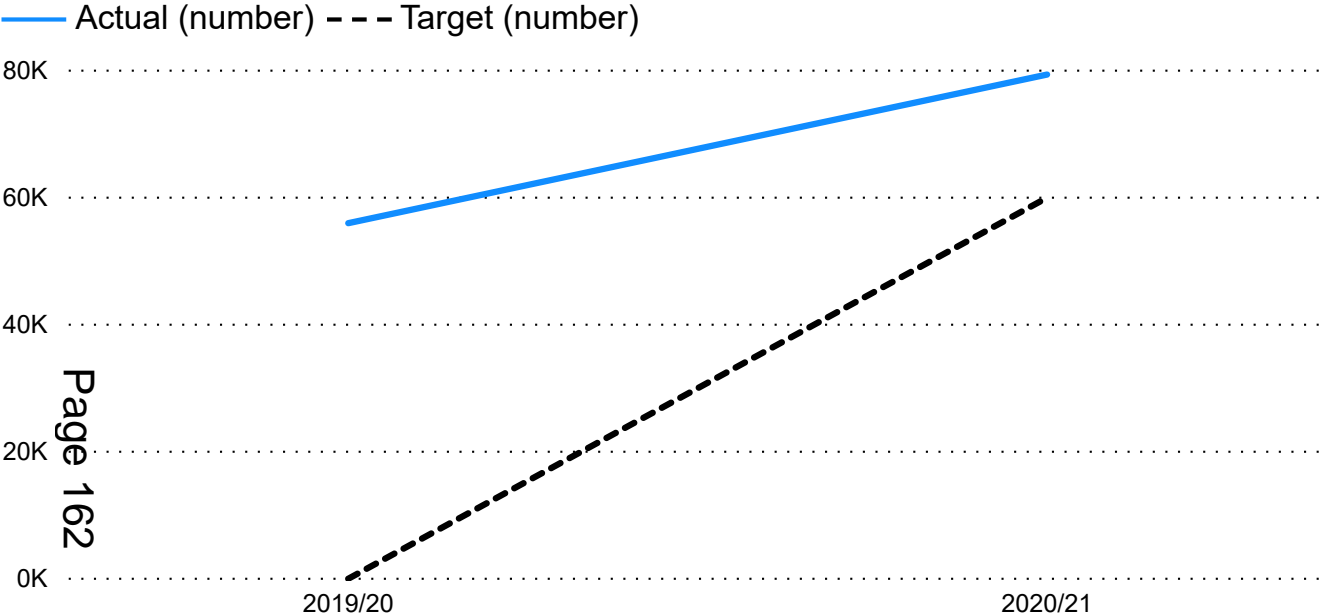
End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
17,405.00	13,131.00	▲ ↑	●

Comment

The number of new subscriptions to My Account continues to increase and has exceeded the target for this year.

Governance - Recovery Measures

Increased digital self-service by customers across multiple services

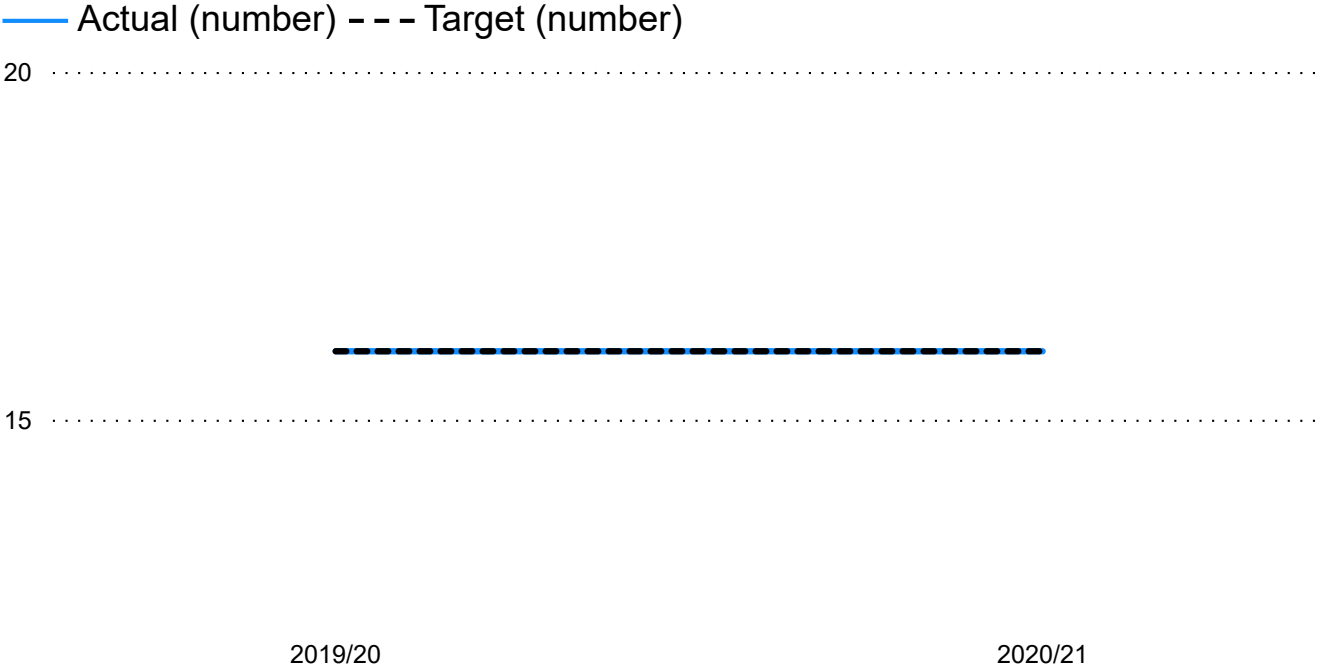


End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
79,389.00	60,000.00	↑	●

Comment

Customers can apply, request, report and pay for a range of Council services online. Over 79,000 enquiries were received in 2020-21 which is a significant increase compared to the previous year and exceeds the target set for the year by 32%. The highest percentage of online enquiries relate to Streetscene services e.g. waste and recycling, garden waste payments and also business grants which were new in 2020 and in response to COVID-19.

Number of chargeable services available to pay online



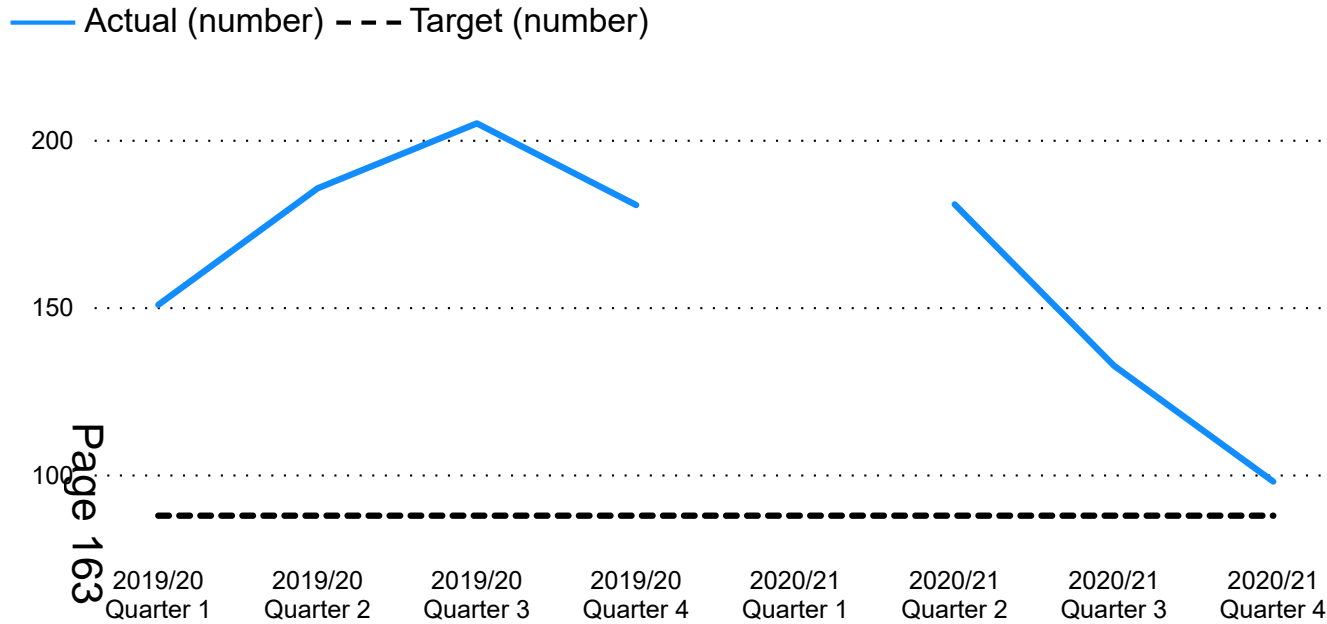
End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
16.00	16.00	→	●

Comment

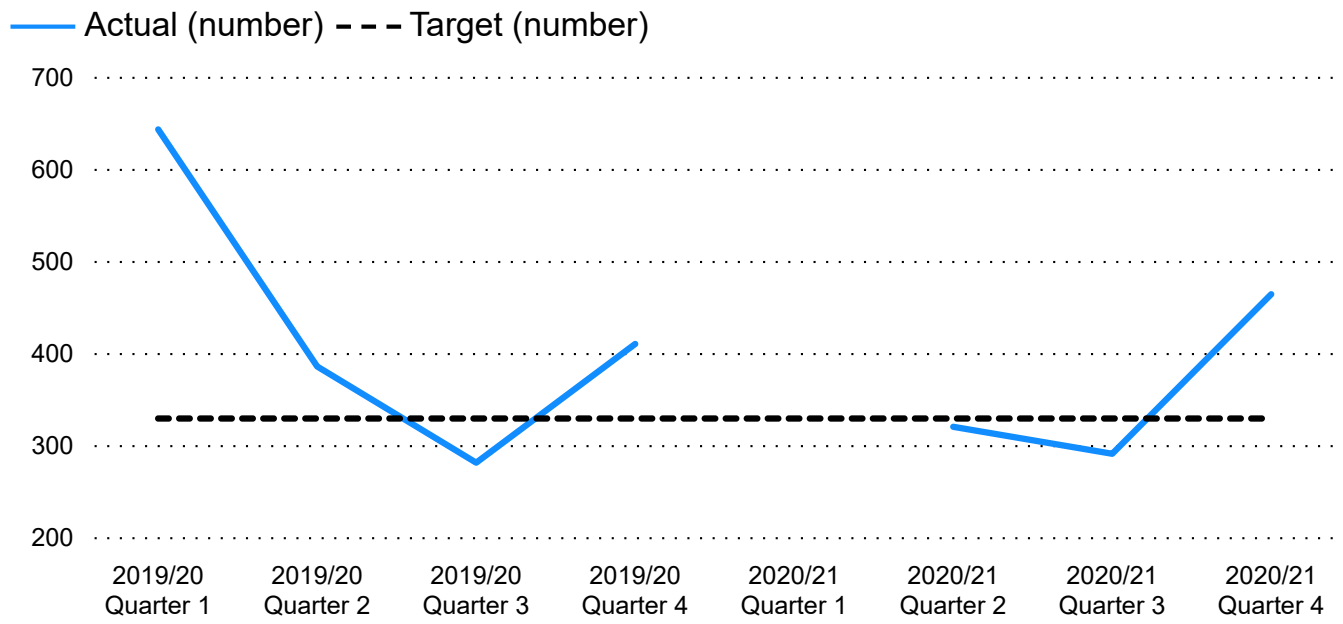
All chargeable services can be paid on-line by debit and/or credit card or by Pay Pal.

Housing and Assets - Recovery Measures

Average number of calendar days taken to deliver a DFG (medium adaptations)



Average number of calendar days taken to deliver a DFG (Large Adaptations)



End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
137.33	88.00	↑	▲

End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
359.23	330.00	↓	▲

Comment

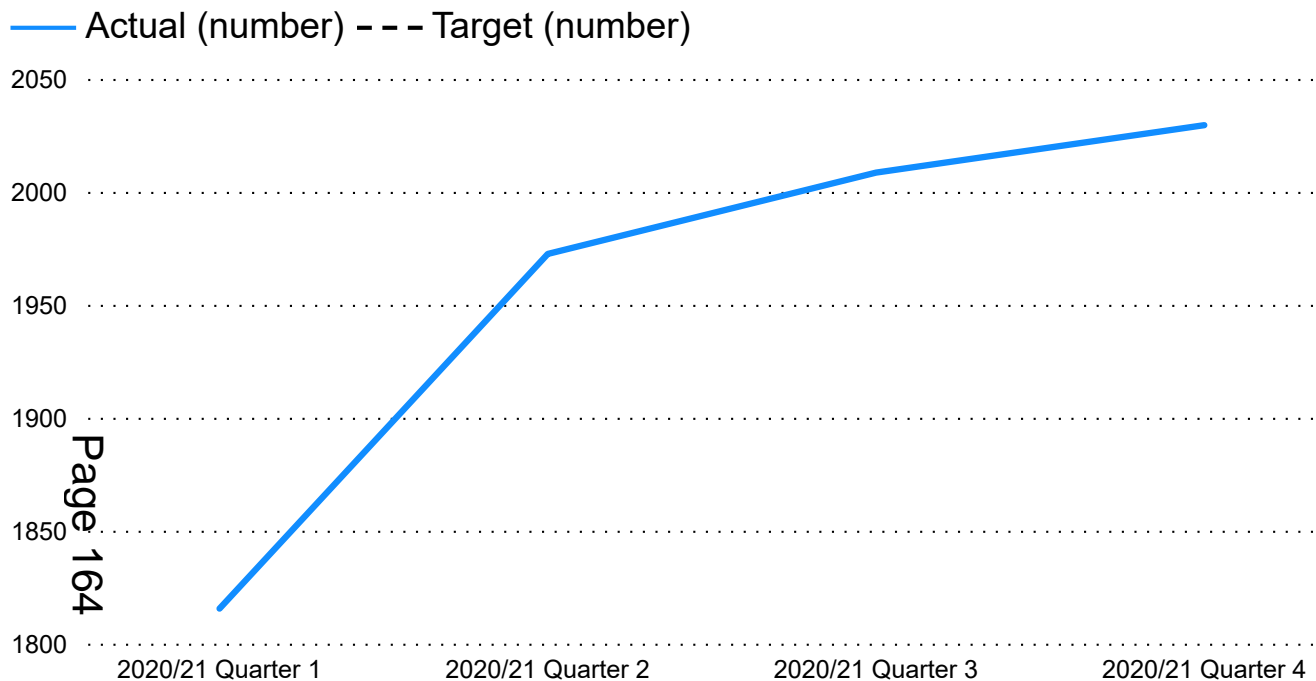
The lockdown restrictions have had an effect on current works. Consideration for the safety of all staff, customers and contractors is paramount. However, majority of works have now re-started and we hope to get back on track to delivery within our timescales as set out in the Housing Service Standards.

Comment

Due to the lockdown restrictions this has had an effect on current works. Consideration for the safety of all staff, customers and contractors is paramount. However, majority of works have now re-started and we hope to get back on track to delivery within our timescales as set out in the Housing Service Standards.

Housing and Assets - Recovery Measures

Number of applicants on the Common Housing Register



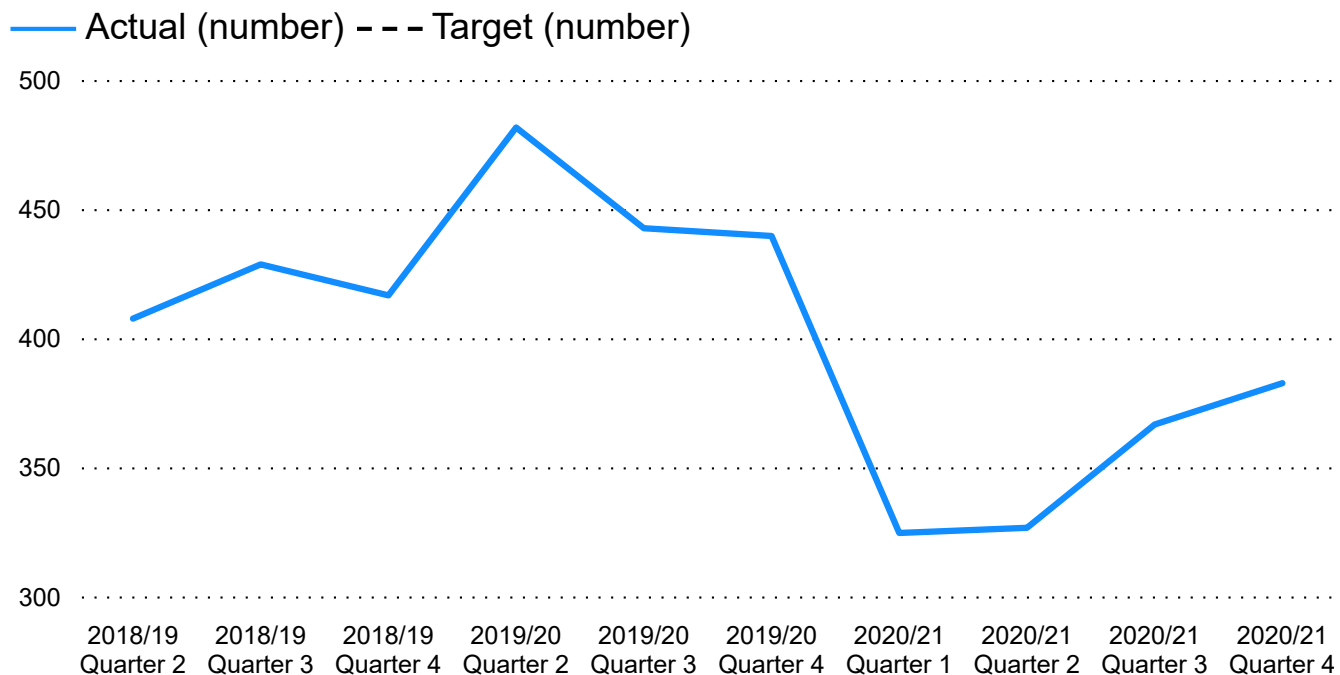
End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
2030.00			

2030.00

Comment

No target set - Demand and eligibility for social housing through the Common Housing Register has increased during the course of the year. Numbers of applicants on the Common Housing Register are up approx. 29% from 1578 in the previous year. The increase is consistent with growing housing needs and hardship during the COVID period. Reduced supply of social housing throughout the year and increasing demand accounts for the large increase across the year and will have an impact on applicants waiting times for rehousing.

Number of referrals to the Housing Support Gateway



End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
1402.00			

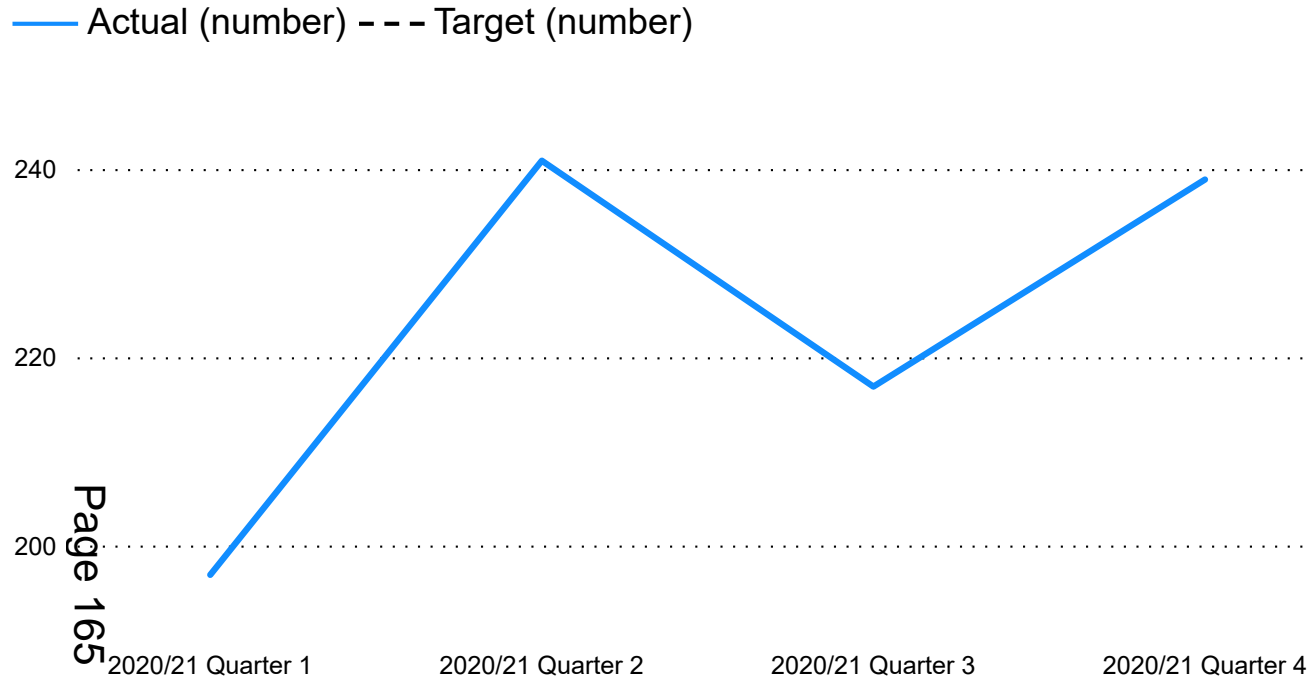
1402.00

Comment

No target set - Demand for housing related support services has increased during the course of the year but is still down on the previous year. There are significant unknowns in regards to the medium term impact of COVID on people incomes, households' debts, health and overall welfare and it is likely that demand for housing related support will increase in the coming year. Flintshire's Housing Support Grant funding from Welsh Government has been significantly increased, enabling us to develop further service capacity in anticipation of forthcoming pressures

Housing and Assets - Recovery Measures

Number of homelessness presentations



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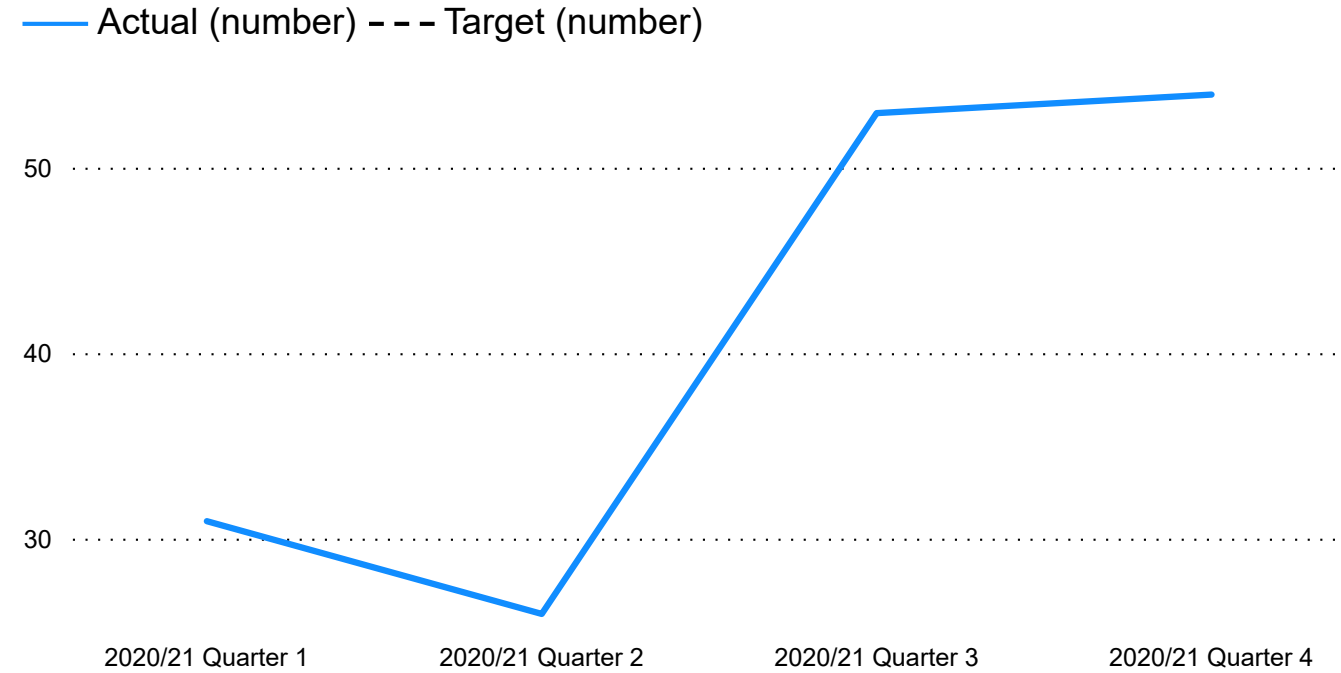
End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
894.00			

894.00

Comment

No target set - Presentations to the Homeless Team is down 11.4% on the previous year. National interventions such as the closure of courts for possession proceedings, evictions ban, furlough scheme, extended notice periods for those who rent, rental and mortgage holidays, have all been positive protections for residents to mitigate risks of increased homelessness during the coronavirus health pandemic. It is however anticipated that levels of presentations and pressures relating to homelessness will increase as these interventions and lockdown measures are eased.

Number of households in homeless accommodation



End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
41.00			

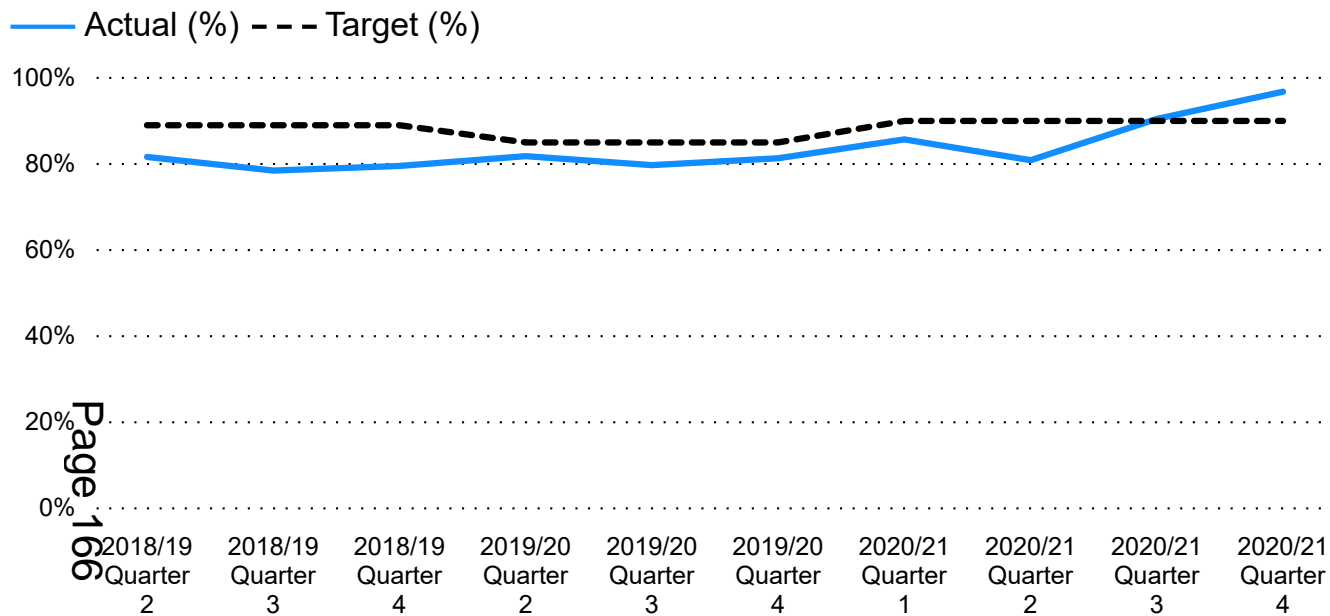
41.00

Comment

No target set - Presentations to the Homeless Team is down 11.4% on the previous year. National interventions such as the closure of courts for possession proceedings, evictions ban, furlough scheme, extended notice periods for those who rent, rental and mortgage holidays, have all been positive protections for residents to mitigate risks of increased homelessness during the coronavirus health pandemic. It is however anticipated that levels of presentations and pressures relating to homelessness will increase as these interventions and lockdown measures are eased.

Housing and Assets - Recovery Measures

Percentage of households successfully prevented from becoming homeless



End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
89.27%	90.00%	↑	▲

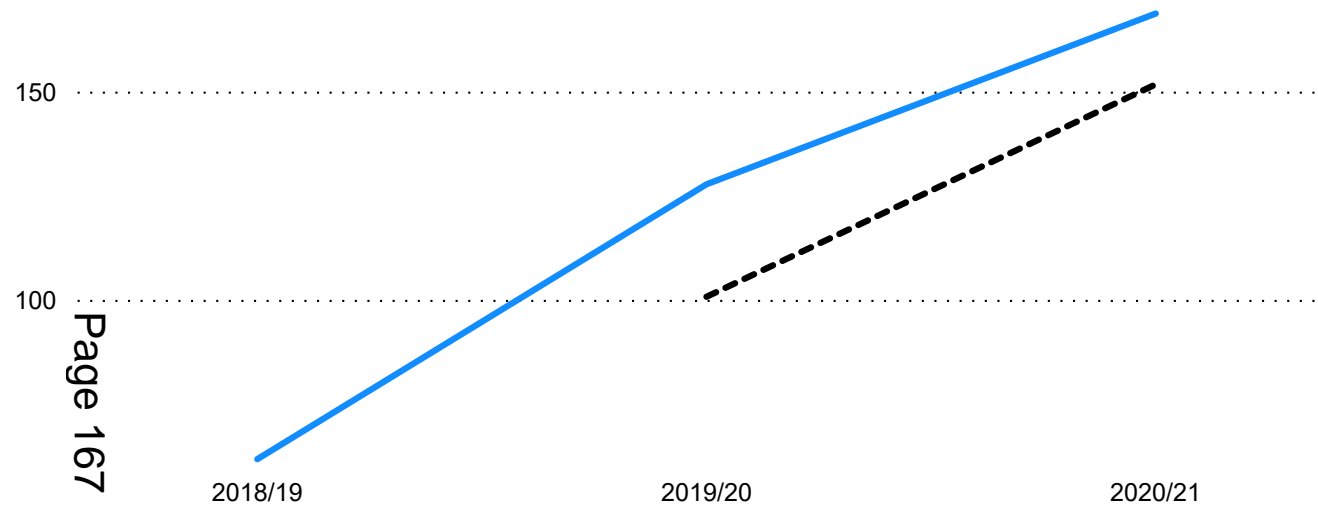
Comment

Throughout the year there were 183 cases where positive intervention by the Council helped people to avoid homelessness. Despite efforts to prevent homelessness this is not always possible and there are 22 cases where homelessness has occurred because prevention activities have failed. There are significant protections during the COVID period in regards to housing such as the evictions ban, extended notice periods that have reduced the number of cases where households are at risk of homelessness. Measures such as the furlough scheme have also helped reduce risks of homelessness. As these protections are lifted there is a greater risk of homelessness and the service is increasing capacity for housing support and homeless prevention.

Housing and Assets - Portfolio Measures

The number of affordable homes owned and managed by NEW Homes

— Actual (number) - - - Target (number)



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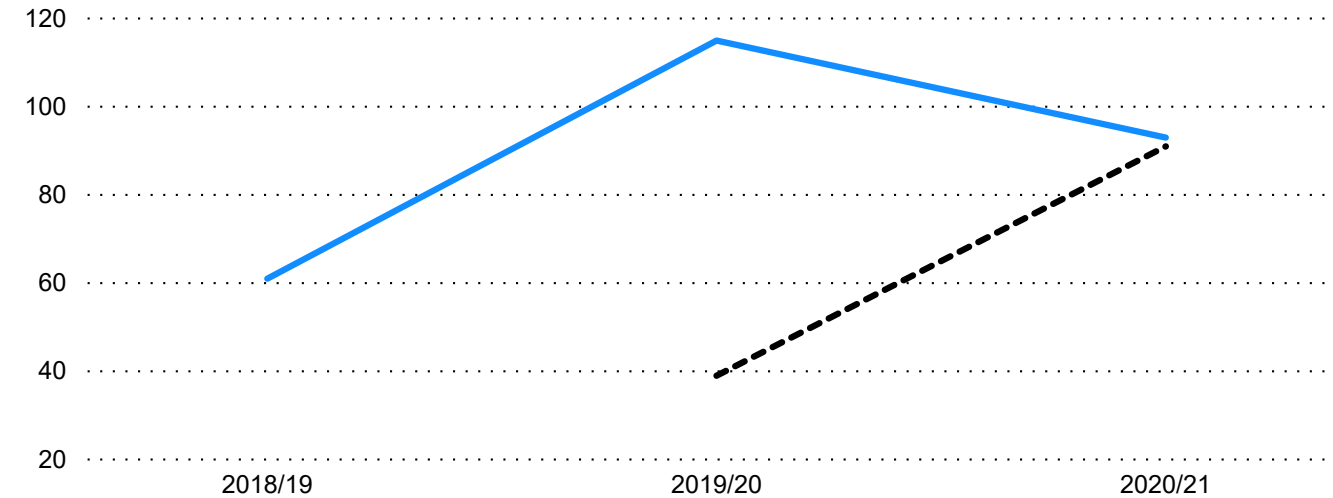
End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
169.00	152.00	↑	●

Comment

Target exceeded by 17 additional homes. Future targets to be based on NEW Homes Business Plan, Planning Permissions and availability funding.

The number of affordable homes completed or under construction through the Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme (SHARP)

— Actual (number) - - - Target (number)



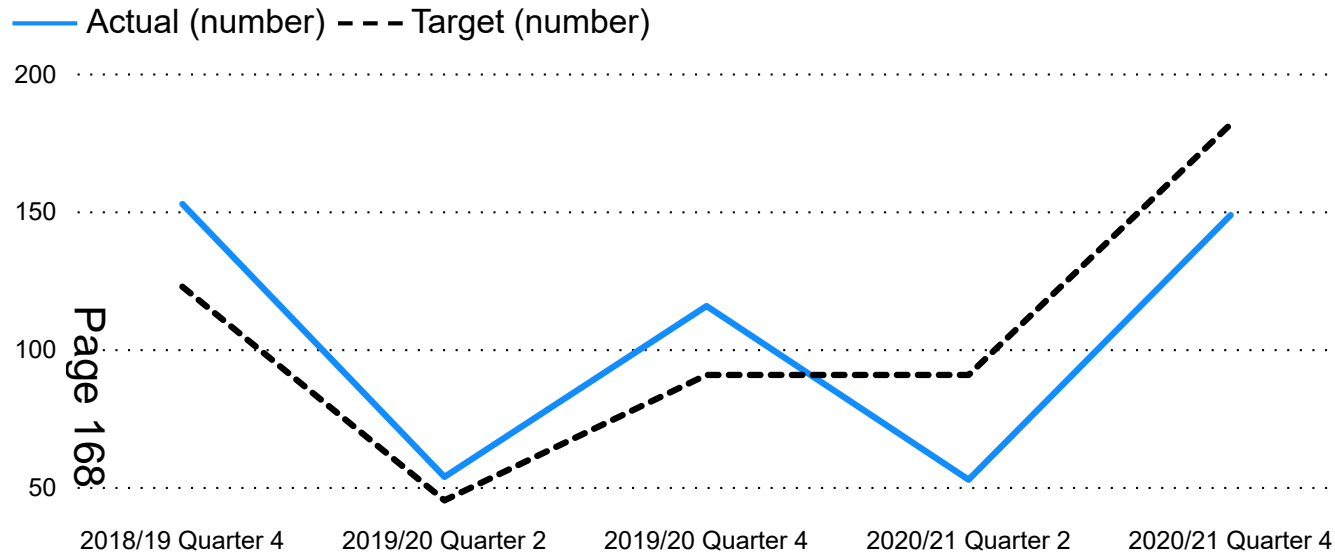
End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
93.00	91.00	↓	●

Comment

The target has been achieved for this measure. The majority of the properties completed for this year were two bedroom apartments and houses. Several three bedroom family homes were also delivered for Flint. Future developments will be conditional on the availability of building land and funding.

Housing and Assets - Portfolio Measures

The number of Council homes completed or under construction through the Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme (SHARP)

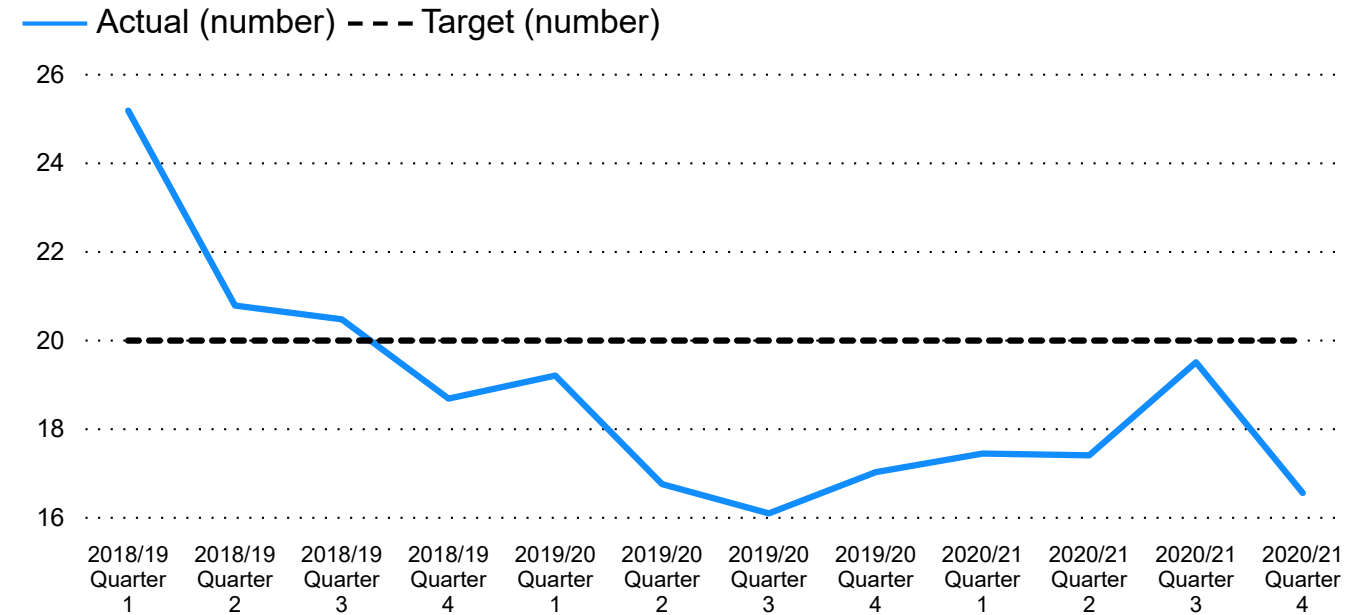


End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
149.00	182.00	↑	⬇

Comment

Whilst the target has not been achieved for this measure, we have delivered 149 properties and over half of these are family homes. This is a great achievement considering the difficulties with ensuring COVID site safety throughout the year and the impact of lockdowns.

Average number of days to process new claims for housing benefit and council tax reduction



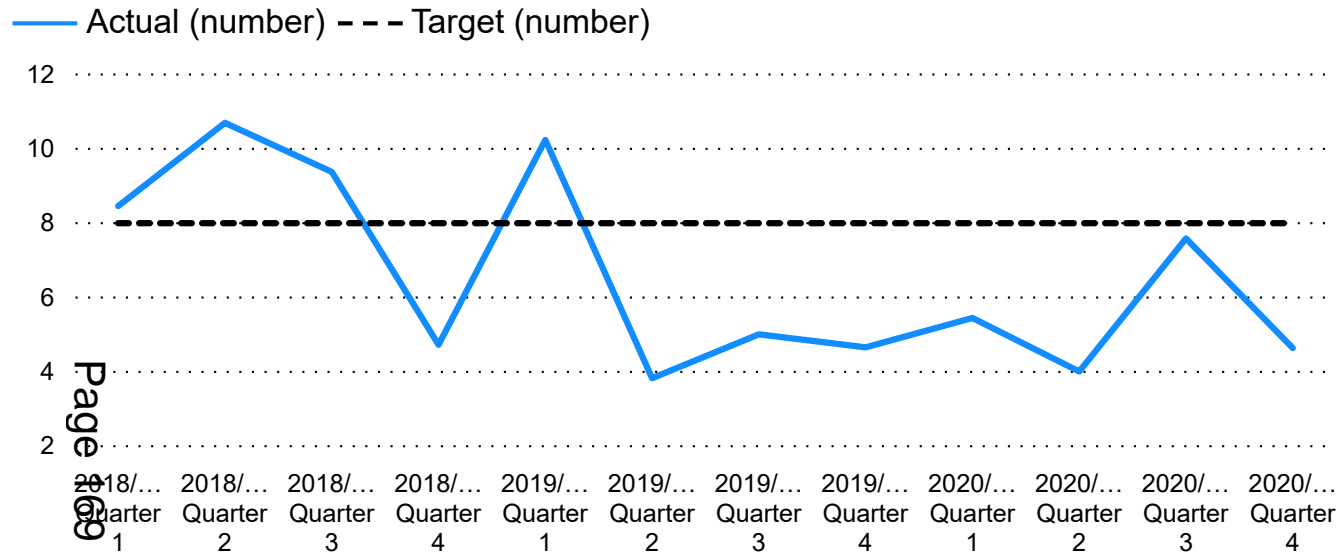
End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
17.73	20.00	↓	●

Comment

Performance target has been met each quarter for 2021/22. Due to the COVID Pandemic and the effect this had on the economy, work volumes increased. The team have been able to meet performance through overtime, TOIL and agency staff.

Housing and Assets - Portfolio Measures

Average number of days to process change in circumstances for housing benefit and council tax reduction

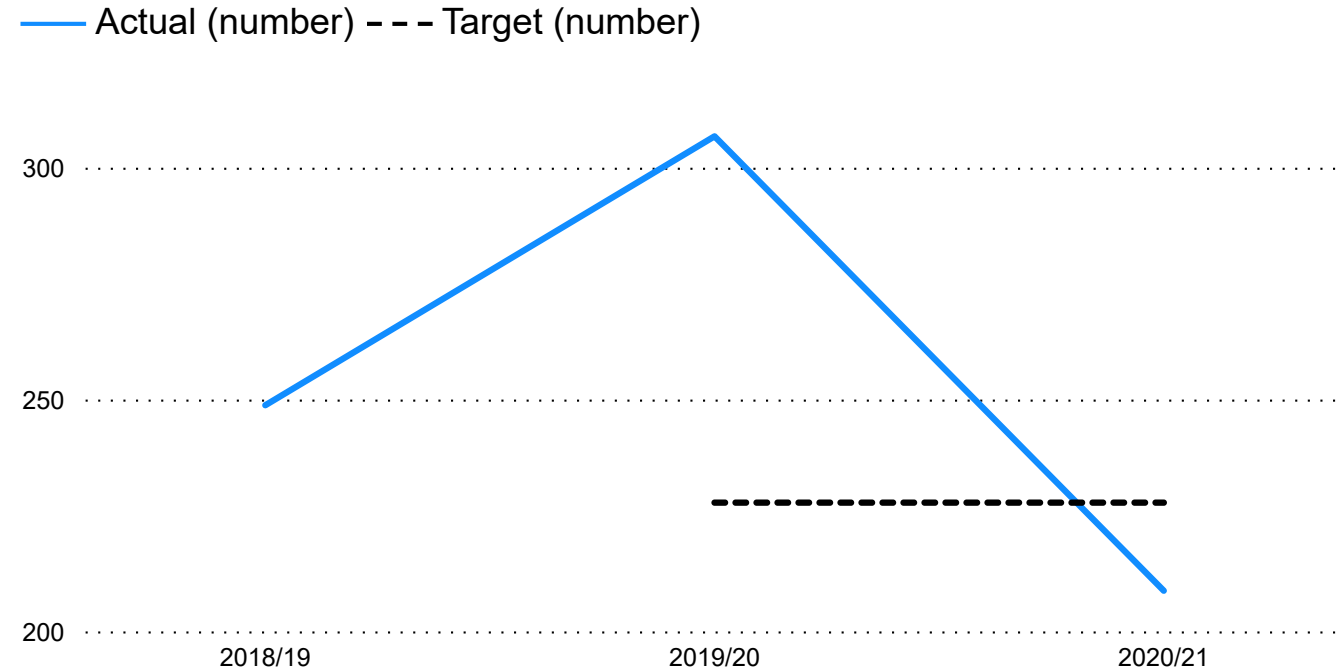


End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
5.42	8.00	↑	●

Comment

Performance target has been met each quarter for 2021/22. Due to the COVID Pandemic and the effect this had on the economy, work volumes increased. The team have been able to meet performance through overtime, TOIL and agency staff.

Increase supply and variety of affordable homes



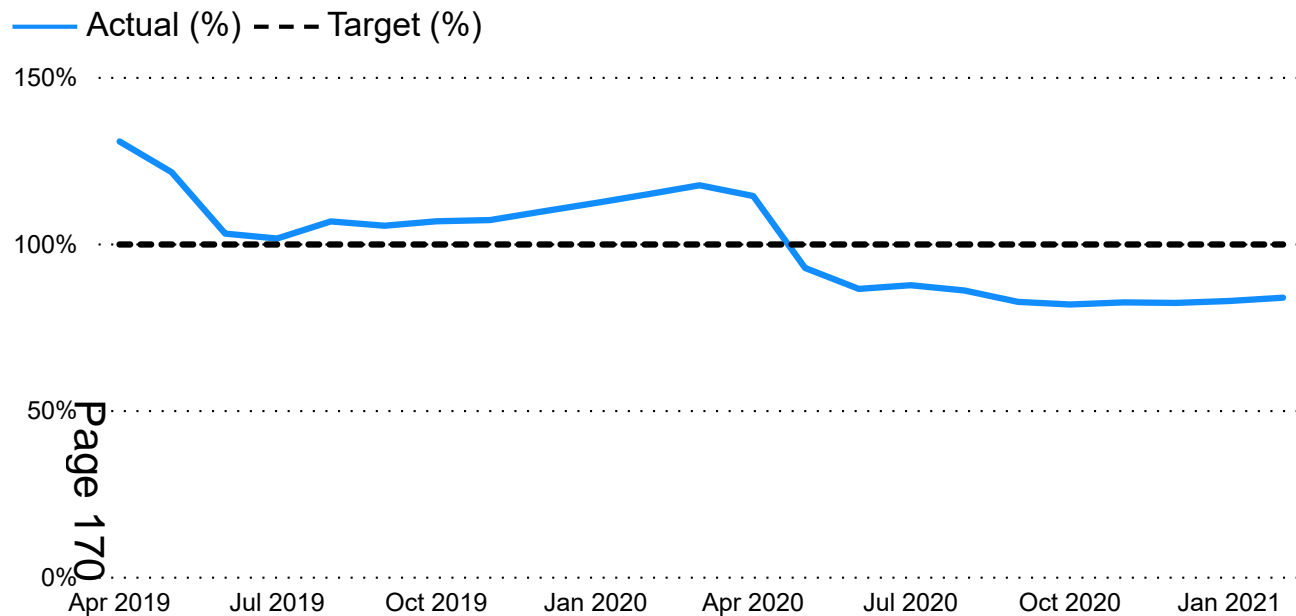
End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
209.00	228.00	↓	▲

Comment

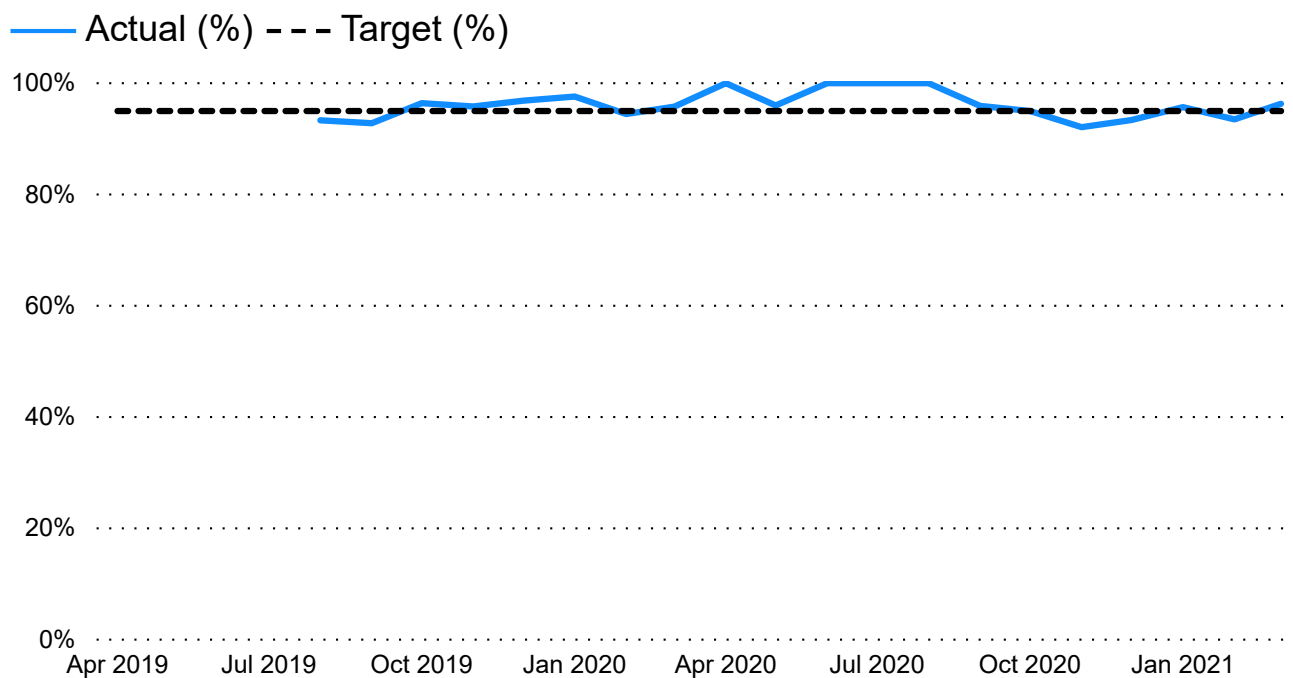
A total of 209 additional affordable homes were provided in Flintshire in 2020/21. Partner Housing Associations (Registered Providers) delivered a total of 125 (60%) additional affordable Homes in Flintshire. These combined with the 84 additional affordable homes (40%) delivered by the Council/NEW Homes give a grand total of 209 affordable homes. Amber performance attributable to Flintshire County Council (FCC)/NEW Homes falling short of 100 unit target by 16 units (FCC Shortfall 13 NEW Homes 3).

Housing and Assets - Portfolio Measures

The percentage of council houses that meet the Welsh Housing Quality standards within our annual programme



Tenant satisfaction level



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End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
85.57%	100.00%	↓	◊

End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
96.05%	95.00%	↑	●

Comment

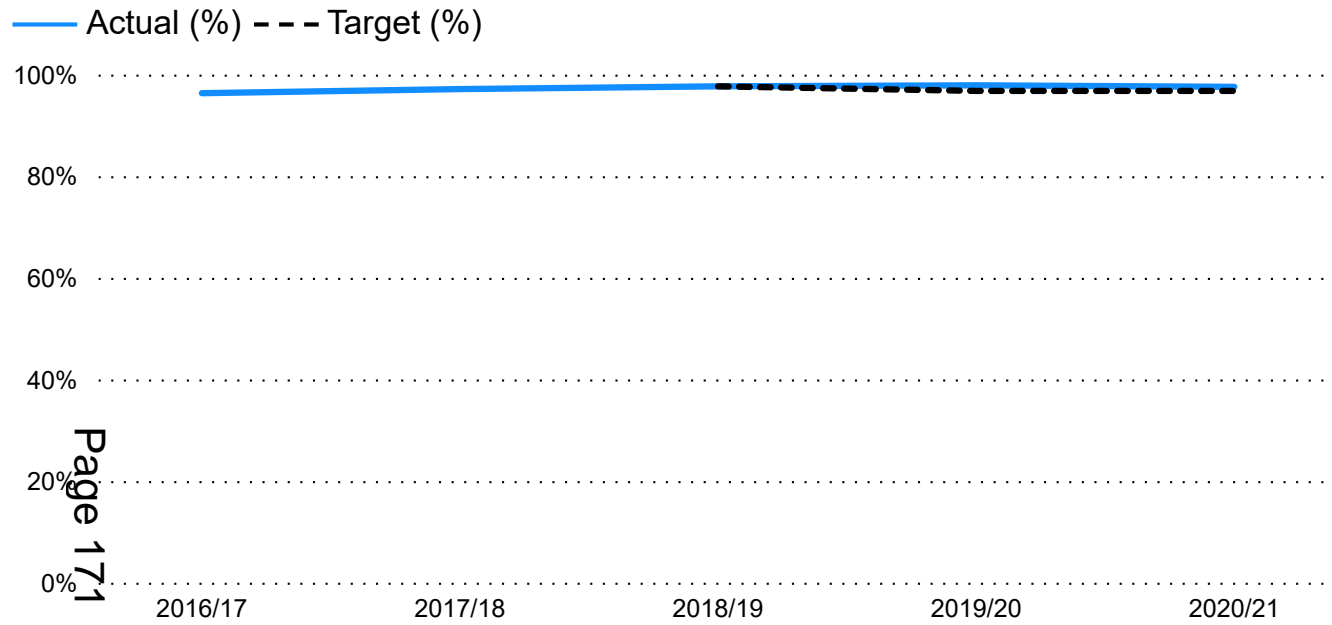
Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, many of the Contractors the Council had procured to deliver the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) Capital Programme were furloughed. This delayed the completion of the 2019-2020 financial years' work (Year Five) and the commencement of the 2020-2021 financial years' work (Year Six). We were able to commence and mobilise WHQS Programmes of work from July and as a result we started to receive hand overs for completed works in quarter three of the 2020-2021 financial year.

Comment

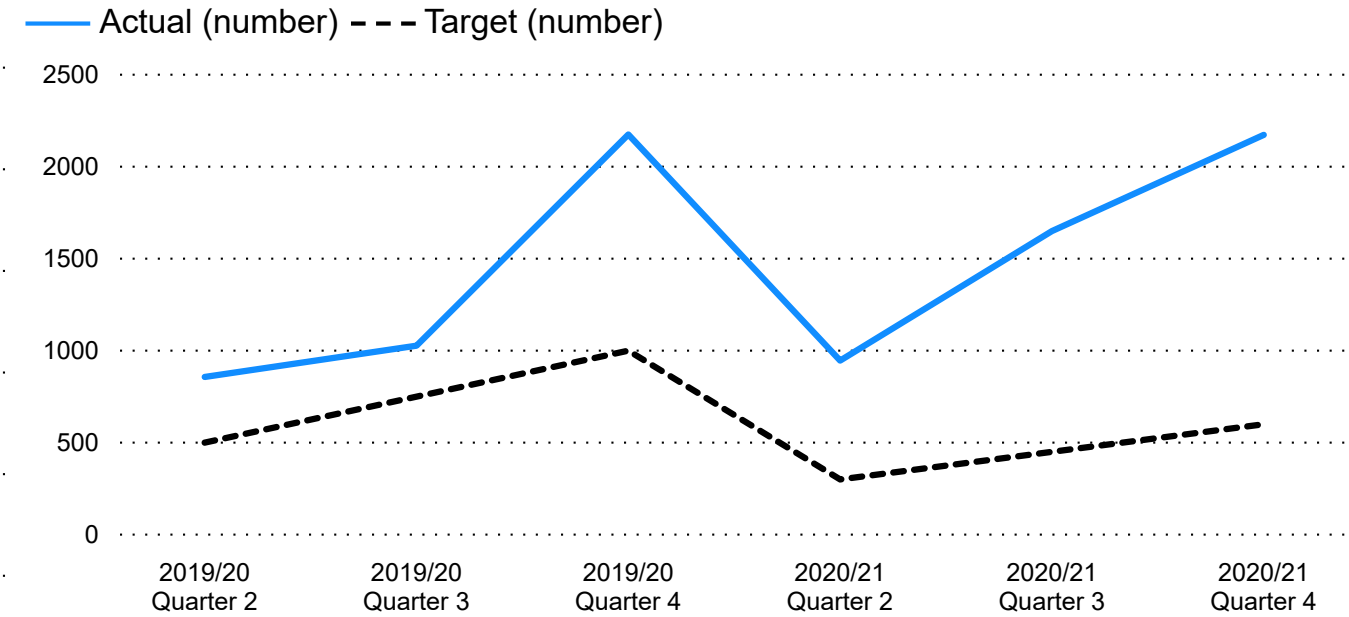
Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, many of the Contractors the Council had procured to deliver the Welsh Housing Quality Standard Capital Programme were furloughed. This has impacted on our tenant satisfaction surveys and the ability to complete these with the tenant face to face with our Tenant Liaison Officers. Our satisfaction results for our Welsh Quality Housing Standards (WHQS) refurbishment programmes ended positively with an overall average of 97%. This is an excellent result given the restrictions placed upon the Council and its Contractors who were working in our tenants homes during this difficult time.

Planning, Environment and Economy - Recovery Measures

Percentage of food establishments that meet food hygiene standards



Total number of energy efficiency measures delivered to reduce fuel poverty



End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
97.80%	97.00%	↓	●

End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
2173.00	600	↓	●

Comment

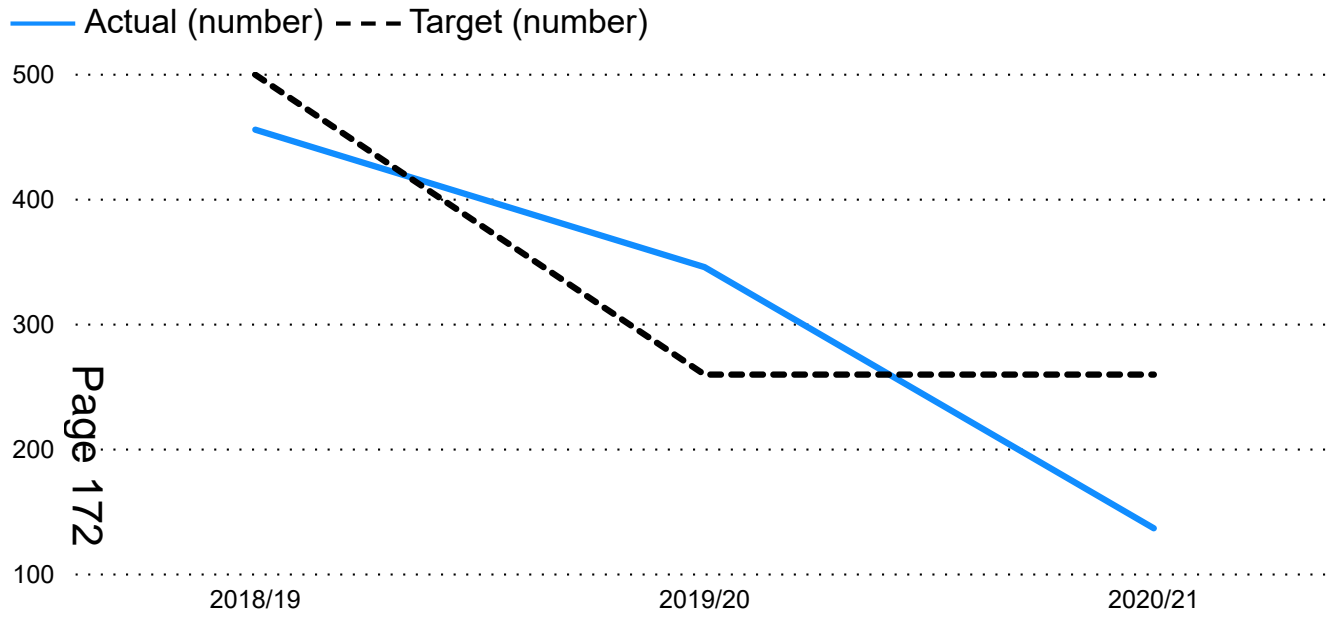
Due to the requirements on the service to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, a lower level of food hygiene inspections have been undertaken. While the level of Broadly Compliant premises has remained above the target of 97%, this is in part due to businesses not having been inspected and so there was no change to their food hygiene rating. The service is concerned as to the effect of the pandemic on compliance levels within food businesses and on the number of new businesses that require inspection which will impact on next year's figures.

Comment

These measures are actual installs funded from various sources available to the team to reflect the maximum benefit to the resident both financially and emotionally who find themselves in fuel poverty. The numbers are less than our target for this quarter due to over achieving last quarter and throughout the year. However the target for the year has been exceeded.

Planning, Environment and Economy - Recovery Measures

Total number of individuals supported to access learning and work opportunities



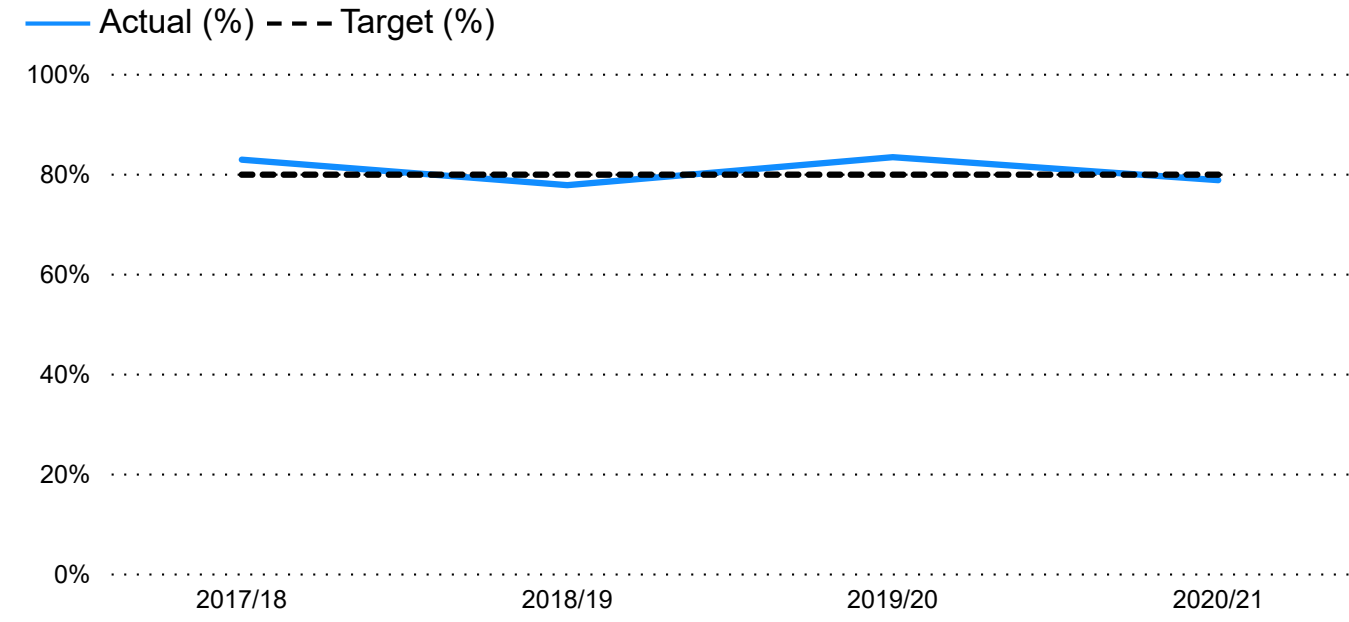
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End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
137.00	260	↓	◊

Comment

This has been a challenging year for the Communities for Work (CFW) programme, which saw Pathway programmes put on hold limiting the options available to participants to access the relevant training opportunities. Teams have delivered the programme virtually by working from home and have supported mentoring scheme participants to gain E-Learning, Customer services and construction skills qualifications. The teams have also supported participants into employment opportunities within the care, retail and construction sectors.

Percentage of all planning applications determined in time



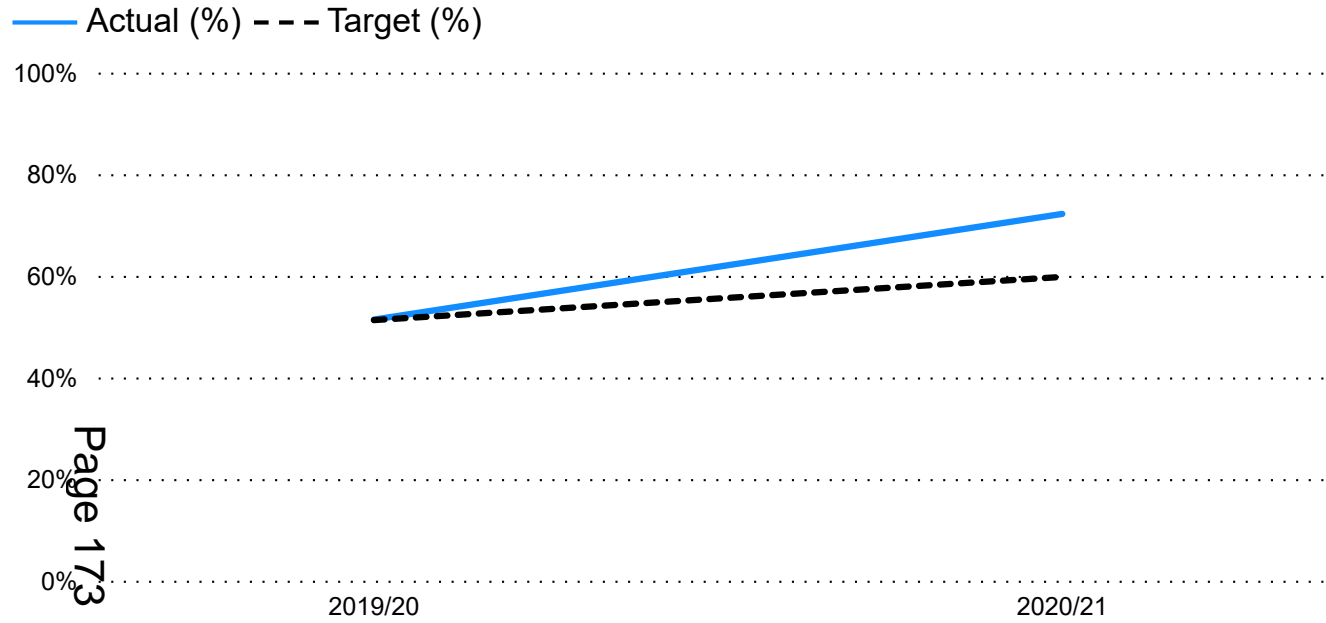
End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
78.90%	80.00%	↓	▲

Comment

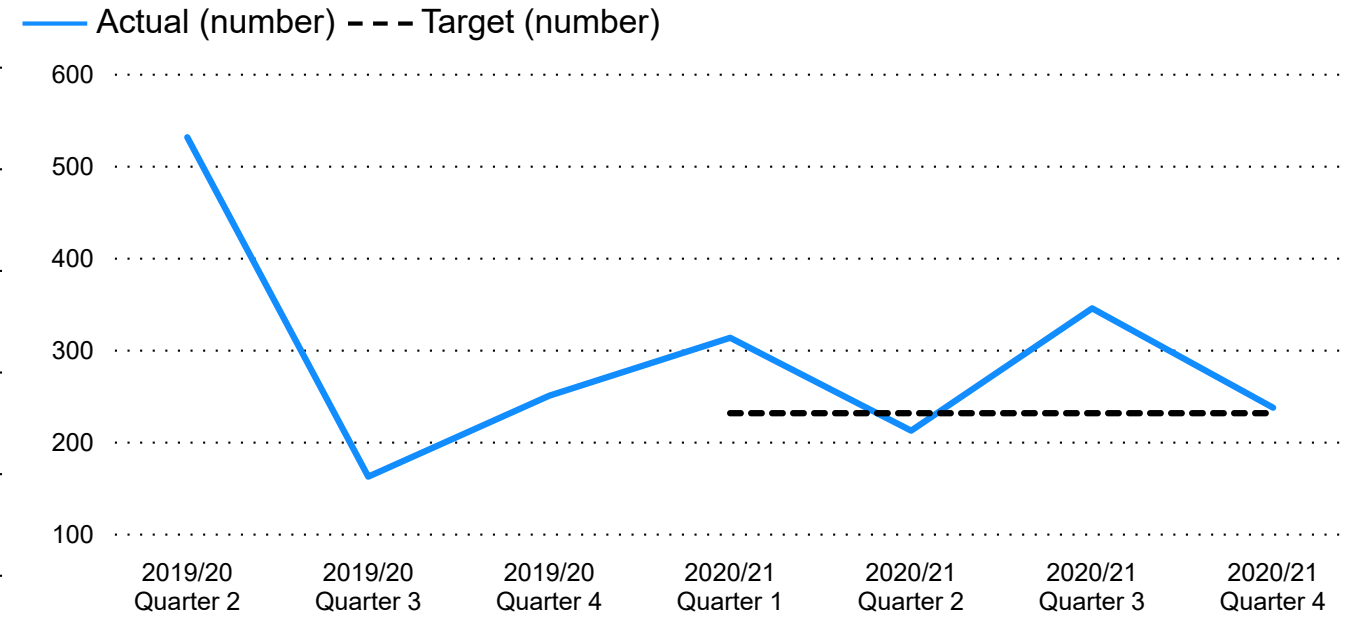
Acknowledgement that the target is unmet. However due to significant capacity issues in the first six months of 20/21 and ongoing impact of pandemic preventing full site visits from December until mid-April the level of performance achieved so close to the target in normal operational times is excellent.

Planning, Environment and Economy - Recovery Measures

Percentage of "major" applications determined within time periods required



Average time taken to determine "major" applications in days



End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
62.00%	60.00%	↑	●

End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
277.75	232	↓	◆

Comment

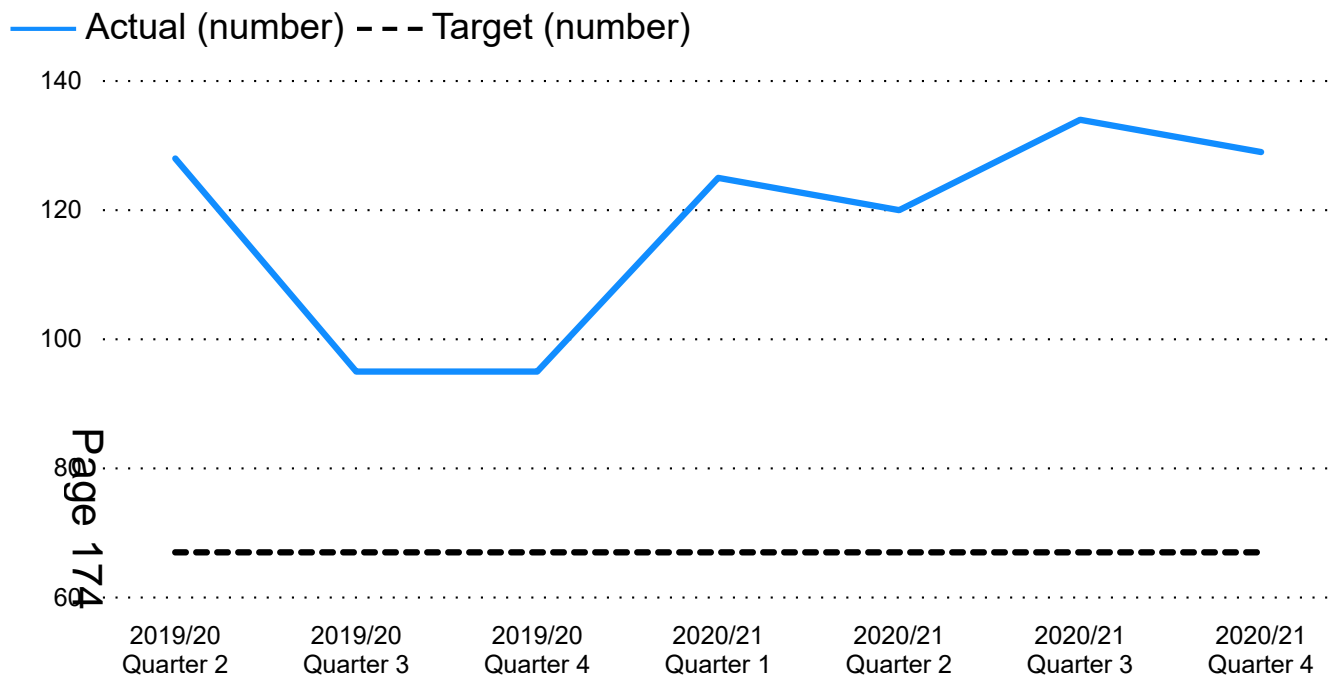
The target for this measure has been exceeded in each quarter.

Comment

Quarter one and quarter three are significantly higher than the target. Action needs to be taken to ensure the overall length of such application is reduced by effective case management.

Planning, Environment and Economy - Recovery Measures

Average time taken to determine planning applications

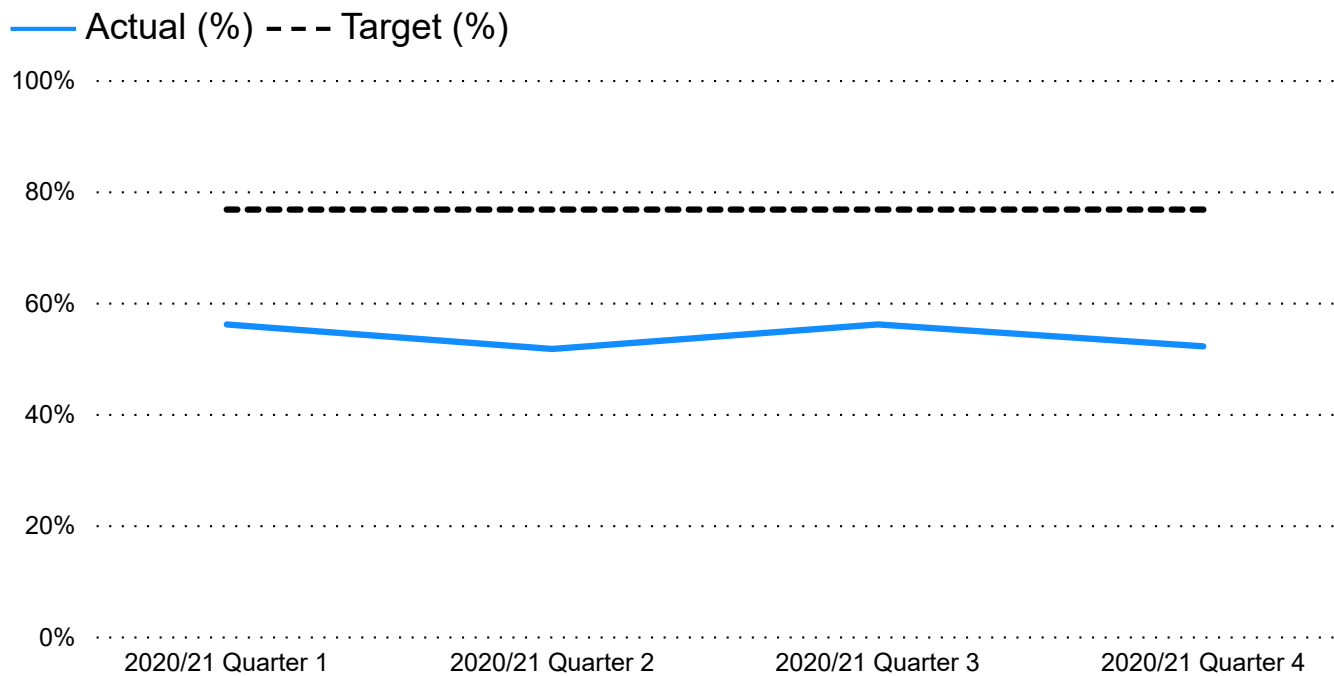


End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
127.00	67	↓	⬇

Comment

Target not met and double the time taken or more. This reflects the impact of the pandemic throughout 20/21 and the reduced capacity within the service to 30% at times. The majority of applicants agreed to extension of times with understanding of delay of the whole process such as inability to display statutory notices (in accordance with Welsh Government advice) and the back log of cases which developed whilst service transferred to electronic working from home .

Enforcement cases investigated within 84 days



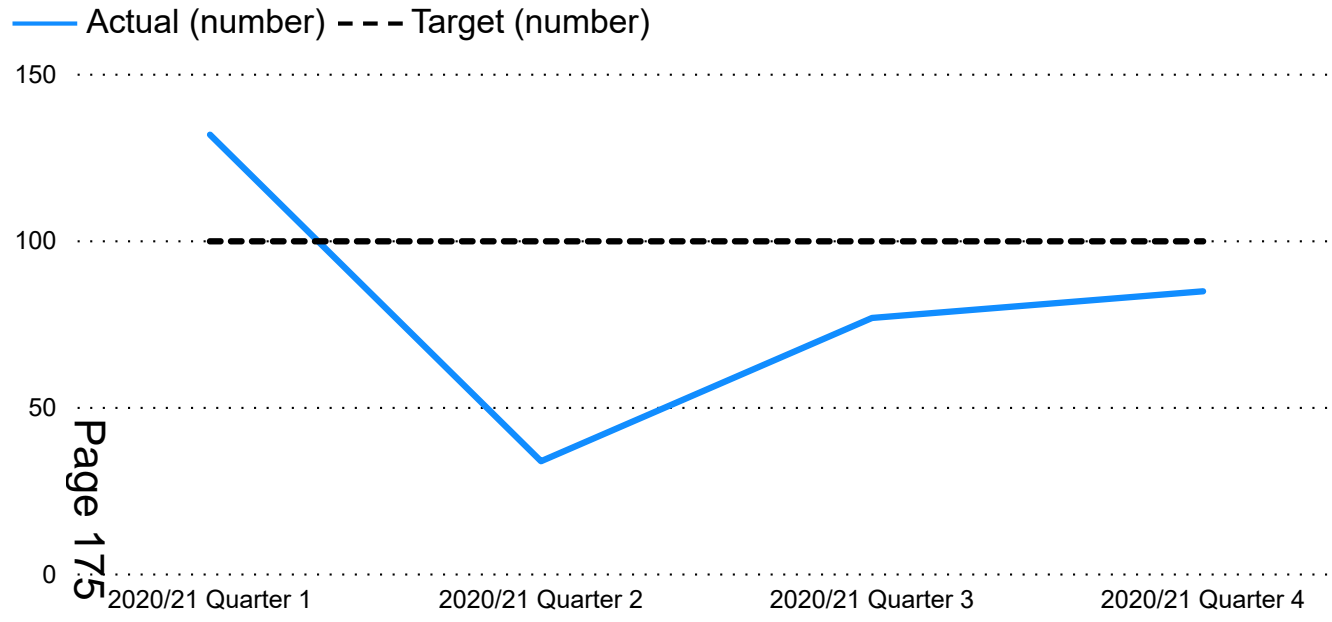
End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
54.17%	76.90%		●

Comment

Data to be verified - Significant impact on speed of investigations as service capacity was reduced and actively redirected to manage significant and major planning applications.

Planning, Environment and Economy - Recovery Measures

Average time taken to pursue positive enforcement action where a breach had been identified



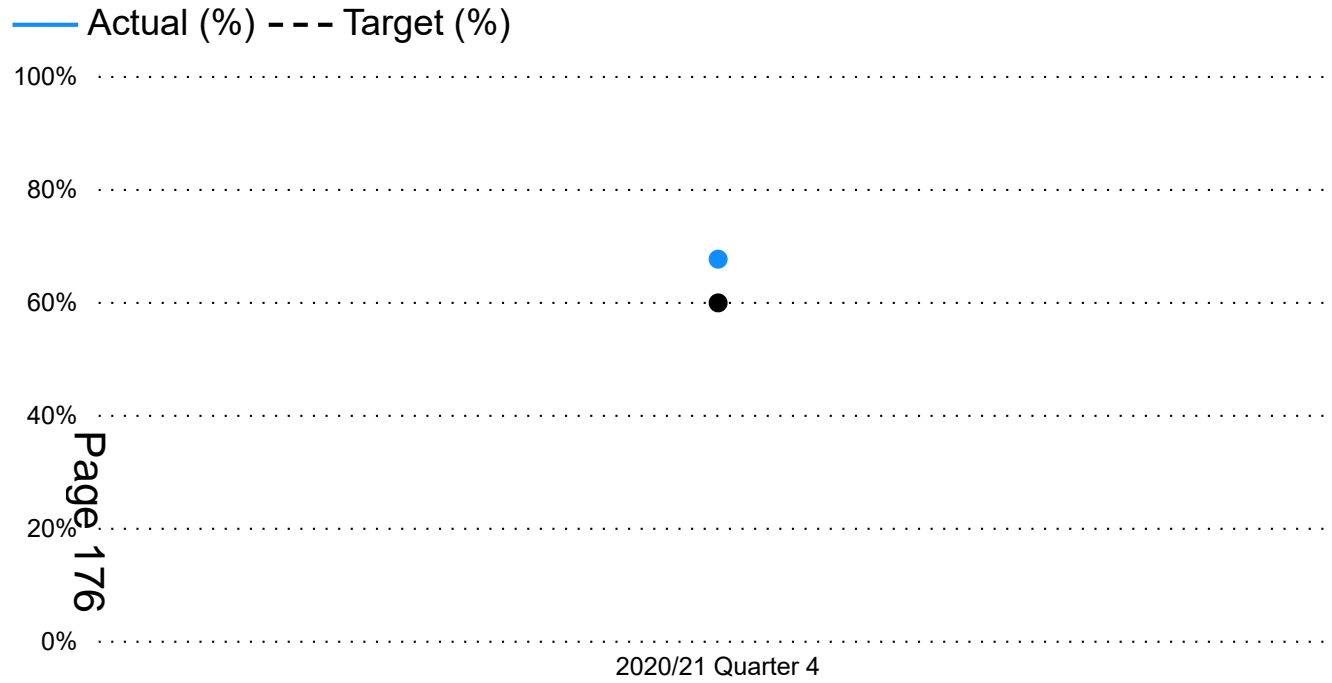
End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
82.00	100		●

Comment

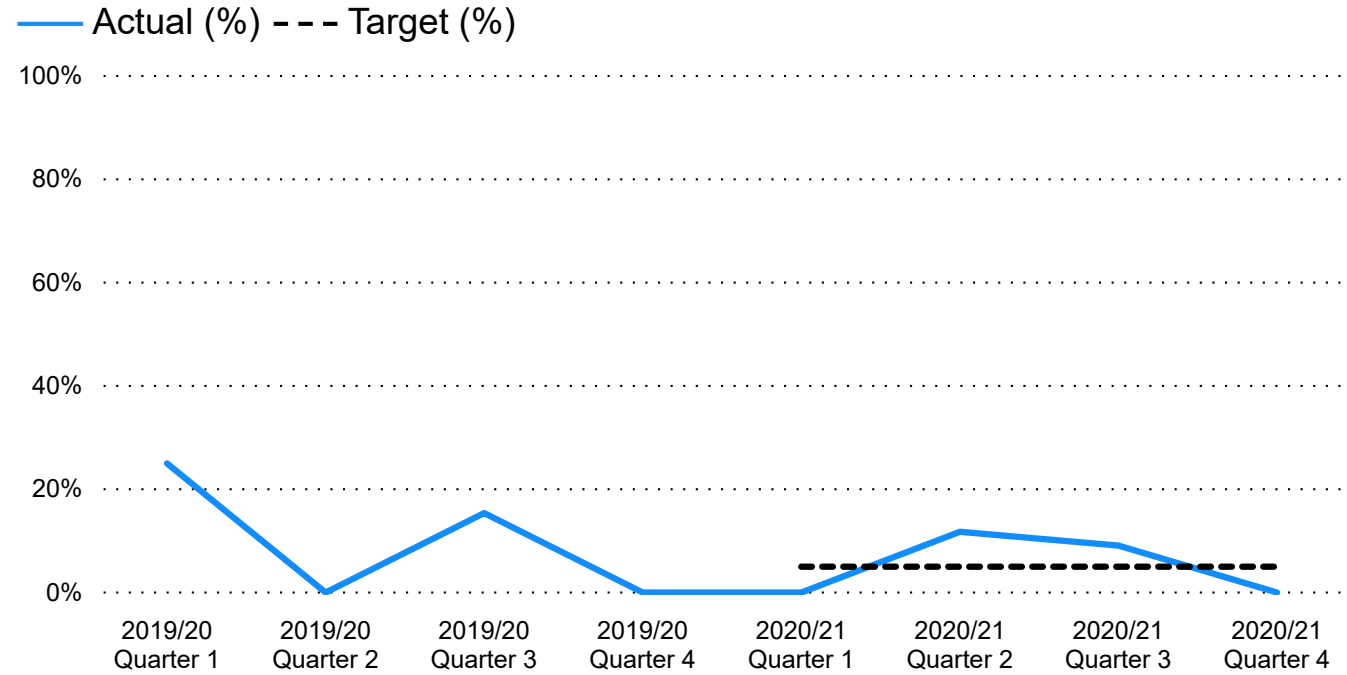
Reflects the pro-active work that the enforcement team were able to take during lockdowns once a breach had been identified.

Planning, Environment and Economy - Portfolio Measures

Percentage of all planning appeals dismissed



Decisions made contrary to officer recommendation



End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
67.74%	60.00%		●

End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
7.31%	20.00%	↑	●

Comment

31 appeals in total of which 21 were dismissed.

Comment

Performance at planning committee has been maintained throughout the pandemic.

Planning, Environment and Economy - Portfolio Measures

Sustainable Development Indicators

Percentage of empty private properties brought back into use

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End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
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End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
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Comment

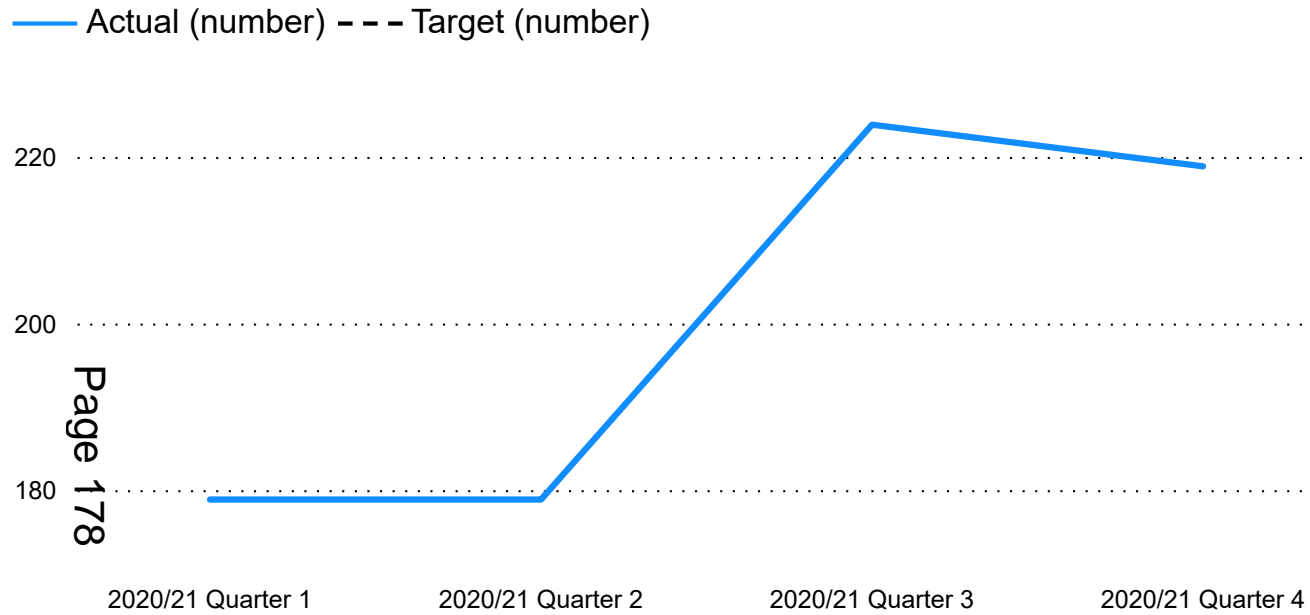
Measure to be removed from quarterly reporting due to changes in Welsh Government requirements.

Comment

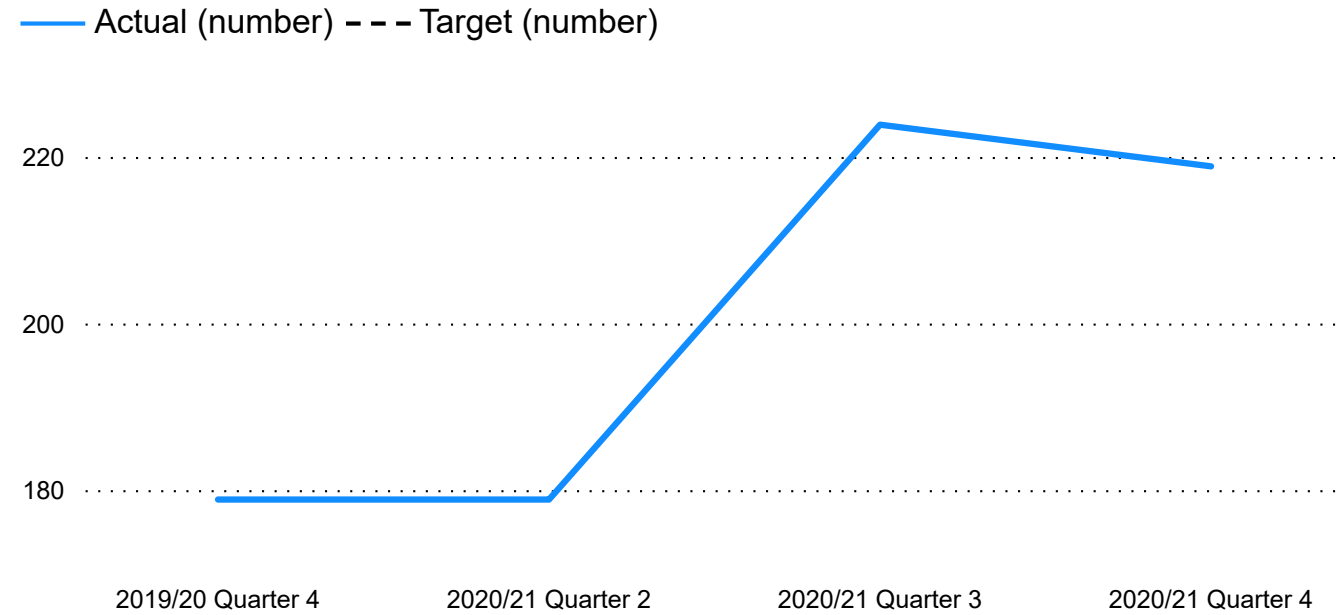
Benchmarking data - This measure is used for benchmarking nationally. The number of empty properties needs to be ratified before a percentage figure can be calculated.

Planning, Environment and Economy - Portfolio Measures

Number of applications received and determined during the quarter



Number of applications received, carried forward, transferred and determined during the quarter



End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
801.00			

End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
801.00			

Comment

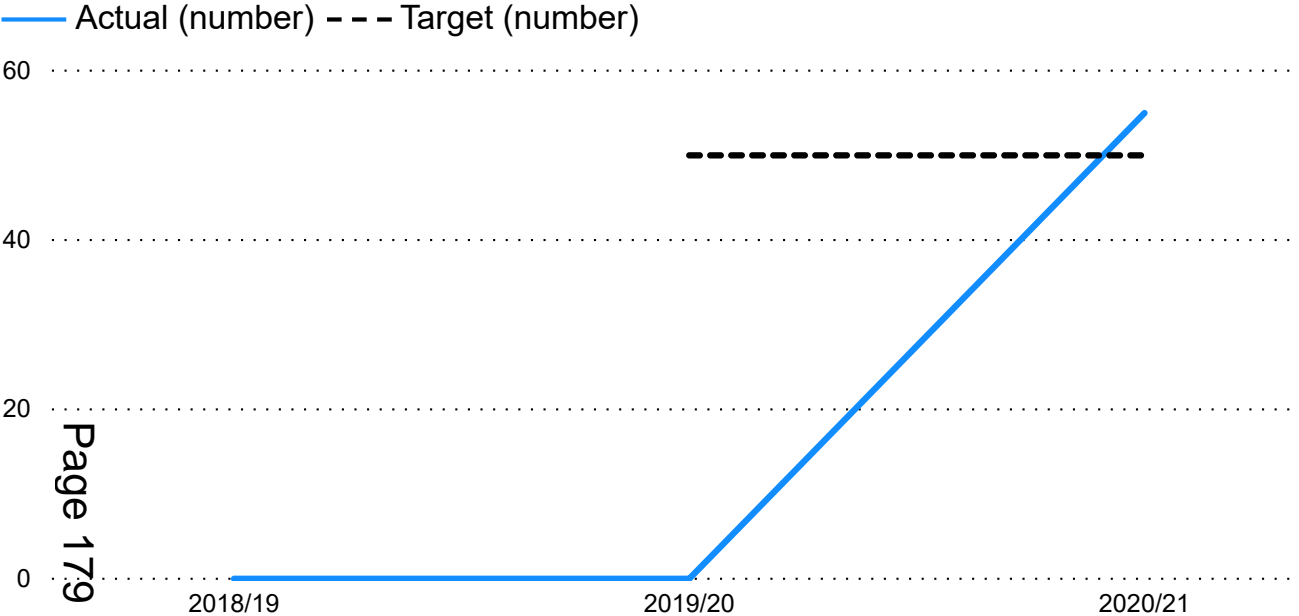
No Target Set - Received 308, determined - 219.
Data is collected to enable Welsh Government to ratify the Quarterly performance returns.

Comment

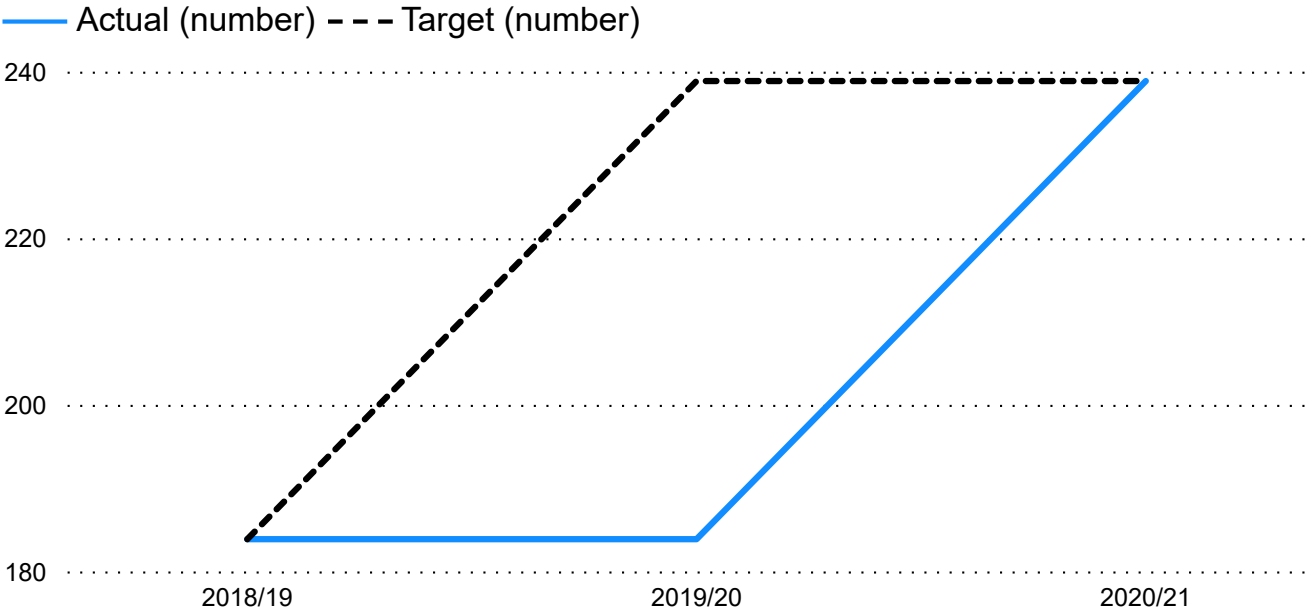
No target set. Received - 308, Carried forward - 495, Determined - 219, withdrawn - 46.
Data is collected to enable Welsh Government to ratify the Quarterly performance returns.

Social Services - Recovery Measures

The number of Holywell Extra Care (Plas yr Yrwn) units created



The number of Extra Care units provided across Flintshire



End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
55.00	50.00	↑	●

End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
239.00	239.00	↑	●

Comment

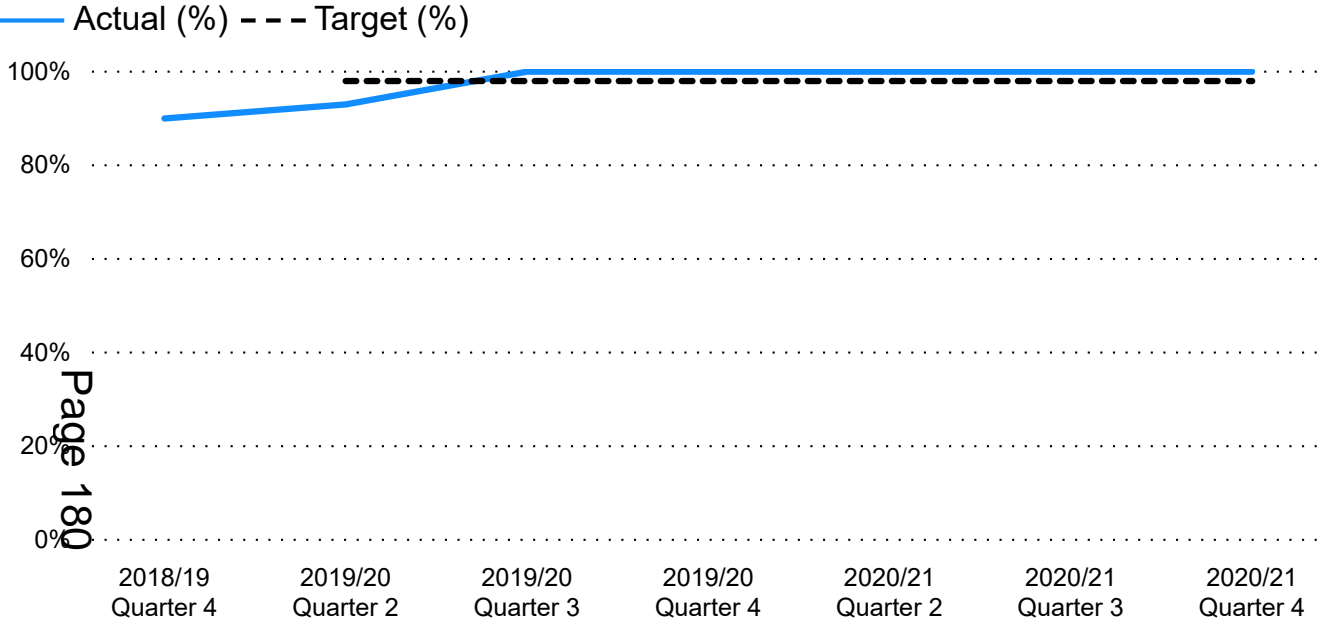
Plas yr Ywen Extra Care opened in Holywell on 22 March, providing 55 modern apartments consisting of 43 one and 12 two bedroom apartments.

Comment

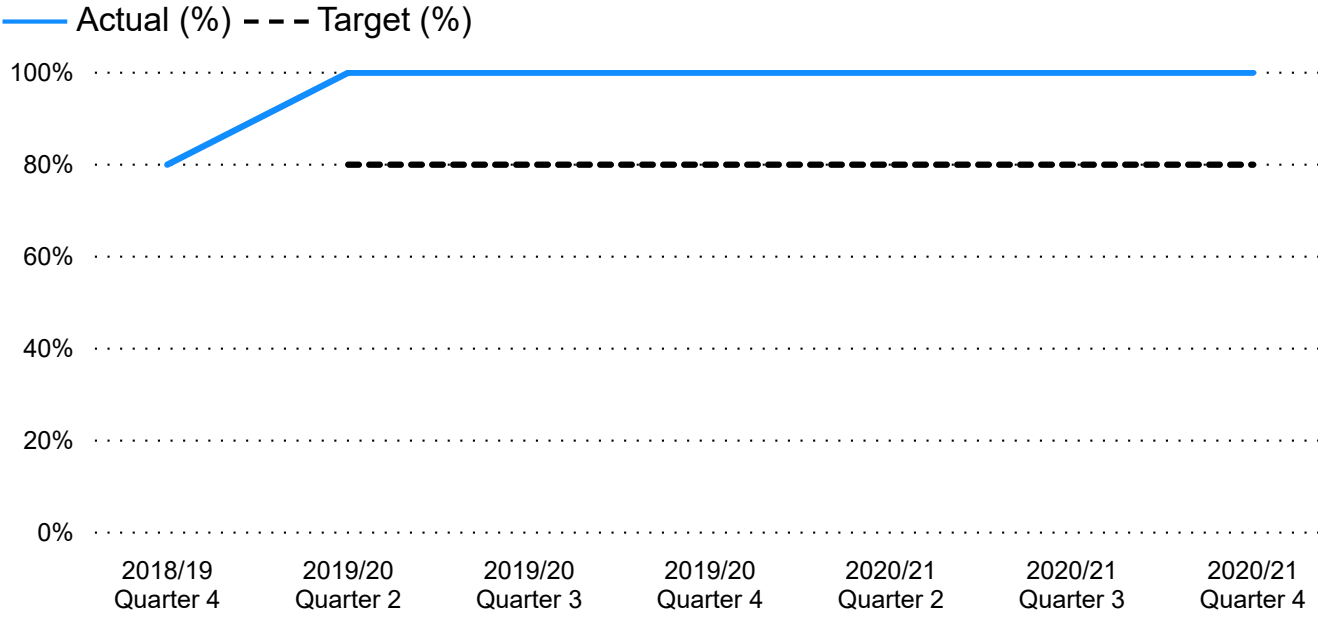
Plas yr Ywen Extra Care opened in Holywell on 22 March, providing 55 modern apartments consisting of 43 one and 12 two bedroom apartments.

Social Services - Recovery Measures

Percentage of urgent requests for equipment that meet or exceed the national 1 Day response standards



Percentage of requests for equipment that meet or exceed the national 7 Day standard



End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
100.00%	98.00%	↑	●

End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
100.00%	80.00%	↑	●

Comment

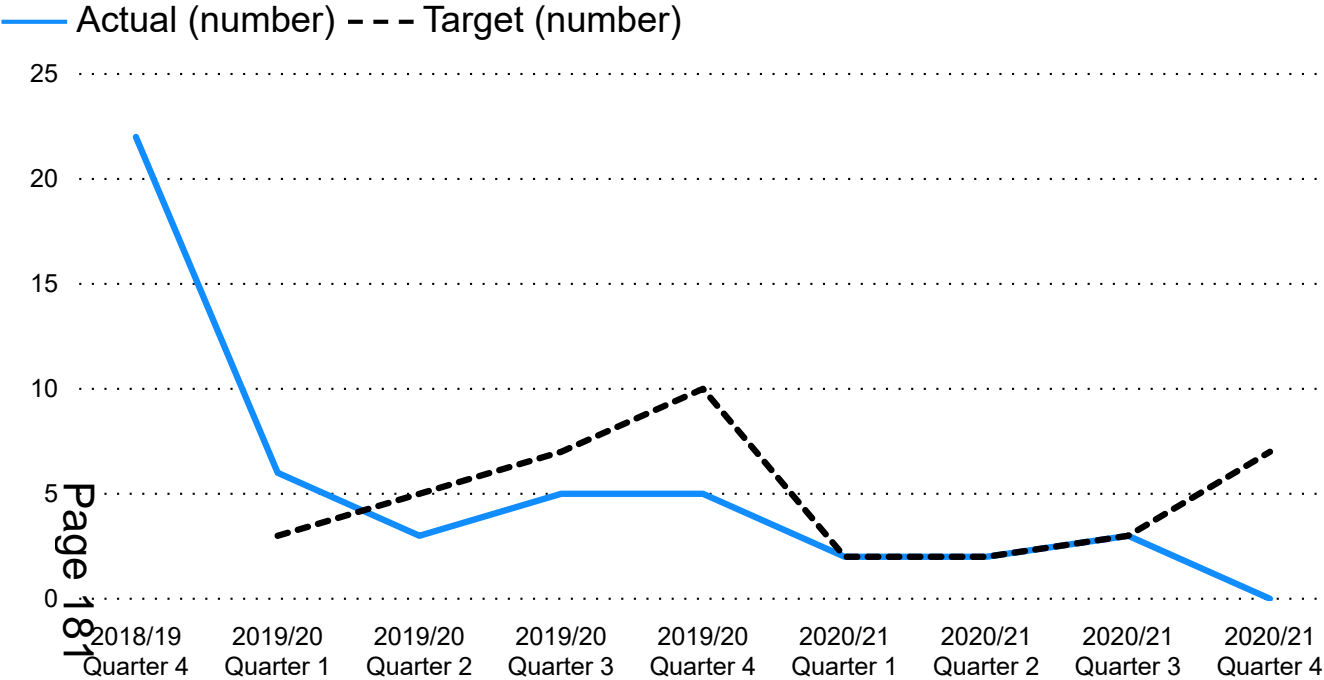
Equipment is managed by the North East Wales Community Equipment Service. The National standard for urgent requests is 90% within one day.

Comment

The National standard for the provision of equipment requests within 7 days is 80%.

Social Services - Recovery Measures

Number of new foster carer approvals in the year

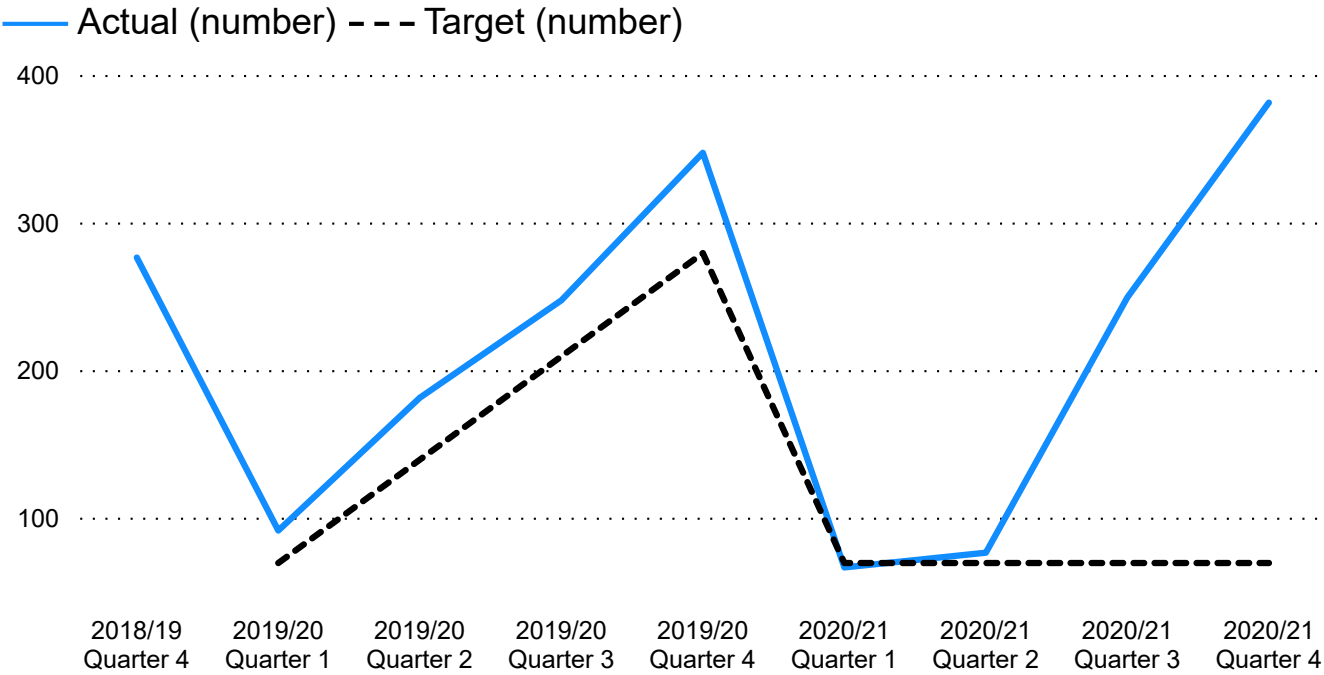


End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
7.00	10.00	↓	●

Comment

We have recruited seven new foster carers this year. Whilst the target of 10 has not been met, the original aim of 5 - 10 has been achieved.

Number of referrals to the Family Group Meeting Service



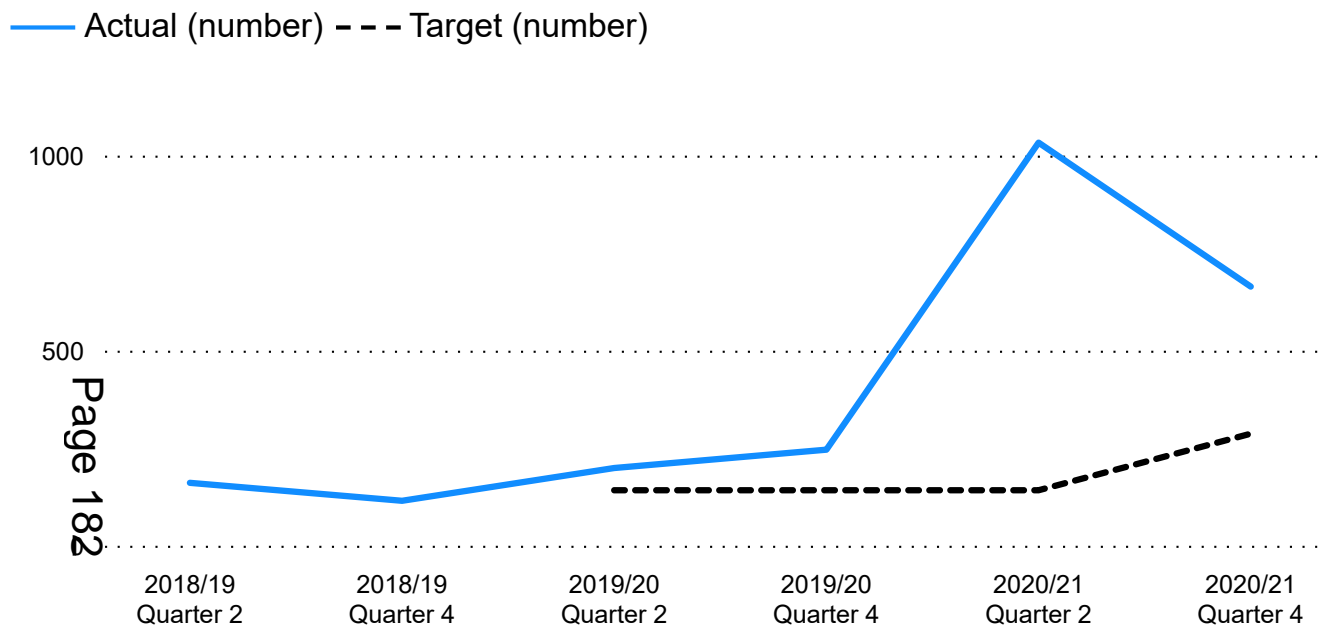
End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
382.00	280.00	↓	●

Comment

382 families were referred to the service in the year. 12 of these families were still to be allocated by 31st March.

Social Services - Portfolio Measures

The number of people who access the social prescribing / 3rd sector service through the Single Point of access

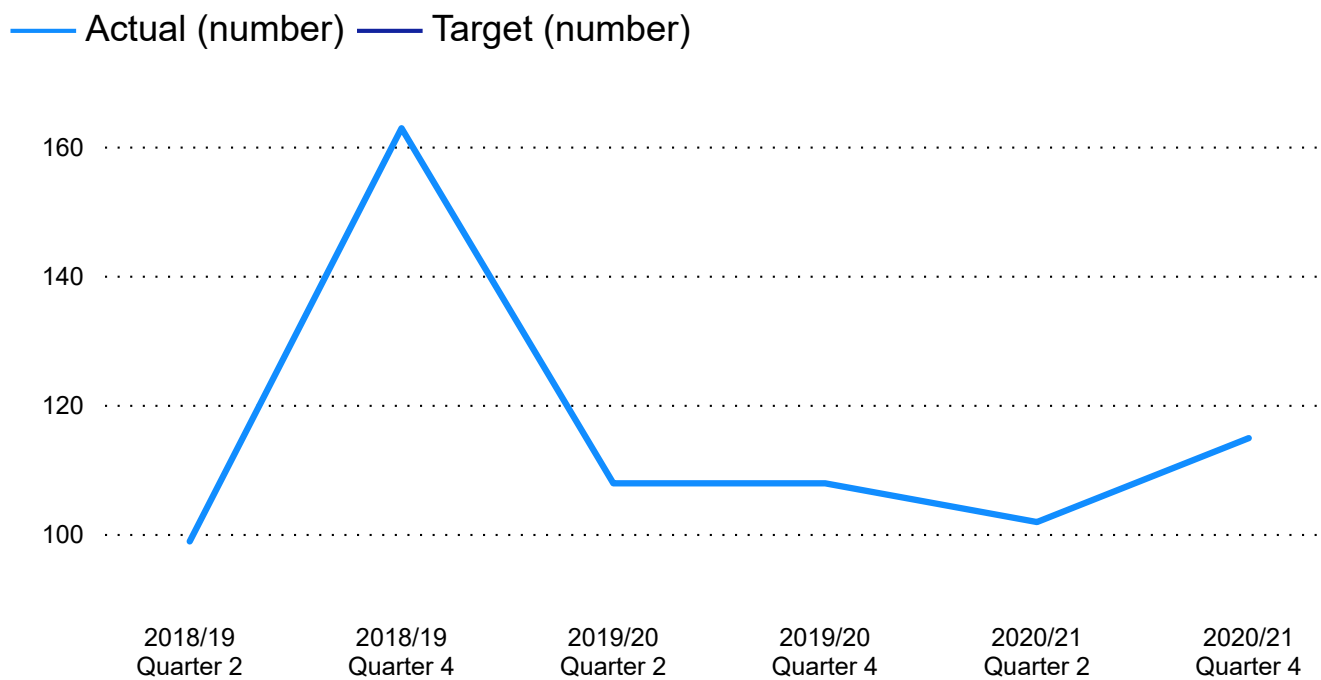


End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
1703.00	290.00	↑	●

Comment

The service has seen a significant increase in demand, particularly in April due to the pandemic. There was a 700% increase in calls/referrals to the service through April; since then demand has reduced somewhat but continues to be high, far exceeding the target which was set pre-pandemic.

The number of admissions to step up / step down beds



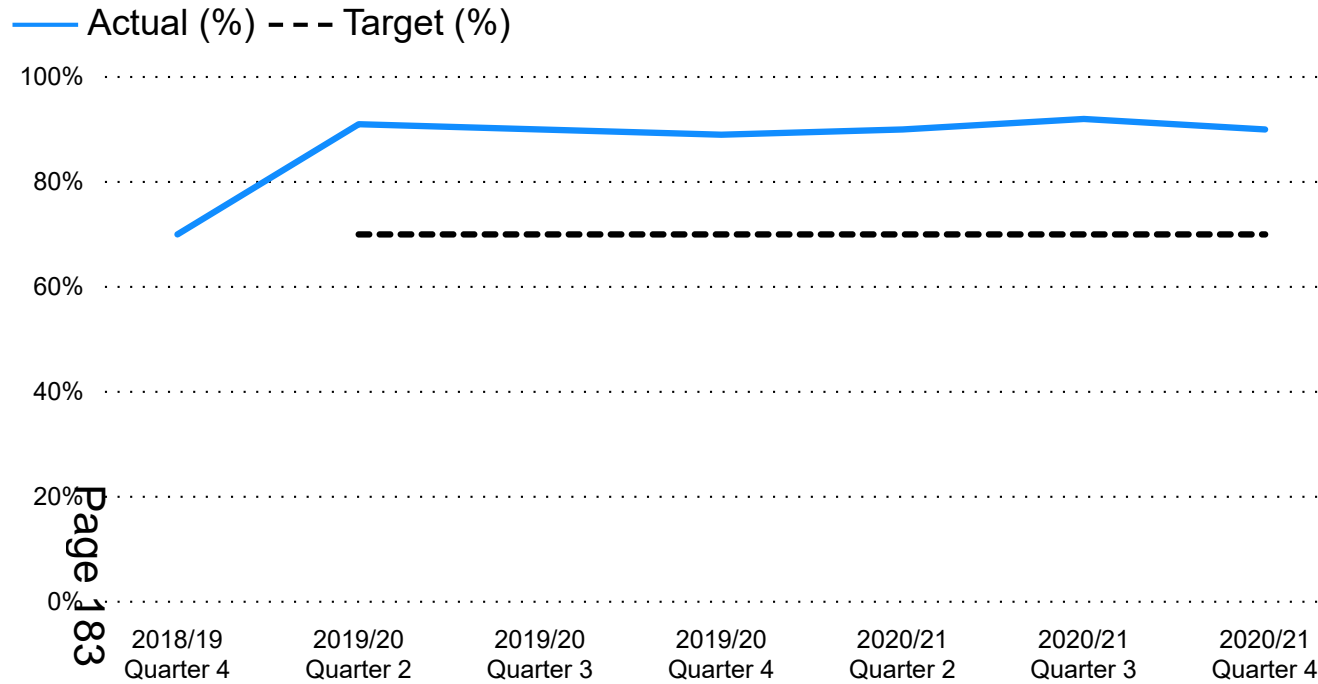
End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
217.00		↑	

Comment

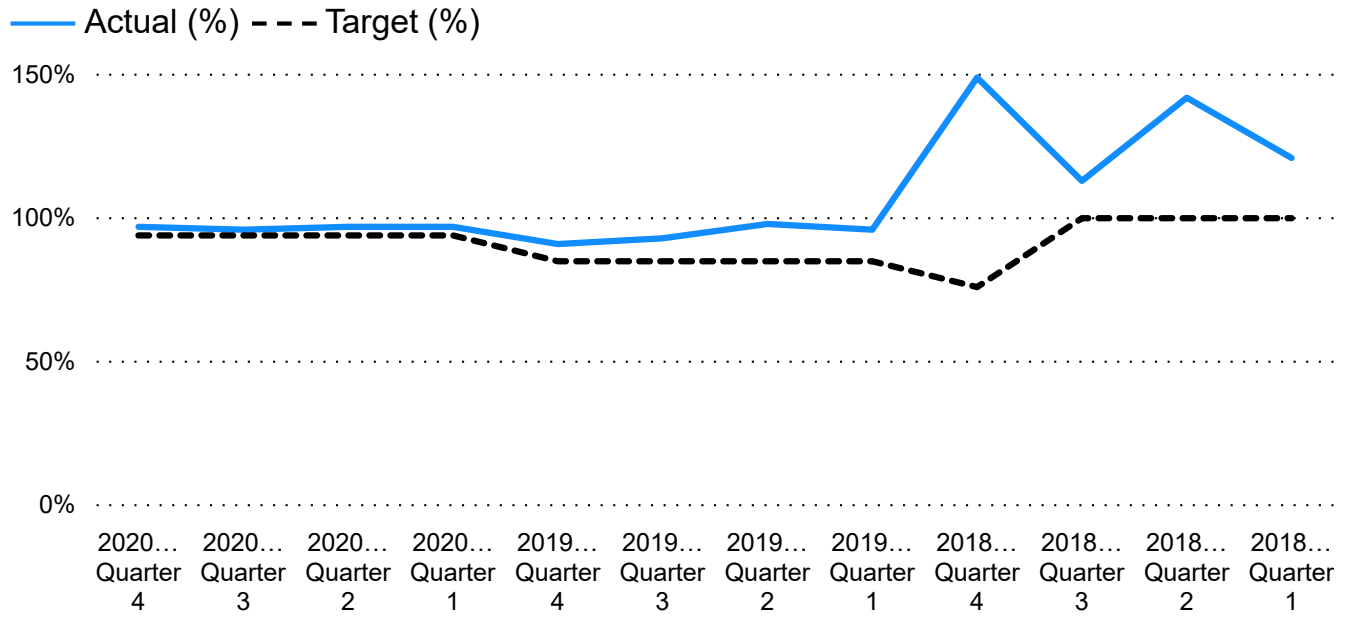
No target set - The data for this measure comes from the Health Board. We do not set a target on their behalf because we do not influence the numbers of people coming through. However, we consider this to be an important measure in terms of how effectively the Partnership are using the funding.

Social Services - Portfolio Measures

Percentage of equipment that is re-used



The percentage of adult safeguarding enquiries that met the 7 day timescale



End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
90.67%	70.00%	↑	●

End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
96.75%	94.00%	↑	●

Comment

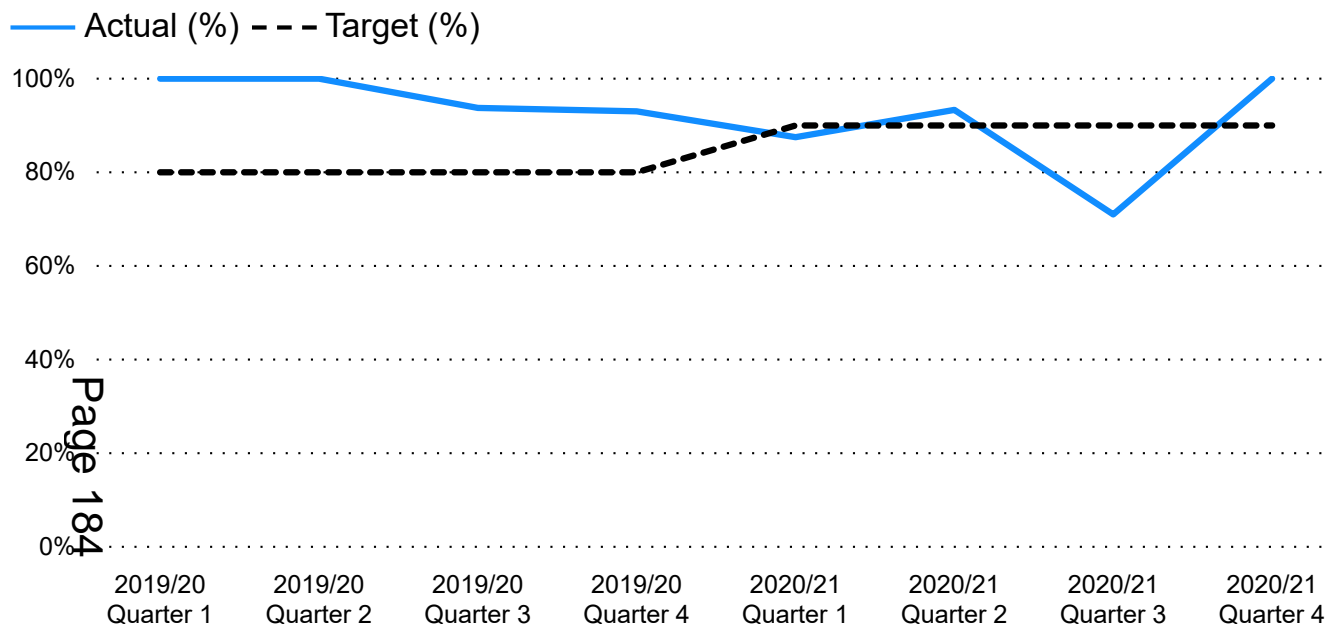
The standard of 70% is set nationally by the "National Minimum Standards for Community Equipment Services in Wales". However, the North East Wales Community Equipment Service (NEWCES) consistently achieve better than what is requested, with an average of approximately 90% re-use of equipment rather than throwing it away. By doing this there is a yearly cost avoidance of over £2m.

Comment

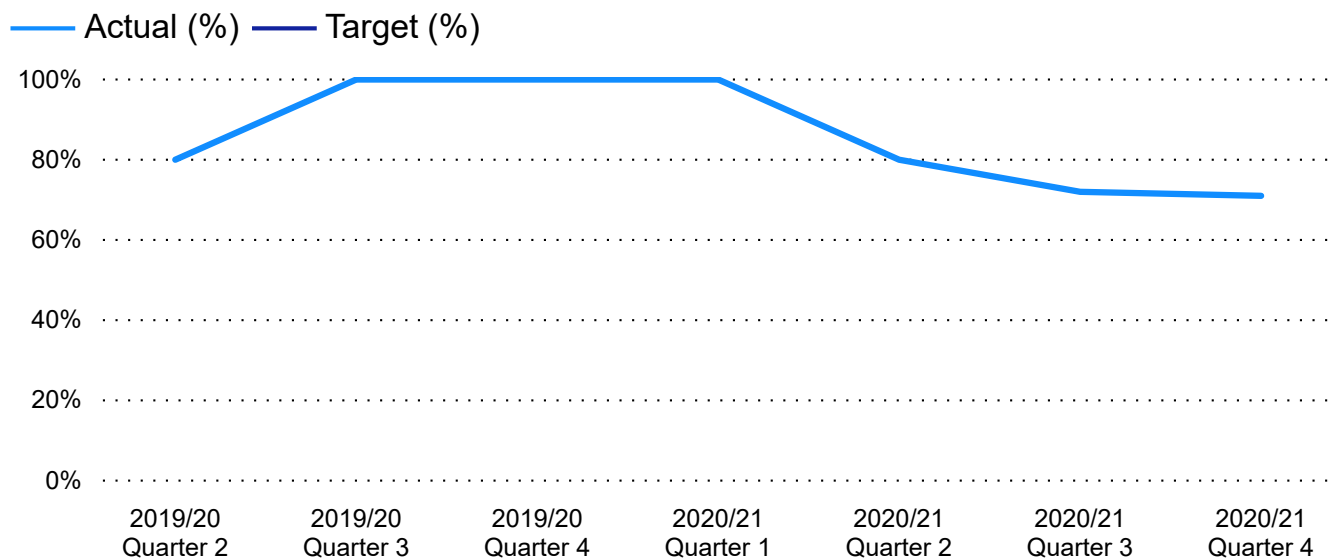
The realignment of the service in 2019 has made it more effective, which is illustrated by the increase in performance over the last two years. We have been able to show a further improvement this year, possibly due to the change from face to face to digital working, by reducing travel and scheduling time. The Safeguarding Unit continue to prioritise enquiries within the 7 day timescale.

Social Services - Portfolio Measures

The percentage pre-birth assessments completed within timescales



The percentage of children who were reported as having run away or gone missing from home who had a return interview



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End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
89.00%	90.00%	↓	▲

Comment

Pre-birth assessments are carried out in line with the North Wales Multi-Agency Pre-Birth Pathway. Sometimes assessments do not meet timescales because of mum's late presentation to Health.

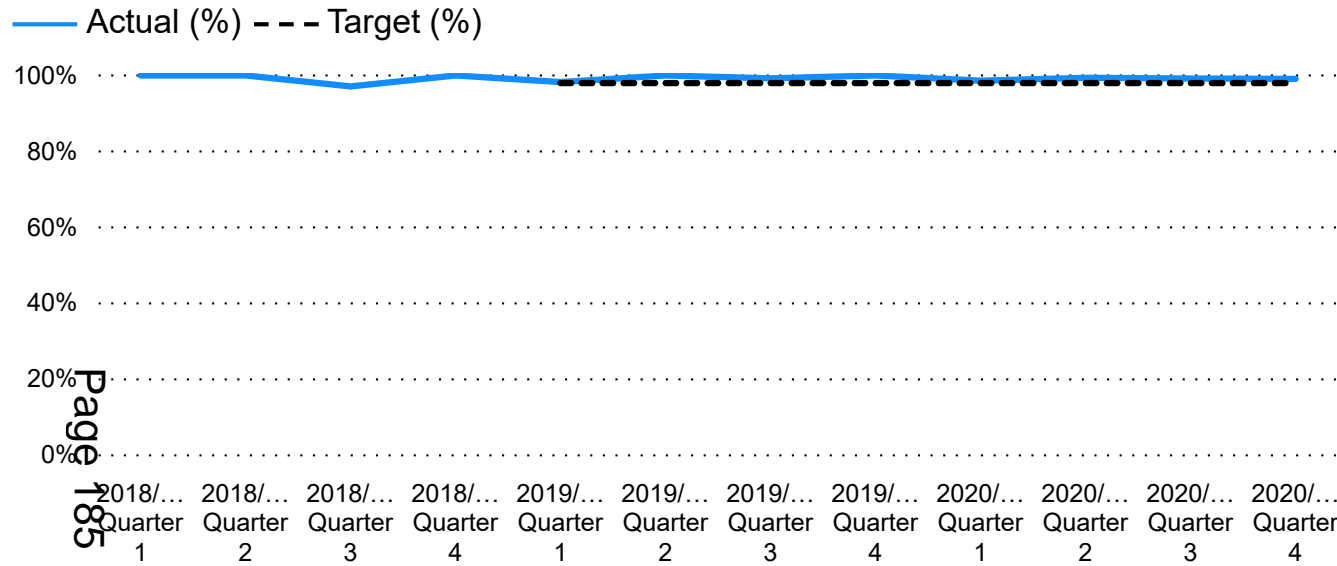
End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
74.33%		↓	

Comment

All children are offered a return home interview, but some decline to engage.

Social Services - Portfolio Measures

The percentage of reviews of children on the Child Protection Register due in the year that were carried out within the statutory timescales

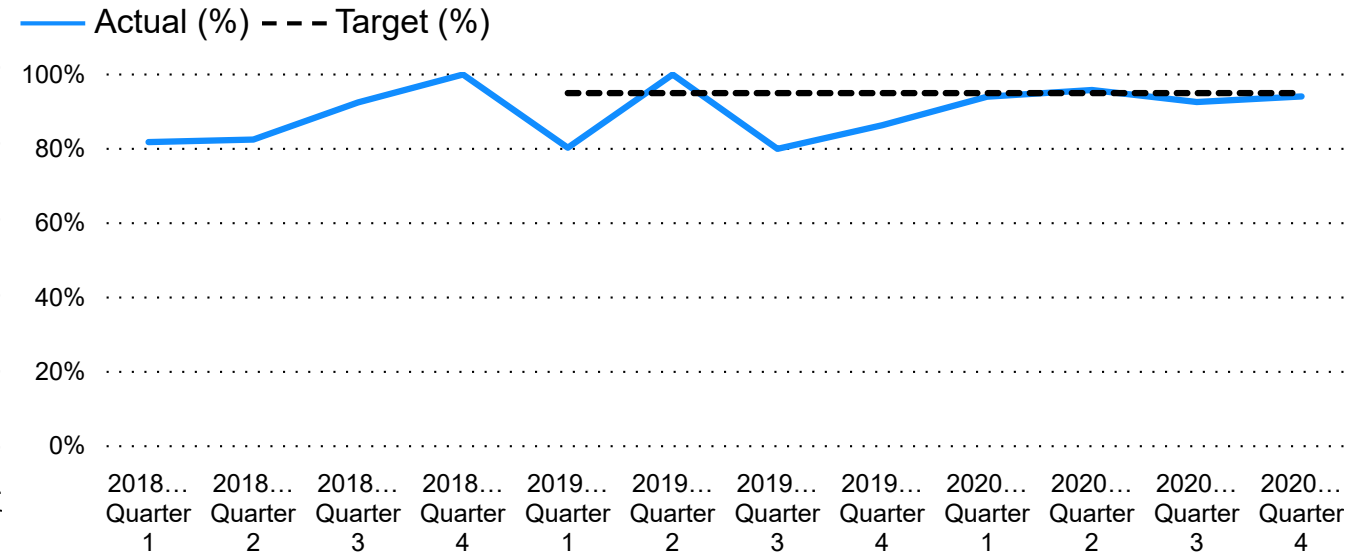


End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
99.08%	98.00%	↓	●

Comment

Child Protection conferences can be delayed for a number of reasons, including the availability of family and professionals, court decisions, or in the interests of the children. All delays are approved by a manger prior to the conference taking place.

The percentage of initial child protection conferences that were due in the year and were held within 15 working days of the strategy discussion



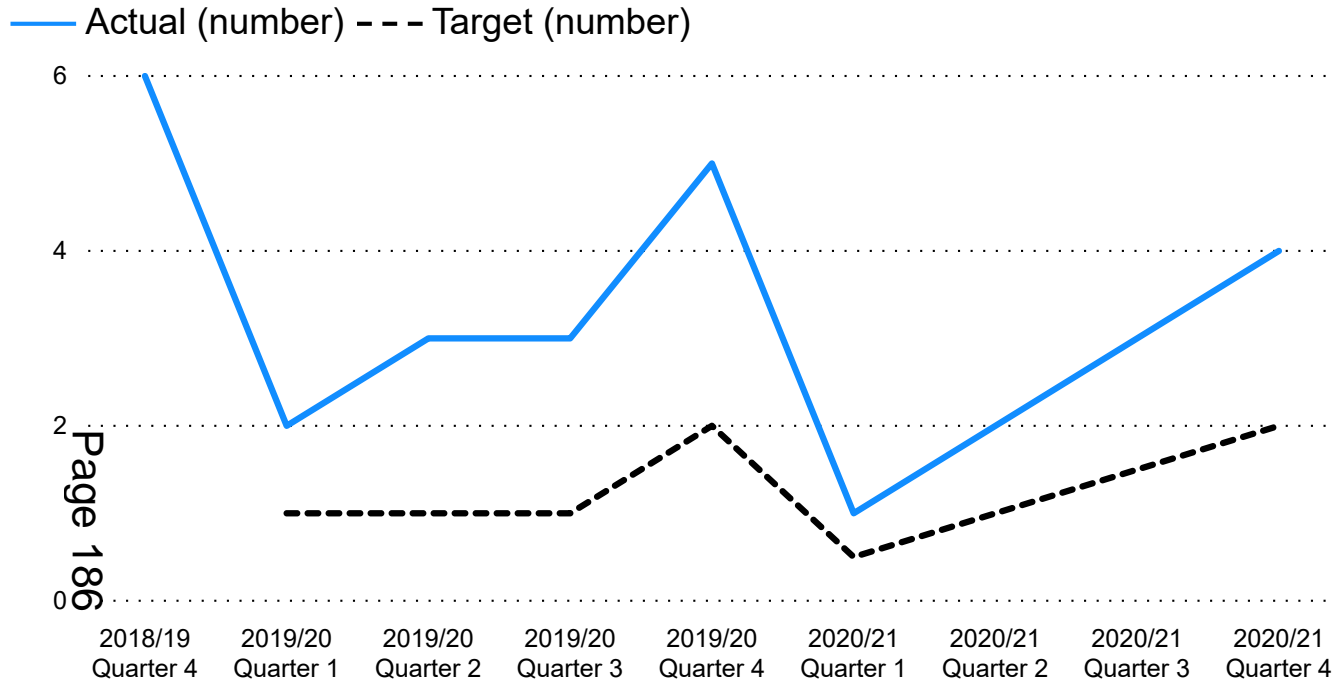
End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
94.14%	95.00%	↑	▲

Comment

Child Protection conferences can be delayed for a number of reasons, including the availability of family and professionals, court decisions, or in the interests of the children. All delays are approved by a manger prior to the conference taking place.

Social Services - Portfolio Measures

Number of Special Guardianship Orders made

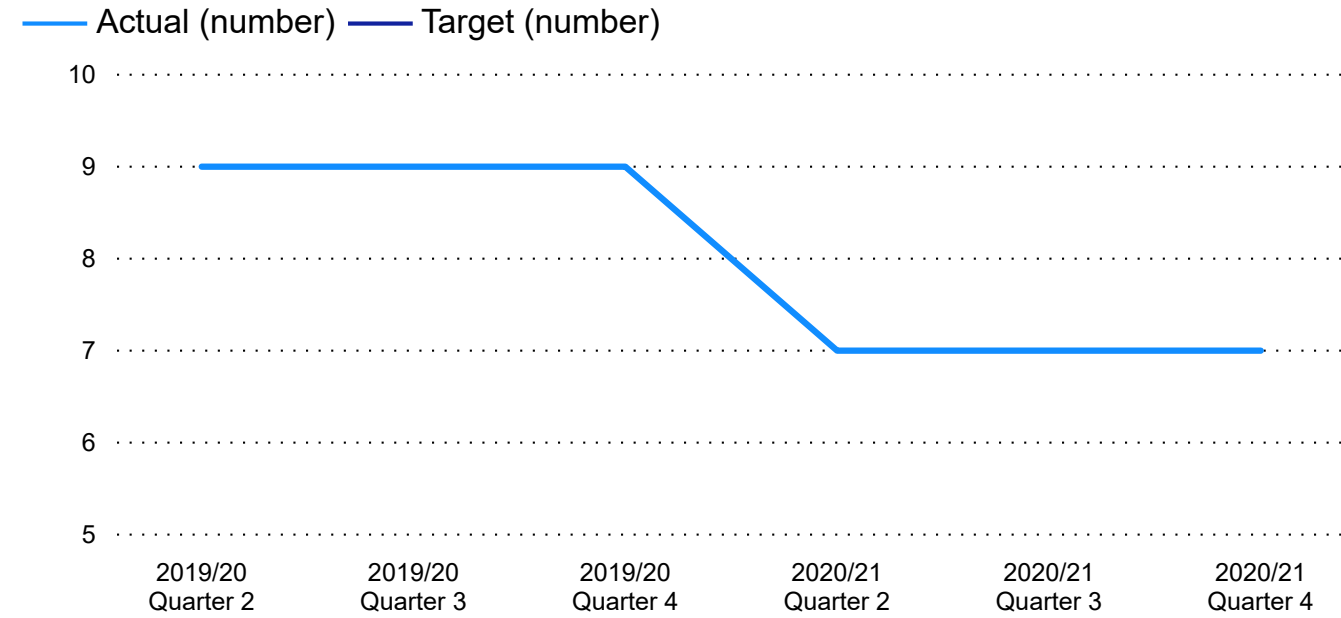


End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
4.00	2.00	↓	●

Comment

Four children this year were prevented from entering the care system through the award of Special Guardianship Orders to family members.

People with a learning disability accessing Project Search to improve their employability skills



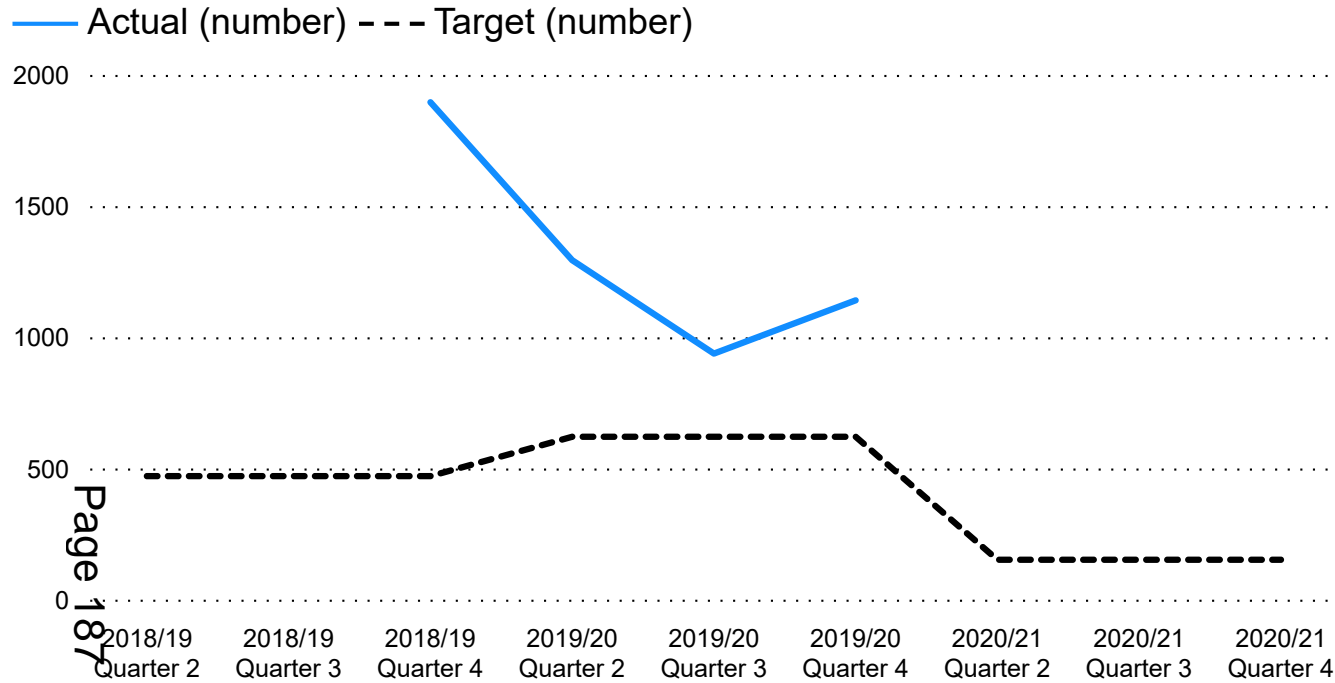
End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
7.00	-	↓	-

Comment

No target set - Seven young people enrolled in Project Search in the September intake.

Social Services - Portfolio Measures

Number of children who accessed the Childcare offer

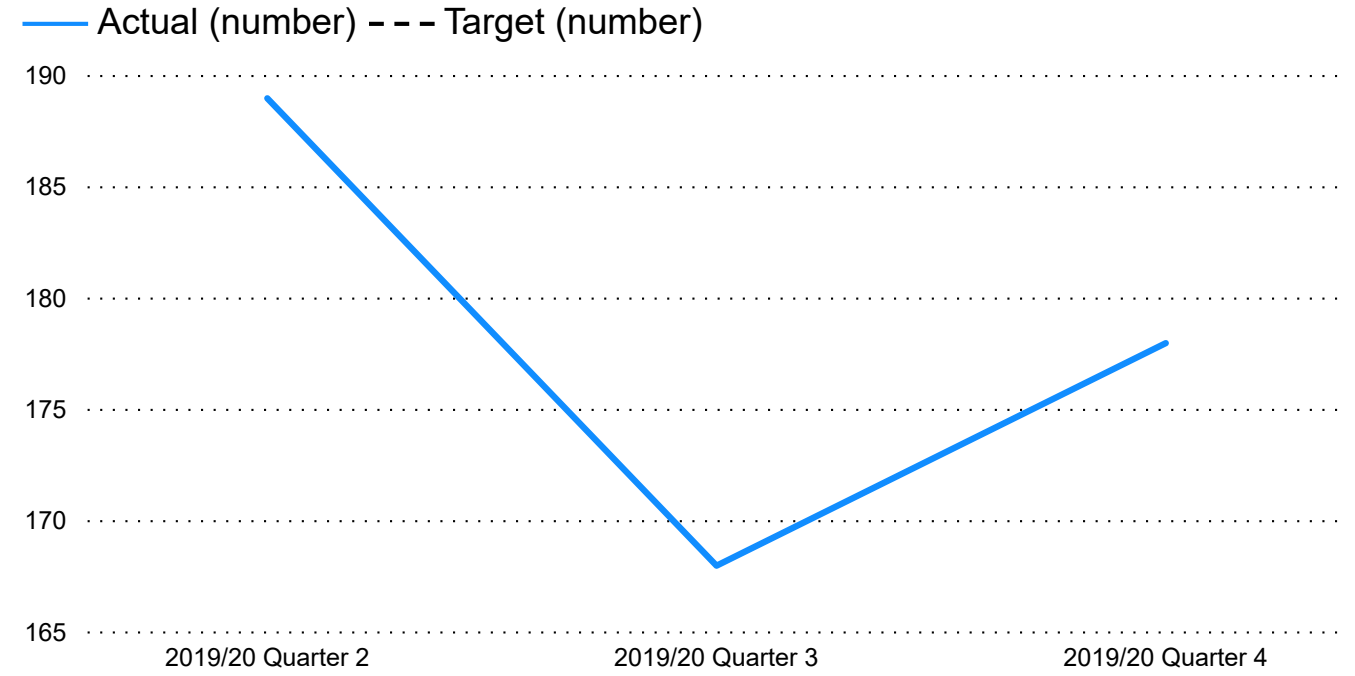


End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
	625.00		

Comment

In line with Welsh Government COVID-19 guidance, the childcare offer was suspended. The funding has been used to support pre-school children of keyworkers, identified vulnerable children or those with additional needs, and also to support 5-8 year olds in summer play schemes.

Number of childcare providers



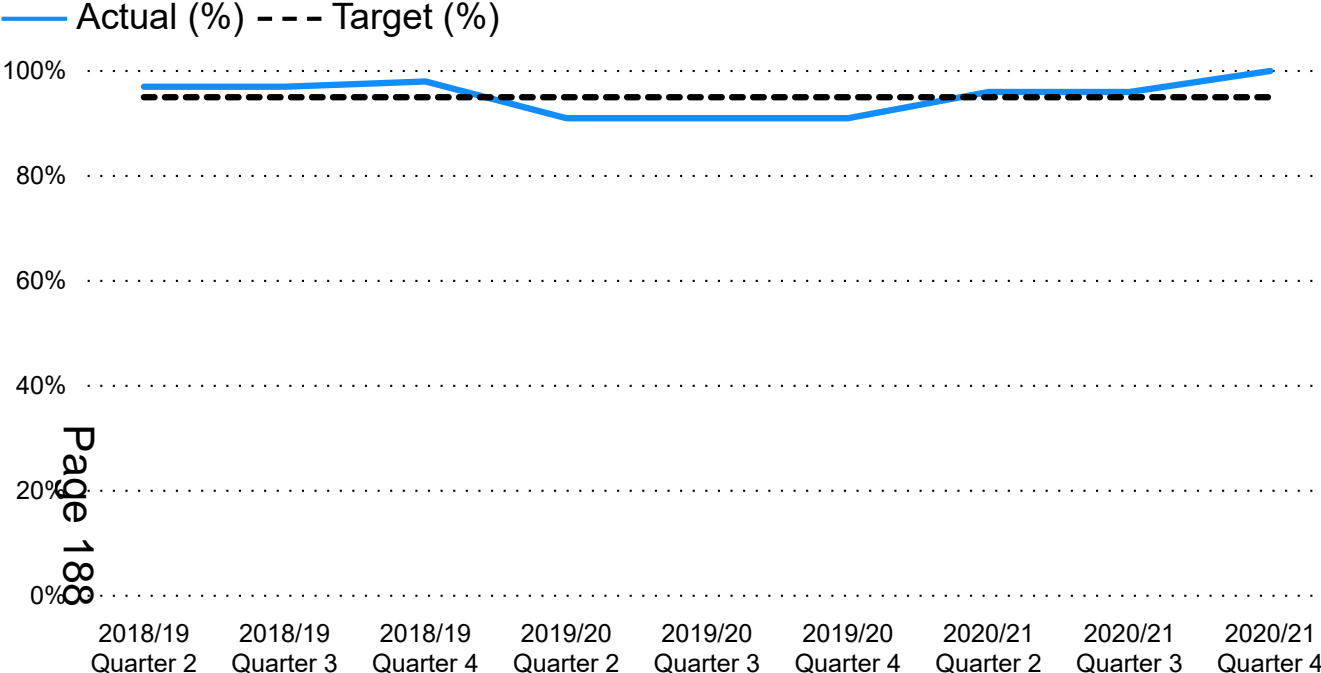
End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating

Comment

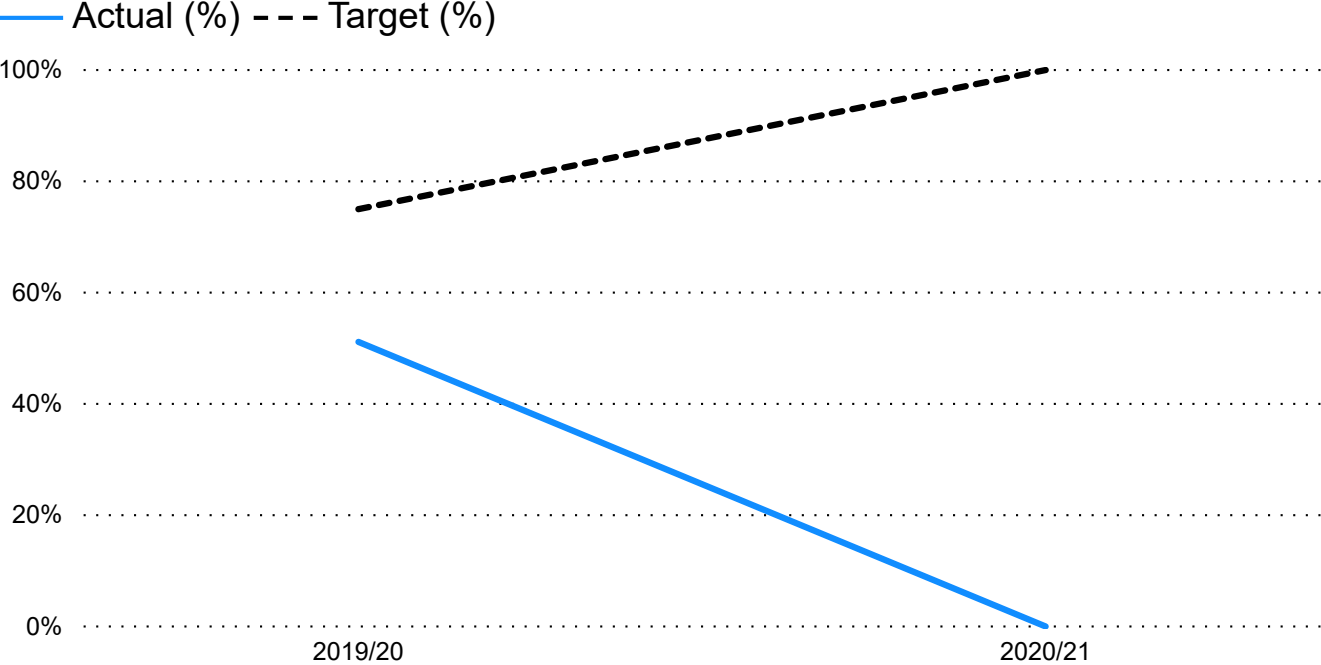
No target set - Due to the suspension of the scheme, no providers contributed to the childcare offer.

Chief Executives Team - Corporate Finance - Recovery Measures

Percentage of planned efficiencies achieved



Percentage of income target achieved



End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
100.00%	95.00%	↑	●

End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
0.00%	100.00%	↓	◆

Comment

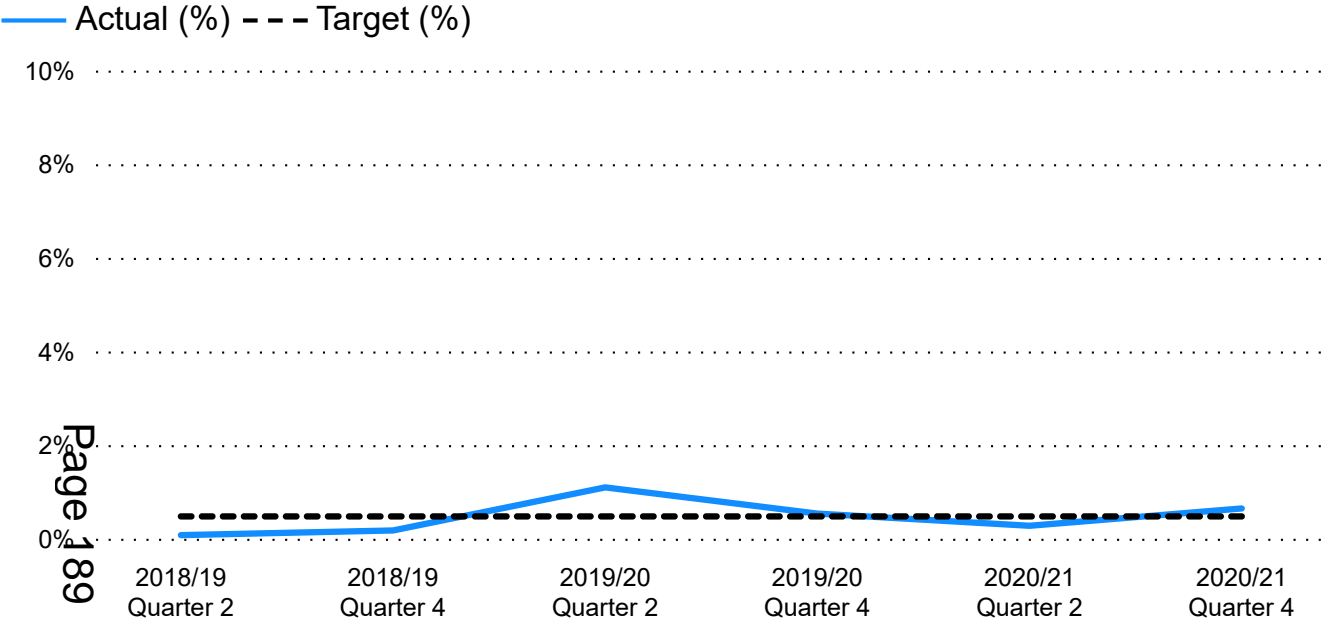
The Council has target of £5.206m of efficiencies in 2020/21 which are monitored on a monthly basis. The target is to achieve 95% of these as reflected in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) KPI's. As at Month 11 it is projected that £5.357m will be achieved.

Comment

A review of fees and charges was undertaken in October 2020 and increases implemented where possible. The impact of the pandemic on Council Services has meant that there has been a reduction in levels of income this year.

Chief Executives Team - Corporate Finance - Recovery Measures

Percentage variance between the revenue budget outturn and the budget set



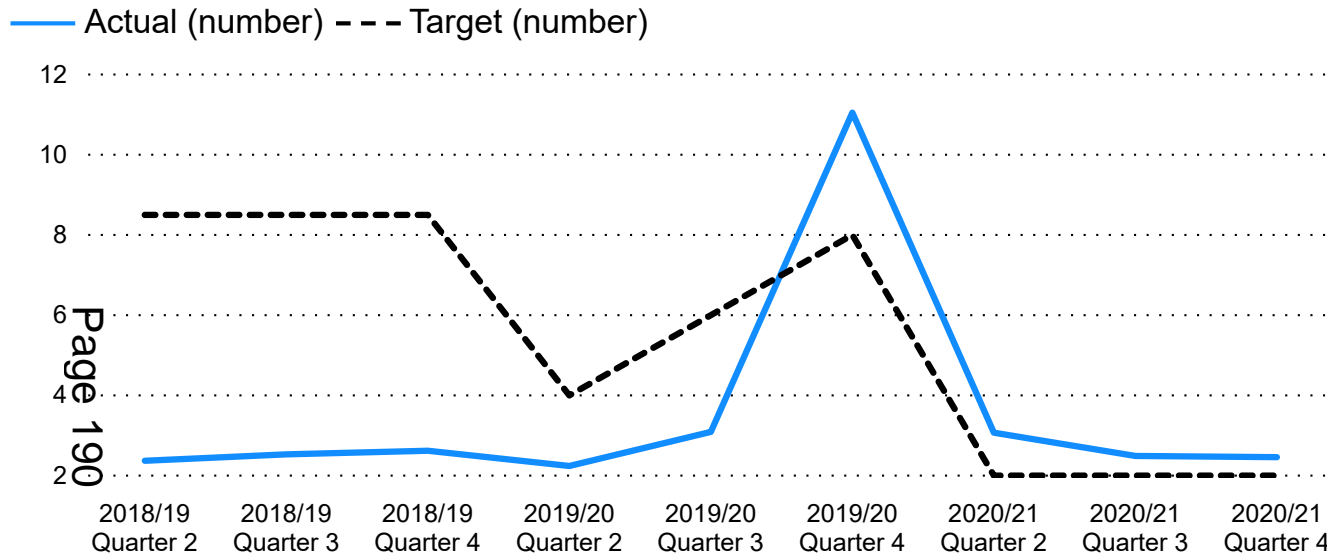
End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
0.67%	0.50%	▲	●

Comment

The Month 11 revenue monitoring report is showing a projected outturn variance of £2.027m underspend against budget. This is marginally above the target Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) KPI for a variance against budget of 0.5%. The final outturn position will be reported in July.

Chief Executives Team - HR & Organisational Development - Recovery Measures

The number of working days lost per full time equivalent (FTE) local authority employees lost due to sickness absence

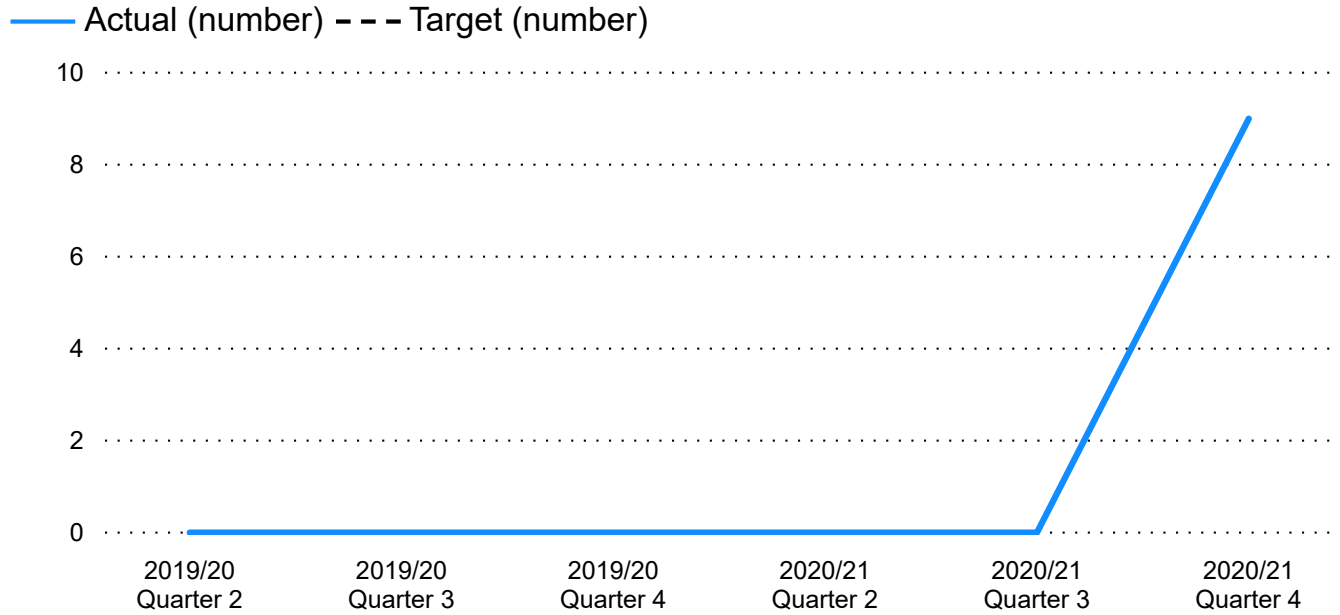


End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
8.02	8.00	↑	●

Comment

The COVID-19 pandemic has seen a change in the way that all workgroups undertake their work. As we continue to navigate new legislation and provide guidance for complex situational questions, to tackle the short and long term obstacles associated with the impact of COVID-19 it has been necessary to provide regular communications and updated guidance to managers and employees.

Number of accredited Mental Health First Aiders across the organisation



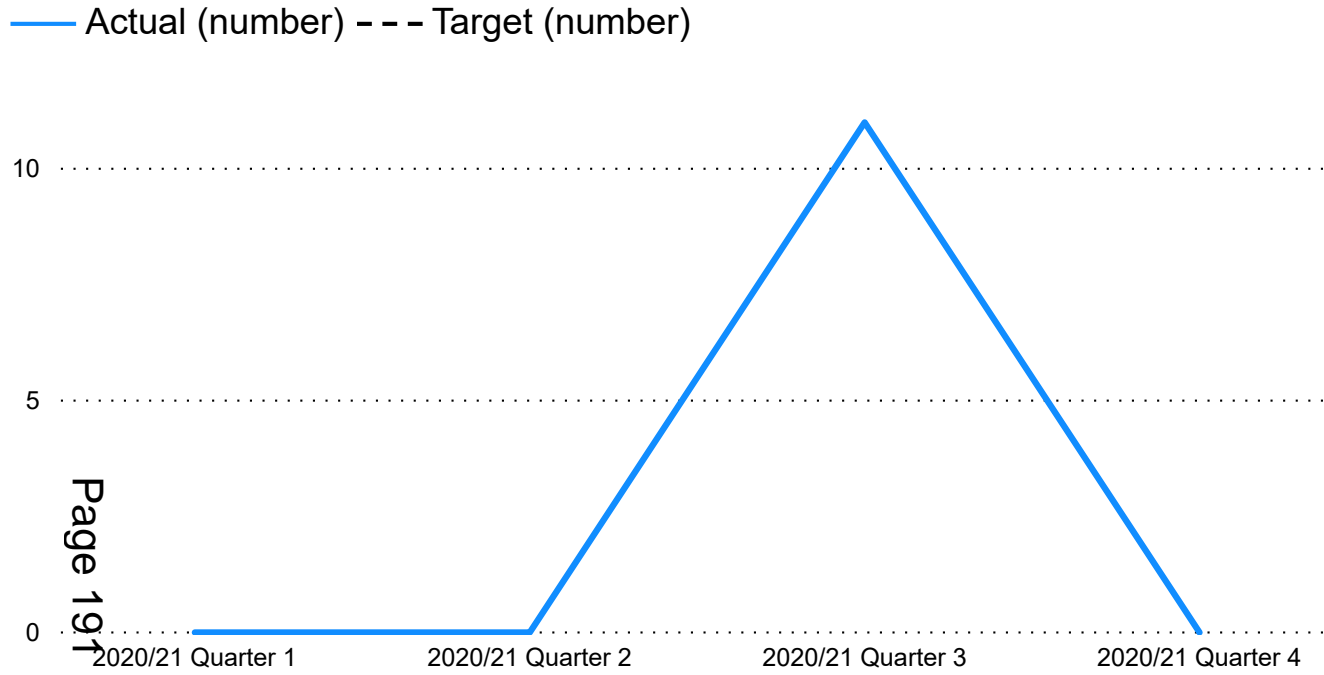
End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
9.00	0.00		

Comment

No target set - Mental Health Awareness courses have been made available across the organisation which has had an excellent take up by employees. The next phase is to provide the necessary training required to increase the number of accredited Mental Health First Aiders.

Chief Executives Team - HR & Organisational Development - Recovery Measures

Increase in attendance at 'Coaching Skills for Managers'

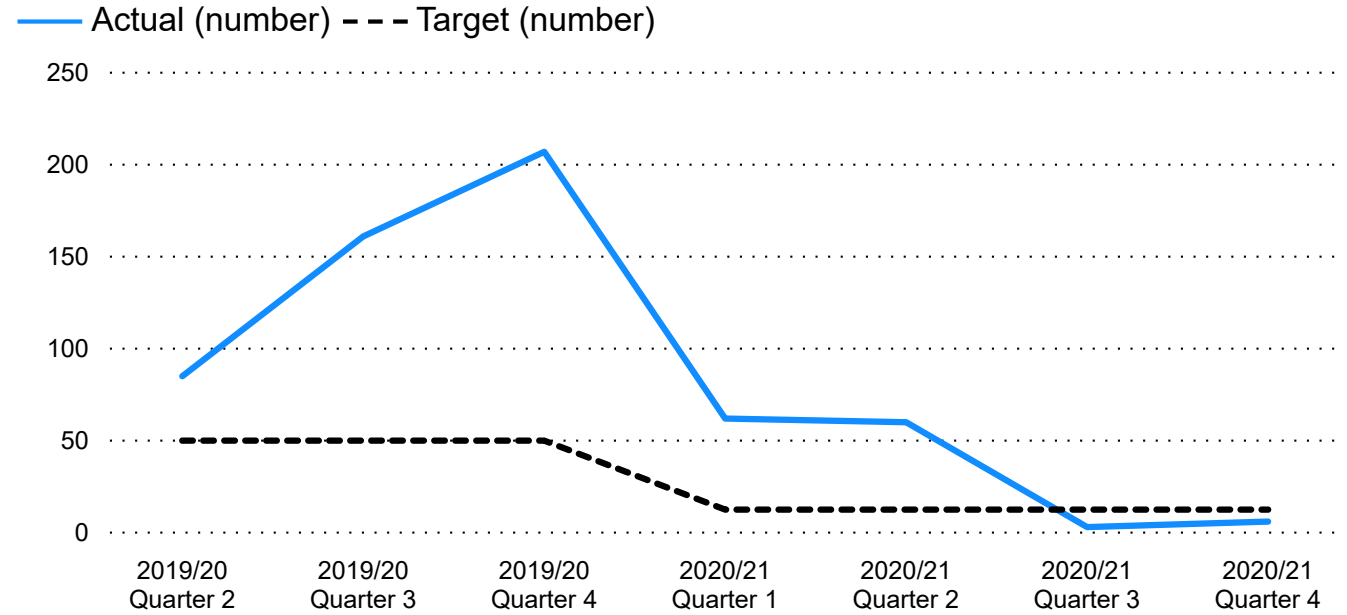


End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
11.00			

Comment

No target set - We were able to deliver online training and promotion during quarter three, which saw a sharp rise in attendance. This has not been replicated for quarter four, however we will be looking to maintain the quarter three levels in the coming months.

Increase in attendance of managers and employee Stress Management training



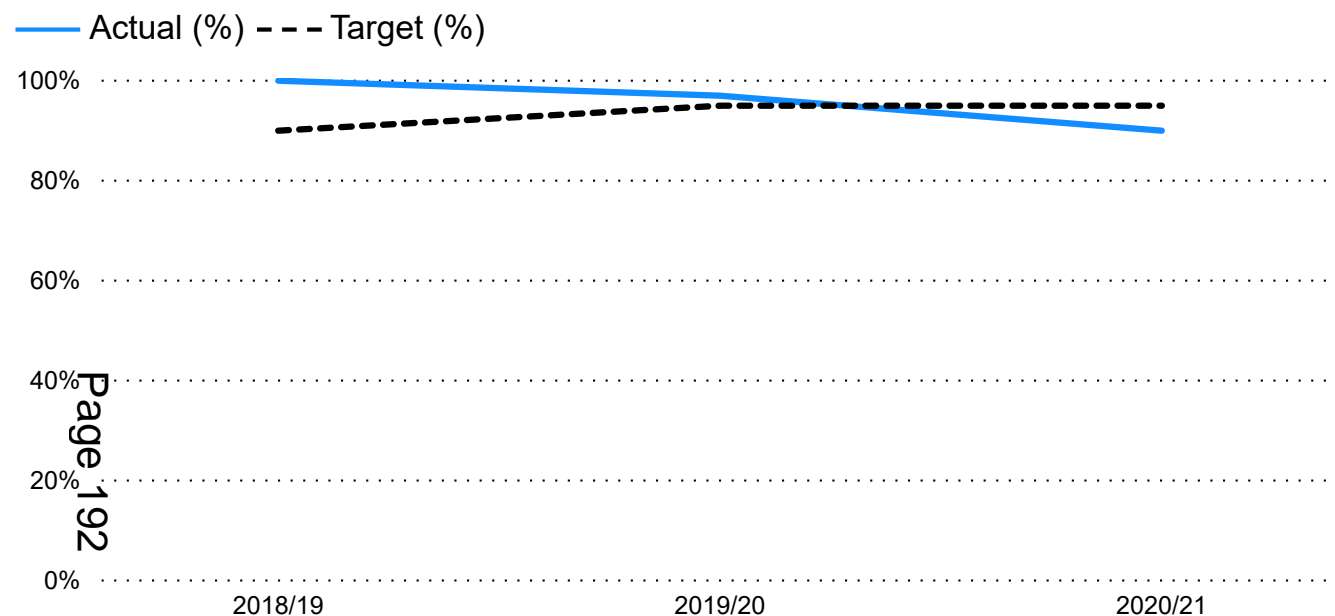
End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
131.00	50.00	↓	●

Comment

The COVID pandemic has presented different challenges to our workforce and as a result of active promotion, we saw an increase in the attendance of managers and employees at a range of awareness training sessions including stress awareness and mindfulness.

Chief Executives Team - HR & Organisational Development - Recovery Measures

The number of apprentices that complete the programme with a positive outcome



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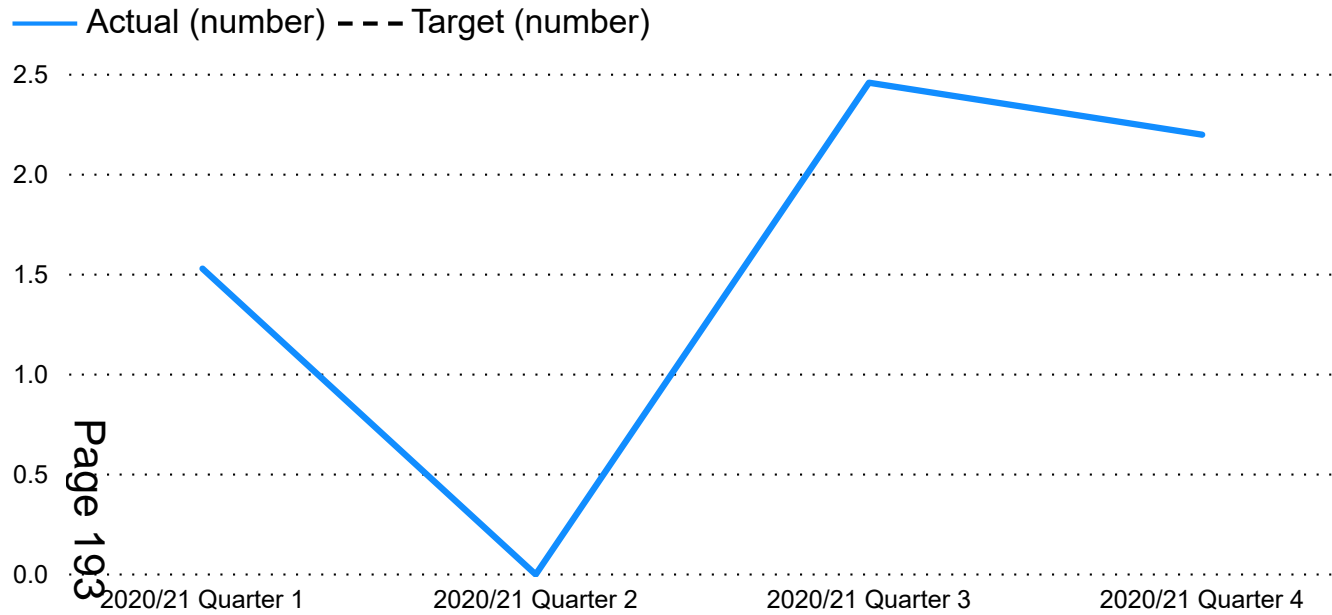
End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
90.00%	95.00%	↓	▲

Comment

A key outcome of our programme is our success rate by our apprentices obtaining employment internally or externally, or go onto Higher Education. The small number who do not progress are supported to consider their next steps, whether to go to college or to find employment. The outturn of a positive outcome for 2020/2021 was 90%. An apprentice was unfortunately made redundant due to the closure of hospitality during the pandemic. However, the Council ensured that the apprentice was able to have observations in College so that they obtained the qualifications that was part of the programme.

Chief Executives Team - HR & Organisational Development - Recovery Measures

Number of full time equivalent (FTE) lost to sickness (non-COVID)



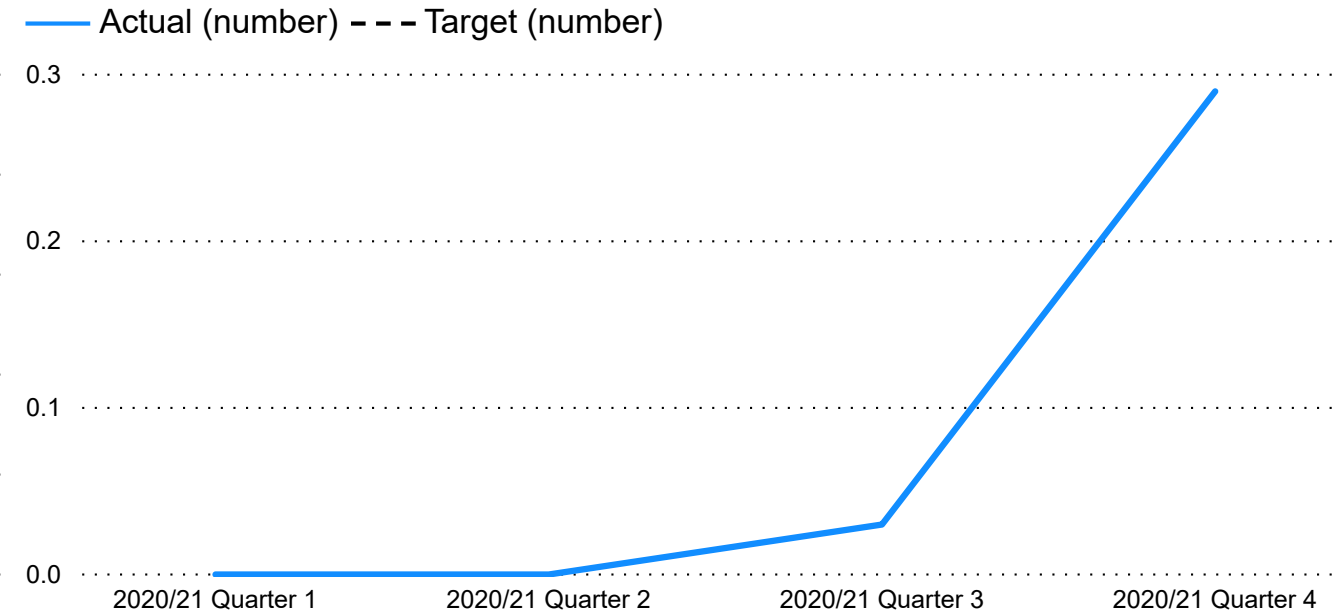
End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
2.20	0.5		

2.20

Comment

Baseline Year - Attendance has been managed very closely throughout the pandemic as managers and employees have had to learn to manage a range of new and complex scenarios such as self-isolation, household isolation and COVID absence. As we continue to navigate new legislation and provide guidance for complex situational questions, to tackle the short and long term obstacles associated with the impact of COVID-19 it has been necessary to provide regular communications and updated guidance to managers and employees.

Number of days full time equivalent lost to (FTE) sickness (COVID)



End of Year Actual (No.)	End of Year Target (No.)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
0.32	0.0		

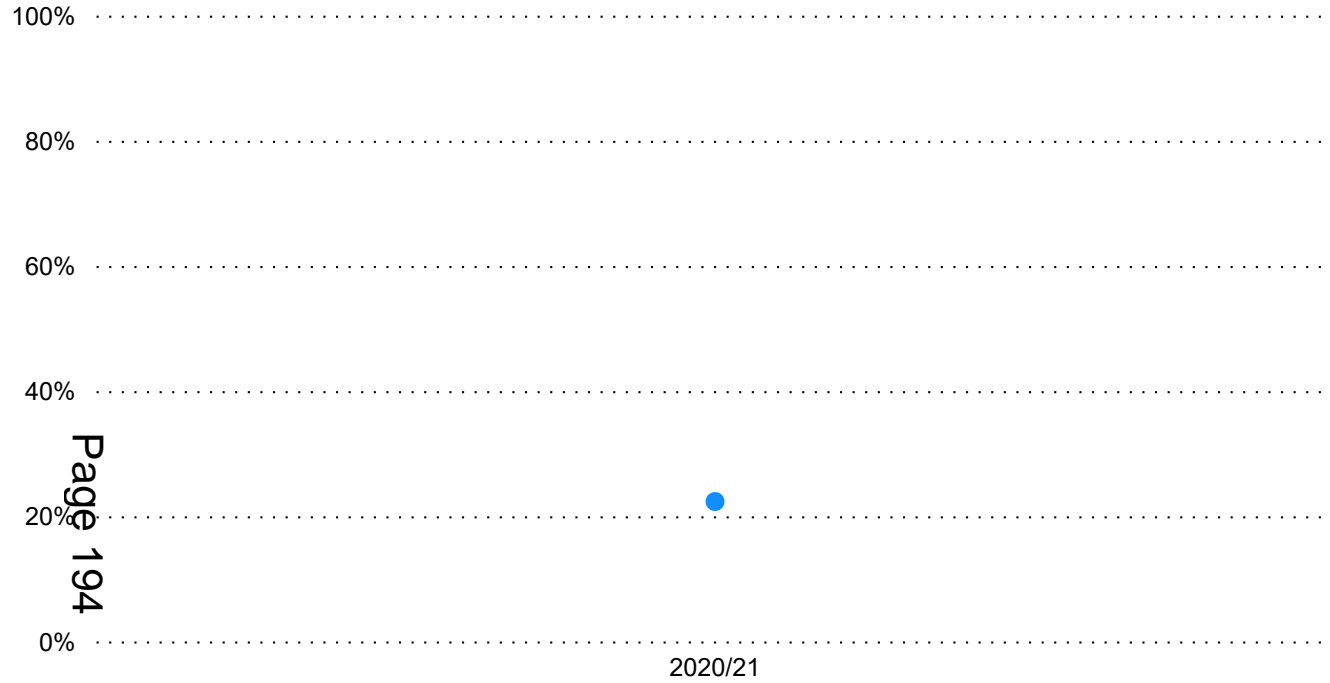
0.32

Comment

Baseline Year - Attendance has been managed very closely throughout the pandemic as managers and employees have had to learn to manage a range of new and complex scenarios such as self-isolation, household isolation and COVID absence. As we continue to navigate new legislation and provide guidance for complex situational questions, to tackle the short and long term obstacles associated with the impact of COVID-19 it has been necessary to provide regular communications and updated guidance to managers and employees.

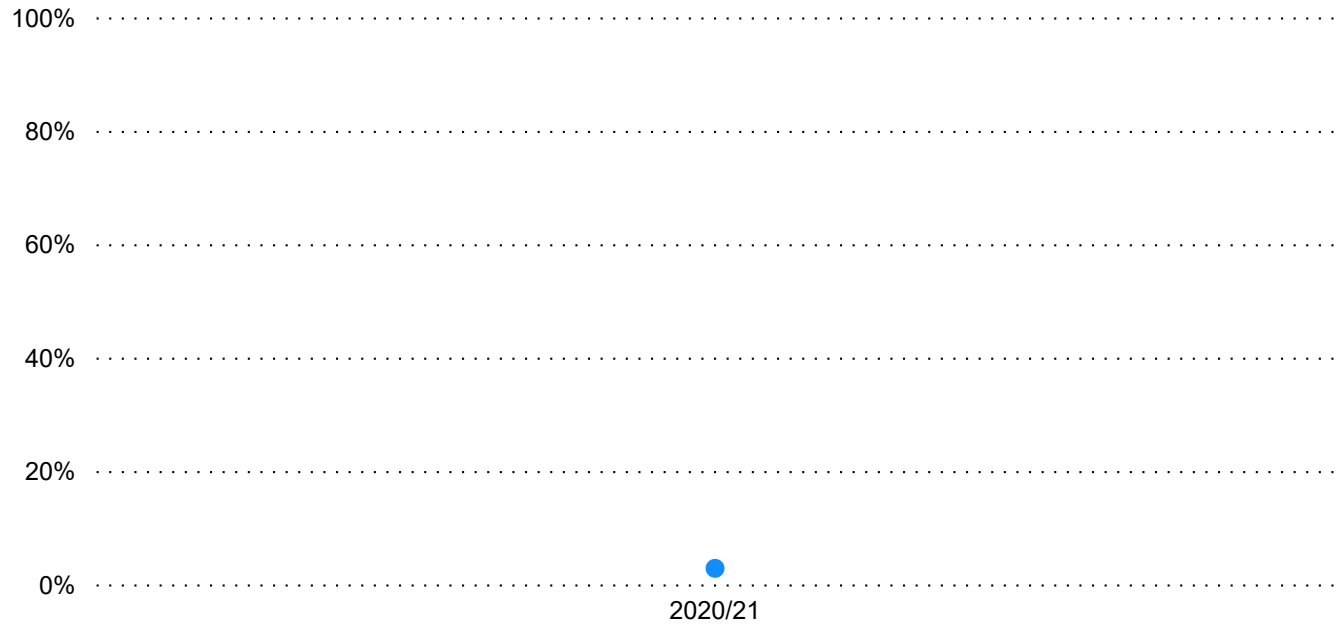
Chief Executives Team - HR & Organisational Development - Portfolio Measures

Percentage of workforce who self-isolated (total)



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Percentage of workforce who were shielding or clinically vulnerable



End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
22.53%			

22.53%

End of Year Actual (%)	End of Year Target (%)	Trend	Current RAG Rating
3.03%			

3.03%

Comment

Comment



CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 15 th June 2021
Report Subject	Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report 2020/21
Cabinet Member	Deputy Leader of the Council (Governance) and Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets
Report Author	Chief Executive
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present the Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report 2020/21 (Appendix 1).

The Council has a statutory duty to publish an annual report setting out how we have met the Welsh Language Standards (WLS). The Standards which we are required to meet are set out in a Compliance Notice. These are unique to each organisation and specify what each organisations is expected to implement in Welsh and the time period for compliance.

This report provides an overview of our progress in complying with the Welsh Language Standards and identifies areas for further progress and improvement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Approve the Annual Monitoring Report prior to publication, noting areas for further progress and improvement.
2	The Welsh Language Annual Report is included on the forward work programme of the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration.
3.	Cabinet to receive a mid-year report on the progress made in-year.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE WELSH LANGUAGE ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21
1.01	<p>The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 enables the Welsh Ministers to specify Standards for the Welsh language. The aim of the Standards is to continue and develop the work of the former Welsh Language Schemes by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improving the services Welsh speakers can expect to receive from organisations in Welsh • increasing the use people make of Welsh language services • making it clear to organisations what they need to do in terms of the Welsh language • ensuring that there is an appropriate degree of consistency of the duties placed on bodies in the same sectors.
1.02	<p>The Welsh Language Commissioner (WLC) served Compliance Notices on each of the 22 local authorities in Wales in September 2015 identifying the Standards by which they must comply.</p> <p>The Welsh Standards Compliance Notice for Flintshire County Council lists 171 Standards: for service delivery; policy making; operational matters, promotion and record keeping. The Standards require the Council to publish an annual report setting out how the standards have been met. This year the WLC has set out guidance on the format and content of the annual report.</p>
1.03	<p>The Welsh Language Annual Report provides an opportunity to set out what the Council has done to meet the Standards and to facilitate and promote the use of Welsh. There have been some areas of improvement and achievement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion rates of our Welsh language skills assessment – increase to 98.46% from 97.18%. There are now only 43 employees who need to complete the assessment. • Reduction in number of employees who do not have any Welsh language skills from 38.18% (1096) to 35.45% (992) employees. • Celebrated St David’s Day through supporting Menter Iaith Fflint a Wrecsam to provide virtual activities, such as a virtual parade with a performance by Band Cambria, cookery recipes and providing competitions. Schools, Extra care schemes and residential homes participated in these events as well as the local community. • Participated in Welsh language rights day in which we posted videos via social media of some of our Welsh speaking employees to encourage our customers to contact us in Welsh and use our Welsh services.
1.04	<p>Although there are positive areas of progress, some issues remain as areas in which to progress and improve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing our employees’ Welsh language skills, particularly those in public facing posts to support services deliver bilingual services. The Learning and Development Team has been

promoting taster courses to encourage employees to start learning Welsh.

- ensuring consistent compliance with the Standards on our website, social media and public documents - Welsh needs to be equal to English.

1.05

Complaints

We received two complaints about Welsh language and a further three complaints were reported directly to the Welsh Language Commissioner. Details of these are included in the annual report and summarised below:

Complaints Service Delivery	Details
Council Tax	<p>Council Tax form not available in Welsh on the website and the complainant did not receive a call back when contacting the Welsh telephone line.</p> <p>The website was checked, forms were available in Welsh and the website -English and Welsh pages were working correctly.</p> <p>An apology was issued to the customer as an employee had not passed on the message</p>
Tweets retweeted through Gov Delivery	<p>Tweets showed incorrectly on a customer's device - misspellings and Welsh did not make sense. Potentially an issue with the complainant's device as they showed correctly on Gov Delivery.</p>
Complaints made directly to the Welsh Language Commissioner	
Complaints Service Delivery	Details
Corporate Communications	<p>Tweets published in English on Welsh Twitter site. The Welsh Language Commissioner decided not to proceed to a full investigation given the exceptional context (national pandemic) when the mistake happened.</p>

	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Corporate Communications</td> <td> <p>English published on the Welsh version on Gov Delivery newsletter.</p> <p>The Welsh Language Commissioner decided not to proceed to a full investigation given the exceptional context (national pandemic) when the mistake happened.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Clwyd Pension Fund</td> <td> <p>Welsh inaccurate on the website and English on some of the Welsh pages. The complainant did not receive a call back when contacting the Welsh line.</p> <p>The Welsh Language Commissioner is currently investigating</p> </td> </tr> </table>	Corporate Communications	<p>English published on the Welsh version on Gov Delivery newsletter.</p> <p>The Welsh Language Commissioner decided not to proceed to a full investigation given the exceptional context (national pandemic) when the mistake happened.</p>	Clwyd Pension Fund	<p>Welsh inaccurate on the website and English on some of the Welsh pages. The complainant did not receive a call back when contacting the Welsh line.</p> <p>The Welsh Language Commissioner is currently investigating</p>
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Clwyd Pension Fund	<p>Welsh inaccurate on the website and English on some of the Welsh pages. The complainant did not receive a call back when contacting the Welsh line.</p> <p>The Welsh Language Commissioner is currently investigating</p>				
1.06	<p>Next Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A mid-year report on the areas for further progress and improvement will be considered by Cabinet. • The members of the Welsh Language Leads Network are undertaking a self-assessment of their Portfolio/service compliance with the Standards. This will help us to identify areas to target improvement actions. • Work with our Welsh Language Network to reduce the number of employees who report that they do not have any Welsh language skills. • Commissioned a Mystery Shopper exercise to review a sample of pages and documents on our website to ensure they comply with the Standards. 				

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	<p>Human Resources: A training programme is required to ensure employees have the skills and knowledge to meet these statutory duties. A budget for Welsh language training is held by the Learning and Development Team.</p> <p>Revenue/Capital: There are no revenue / capital implications.</p>

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT	
3.01	A full integrated impact assessment is not required for this report, as it is a report on progress and compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.	
3.02	Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact	
	Long-term	Positive - safeguarding the Welsh language for future generations and increasing access to services through the medium of Welsh.
	Prevention	Positive- increasing the number of people using and speaking Welsh.
	Integration	No change
	Collaboration	Positive – through supporting other plans and strategies such as the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and “More than Words” Framework which aims to increase the use of Welsh in health and social care services.
	Involvement	No change
3.03	Well-being Goals Impact	
	Prosperous Wales	No impact
	Resilient Wales	No impact
	Healthier Wales	No impact
	More equal Wales	Positive – through increasing access to bilingual services and ensuring that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language.
	Cohesive Wales	No impact
	Vibrant Wales	Positive - through promoting the Welsh language
	Globally responsible Wales	No impact

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	No formal consultations were required for this report but key officers and services have made a contribution to the content of the report.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Welsh Language Annual Report 2020/21

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Welsh Language Standards Compliance Notice

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Fiona Mocko, Strategic Policy Advisor Telephone: 01352 702122 E-mail: Fiona.mocko@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	<p>Compliance Notice: specifies the exact Welsh Language Standards that each organisation should have to comply with and also the date by which they are required to comply with a standard.</p> <p>Menter Iaith Fflint a Wrecsam: an organisation funded by Welsh Government to support and promote the Welsh language in the county.</p> <p>Welsh Language Measure: Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011: confirms the official status of Welsh, creates a new system of placing duties on bodies to provide services through the medium of Welsh and creating the post of Language Commissioner with enforcement powers.</p> <p>Welsh Language Standards: specific standards of conduct in relation to the Welsh language.</p>

Welsh Language Standards Annual Report

Cymraeg

April 2020 -
March 2021

Welsh Language Standards Annual Report April 2020 - March 2021

We can provide this information in alternative formats or in your own language

Corporate Business and Communication Team

Corporate Services

County Hall

Mold

Flintshire

CH7 6NG

Tel: ☎ 01352 702131

Email: ✉ corporatebusiness@flintshire.gov.uk

Mae'r cyhoeddiad hwn ar gael yn Gymraeg

Welsh Language Standards Annual Monitoring Report 2020 - 2021

Executive Summary

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Appendices

Appendix 1	Welsh Language Skills Self-Assessment Tool	
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Executive Summary

The Welsh Language Standards came into force on 30 March 2016 and the Council was required to comply with 146 Standards by this date. Further Standards came into force at a later date; totalling 171 in all. Many of the Standards that apply to the Council reflect the commitments in our previous Welsh Language Scheme and our existing practice and commitments to Welsh language.

This is the fifth Welsh Language Standards Annual Monitoring Report and covers the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. It shows actions we have been taking to comply with the Standards and includes data we are required to publish. This has been a challenging year during which we have contributed to the national response to the pandemic whilst continuing with our day to day work.

We are pleased to report that we supported Menter Iaith Fflint a Wrecsam to celebrate Dydd Gŵyl Dewi and promote and share our Welsh heritage virtually. Holding virtual celebrations meant many more people could participate, including the social care sector and residents within our residential homes and Extra Care Schemes.

For the period 2020/21 we made a commitment to increase the number of employees who report that they have some (level1) Welsh language skills, ultimately reducing the number of employees who report that they do not have any Welsh language skills. Although we did not achieve our target there has been an improvement in the number of employees who report that they have some level of Welsh language skills.

The number of employees learning Welsh has reduced over the past few years, there was a small increase during 2020/ 2021. We are investigating the reasons for the reduction in the numbers attending training.

Over the next 12 months we will work to continue to increase the number of employees with some Welsh language skills and develop the skills of employees who already speak some Welsh. We will continue to promote the Welsh Language Standards to our employees and a mystery shopper exercise of our website will help us identify improvements to ensure it meets the Welsh Language Standards.

Colin Everett
Chief Executive

Councillor Billy Mullin
Cabinet Member for Corporate
Management

Welsh Language Standards Annual Monitoring Report 2020-21

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Flintshire County Council has adopted the principle that in the conduct of public business and the administration of justice in Wales it will treat the Welsh and English languages on a basis of equality. The introduction of the Welsh Language Standards builds on this commitment.
- 1.2 The aim of the Standards is to:
 - improve the services Welsh speakers can expect to receive from organisations in Welsh.
 - increase the use people make of Welsh language services.
 - make it clear to organisations what they need to do in terms of the Welsh language.
 - ensure that there is an appropriate degree of consistency in terms of the duties placed on bodies in the same sectors.
- 1.3 The Welsh Language Commissioner (WLC) served Compliance Notices on the Council identifying the 171 Standards to which we must comply. Compliance Notices are unique to each organisation reflecting the linguistic profile of the local community and organisational capacity to meet the Standards. The WLC has the powers to investigate and take action against those organisations who fail to comply with the Standards. This includes imposing financial penalties for non-compliance.
- 1.4 The Council is required to publish an annual report by 30 June as set out in the Standards 158, 164 and 170. The full list of Standards with which we are required to comply is available [here](#). This report is also received annually by the Council's Cabinet on performance in relation to the Standards and approves the report before publication. This report focuses on the period 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021. Details of how we comply with the Standards are published on our website and can be found [here](#).
- 1.5 The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with the Standards. The Strategic Policy Advisor is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Welsh Language Standards. Our Welsh Language Network provides strategic leadership.
- 1.6 Complaints about failure to meet the Welsh Language Standards can be made by using our [Complaints Procedure](#).

2.0 Complying with the Standards during 2020/21

2.1 We are required to report on our arrangements for complying with the following Standards:

- Service delivery Standards
- Policy Making Standards
- Operational Standards

2.2 Compliance with Service Delivery Standards

Further details on compliance with the Service Delivery Standards is available on our [website](#). In addition:

- We are undertaking a self-assessment against the Standards to identify where we need to improve.
- We monitor calls to the English and Welsh lines of our Contact Centre which are reviewed at our quarterly Rhwydwaith meetings to monitor any differences in response times to Welsh and English calls. There are 4.5 full time equivalent (FTE) Welsh speaking employees within the Contact Centre out of a total of 12.10 full time equivalents.
- Within our Connects Centres (One Stop Shops) there are 12.7 FTE employees of whom 1.8 FTE are Welsh speakers
- The Commissioning Form for new contracts includes a checklist for Commissioning Officers to confirm whether an Impact Assessment has been undertaken which prompts them to include Welsh language requirements within the contract. This will ensure Welsh language is included within any contracts for new IT systems.
- Our Contract Procedure Rules incorporates the Welsh Language Standards, this reminds commissioning officers of what they need to do to ensure compliance with the Standards. Sample clauses for contracts are published on the intranet.
- Aura, an employee owned company, providing leisure and library services in the county on our behalf is also a member of Rhwydwaith. Members of Rhwydwaith are undertaking Mystery Shopper exercises of Aura to monitor their compliance with the Standards.
- The Council's Complaints Procedure has been amended to ensure it is meets the requirements of the Standards. The Council published its Concerns and Complaints Policy on 1 April, 2021
<https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Contact-Us/Concerns-and-Complaints.aspx>

- The new policy is based on model guidance issued by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales in September 2020 which aims to bring complaints handling processes back into broad alignment - providing basic standards, a common language and a set of principles to underpin how complaints are handled throughout public services. The model policy, as advised by the Ombudsman, is fully compatible with the Welsh Language Standards. The Council's website clearly advises people that the policy also applies to complaints about Welsh language, and any such complaints are routinely copied to the Strategic Policy Advisor for monitoring.
- The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales is delivering bespoke complaints training which has been designed to support and enhance complaint handling throughout public services by considering best practice from multiple sectors from around the world. Over 70 key officers have attended training in 2020-21 and more is planned for 2021-22.
- A new reporting model has been introduced from 1 April, 2021 and complaints performance data is shared with the Chief Officer Team, Cabinet, Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny, and Audit Committee at regular intervals throughout the year. Complaints about Welsh language are also reported at Rhwydwaith meetings.

2.3 Compliance with Policy Making Standards

- We are working with our colleagues from other public bodies in North Wales to develop a regional Impact Assessment template which includes Welsh language. This template was forwarded to the Welsh Language Commissioner for his comments which have been incorporated within the template.
- Guidance on consultation and research, including Welsh language is available on the intranet. This has been promoted to employees, as has the requirement to comply with the Policy Making Standards.
- We offer various grants and some are managed by other organisations on our behalf. Application forms and criteria are bilingual and include a statement to say that there will not be a delay in responding to applications submitted in Welsh.
- The number of grant applications made through the medium of Welsh during 2020/21 is set out below:

Grant	Number of applications made in Welsh
Community Chest	0
Community Endowment Fund	0
Welsh Church Act Fund	0

- Details of how we comply with the Policy making Standards is available on our [website](#).

2.4 Compliance with Operational Standards

Full details of how we are complying with the Operational Standards are available on our [website](#).

- A Welsh in the Workplace Policy was adopted in 2017 and is published on the intranet. This is the Council's policy for using Welsh and encouraging the use of Welsh internally. The purpose of the policy is to:
 - promote positive attitudes and encourage employees to take pride in the Welsh language and Welsh culture.
 - increase the number of Welsh speaking employees and provide opportunities for employees who are already fluent Welsh speakers and those who are learning to use Welsh both in work and at work.
 - encourage a bilingual working environment in which employees have the freedom and support to work through the medium of Welsh.
- Employees and managers have been informed of the Operational Standards and the rights of employees.
- Employees have been informed of their rights to receive personally addressed business through the medium of Welsh. This information is recorded on iTrent (human resource management system) and by managers. It is printed on employees' payslips to ensure the message reaches all employees and is included in the Induction checklist. 35 employees are recorded as requesting business correspondence in Welsh.
- New employees are asked in which language they would like their employment contract to be issued.
- Appraisal documentation is published on the intranet in Welsh. Employees have the option of disciplinary and grievance interviews/meetings being held in Welsh.
- The following policies are published in Welsh:
 - Attendance Management Policy
 - Benefits of Working at Flintshire County Council
 - Capability Policy
 - Corporate Safeguarding Policy
 - Disclosure and Barring Service Policy
 - Dignity at Work Policy
 - Diversity and Equality Policy
 - Flexible Working application form

- Flexible Working Hours Policy
- Foster for Flintshire Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Welsh in the Workplace Policy

2.5 Promoting and facilitating the use of Welsh

- Employees are encouraged to develop their Welsh language skills through training provided by the local college. Employees are supported to attend training sessions within worktime. Panad a Sgwrs sessions are also held once a week to support learners to practice their Welsh in a safe environment, these sessions are facilitated by Welsh speakers. During 2020/21 these one hour informal sessions have been held virtually.
- Cysgliad (Welsh grammar, spellchecker and dictionary) is available for employees. This is promoted at induction and employees are regularly reminded, through workforce news items, that they can request Cysgliad.
- Resources to support Welsh learners and Welsh speakers are available on the intranet on a dedicated page for Welsh learners. Activities to support learners which take place in the community are promoted to the workforce.

2.6 Monitoring arrangements

- Our Welsh Language Network, Rhwydwaith, includes representatives from all portfolios, Aura (libraries and leisure services) and Theatr Clwyd and meets quarterly. Standing items on the agenda include Welsh language training, the profile of employees' Welsh language skills, Welsh language promotion and complaints.
- Calls to the Welsh and English Contact Centre telephone lines are also reviewed at these meetings to identify any difference in waiting times.
- We are part way through an exercise asking services to complete a self-assessment against the Standards so that we can identify and focus on areas in which we need to improve.
- We have commissioned a mystery shopper exercise to review a sample of pages, documents and e-forms on our website as this is where there have been consistent complaints about non-compliance with the Standards.

2.7 Events

Throughout the year we have participated in key activities to promote the Welsh language including:

- Welsh Language Rights Day- 7 December 2020 – we produced a range of videos with our Welsh speaking employees encouraging our customers to contact us through the medium of Welsh. We posted these on our Twitter site during December 2020.

- Welsh Language Music Day – 5 February 2021 – we posted tweets on our Twitter site to promote this and through our Business Team who promoted to local businesses to encourage them to take part.
- Dydd Gŵyl Dewi -1 March 2021- we supported Menter Iaith to celebrate this day by providing financial support which funded videos including videos of passing the Welsh flag, telling the story of St David, wishing people a happy St David's day and reciting the Welsh national anthem. These were posted on our Twitter site. There were also competitions for school students and for community members.

3.0 Welsh language skills and training

- 3.1 Welsh language skills are self-assessed against the Welsh Language Proficiency Framework. (Appendix 1). The profile of employee Welsh language skills by Portfolio is set out in Table 1. Table 2 shows a summary of Welsh language skills across the workforce. The tables show that the number and percentage of employees who state that they do not have any Welsh language skills is reducing. 992 employees (35.45% of all employees) reported that they do not have any Welsh language skills compared to 1,056 employees, (38.18% of all employees who completed the self- assessment) in March 2020.
- 3.2 The numbers and percentage of employees who report that they have Welsh language skills at level 1 has increased from 963 employees (34.82% of the workforce) to 1,066 employees (38.1% of the workforce) in March 2021.
- 3.3 There have been slight changes at other levels. The number of employees who report that their Welsh skills are at level 2 has increased from 376 employees (13.59%) in March 2020 to 387 employees (13.83%) in March 2021. There has been a small increase in the number and percentage of employees who report that their Welsh skills are at level 3 – rising from 94 employees (3.4% of the workforce) to 102 employees (3.65% of the workforce) in March 2021. There has also been a small increase employees who report that they are at levels 4.

Table 1: Profile of Welsh language skills of the workforce as at March 31 2021

Portfolio	Headcount	Level 0	%	Level 1	%	Level 2	%	Level 3	%	Level 4	%	Level 5	%	Not Recorded	%
		No.													
Chief Executives	40	3	7.50%	19	47.50%	8	20.00%	5	12.50%	3	7.50%	2	5.00%	0	0.00%
Education and Youth	253	57	22.53%	110	43.48%	35	13.83%	18	7.11%	17	6.72%	15	5.93%	1	0.40%
Governance	199	38	19.10%	99	49.75%	32	16.08%	8	4.02%	10	5.03%	9	4.52%	3	1.51%
Housing and Assets	321	123	38.32%	130	40.50%	35	10.90%	11	3.43%	13	4.05%	8	2.49%	1	0.31%
People and Resources	181	42	23.20%	78	43.09%	35	19.34%	9	4.97%	11	6.08%	6	3.31%	0	0.00%
Planning, Environment and Economy	196	46	23.47%	83	42.35%	33	16.84%	8	4.08%	15	7.65%	8	4.08%	3	1.53%
Social Services	1,076	406	37.73%	376	34.94%	162	15.06%	34	3.16%	30	2.79%	40	3.72%	28	2.60%
Streetscene and Transportation	532	277	52.07%	171	32.14%	47	8.83%	9	1.69%	9	1.69%	12	2.26%	7	1.32%
Grand Total	2,798	992	35.45%	1,066	38.10%	387	13.83%	102	3.65%	108	3.86%	100	3.57%	43	1.54%

Table 2: Summary of the profile of the Welsh language skills of the workforce as at March 31 2021

Portfolio	Total number of employees	Number of employees where Welsh language skills are not recorded	Total number of employees with Welsh language skills (Level 1- Level 5)	% of employees with Welsh language skills	Number of employees with no Welsh language skills	% employees without Welsh language skills
Chief Executives	40	0	37	92.5%	3	7.50%
Education and Youth	253	1	195	77.15%	57	22.53%
Governance	199	3	158	79.40%	38	19.10%
Housing and Assets	321	1	197	61.40%	123	38.32%
People and Resources	181	0	139	76.80%	42	23.20%
Planning, Environment and Economy	196	3	147	75%	46	23.47%
Social Services	1,076	28	642	59.66%	406	37.73%
Streetscene and Transportation	532	7	248	46.62%	277	52.07%
Total	2,798	43	1,763	63.01%	992	35.45%

3.4 Activities to develop a bilingual workforce include:

- Encouraging employees to attend Welsh language training
- Offering Welsh language taster sessions through Coleg Cambria, two hour sessions for a six week period. These courses are for employees who do not have any Welsh language skills.
- Offering Panad a Sgwrs weekly sessions to provide learners with the opportunity to speak and practice Welsh language skills within an informal and supportive environment.
- Including a requirement for “courtesy” Welsh language skills within public facing posts guidance.
- Setting ourselves targets to reduce the number of employees who report that they have no Welsh language skills
- Reaffirming our commitment to Welsh language within our recruitment process.
- Continuing to release employees to attend Welsh language skills training.

3.5 An e-learning module accessible on Flintshire Academi Learning Pool called Welsh Language Awareness is provided as a mandatory module for all employees. During 2020/21, 277 employees completed this training module. This is an increase compared to the previous year 2019/20, when 151 employees completed the module.

3.6 A variety of Welsh language skills courses are provided. This includes Taster course, Entry level, Foundation, Intermediate, Advanced and Proficiency. There are also a variety of durations of course offered from 6 weeks to 30 weeks, with the option on completion of each to continue to a higher level if required. Many of the employees who completed the 6 week taster course have since moved on to study the entry level course. These courses are run with through Coleg Cambria and are offered on Learnwelsh.cymru

There are usually a variety of locations offered, however due to the Covid 19 pandemic courses have been run online, usually on Google Meet.

Table 3: Number of employees attending Welsh language skills training

Level	2016/17 Number	2017/18 Number	2018/19 Number	2019/20 Number	2020/21 Number
Basic Language Skills	62	48	1	15	11
Entry	34	50	34	22	28
Foundation	20	7	12	6	10
Intermediate	12	23	3	2	1
Advanced	2	1	9	7	6
Proficient	3	10	5	5	3
Total	133	139	64	57	59

3.7 As part of the Welsh Language Standards we are required to report:

i) the number of employees who attended courses through the medium of Welsh.

ii) if a Welsh version of a course was offered – the number and % of employees who attended the Welsh version.

3.8 There is information on the Council’s intranet pages to inform employees that if they wish to complete any of the courses in Welsh to contact the Corporate Learning and Development Team. The Council has an informal agreement with Gwynedd County Council which means that employees can attend their Welsh medium courses. Due to the pandemic all training was cancelled. There was also a recruitment freeze. Currently all Performance management, recruitment training and disciplinary is provided by HR advisors in their own portfolio.

The number of employees who attended specific courses in Welsh is set out below:

Table 4: Profile of training provided through the medium of Welsh

Type of training	Number who attended the Welsh version	Number who attended the English version	Percentage that attended the Welsh version
Health and safety	Total 115 IOSH (Institution of Occupational Safety and Health) for schools -16 ELearning – introduction to Health and Safety 99	Total: 115	Total: 0

3.9 A process to assess the linguistic skills required for new posts is in place. A method to record the number of posts that have been assessed as desirable or essential has been developed. The Council is required to report the number of new and vacant posts which were categorised as posts where:

- i) Welsh language skills were essential
- ii) Welsh needed to be learnt when appointed
- iii) Welsh desirable
- iv) Welsh language skills were not necessary

The data for 2020/2021 is set out below.

Category	Number of posts categorised	Percentage of posts categorised
Essential	3	5.00%
Desirable	9	15.00%
Need to learn Welsh	2	3.3%
No Welsh language skills required	46	76.67%

In comparison with previous years

Category	Number				
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
i) Welsh language essential	17	8	14	2	3
ii) Welsh needed to be learnt when appointed	0	0	0	0	9
iii) Welsh desirable	9	40	42	12	2
iv) Welsh language skills not essential	277	185	207	66	46

4.0 Complaints

4.1 During 2020/21 we received two complaints, in addition three complaints were made directly to the Welsh Language Commissioner.

4.2 The breakdown of complaints 2020/21 is set out below:

Class of Standard	Complaints received directly	Complaints raised with the Welsh Language Commissioner	Total Number of complaints
Operational			0
Service Delivery	2	3	5
Policy making			0
Promotion			0

The detail of these complaints are set out in the following table

Complaints Service Delivery	Details	Outcome and action taken
Council Tax	Council Tax form not available in Welsh on the website and the complainant did not receive a call back when contacting the Welsh telephone line.	The website was checked, forms were available in Welsh and the website - English and Welsh pages were working correctly. An apology was issued to the customer as an employee had not passed on the message.
Tweets retweeted through Gov Delivery	Tweets showed incorrectly on a customer's device- misspellings and Welsh did not make sense	Tweets published on our Twitter site and on Gov Delivery were accurate and not the same as those that appeared on the customer's device. A check was made to ensure they appeared correctly on other personal devices. There were not any issues. The problem appears to be with the customer's device as we were unable to account as to why they were not shown as published on our Twitter site and through Gov Delivery.

Complaints made directly to the Welsh Language Commissioner		
Complaints Service Delivery	Details	Outcome and action taken
Corporate Communications	Tweets published in English on Welsh Twitter site. The tweets were published in English because it was felt that issue was urgent and Welsh Government messages regarding re-opening of businesses during the pandemic needed to be posted as	This was investigated by the Welsh Language Commissioner, who decided not to proceed to a full investigation given the exceptional context (national pandemic) when the mistake happened. The Corporate Communications Team is

	soon as possible. The Welsh version was posted as soon as returned from the Translation Team.	familiar with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards and are complying with requirements.
Corporate Communications	English published on the Welsh version on Gov Delivery newsletter.	
Clwyd Pension Fund	Welsh inaccurate on the website and English on some of the Welsh pages. The complainant did not receive a call back when contacting the Welsh line.	<p>This is currently being investigated by the Welsh Language Commissioner.</p> <p>A new person has been appointed and is reviewing and updating the Clwyd Pension Fund website to ensure Welsh and English languages are published equally. The post holder will take responsibility for quality assurance of the website.</p> <p>All employees are aware of the need to ensure Welsh speaking members of the Clwyd Pension Fund are provided with a bilingual service. Unfortunately on this occasion the officer responsible for the call had to leave work urgently and procedures were not followed.</p>

4.3 We previously reported that a complaint regarding a contractor was under investigation by the Welsh Language Commissioner. The Commissioner has determined that the Council did breach the Welsh Language Standards as the contractor failed to comply. The Commissioner issued a notice requiring us to undertake specific actions, including:

- providing training for the contractor;
- ensuring the contractor amends their website so that Welsh is equal to English; and
- ensuring the contractor responds to Welsh correspondence from customers in Welsh.

These actions were completed during 2020/21 and random mystery shopper exercises are now being undertaken with the contractor concerned.

5.0 Conclusion and Future Actions

- 5.1 During the past 12 months the number of employees who report that they do not have any Welsh language skills reduced. Although we did not meet our target we are confident that we will continue making progress. We are concerned about the decrease in the number of employees who are learning Welsh. We are reviewing the reasons why employees do not take-up the training and why employees do not continue with the training course.
- 5.2 We have continued to promote the Welsh language. One of our tenants in one of our Extra Care schemes was supported to contribute a video singing a Welsh lullaby “Gee Ceffyl Bach” to the COR-ONA Facebook group. A number of tenants sang the National Anthem as part of the “Sing For Wales” Facebook group. Through Siarter Iaith and Cymraeg Campus initiatives we are continuing to promote the use of Welsh socially. We will continue to promote events to celebrate Welsh culture.
- 5.3 Moving forward during 2021/22 we will continue to remind and support employees and managers about their responsibilities to meet the Welsh Language Standards and complete our self-assessment against the Standards. We have also commissioned a Mystery Shopper review of our website to identify areas where we need to improve to meet the Standards.
- 5.4 During the next 12 months we will continue to focus on:
- ensuring 100% employees review and complete the Welsh language skills audit by March 2022;
 - increasing the number of employees who complete the Welsh language awareness e-learning module by March 2022;
 - reducing the number of employees who report that they do not have any Welsh language skills working towards the target of 5% employees without Welsh language skills by March 2023; and
 - participating in initiatives to raise the profile of Welsh language in the workplace and the community.

For further information please contact us on:

Tel: 📞 01352 702131

Email: 📧 corporatebusiness@flintshire.gov.uk

Appendix 1 WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

	LISTENING / SPEAKING	READING / UNDERSTANDING	WRITING
LEVEL 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No appreciable ability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No appreciable ability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No appreciable ability
LEVEL 1	<p style="text-align: center;">I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pronounce Welsh words, place names, department names, etc. ● Greet and understand a greeting. ● Use basic every day words and phrases, e.g. thank you, please, excuse me, etc. ● Understand / pass on simple verbal requests of a routine / familiar / predictable kind using simple language, e.g. 'May I speak to...' ● State simple requests and follow up with extra questions / requests in a limited way 	<p style="text-align: center;">I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understand simple key words and sentences on familiar / predictable matters relating to my own job area, e.g. on signs, in letters. 	<p style="text-align: center;">I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fill in simple forms, note down simple information, e.g. date and venue of a meeting, Welsh address, etc.
LEVEL 2	<p style="text-align: center;">I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understand the gist of Welsh conversations in work ● Respond to simple job-related requests and requests for factual information ● Ask simple questions and understand simple responses ● Express opinions in a limited way as long as the topic is familiar ● Understand instructions when simple language is used 	<p style="text-align: center;">I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understand factual, routine information and the gist of non-routine information on familiar matters related to my own job area , e.g. in standard letters, leaflets, etc. 	<p style="text-align: center;">I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Write short simple notes / letters / messages on a limited range of predictable topics related to my personal experiences or my own job area
LEVEL 3	<p style="text-align: center;">I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understand much of what is said in an office, meeting, etc. ● Keep up a simple conversation on a work related topic, but may need to revert to English to discuss / report on complex or technical information ● Answer predictable or factual questions ● Take and pass on most messages that are likely to require attention ● Offer advice on simple job-related matters 	<p style="text-align: center;">I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Scan texts for relevant information ● Understand a fair range of job-related routine and non-routine correspondence, factual literature, etc. when standard language is used. 	<p style="text-align: center;">I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Write a detailed / descriptive letter relating to my own job area, but will need to have it checked by a Welsh speaker ● Make reasonably accurate notes while someone is talking
LEVEL 4	<p style="text-align: center;">I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Keep up an extended casual work related conversation or give a presentation with a good degree of fluency and range of expression but may need to revert to English to answer unpredictable questions or explain complex points or technical information ● Contribute effectively to meetings and seminars within own area of work ● Argue for/against a case 	<p style="text-align: center;">I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Read and understand information fairly quickly as long as no unusual vocabulary is used and no particularly complex or technical information is involved 	<p style="text-align: center;">I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prepare formal letters of many familiar types such as enquiry, complaint, request and application ● Take reasonably accurate notes in meetings or straightforward dictation ● Write a report / document relating to my own job area, but will need to have it checked by a Welsh speaker
LEVEL 5	<p style="text-align: center;">I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Advise on / talk about routine, non-routine, complex, contentious or sensitive issues related to own experiences ● Give a presentation/demonstration ● Deal confidently with hostile or unpredictable questions ● Carry out negotiations using complex / technical terms ● Give media interviews 	<p style="text-align: center;">I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understand complex ideas and information expressed in complex or specialist language in documents, reports correspondence and articles, etc. 	<p style="text-align: center;">I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Write letters on any subject ● Write full / accurate notes of meetings while continuing to follow discussions and participate in them ● Write reports / documents with confidence but they may need to be checked for minor errors in

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CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 15 th June 2021
Report Subject	Developing In House Residential Care for Children
Cabinet Member	Deputy Leader of the Council (Partnerships) and Cabinet Member for Social Services
Report Author	Chief Officer (Social Services)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The council is committed to ensuring children and young people receive high quality care so they are, and feel, safe, loved and supported to develop the skills and resilience to lead fulfilled lives.

Our main aim is to support families to care for their own children, and to prevent them, if safe to do so, from becoming looked after. This is what the majority of families want and where most children will best achieve their potential.

Where children need to be looked after we want to ensure that we can make suitable and timely placements. However, there are significant challenges with placement sufficiency. As an authority we are reliant on the independent sector for Children's Residential Care provision. This provision is very expensive and often in placements that are out of area. This has led to children being placed away from their communities at an increasing, and unsustainable, financial cost to the local authority. As a Corporate Parent this is not what we want for our children.

To secure change we have set a commitment to develop our own Residential Care Home provision for children and young people. This paper proposes the priorities for the next three financial years through the delivery of the following projects:

1. Arosfa: to support a growing number of disabled children and their parents/carers
2. Ty Nyth: to provide specialist therapeutic assessment and support
3. Emergency Provision: to enable an effective response to crisis situations
4. Small Group Homes: to enable children to live within their local community

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Members support the move to become a direct provider of Residential Care for Children
2	The following 4 projects are agreed as the priority projects for in House development: Arosfa, Ty Nyth, Emergency Provision, Small Group Homes

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING REBALANCING THE RESIDENTIAL MARKET FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
1.01	<p>In August 2020 ADSS Cymru published a report which examined the case for rebalancing social care provision in Children’s Services. The reports identifies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A significant imbalance of power in the children’s residential care market, which is affecting placements and choice, the ability to make the best match to a child’s needs, the workload, and the outcomes for children. • The current level of dependency on private residential care provision must be reduced. A small number of local authorities have taken, or are taking, steps to do this but action is needed, locally and / or regionally, in all areas. It will require considerable, and co-ordinated, action and investment. • The development of more short-term assessment, emergency and crisis accommodation will help to address one of the major problems supporting private provider dominance i.e. the urgency or desperation to find any placement, which can compromise the ability to find right match for a child’s needs • Without rebalancing, there will be a continued reliance on private providers with, in some cases, high cost, and questionable value for money, greater instability for children and poor outcomes. • The aim of any re-balancing must be to develop stable, resilient markets, which offer options and choice, quality care, fewer placement breakdowns, and good outcomes for children. • Reducing cost is an acceptable goal of rebalancing. However, driving down costs and ‘the cheapest option is best’ must not be the prime objectives. Quality care and good outcomes must come first.
1.02	Building on the findings on ADSS Cymru, this report articulates the approach we will be taking to rebalance children’s social care in Flintshire, placing children, and the delivery of high quality outcomes, at the forefront of our ambition.
	Whole System Approach
1.03	It is important that the development of in house residential Children’s Care Home is seen as part of a whole system approach to supporting children and young people. This involves a number of complimentary projects to:

1.04	<p><u>Reduce the number of children looked after by:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. strengthening edge of care provision to support children safely and appropriately at home and prevent them needing to enter the formal looked after care system 2. working to revoke court orders to ensure that children who no longer need to be in care can safely exit the care system 3. developing our support package for Special Guardianship arrangements in line with the financial and support arrangements for foster carers
1.05	<p><u>Support more children through local authority fostering by:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. attracting more general foster carers through a Methu Wales/Foster Wales campaign 2. expanding our Mockingbird Hub model
	Service Objectives
1.06	<p>The objectives of our approach to providing Residential Care will be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure a supply of high quality local placements • Provide a safe and secure environment that promotes the well-being of looked after children who have complex needs • Provide the right level of specialised support and care for the child, working in partnership with education and health teams to improve their outcomes. • Support looked after children to sustain and build positive local connects with family, friends and their community • Support children to develop the skills and resilience to lead fulfilled lives with seamless well organised transition arrangements and support as they become young care leavers.
	Project One: Arosfa
1.07	<p>Arosfa is a well-established service providing short term breaks / respite for children with disabilities. Provided in a local authority the service is run for the local authority by Action for Children. Through Council capital funding an unused wing at Arosfa has been refurbished to provide 2 additional bed spaces at the facility. This enhances the capacity of Arosfa to support 5 children at any one time.</p>
1.08	<p>The model that we will use for the new beds at Arosfa is being developed to respond to the identified needs to the current cohort of children. Options being explored include long term placements and an innovative model of 'shared care' working with parents to sustain family arrangements.</p>
1.09	<p>The building and refurbishment work is scheduled for completion at the end of April 2021. A phased approach will be taken to expand support at Arosfa with introductions and arrangements developed to respond to the individual needs of the identified children who will be supported in the new wing. Our timelines and processes will need to be informed by COVID restrictions and associated safety measures.</p>

	Project Two: Ty Nyth
1.10	Through the use of Intermediate Care Fund (ICF) funding we are in the final stage of acquiring the Ty Nyth site in Mold from Clwyd Alyn Housing Association. A report has been commissioned to identify the work that is required to bring the buildings and site to registration standards under RISCA legislation. A specific focus is also being given to ensure that development plans will provide sufficient parking for staff and visitors to the site. Once available the report will provide an informed basis to finalise the range of regulated support that can be provided at the site, maximising the use of the main building and the 2 semi-detached properties that constitute Ty Nyth.
1.11	At the centre of the planned development at Ty Nyth will be the provision of a Children's Residential Assessment Centre providing short term (up to 20 week) care as well as therapeutic assessment and support through a dedicated Multi Systemic Therapy Team (MST). The purpose is to undertake intensive assessment and support to meet the needs of young people whilst seeking family reunification, or a longer term local fostering/residential placement appropriate to the child's assessed needs. We are exploring the potential of this being a shared, and jointly funded, project with Wrexham. This approach will facilitate the leverage of grant funding for the establishment of the provision.
	Project Three: Emergency Provision
1.12	Social Services across the UK are facing increased pressures to find placements in emergencies. Locally, we do have situations where no placement can be sourced for child. This necessitates the development of a holding position to provide accommodation and support until a placement can be found. This situations may arise from difficulties in placing young people following the breakdown of relationships at home, transfer of children where the police have used their powers of protection to remove children and a lack of secure beds for young people with high level needs and welfare risks.
1.13	It is important to emphasise that these arrangements are used as a last resort in emergency situations, due to exceptional circumstances and for a short period until a regulated provision can be sourced. Safeguards around unregulated placements include the need for Senior Manager approval, notification to CIW as our regulator, a care and support plan, completion of social work visits, involvement of Independent Reviewing Officers and supervision of social workers to look at arrangements/ move on plans.
1.14	The arrangements that local authorities have to put in place in emergencies can amount to unregulated placements. Under RISCA it is an offence for a person to provide a regulated service without being registered in respect of that service. This project will move to establish a registered provision that be set up in an emergency to provide accommodation, care and support. The provision will be designed to open as situations arise and close down as move on placements found. We would draw on registered staff in other provisions as opposed to employing a dedicated staffing Team.

Project Four: Small Group Homes	
1.15	The small group homes model involves the establishment of registered services in community based houses supporting one or two children. The model has a strong community and family feel for those children who do not suit support in larger settings, often due to challenges in finding appropriate matches with other children, and their need for intensive levels of support. This model is being delivered successfully in other areas including Anglesey and Bristol.
1.16	For economy of scale Homes would be grouped in two's with a shared management and staffing group who could be used flexibly across the 2 sites which would need to be within a 5 mile proximity of each other.
1.17	Our intention is to explore establishing out first small group homes project aligned to the development of the Ty Nyth site. We are also working closely with Housing colleagues who are supportive in identifying potential properties within our existing housing stock. Indicatively we are seeking to commit to 6 small group homes over the next 3 years. After each provision is developed we will undertake a gateway review to affirm need, that the provision will deliver the intended outcomes and there is a clear financial plan to support the development. The development will only proceed if the gateway review confirms that this is the most appropriate way forward. Given the size and community base, any property that is no longer needed as a Small Group Home in future could quickly be reverted back to social housing.

2.00 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	
2.01	<p>Arosfa The Council's Capital programme has funded the refurbishment of Arosfa. Social Services has secured ICF funding to the value of £200k per annum toward the total costs of the Arosfa service. Other grant funding, including BCU health funding such as CHC, will be maximised wherever possible towards the service.</p> <p>We will work within the IFC funding envelope (200k) for the next 12 months and work with Action for Children to establish service cost based on the needs of children/ young people. This inform a funding bid to the next iteration of ICF.</p>
2.02	<p>Ty Nyth £500k ICF funding has been secured for the acquisition of Ty Nyth. An initial high level estimate, which is based on a number of assumptions, indicates a refurbishment cost of £1.1m for the main Ty Nyth building. ICF capital grant funding has been identified to meet this cost. However, the semi-detached properties would be an additional cost, but they require significantly less investment. This may necessitate a phased approach to the site with refurbishment and establishment of the service at the semi-detached properties depending on the actual cost and whether Wrexham become a funding partner.</p>

	<p>A proposal for a Welsh Government grant to support the development of 'safe accommodation for children with complex, high end emotional and high end needs' has also been submitted which, if successful, will provide an additional funding source for the refurbishment. However, we are advised that funding submissions far exceed the available grant provision.</p> <p>A framework has been identified which offers the potential for us to commission a contractor to develop of the site with pace given the grant requirement for works to be completed within the 2021/22 financial year. As we move forward through this framework we will have a more detailed precise costing schedule and understanding of the priority areas for completion in 2021/22 within the funding envelope.</p> <p>Revenue funding has been secured through the Welsh Government Transformation Fund to cover the initial set up and revenue expenditure in 2021/22 for the registered care and support Team as well as the provision of the MST support. A detailed costed business case is being developed to identify associated revenue costs from 2022 onwards with anticipated costs being identified through the Medium Term Financial plan.</p>
2.03	<p>Small Group Homes</p> <p>A costed business case is being developed to ensure a full analysis of the financial costs associated with Small Group Home provision. Based on a premise of supporting children with a high acuity of need, and therefore staffing support we are estimating a top end cost of 300k revenue costs for each provision. Whilst expensive this still compares favourably with the annual costs of commissioning this care. Again the associated cost pressures are being built into the Medium Term Financial plan</p>

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	Existing residential placements range from £3,500 to £10,000 per week if beds are available. COVID-19 has seen an increase in the number of children looked after, a reduction in the number of available Residential beds and sharp increases in the rates Providers are now charging for placements. Even some of our existing providers are now moving to inflate their fees. There is not always an alignment of bed availability with placement need particularly closer to home. Failure to rebalance the market is likely to lead to more children being placed out of county at an unaffordable cost to the local authority.
3.02	The facilities will need to be registered with CIW and our delivery plans will be subject to CIW's timelines for considering applications. Arosfa is more straightforward as this would be a variation to an existing registration.
3.03	Finding suitably qualified and experienced registered managers for the provisions is likely to be a challenge. As local authorities have not developed their own in house provision for many decades we do not have a supply of in house staff ready to step into these roles and will need to compete with the open market. We will need to ensure that our approach to recruitment does not destabilise the local market.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	Initial engagement work has commenced in Mold with specific individuals. As Ty Nyth comes into the ownership of the local authority, and the plans for the site are finalised, targeted work will take place to ensure effective communication with local residents and organisations. The development of all proposals will need to have a detailed stakeholder communication and engagement plan to reassure communities.
4.02	These plans to develop in-house Residential Children's Homes were outlined at two well attended Out of County Member's Workshops held on the 22 nd of March to discuss Out of County pressures. There was unanimous and overwhelming support for the proposals from members.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	ASSOCIATION OF DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES CYMRU: Delivering Transformation Grant Programme 2019-20 Rebalancing social care: A report on Children's Services https://www.adss.cymru/en/blog/post/rebalancing-social-care-a-report-on-children-s-services

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Neil Ayling – Chief Officer (Social Services) Telephone: 01352 704511 E-mail: neil.ayling@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	ICF (Integrated Care Fund): Welsh Assembly Government fund that helps health boards and social care partners in local authorities, housing and voluntary sectors to work together to support frail and older people, people with a learning disability, children with complex needs due to disability or illness and carers, including young carers. Multi Systemic Therapy (MST) is an intensive family and community based intervention for children and young people aged 11-17, where young people are at risk of out of home placement in either care or custody. MST teams focus on the whole world of the young person - their homes and families, schools and teachers, neighbourhoods and friends. MST staff go to where families live and work with them intensively for three

to five months, including being on call to families 24 hours a day, seven days a week

Looked After Child Looked after children are children and young people who are in public care and looked after by the state. This includes those who are subject to a care order or temporarily classed as looked after on a planned basis for short breaks or respite care. The term is also used to describe 'accommodated' children and young people who are looked after on a voluntary basis at the request of, or by agreement with, their parents.



CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 15 th June 2021
Report Subject	Biodiversity Duty Update
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Streetscene
Report Author	Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report details how the Council is making progress in delivering its biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The Council's Biodiversity Duty Delivery Plan 2020 – 2023, titled 'Supporting Nature in Flintshire' is explained and the progress of action to deliver objectives is reviewed, highlighting key areas of biodiversity work within the county.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Cabinet recognises and supports the progress with the biodiversity strategy
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE BIODIVERSITY DUTY UPDATE
1.01	Nature is our planet's life support system and consequently essential for human survival. Our natural environment provides our food, water, air, building materials, medicines and landscape. Biodiversity is the variety of life on earth and biodiversity loss continues as a direct result of human impacts, through habitat loss and degradation, over exploitation, pollution, climate change and the invasion of non-native species.
1.02	As a local authority we have a responsibility to function sustainability and lead by example when it comes to protecting and enhancing our natural environment. To meet the challenge of reversing the decline in biodiversity it is essential that we act and ensure that, as a local authority, we meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
1.03	The Council's first Biodiversity Duty Delivery Plan (2016 – 2019) was produced in response to the enhanced biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The Act requires that public authorities must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of their functions and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems. Progress of this first plan was reported to Welsh Government in January 2020 and 'good progress' was made in 67% of the target areas.
1.04	"Supporting Nature in Flintshire" is the Council's second biodiversity duty plan and covers the period from 2020-2023. This updated plan continues the previous good work in delivering biodiversity action and maintains progress to embed biodiversity as consideration across all departments.
1.05	The biodiversity update (Appendix 1) details the progress made in delivering action to meet the plans 6 objectives. Of the 20 actions, 20% were making good progress/completed, 65% were on track and making some progress with 15% not started or no progress.
1.06	<p>Objective 1 - Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels</p> <p>The Biodiversity Officer is now included on the integrated impact assessment board and with the Natural Environment Team, provide comment and input into higher level plans across portfolios eg Active Travel Schemes. The required social value element to procurement also now provides an opportunity for environmental considerations.</p> <p>Work to develop the Nature Partnership, which maximise effectiveness, supports collaborative conservation action across North East Wales, is ongoing through the Local Nature Partnerships Cymru project, which funds officer time and promotion/publicity activities for nature recovery. In March 2021 the regional nature partnership website was launched: https://www.bionetwales.co.uk/about/</p> <p>Restrictions as a result of Covid greatly impacted on volunteering opportunities, engagement events and activities throughout 2020. As</p>

	<p>circumstances allow it is planned to reinstate our previous volunteering opportunities (species specific and invasive control) and combining activity and event delivery with our countryside service and conservation partners.</p>
1.07	<p>Objective 2 - Safeguard species and habitats of principle importance and improve their management</p> <p>In consultation with the Regional Nature Partnership (Bionet) the first three priority habitats for our area have been outlined on the nature partnership website with short, medium and long term targets. This document will evolve online and provide evidence of change and guidance for regional conservation project priorities. It can be viewed at https://www.bionetwales.co.uk/nature-recovery-plan/</p>
1.08	<p>Objective 3 - Increase the resilience of our natural environment by restoring degraded habitats and habitat creation</p> <p>Grant funding has enabled progress in increasing tree and wildflower areas across our Council estate, this work will continue through 2021. Grant funded machinery purchased in 2020 will support changes in amenity grass management to allow more areas to grow and benefit biodiversity with a late summer 'cut and collect'. This shift from conventional management will benefit both nature and carbon emissions/sequestration.</p> <p>Key supporting action to work towards bee friendly status includes reduced use of chemical weed control and investment in the Foamstream system, currently being effectively used by Streetscene and Countryside Services.</p> <p>This spring newly developed wildflower sites have included sites in Flint, Mold, Buckley, Penyffordd, Bagillt and Connahs Quay.</p> <p>Biodiversity enhancements at greenspaces in Flint have been delivered, supporting the draft Flint Green Infrastructure Plan (Tree planting and wildflower areas at Cornist Park and Swinchiard Recreational ground) Work with Streetscene has been positive and grant funding has enabled 10 wildflower roadshow sites to be installed May 2021. Additional sites will be added in the autumn 2021. Future work will also consider; cemeteries for wildflower enhancement and management for biodiversity where appropriate; and also the roundabout sponsorship scheme and how it can complement future wildflower sites.</p> <p>The Biodiversity Officer is working collaboratively with Denbighshire County Council to use innovative mapping systems to target and evidence conservation action.</p> <p>A winter programme of tree planting has been undertaken since the launch of the Urban Tree and Woodland Plan in 2018. Although there was impact on community planting events due to Covid, business sponsorship, grant funding and partnership working have enabled progress towards increasing canopy cover.</p> <p>Often short term specific funding and resources dictate the scope of tree planting projects. The 2021 Townscape Trees Project funding has been approved to maximise planting opportunities through the use of external consultants to work with the Natural Environment Team to plan, consult</p>

	<p>and prepare tree planting sites. The grant will also fund the purchase of trees and contractor installation.</p> <p>Key urban planting schemes to date have taken place in Flint, Connah's Quay, Saltney and Mold with additional planting at a number of school sites including Nercwys, Nannerch, Broughton and Holywell.</p>
1.09	<p>Objective 4 - Tackle key pressures (Climate change/Invasive non-native species/habitat loss) on species and habitats</p> <p>Changes in our grounds maintenance regimes and delivery of tree planting schemes will help to reduce the impacts of climate change and contribute to our carbon reduction strategy.</p> <p>Our Flintshire Eco Champions education programme (run in conjunction with Energy staff) also supports this action.</p> <p>There will also be further opportunity to look at specific sites within our landholdings in terms of improving biodiversity value and carbon sequestration which often go hand in hand.</p> <p>Unfortunately a conference on greener development which had been organised by the Biodiversity Officer and colleagues and due to take place March 2020 was postponed due to Covid. This will be re-arranged to align with any future restrictions and may be moved online.</p> <p>The majority of work to tackle invasive non-native species relies on volunteer involvement and events, all these events were cancelled in 2020 as a result of Covid. As a result of collaboration with the North Wales Wildlife Trust, some management for key projects (E.g. Controlling Himalayan Balsam along the River Alyn) was undertaken by their staff when it was safe to do so. The Biodiversity Officer will be mapping invasive non-native species records and control measures in 2021 and continuing ongoing communication with Streetscene, Valuation & Estates and Housing where sites are reported.</p>
1.10	<p>Objective 5 - Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring</p> <p>In 2021 we will begin to use interactive mapping to track and evidence change in addition to the above reports. This will allow a more effective level of post project monitoring</p>
1.11	<p>Objective 6 - Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery</p> <p>The nature partnership is in year 2 of a 3 year project to improve its effectiveness, visibility and sustainability. This will provide the regional network needed to support local authority and other member action.</p> <p>The Biodiversity officer has obtained grant funding to increase hours to full time. In 2020/2021 this has been complimented by additional grant funding to contract temporary part time support to deliver specific grant funds.</p>

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	The Council's revenue budget enables employment of the Biodiversity Officer part time, who works closely with the wider Access & Natural Environment Service and other portfolio colleagues to maximise resources for biodiversity benefit. Resources to deliver action are secured through external funding streams.
2.02	The biodiversity update (Appendix 1) provides a detailed breakdown of grant funded action.
2.03	Grant income for biodiversity projects (excluding Countryside Service projects) for 2020/21 exceeded £220,000. Confirmed biodiversity grant funding for 2021/22 is approximately £232,000.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	Some areas of work have been subject to consultation with the nature partnership. Where changes in land management are planned consultation often involves, councillors, communities and local town/community councils.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	There is risk that if external funding is not secured, that resources and action will reduce in Flintshire, local biodiversity will continue to decline with implications for resilience to climate change.
4.02	The Biodiversity Officer is the singular specialist in this field and is limited by capacity, the engagement of other officers and partners and their ability to include biodiversity as part of their existing work. Resilience with the authority has improved with the integration with Access & Natural Environment Service, but there is risk should this post be lost.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Biodiversity Duty Update Appendix 2 –‘Supporting Nature in Flintshire’ Biodiversity Duty Plan 2020-2023

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Contact Officer: Tom Woodall, Access & Natural Environment Manager Telephone: 01352 703902 E-mail: tom.woodall@flintshire.gov.uk

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	<p>Biodiversity - The variety of life found on earth. It includes all species of plants and animals, their abundance and genetic diversity.</p> <p>Ecosystem - An ecosystem is made up of living organisms (plants, animals and microorganisms) in conjunction with their non-living environment (air, water, minerals and soil) and all the diverse and complex interactions that take place between them</p> <p>Sustainable development - Ensuring that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.</p> <p>NRW - Natural Resources Wales is the largest Welsh Government Sponsored Body. NRW were formed in April 2013, largely taking over the functions of the Countryside Council for Wales, Forestry Commission Wales and the Environment Agency in Wales, as well as certain Welsh Government functions.</p> <p>Bionet - The North East Wales Biodiversity Network (Bionet) was formed in October 2009 and renamed in 2010. It brought together partnerships that had existed in the Counties of Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham. The broad aim of the network is to conserve, protect and enhance biodiversity for current and future generations. Coordination and collaboration are seen as being important to the partnership alongside other objectives that include raising awareness and the promotion of biodiversity and identifying local priorities to deliver local and regional biodiversity improvements.</p>

Biodiversity Progress Report

Background

We are in an ecological and climate crisis. Nature is our planet's life support system and consequently essential for human survival. Our natural environment provides our food, water, air, building materials, medicines and landscape. Biodiversity is the variety of life on earth and biodiversity loss continues as a direct result of human impacts, through habitat loss and degradation, over exploitation, pollution, climate change and invasive non-native species.

As a Local Authority we have a responsibility to function sustainably and lead by example, protecting and enhancing our natural environment. Flintshire County Council have many areas of responsibility which can impact on the natural environment and we have the authority to ensure we function in a way which ensures the protection and recovery of nature. This way of working goes hand in hand with effective action against climate change.

To meet the challenge of reversing the decline in biodiversity it is essential that we act now and ensure as a local authority we meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Supporting Nature in Flintshire

Flintshire County Councils' Biodiversity plan "Supporting Nature in Flintshire 2020 - 2023" has been produced in response to the enhanced biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The Act requires that Public Authorities must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of their functions and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems.

A public authority, in complying with the Section 6 duty, must have regard to:

- The Section 7 list of habitats and species of principle importance for Wales
- The State of Nature Report published by Natural Resources Wales (NRW)
- Any Area Statement which covers all or part of the area in which the authority exercises its functions, once these are produced.

"Supporting Nature in Flintshire" is Flintshire County Council's second biodiversity duty plan which outlines how we plan to address our biodiversity duty under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 between 2020 and 2023. Delivering the plan will also help achieve our Council plan priorities and Well-being objectives.
















Whilst we made good progress in 67% of the target areas in the 2016-2019 plan. There are areas which need further work and this updated plan ensures that these areas are included and can be prioritised.

Flintshire County Council, like other Local Authorities are under extended and continued financial pressure. It is essential that environmental initiatives are viewed holistically,

considered across functions, embedded within council programmes and embraced as an opportunity to improve our local environment, County wide well-being and resilience.

Progress to date on the plan is outlined below:

Objective 1: Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels


<p>Action 1. Engage key departments across the Council to support implementation of the Section 6 duty</p>
<p>No Progress  Some Progress  Good Progress </p> <p>This engagement faced some delays due to the need to focus council operations on Covid response. The plan will be taken to Informal Cabinet in May 2021 and Scrutiny in June 2021</p> <p>Following this department specific input will be sought in 2021 which will further shape implementation of the plan.</p>
<p>Action 2 Assess existing Council plans and policies for impact on biodiversity and influence where possible</p>
<p>No Progress  Some Progress  Good Progress </p> <p>Biodiversity officer inclusion on the integrated impact assessment board and additional Nature Partnership representation on IIA board.</p>
<p>Action 3. Ensure high level consideration of duty in Council documents</p>
<p>No Progress  Some Progress  Good Progress </p> <p>The Biodiversity officer and Natural environment department provide comment and input into higher level plans.</p>
<p>Action 4. Ensure that environmental impact is considered through the procurement process</p>
<p>No Progress  Some Progress  Good Progress </p> <p>The required social value element to procurement now provides an opportunity for environmental considerations.</p>
<p>Action 5. Continue to work in partnership to coordinate the regional nature partnership (Bionet)</p>
<p>No Progress  Some Progress  Good Progress </p> <p>Work to develop the Nature Partnership, maximize effectiveness, support collaborative conservation action across north east wales is ongoing through the Local Nature Partnerships Cymru project which funds officer time and promotion/publicity activities for nature recovery.</p> <p>In March 2021 the regional nature partnership website was launched https://www.bionetwales.co.uk/about/</p>
<p>Action 6. Continue to develop and deliver projects with partner organisations</p>

<p>This is an area which is constantly evolving as funding is obtained or sort, for conservation projects. A wide range of these ongoing projects are displayed on the nature partnership website at https://www.bionetwales.co.uk/projects/</p>
<p>Action 7. Continue to develop and deliver internal communication and training</p>
<p>Following on from the generic biodiversity training held for the previous reporting round. Department specific training will be the next step, this will need to be developed with each department to ensure it is both relevant and effective.</p>
<p>Action 8. Continue our role in educating residents and future generations about the importance of our natural environment</p>
<p>This is done in a number of ways, combined activities and events with our countryside service and conservation partners. Promotion and publicity through the nature partnership website and social media platforms and education through our Flintshire eco champions schools programme</p>
<p>Action 9. Continue to provide and expand our environmental volunteering opportunities</p>
<p>Restrictions as a result of Covid greatly impacted on volunteering opportunities throughout 2020 and have continued in 2021. Through the nature partnership website we can now link into project volunteering opportunities with our conservation partners.</p> <p>As circumstances allow we plan to reinstate our previous volunteering opportunities (species specific and invasive control) and build on our offering.</p>

Where we need to be in 2023:

- Considering the impact of decisions on the natural environment across all departments as standard and ensuring that decisions seek to promote and enhance nature wherever possible.
- Coordinating an influential and effective Regional Nature Partnership and creating opportunities for partnership working.
- Our staff understand the impact they can make on the natural world and are confident to suggest change to support continual improvements towards a sustainability.
- Supporting and promoting a strong understanding of the importance of nature across our communities.



Objective 2: Safeguard species and habitats of principle importance and improve their management

<p>Action 10. Publish a Local Nature Recovery Action Plan for North East Wales</p>  <p>In consultation with the Regional Nature Partnership (Bionet) the first three priority habitats for our area have been outlined on the nature partnership website with short, medium and long term targets. This document will evolve online and provide evidence of change and guidance for regional conservation project priorities. It can be viewed here https://www.bionetwales.co.uk/nature-recovery-plan/</p>
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Where we need to be in 2023:

- Have an effective, innovative and collaborative Regional Nature Recovery Action Plan

Objective 3: Increase the resilience of our natural environment by restoring degraded habitats and habitat creation

<p>Action 11. Green our Council estate and improve accessible green spaces for wildlife and people</p>  <p>Grant funding has enabled some progress to increase trees and wildflower areas across our council estate, this work will continue through 2021.</p> <p>Going forward there will be a lot of value in allowing more areas to grow and manage them for biodiversity with a late summer cut and collect. Grant funded machinery purchased in 2020 will support these changes in management, this shift from conventional management would benefit both nature and carbon emissions/sequestration.</p>
<p>Action 12. Achieve Bee friendly status</p>  <p>Key supporting action to work towards bee friendly status include, reduced use of chemical weed control and investment in the Foamstream system. Reduced areas of mowing, installation and continued management of wildflower areas. Incorporation of green infrastructure into new design and retrofitting into existing.</p> <p>An application for Bee friendly status will be drafted in 2021.</p>
<p>Action 13. Progress our cross department Wildflower campaign</p>



<p>Work with Streetscene has been positive, grant funding has enabled 10 wildflower Roadshow sites to be installed May 2021.</p> <p>Additional sites will be added in the autumn 2021. Future work will also consider our burial grounds for wildflower enhancement and management for biodiversity where appropriate. We are also exploring the roundabout sponsorship scheme and how it can complement future wildflower sites.</p>
<p>Action 14. Progress our "Mapping to support nature recovery" project</p>
<p>Biodiversity officer is working collaboratively with Denbighshire County Council to use innovative mapping systems to target and evidence conservation action.</p> <p>While the mapping allows much greater functionality and efficiency in the field. In house technical skills need to be improved further to enable best use of the system.</p>
<p>Action 15. Continue to implement the FCC urban tree and woodland strategy</p>
<p>A winter programme of tree planting has been undertaken since the launch of the Urban tree and woodland plan in 2018. Although there was impact on community planting events due to Covid, business sponsorship, grant funding and partnership working have enabled some progress towards increasing canopy cover in 2020.</p> <p>A grant obtained for townscape tree planting in 2021 will greatly support tree planting in 2021/22. (Further details about our FCC tree planting approach are outlined below)</p>

Where we need to be in 2023:

- Have a greener more biodiverse council estate which is well used and appreciated by residents.
- Using accessible and efficient mapping technologies to inform action, evidence change and engage residents.

Objective 4 Tackle key pressures on species and habitats


<p>Action 16. Continue to work with key departments to reduce the impact of climate change</p>
<p>Changes in our grounds maintenance through Streetscene (discussed above) will help to reduce the impacts of climate change.</p> <p>Our Flintshire Eco Champions education programme (run in conjunction with Energy staff) also supports this action.</p>

<p>Work through the IIA board enabling the impact of projects on the environment to be assessed will also support action against climate change.</p> <p>There will also be further opportunity to look at specific sites within our landholdings in terms of improving biodiversity value and carbon sequestration which often go hand in hand.</p>
<p>Action 17. Promote and enable greener development</p>

<p>Our County Ecologist works to enable greener development across the council and ensure that important species and habitats are protected.</p> <p>Unfortunately a conference on greener development which had been organised by the Biodiversity officer and colleagues and due to take place March 2020 was postponed due to Covid. This will be re-arranged to align with any future restrictions and may be moved online.</p> <p>As a collaborative piece of work with the nature partnership we are exploring how else we can support greener development across the north east wales region.</p>
<p>Action 18. Work in partnership to limit the impact of INNs on local biodiversity</p>

<p>The majority of invasive nonnative work relies on volunteer involvement and events, all these events were cancelled in 2020 as a result of Covid. As a result of collaboration with the North Wales Wildlife Trust, some management for key projects (E.g. Controlling Himalayan balsam along the River Alyn) was undertaken by their staff when it was safe to do so.</p> <p>The Biodiversity officer will be mapping invasive nonnative records and control measures in 2021 and continuing ongoing communication with Streetscene, estates and housing where sites are reported.</p>

Where we need to be in 2023:

- Climate action is led, coordinated and supported by a cross departmental group
- Improved levels of nature consideration and inclusion across all new development
- We are involved in effective partnership work to minimise the impact of invasive species

Objective 5 Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring

<p>Action 19. Monitor and evaluate action</p>

<p>Action to date has been recorded through plan reporting and grant funding reports.</p>

In 2021 we will begin to use interactive mapping to track and evidence change in addition to the above reports. This will allow a more effective level of post project monitoring.

Where we need to be in 2023:

- We will have a platform where we can share appropriate environmental data across the regional nature partnership.
- We will be able to evidence change and understand what the best action is and where and when to undertake it to focus resources we have.
- We will be using a spatial nature recovery action plan to inform action

Objective 6 Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery

Action 20. Ensure sufficient capacity and resources to comply with the duty

No Progress

Some Progress

Good Progress

The nature partnership is in year 2 of a 3 year project to improve its effectiveness, visibility and sustainability. This will provide the regional network needed to support local authority and other member action.

The Biodiversity officer has obtained grant funding to increase hours to full time. In 2020/2021 this has been complimented by additional grant funding to contract temporary part time support to deliver specific grant funds. While this is not a long term solution it provides a short term structure for effective delivery of commitments in Flintshire.

Where we need to be in 2023:

- Have a strong and effective local and regional network which has well-coordinated and effective communication with national forums.
- We need a local structure which is effective, stable and supports our commitment to continued action to halt nature loss and creates a workplace where environmental consideration and nature based solutions are mainstream.

Short term grant funded projects:

The majority of biodiversity work to fulfill the objectives are undertaken with external grant funding. The level of funding obtained dictates the scope and impact of projects.

- Grant income for biodiversity projects (excluding Countryside service projects) for 2020/21 exceeded £220,000. This grant funding enabled the enhancement of green spaces for pollinators, orchard creation, tree planting, and installation of wildflower areas, meadow management and investment in machinery to manage the council estate for wildlife, including cut and collect machinery and a chemical free weed control system.
- Confirmed biodiversity grant funding for 2021/22 is approximately £232,000. Planned outputs for this grant funding include, continued temporary increase in hours for Biodiversity officer role, part time temporary support for the Biodiversity officer, creation of a total of 40 new natural assets across the county, including; High impact wildflowers in our Roadshow project, biodiversity enhancement along coastal sites in the Colour Our Coast project, fruit tree planting along active travel networks for our Fruit routes project, creation and enhancement of More meadows, a Townscape trees project to increase urban tree cover and improve understanding of their value and further investment in equipment to enable the management of natural assets into the future. The Biodiversity officer has also begun a collaborative project with Bumblebee conservation to further work with Calon wen farms in Flintshire and will be able to link with FCC tenant farms, offering support for farm management which benefits pollinators.

Tree planting

- Our urban tree and woodland plan sets out targets to increase urban canopy cover. Following its adoption in 2018 a number of grant funds have been obtained to progress the plan. The natural environment team have undertaken a programme of tree planting each winter planting season since 2018 which complies with the requirements of funding obtained, supports work within partnerships and/or takes advantage of opportunities. Short term, specific funding and resources can dictate the scope of tree planting projects. Tree planting is also guided by the urban tree and woodland plan and the principle of the right tree in the right place. This avoids important natural habitats being planted with trees where it wouldn't be appropriate or inappropriate species being planted
- Following the adoption of the plan, the team contacted town and community councils to promote tree planting and attended a number of meetings when requested to explore planting options.
- When sites are suggested for planting an appropriate level of engagement is undertaken, site managers are consulted and underground utilities checked prior to planting which is usually undertaken by the natural environment team with support from Countryside services and where appropriate volunteers.

- The 2021 townscape trees project funding has been approved to contract external consultants to work with the natural environment team to plan and prepare tree planting sites. The grant will also fund the purchase of trees and contractor installation.
- In Flintshire, a large proportion of our tree planting uses heavy standards which are large trees, these have instant impact and are less prone to damage through vandalism.
- New grant funded mapping capability is enabling the mapping of new tree planting to evidence progress and will in due course be used to publicise action.
- Key urban planting schemes to date have taken place in Flint, Connah's Quay, Saltney and Mold with additional planting at a number of school sites including Nercwys, Nannerch, Broughton and Holywell.

Wildflower areas

- Wildflower work is ongoing between the Biodiversity officer and Streetscene staff, the work has a number of objectives; to create demonstration wildflower verges, to improve the management of naturally diverse verges and to manage identified areas of green space less, allowing the grass to grow in some areas where it is appropriate.
- This work links with grant funded projects and equipment and has also established a link with the FCC roundabout sponsorship scheme which will be explored further this year.
- This spring wildflower sites have included sites in Flint, Mold, Buckley, Penyffordd, Bagillt and Connah's Quay

Partnership working

- One element of funding supports Biodiversity officer coordination of the regional nature partnership. This is a collaboration between Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham and drives regional species monitoring projects, development and implementation of the nature recovery plan, a programme of specialist mapping for conservation, awareness and publicity, regional project facilitation. More about the nature partnership can be found at <http://www.bionetwales.co.uk/> and the projects across north east wales here <https://www.bionetwales.co.uk/projects/>

Other areas:

The Biodiversity officer is also involved in projects looking at potential to improve biodiversity value and carbon sequestration, invasive species control, integrated impact assessments and input into the environmental impact and considerations of internal projects. Green infrastructure projects and site landscaping for biodiversity. For example: the River Alyn Himalayan balsam Control project, Queensferry campus biodiversity enhancement opportunities and Shotton green infrastructure project.

Detailed breakdown of Biodiversity Funding 20/22

Local Nature Partnerships Cymru: EnRaW funding 2019 – 2022

Aim: To make a long-term, sustainable difference to halting and reversing the decline of the natural environment, as detailed in the Nature Recovery Action Plan and Natural Resource Policy, through using SMNR principles to harness the collective resources of communities, volunteers, public bodies and businesses (beyond traditional audiences) to take informed, evidence-driven collaborative action within local authority or national park areas.

Objectives:

1. To establish a vibrant and effective all-Wales network of Local Nature Partnerships capable of contributing to Environment Act implementation at a local level through post creation, capacity-building, peer support and expert input at local and national level.
2. To develop local Nature Recovery Action Plans in all local authority/national park areas and support a broad range of actors to contribute to them in line with SMNR principles,
3. To deliver compelling evidence-based narratives about the value of nature recovery that resonate with a range of audiences and resources to help people, public bodies and businesses reap SMNR benefit themselves
4. To contribute to integration of NRAP, NRP and WFG Act objectives in policy development at local and national level (e.g. Well-Being Plans and Area Statements)
5. To widen participation and investment in the LNP Cymru project at local and national levels and to achieve a more secure and integrated funding base so that nature-based activities that also contribute to social, economic and cultural well-being can continue in future.

Grant fund	WG: Enabling Natural Resources and Well-being Grant - £2.4m		
Funds received by FCC	Staffing	£31,869.94 (over 3 years)	To fund biodiversity officer increase hours to full time
	Project	£21,422.80 (over 3 years)	Project budget for Local Nature Partnership events, publicity and promotion
Outputs 20/21	Developed the regional nature partnership (Bionet) further working with Conwy CBC, Denbighshire CC and Wrexham CBC		
	Biodiversity Officer upskilling: Funded Budget management training, Project management Prince2 Foundation and Practitioner		
	Greener development conference (Fully booked for 120 delegates in March 2020 – Postponed due to Covid)		
	Development of Nature Recovery Plan (Draft complete March 21)		
	Investment in ArcGIS mapping technology to enable mapping in the field , improved action capture, evidence and monitoring (Link to Nature Recovery Plan)		

	Creation of Nature Partnership website (Launch March 2021)
	Progress joint species monitoring projects
Planned Outputs 21/22	Progress action under Nature Recovery Plan
	Re-schedule Greener development conference/Move online if necessary
	Make full use of mapping, website and improved social media platform
	Continue to develop and deliver regional projects
	Explore financial sustainability of the Nature Partnership

Local Places for Nature 2020-2022

Background

1. Our environment underpins our economic, social, cultural and individual well-being. We depend on nature to provide our food, clean water, air, energy and the raw materials for our industries. Pressure on nature comes from many sources, including urbanisation, agricultural management, pollution, climate change and woodland management. NRW's 'State of Natural Resources Report, 2016' identified that Wales did not meet the 2010 international and national biodiversity targets. The most recent State of Nature, 2019 report (a third sector partnership of nature conservation organisations) says that of the 3,902 species (for which sufficient data were available) over 600 (17%) were threatened with extinction from Wales. Another 73 (2%) have gone extinct already.
2. Welsh Government has put in place some of the strongest legislation in the world, including the Wellbeing of Future Generations Acts and the Environment Act. This legislation seeks to address some of the challenges we face in a more joined-up way, with duties on Ministers and public authorities.
3. While this legislation is starting to bear fruit, our ecosystems are under imminent threat and there is a need to take immediate action.
4. The First Minister's manifesto commits to development of an Environmental Growth Plan to halt and reverse the decline in nature and to grow the environment for the benefit of future generations. It focusses on a holistic approach to land, water, air, plants and animals. The concept of 'Stop, Grow, Change for Environmental Growth' explains what individuals, communities, businesses and public bodies can do to help environmental growth;
 - a. **Stop** the decline in nature: this could include a range of activities around reducing litter, stopping or amending existing mowing practices, reducing pesticides and fertilizers, bringing into better management neglected areas enhancing areas of habitat.
 - b. **Grow** nature: this could include growing a National Forest, greening the estate, improving connectivity of habitats, growing the circular economy, creating

- allotments/community gardens, creating or increasing nature-rich urban green spaces and using area statements to drive forward activity locally.
- c. **Change** by removing barriers to, and encouraging, 'doing the right thing'. This could include, promoting active travel, inspiring interest and awareness of ecosystem resilience, etc.
5. 'Local Places for Nature'. Environmental Growth intends to enable people to see improvements to the natural environment 'from their doorsteps'. This includes community led activity, attending to the everyday places, demonstrating Environmental Growth 'on your doorstep' These may include new projects for community orchards, allotments, 'greening of public buildings', Tiny Forests, water fountains, habitat creation and interpretation, changing mowing practices etc.
 6. The Local Places For Nature fund is a £5m capital fund in 2020-21 to deliver 'Environmental Growth on your doorstep' It is intended to be a 'bottom up' approach. It is not intended to be prescriptive about what communities may wish to pursue. A range of projects could be presented and supported under the following 4 areas of focus including;
 - a. **AIR: Improving air quality**, increasing carbon storage, reducing carbon emissions, removing pollutants.
 - b. **LAND & SEA: Improving land and sea**; improving soil quality, improving water quality, encouraging nature in fields, nature reserves, and public rights of way.
 - c. **PLANTS & ANIMALS: Encouraging plants and animals**; creating places for nature, allotments , developing ecological networks, encourage pollinators, wildlife passages, restoring habitat, planting, removing invasive and non-native species, street trees, gardens, hedgerows, roadside verges and green roofs, green corridors, parks, wildflower meadows, woodlands, cemeteries, urban green infrastructure
 - d. **WATER: Improving water quality and availability**; creating places for nature in local rivers, streams and ponds, improving water regulation and improving drainage, water fountains, minimising chemical fertilizers and pesticides etc, using green infrastructure to minimise flooding or improve water availability.
 7. Requirements for all projects;
 - a. To restore and enhance nature.
 - b. Delivers environmental growth that can be seen 'from your doorsteps'. This means where people live, work, access public services, travel (so it includes roadside verges, roundabouts) and spend their leisure time (e.g. public open spaces). The proposals also include work to underpin the FM's commitment on 'doing the small things'.
 - c. Deliver a capital asset that has a sustainable management plan for future maintenance.
 - d. It will also be important for all projects to show to an appropriate extent that the activity:

- Is small-scale, local activity, designed and led by communities. Enables participation; helping people to experience and value nature, leading to individual and community action to protect and enhance nature.
 - Is focused on, or will benefit residents of, areas of deprivation.
- e. Demonstrates multiple benefits; spanning environmental, social, economic and cultural well-being.

Grant fund	WG: Local Places for Nature 2020/21	
Grant stream	Funds received	Outputs
Greening the public estate	£40,135	Investment in Foamstream chemical free weed control system – housed at Alltami for cross dept use. Foamstream system has reduced the use of chemical weed control, is multi-use has also been used for park cleaning and will be used in preparation for wildflower areas and future management of these areas.
Environmental growth	£72,365	Creation of 14 capital assets for nature and investment in maintenance equipment. New meadows, orchards, exemplar places for pollinators and 2 Bank Commander 2 wheel tractors (1 Streetscene, 1 Countryside) to enable grassland management and ground preparation for wildflowers)
LP4N Capital Underspend	£38,850	Biodiversity enhancements at greenspaces in Flint – Supporting the draft Flint Green infrastructure plan (Tree planting and wildflower areas at Cornist Park and Swinchiard Recreational ground)
Preparatory Grant	£65,000	Purchase of grass management equipment: Grillo Cut and collect machinery for Streetscene, Tractor and Ryetec for meadow management in Countryside to support delivery of objectives in 2021/22 LP4N bid.
Revenue Grant	5,000	To support delivery Q3/4: Funded relief ranger support 1 day per week Nov 20 – March 21
Outcomes 20/21	Support delivery of FCC Sect. 6 Duty (and related Council plan action), FCC Urban tree and Woodland Plan and Environment priority in FCC Wellbeing plan.	

	Investment in equipment to support improved council estate management for biodiversity and wellbeing.
	Creation of natural community assets improving local biodiversity value and community connection with nature.
	Funding and increased capacity has enabled improved internal cross departmental working and enhanced regional working.

Grant fund	WG: Local Places for Nature 2021/22	
Grant stream	Funds approved	Planned Outputs
Local Places for Nature (Greening the public estate and Environmental Growth Combined at Biodiversity officer request)	£112,437.50 (£8,437.50 project office)	Colour Our County Project: 4 Work areas outlined below to create 40 natural assets. It will also purchase additional equipment to support future maintenance of the assets. <i>Work will support delivery of S6 duty, Urban tree and woodland plan and Council plan.</i>
		Colour our coast: Tree and shrub planting, wildflower area creation in publically accessible spaces in the more deprived coastal communities. (10 sites min.)
		Roadshow: High impact wildflowers on our transport network (15 sites min.)
		Fruit routes: Fruiting tree and shrub planting along our active travel routes (10 sites min.)
		More meadows: Meadow enhancement or creation at publically accessible sites (5 sites min.)
Challenge Fund	£100,000 (£10,000 project office)	Townscape trees: Tree planting across our settlements. The grant will specifically fund: 1.Consultant work to undertake; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site scoping (Refer to tree and woodland plan and deprivation index) • Site assessments, Utilities searches and permissions, • Design Drawings, Recommendations for tree species, form and sizes for each location, Stakeholder liaison, • Works specification for each site, • Details of any traffic management required for the sites and keeping professional stakeholders (e.g.

		<p>highway engineers) appraised of the developing schemes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief 5 year maintenance requirements. <p>2.Tree purchase and accessories 3.Contractor planting (Winter 21/22) 4. Mapping of all planting. It will provide a clear picture of project output and local benefit.</p> <p><i>Work will progress Urban tree and Woodland plan, support carbon reduction action and implement S6 duty.</i></p>
Revenue Fund	£20,000	<p>Continued support for the Biodiversity Officer from Relief ranger (1 day per week)</p> <p>Contracted support from North Wales Wildlife Trust (1 day per week)</p> <p>Collaborative project with WCBC, Bumblebee conservation and Calon wen farms (Including work with Council tenant farms where possible)</p>

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Supporting Nature in Flintshire

Our plan to maintain and enhance biodiversity
under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016



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January
2020 -
December
2023

Foreword

Nature is in deep crisis, 2020 marks the year our nation has failed to meet almost all of the international biodiversity commitments which were set 10 years ago. The continual downward spiral in the health of our natural world demonstrates the need to change the way we live and make business decisions. The wellbeing of future generations will depend on our action now.

At Flintshire County Council serving our community is central. We know that our communities want first class local services and we want to ensure that our environment is protected and enhanced while we carry out these functions. We understand how important the health of our environment is and how closely it is linked with the wellbeing and happiness of our communities.

The Covid-19 crisis has put many public services under huge pressure but it has also highlighted to many the value of our natural world, we have all had to find new ways of working and many of these are positive for our environment and will be adopted permanently as we emerge from the crisis.

We understand at Flintshire County Council that we are in a key position and moment when we can lead the way in nature recovery and support understanding and action across our communities.

Councillor Carolyn Thomas
Deputy Leader Flintshire County Council

*Complying with
our Section 6
Biodiversity Duty
Under the
Environment Act*

*20
Actions for
nature*

*Delivering a
greener council
and supporting
community
wellbeing*



Contents



Summary

Why is nature important and why action is needed now. Background to the plan and how it will be progressed.



Why do we need a plan

What compliance looks like and links with other legislation, plans and policies



Why do we need to support nature in Flintshire

What we have in Flintshire, Grassland and Commons, Woodlands and trees, Rural and urban green infrastructure and protected sites.



How will we measure progress

The many ways that action will be monitored.



Action to support nature in Flintshire

20 Actions for nature set out under objectives 1 to 6 of the National Nature Recovery Action Plan.



References and Further information

Summary

Nature is our planet's life support system and consequently essential for human survival. Our natural environment provides our food, water, air, building materials, medicines and landscape. Biodiversity is the variety of life on earth and biodiversity loss continues as a direct result of human impacts, through habitat loss and degradation, over exploitation, pollution, climate change and invasive non-native species.

Welsh Government recognise all the benefits that are provided by plants, animals microorganisms and the places where they live and are aiming to reverse the decline of biodiversity in Wales with a ground breaking new framework of legislation.

As a Local Authority we have a duty to function sustainably and lead by example to protect and enhance our natural environment. Flintshire County Council have many areas of responsibility which can impact on the natural environment and we have the authority to ensure we function in a way which ensures the protection and recovery of nature. This way of working goes hand in hand with effective action against climate change.

To meet the challenge of reversing the decline in biodiversity it is essential that we act now and ensure as a local authority we meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Wales did not meet the 2010 biodiversity targets

Globally we will fail to deliver the 2020 targets



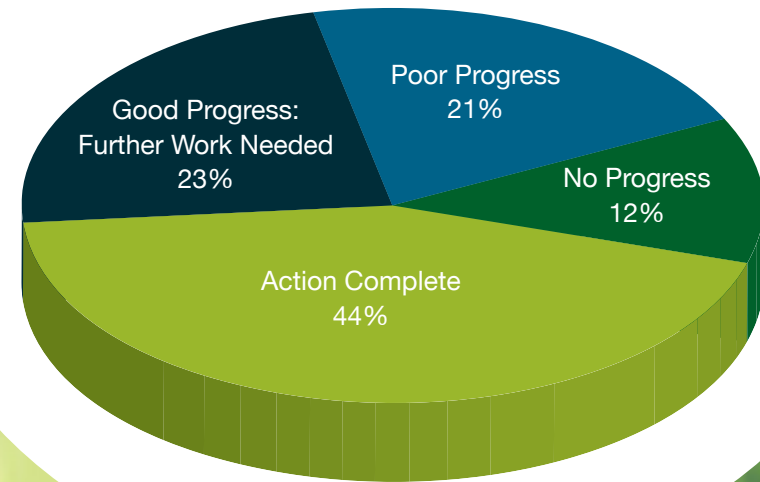
Between 2002 and 2008 less than half of our most important SPECIES IN WALES were considered stable or increasing

2016-19 Biodiversity Section 6

Plan progress report: Dec 2019

Supporting Nature in Flintshire is our second plan for maintaining and enhancing biodiversity in Flintshire. We made good progress in 67% of the target areas under our 2016-2019 plan and are progressing our work in 2020 in a stronger position having continued to secure a number of grants for action for nature and to increase our Biodiversity Officer position to full time. Flintshire have been instrumental in ensuring the continuation of the Regional Nature Partnership (Bionet) which will be an essential tool in the development of a Local Nature Recovery Action Plan, in implementing targets from the National Nature Recovery Action plan, priorities from the Area Statements and wellbeing objectives.

Our plan is ambitious. It will involve working across council departments, driving change which will have multiple benefits and promoting new ways of thinking and working. There will be particular links with the Carbon reduction program and the emerging priority area of climate change.



Why do we need a plan?

Supporting Nature in Flintshire has been produced in response to the enhanced biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

The Act requires that Public Authorities must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of their functions and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems.

To comply with the Section 6 duty, a Public Authority must have regard to:

- The Section 7 list of habitats and species of principle importance for Wales
- The State of Nature Report published by Natural Resources Wales (NRW)
- Any Area Statement which covers all or part of the area in which the authority exercises its functions, once these are produced
- and**
- Must prepare and publish a Sect. 6 delivery plan and report on plan progress every 3 years

Supporting Nature in Flintshire outlines how, as an organisation, we plan to address our biodiversity duty under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

There are strong links between the Environment

(Wales) Act 2016 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

All major threats to nature including; climate change, over-exploitation, habitat loss, pollution, land management and invasive species can be addressed by living more sustainably which is at the heart of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Complying with the Section 6 duty will help us maximise our contributions to the Well-being goals and will also support delivery of other key plans and policies. Linked national, regional and local legislation, plans and policies are outlined below.

National	Regional	Local
Well-being of future generations (Wales) Act 2015	Area Statements	Council Plan 2020 -2023
Environment (Wales) Act 2016	Nature Recovery Action Plan	Well-Being Plan
Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales		Carbon Reduction Programme
Climate Emergency Declaration		Urban Tree & Woodland Plan
Action Plan for Pollinators		Environment & Sustainability Policy



Why do we need to support nature in Flintshire?

Flintshire is a county of contrasts. Set between the rural counties to the west and the more developed areas of Cheshire and Merseyside, land use varies from intensive industrial development along the Dee estuary through to remote and wild areas on the Clwydian range. The moorland, coast and woodland are important to all who live, work and visit the County.

The Clwydian Range, designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, lies in the west of Flintshire, here Coniferous forests are prominent and although areas are managed for agriculture, much of it is still covered by a mosaic of heath, heather and gorse. Our only areas of deep peat in the county are in the Clwydian range. Peatland habitats can play an important role in water management, slowing down flood waters and naturally reducing flood-risk downstream. By slowly releasing water during dry periods, peatland helps to reduce the impact of droughts on water supplies and on river and stream flows.

Nature is being lost across the whole of Wales and Flintshire is no exception. Over the decades, Flintshire has undergone significant transformation.

Impacts are evident on our Dormouse population where average positive survey records across our sites has reduced by 94% indicating a population which has plummeted. Another small mammal the water vole is the UK's fastest declining mammal and in Flintshire is now only found in specific pockets of suitable habitat.

The widespread loss of natural habitats through development, agriculture, housing, infrastructure, industry and mineral extraction is significant and there are new threats including pests and diseases such as Ash Dieback which is likely to greatly impact on the Ash trees across the County.

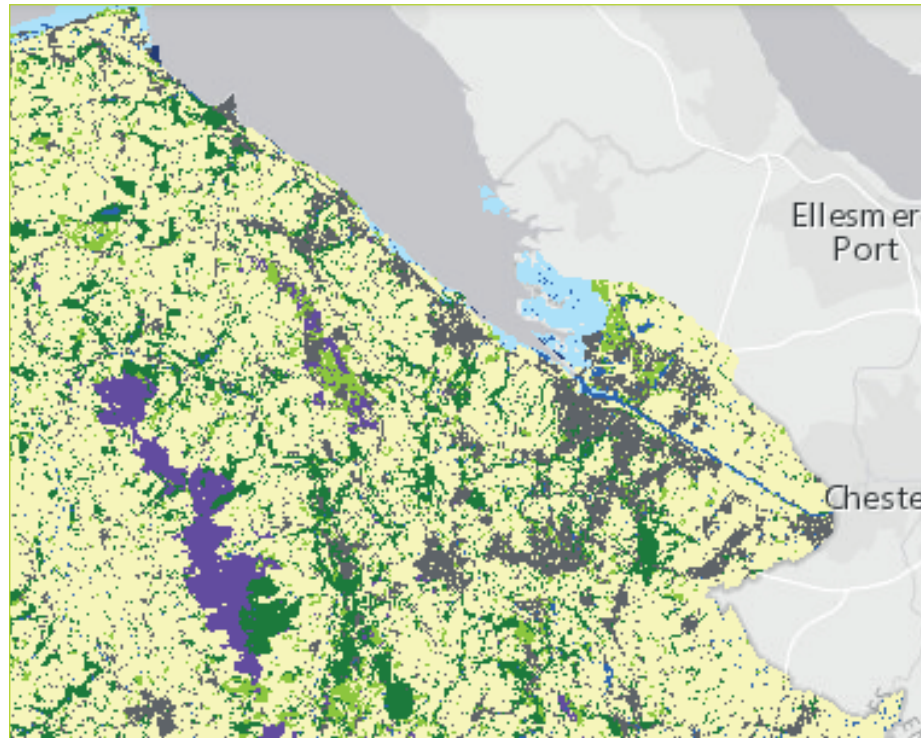
Despite this Flintshire does still retain many places that are of importance for wildlife in urban and rural areas and there is now more evidence than ever, that these natural places are also incredibly important for human well-being.

The Well-being Plan for Flintshire reports "that people living, working and visiting Flintshire, place a high value on the natural environment and want to use it more for their own wellbeing"



Nature in Flintshire

The broad distribution of habitats in Flintshire is shown in the map below.



Legend

- Woodlands
- Mountains, moorland, heath
- Seminatural grassland
- Enclosed farmland
- Coastal margins
- Open water, wetlands & floodplains
- Urban / Not habitat
- Marine (estuaries)

Natural Resources Wales

<https://envsys-ltd.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=f8741b82f4974486ae3ad0ddd8285692>

Grassland and Commons

Many of the commons within Flintshire are important for wildlife. The Halkyn Common Special Area of Conservation (SAC) was formed over glacial deposits and 350 million year old limestone, creating a unique habitat and the largest resource of Calaminarian grassland in Wales. Nationally uncommon species such as the lead-tolerant spring sandwort are abundant as a result of the long history of metalliferous mining in the area.

The commons in the more urban areas also provide important diverse habitats. The network of ponds, wetland and scrub areas on Lower Common, Buckley are particularly important as breeding sites for frogs and newts and form part of the Deeside and Buckley Newt Sites SAC.

Flintshire is one of the key counties in Wales for the Great crested newt, they will often favor rural farm ponds, old quarries and derelict land in urban settings.

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Award winning mitigation at a development site in Buckley has increased the Great Crested Newt Population on site by over 1000%

Woodlands and Trees

Woodlands cover 8.8% of the county, well below the Wales average of 14%. It is characterised by small blocks of farm woodland and some rural estates, as well as larger forest blocks, such as Nercwys and Moel Famau in the south of the county. Woodland forms an important habitat component in the wider countryside and within protected sites. For example Alyn Valley Woods SAC which follows the river Alyn from Loggerheads to Rhydymwyn is designated for its broadleaved woodland on limestone and wet alder woodland. Much of the Deeside and Buckley newt sites SAC is woodland which is important terrestrial habitat for Newts and Wepre Woods in Connahs Quay is designated for the sessile oak woodland present.

In 2018 we launched our Urban tree and woodland plan, the plan sets a target of achieving an urban canopy cover of 18% by 2033, an increase from the current 14.5%, the seventh lowest in Wales. It's a 15 year plan which sets out an integrated approach to planting on all types of council land.

Tree planting and natural regeneration (where appropriate) will be an important part of creating resilient ecological networks. It is essential that "The right tree in the right place" policy is followed when planning tree planting. This will prevent any loss of other important habitats (such as wetland or grassland) and will ensure that the trees provide maximum benefit into the future.

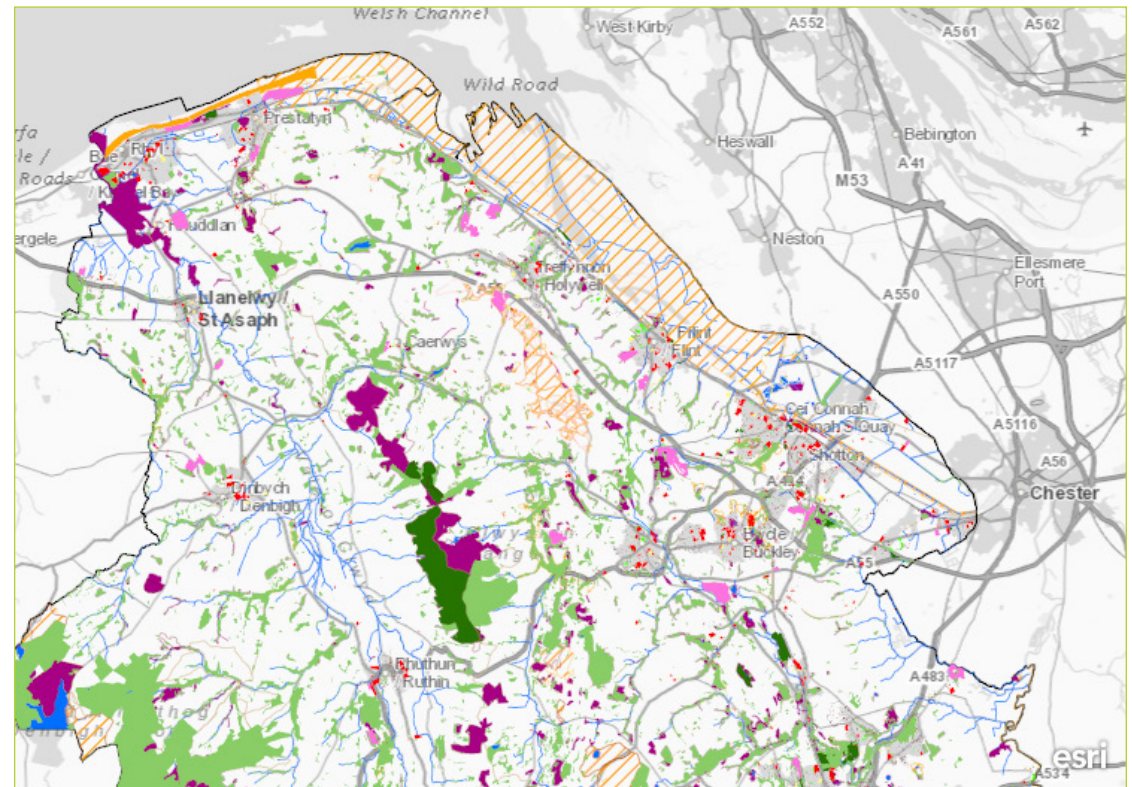


*In the year
2019/2020
we planted
over 6000
trees*

Rural and Urban Green Infrastructure

There are many undesignated sites and scattered fragments of habitats which have nature conservation value and are essential for nature. This forms our green infrastructure. It includes streams and small pockets of wet woodlands, old hedgerows, acting as corridors for wildlife in otherwise species-poor fields; ancient woodlands hosting hundreds of species including bluebells. Combined these habitats provide for our more common and rare species such as Sand Lizards, Natterjack toads, Bats, Dormice, Otter, Great Crested Newts and thousands of wading birds on the Dee Estuary.

Most urban areas within the County incorporate informal 'green space' which is important for wildlife and recreation. Many of these are the legacy of old industrial or mineral workings which have developed natural flora and are the home for numerous insect species. Greenfield Valley, Holywell and Wepre Park, Connah's Quay are particularly valuable 'wild spaces'. The map to the right shows the different types of urban green infrastructure across Flintshire.



Protected Sites

Flintshire contains a high number of international, national and local nature conservation designations.

Interest (SSSIs) and over 300 locally designated wildlife sites.

The saltmarsh, sand dune and mudflat habitats of the Dee Estuary are not only important in their own right, but host internationally important populations of wildfowl and waders and are designated internationally as Special Protected Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and RAMSAR wetland site of international importance. Other internationally designated sites include the Alyn Valley Woods SAC, Deeside and Buckley Newt Sites SAC and Halkyn Mountain SAC.

These contain sensitive habitats including coastal and floodplain grazing marsh (5% of the welsh resource), Lowland Calcareous grassland (17% of the welsh resource), Saltmarsh (12% of the welsh resource) heathland, reedbeds, calaminarian grassland, ponds and coastal sand dunes .

In total the County hosts over 23 Sites of Special Scientific

We have 23 nationally protected sites (SSSIs) in Flintshire Crested Newt Population on site by over 1000%

The last review of sssi in flintshire highlighted that 68% were in unfavourable condition

How will we measure progress?

Progress against the plan will be formally reported to Welsh Government after every three year period with a report published on our website. This is dictated by the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

Due to the cross cutting and integrated nature of the plan and the fact that the plan will deliver objectives for a number of Council areas, action under this plan will be measured and reported through a number of additional methods.

Regular progress reports will be received by the Flintshire County Council Environment working group. Actions will be reported quarterly through the Welsh Government funded Local Nature Partnership Cymru project. Flintshire County Council also sit on the Welsh Government Section 6 Task and Finish Group so action will be reported directly to Welsh Government at these meetings. Action will also contribute to the quarterly Council Plan reporting and reporting for the Well-being objectives.

Action will be measured by the outcomes produced, production of documents, the mapping of environmental assets or the mapping of change. Electronic survey methods and attendance and feedback from events and activities will also be used where appropriate.



Action to support nature in Flintshire

Actions in this plan are structured under the Welsh Governments National Nature Recovery Action Plan objectives, this is in line with guidance from Welsh Government.

All actions are in line with the sustainable development principles also known as the “5 ways of working” outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

- Long term
- Prevention
- Integration
- Collaboration
- Involvement

There will often be some overlap between the actions and objectives of various national and local plans and we work to ensure that these work streams complement each other.

Some of the actions in Supporting Nature in Flintshire, do directly link to the Council Plan and Wellbeing objectives. Where actions directly deliver for these plans it is indicated by the symbols below. Additionally much of our work is grant funded and can be a legal requirement but where specific actions in this plan are statutory or grant funded (For part of the plan duration) it is also highlighted.

- ST** Statutory
- CP** Council Plan
- WB** Well-being Plan
- GF** Grant Funded



Objective 1: Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels

Current challenges:

Corporate change is needed to alter the impact of our actions on the natural world, ensuring the value of our natural world is recognised and understood will help initiate this change. As a public body we have the ability to influence how our own estate is managed, our residents understanding of the issue and our own processes and policies.

In Flintshire the large businesses and industrial areas highlight the need for private companies to also be performing sustainably and fully engaged in conservation objectives. There are many good examples of links between businesses and conservation work in Flintshire. These partnerships need to be built on and promoted. It is essential that biodiversity is considered and incorporated into design and discussions at an early stage to ensure our landscape can be both economically and environmentally prosperous.

Where we need to be in 2023:

- Considering the impact of decisions on the natural environment across all departments as standard and ensuring that decisions seek to promote and enhance nature wherever possible.
- Coordinating an influential and effective Regional Nature Partnership and creating opportunities for partnership working.
- Our staff understand the impact they can make on the natural world and are confident to suggest change to support continual improvements towards a sustainability.
- Supporting and promoting a strong understanding of the importance of nature across our communities.

Action 1 Engage key departments across the Council to support implementation of the Section 6 duty.

Action 2 Assess existing Council plans and policies for impact on biodiversity and influence where possible.

Action 3 Promote high level consideration of duty in Council documents.

Action 4 Ensure that environmental impact is considered through the procurement process.

Action 5 Continue to work in partnership to coordinate the regional nature partnership (Bionet) **GF**.

Action 6 Continue to develop and deliver projects with partner organisations and businesses.

Action 7 Continue to develop and deliver internal communication and training.

Action 8 Continue our role in educating residents and future generations about the importance of our natural environment.

Action 9 Continue to provide and expand our environmental volunteering opportunities **WB**.

*Over 2500
people
attended our
environmental
events in
2019*



Objective 2: Safeguard species and habitats of principle importance and improve their management

Current challenges:

Since 1970 in the UK 41% of species have decreased. In Wales we have seen changes where wildlife is found: 30% is found in fewer places. Across the whole of Wales protected areas are generally small and fragmented and are therefore vulnerable to management changes and the influence of surrounding land use. The last review 68% of SSSIs were in unfavourable condition and 71% of assessed habitat features are judged to be in unfavourable condition.

There are strong development pressures around important habitats in Flintshire and key European Great Crested Newt sites. The future of the species in Flintshire will be dependent on maintaining habitat connections through the developing landscape this is also vital for retaining a landscape and ecosystems which will be resilient in a changing climate.

Where we need to be in 2023:

- Have an effective, innovative and collaborative Nature Recovery Action Plan

Action 10 Publish a Nature Recovery Action Plan to inform and guide action for species and habitats of principle importance across Flintshire **GF**



Objective 3: Increase the resilience of our natural environment by restoring degraded habitats and habitat creation

Current challenges:

There are numerous issues which may undermine the resilience of our ecosystems; pressure from development for industry, housing and infrastructure, lack of available land that owners are willing to leave wild/enhance for nature. The spread of invasive non native species. Social pressures such as off-road motorcycling and anti- social behaviour including littering and fly tipping all place additional pressure on our ecosystems and their ability to cope with change.

Restoring, expanding and improving the condition of our natural habitats, as well as incorporating natural space into our new development is the key to making them more resilient and able to deliver a wider range of social, economic and environmental benefits.

Where we need to be in 2023:

Have a greener more biodiverse council estate which is well used and appreciated by residents.

Using accessible and efficient mapping technologies to inform action and evidence change

Action 11 Green our Council estate and improve accessible green spaces for wildlife and people **CP WB**

Action 12 Achieve Bee friendly status **CP**

Action 13 Progress our cross department Wildflower campaign **CP**

Action 14 Progress our “Mapping to support nature recovery” project **GF**

Action 15 Continue to implement the FCC Urban tree and woodland strategy **CP**



Objective 4: Tackle key pressures on species and habitats

Current challenges:

Climate change is one of the biggest threats to biodiversity. Impacts are already being seen across our species. Migratory birds are arriving and laying eggs earlier for example swallows are arriving 15 days earlier today than they did in the 1960s. The availability of sand eels has reduced which are a key food source for our sea birds. On average 10-12 new non native species become established in the UK each year and up to 20% of these can have serious adverse impacts. Pests and diseases also threaten our native species, The disease Ash dieback continued intensification of land management and urbanisation also have a dramatic impact on our nature.

Where we need to be in 2023:

- Climate action is led, coordinated and supported by a cross departmental group
- Improved levels of nature consideration and inclusion across all new development
- We have implemented planned ash dieback action and where possible minimised negative impacts on local nature
- We are involved in effective partnership work to minimise the impact of invasive species

Action 16 Continue to work with key departments to reduce the impact of climate change **CP WB**

Action 17 Promote and enable greener development **WB**

Action 18 Work in partnership to limit the impact of INNs and pests and diseases on local biodiversity



Objective 5: Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring

Current challenges:

Our data on local regional and national species and habitats is limited and we do not have the capacity, time or resources to undertake complete habitat and species audits. Data is poorly shared between organisations which leads in inefficient working and missed opportunities. We need to focus on halting the decline of nature and we need to improve local action through effective monitoring and evidencing of project action.

Where we need to be in 2023:

- We will have a platform where we can share appropriate environmental data across the regional nature partnership.
- We will be able to evidence change and understand what the best action is and where and when to undertake it to focus resources we have.
- We will be using a spatial nature recovery action plan to inform action

Action 19 Monitor and evaluate action **ST**



Objective 6: Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery

Current challenges:

Like many other public bodies we have work to do in raising the profile of the environment across our depts. We recognise that work is needed to embed environmental consideration and we will look to incorporate the environment across Local Authority policy and documents to allow consistency and clarity on our commitments to nature recovery.

Where we need to be in 2023:

- Have a strong and effective local and regional network which has well-coordinated and effective communication with national forums.
- We need a local structure which is effective, stable and supports our commitment to continued action to halt nature loss and creates a workplace where environmental consideration and nature based solutions are mainstream.

Action 20 Ensure sufficient capacity and resources to comply with the duty



References

- State of Nature Report 2019 <https://nbn.org.uk/stateofnature2019/>
- Flintshire County Council Council Plan <https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Council-and-Democracy/Council-Plan.aspx>
- Flintshire County Council Well-being Plan <https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Council-and-Democracy/Council-Plan.aspx>
- Flintshire County Council Urban tree and woodland Plan <https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/PDFFiles/Countryside--Coast/Tree/Urban-Tree-and-Woodland-Plan.pdf>
- North East Wales Green Infrastructure map: Cofnod 2018: Not published
- Broad habitat mapping: Natural Resources Wales <https://envsys-ltd.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=f8741b82f4974486ae3ad0ddd8285692>
- Welsh habitat targets disaggregation report CCW 2007

Further Information

- For the full text of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2016/3/contents/enacted>
- For guidance documents see: <https://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/Environment-Wales-Act>
- For the full text of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2015/2/contents/enacted>
- For guidance documents see: <https://futuregenerations.wales/about-us/future-generations-act/>
- For further information on the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Section 6 duty: <https://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/Section-6>
- For further information about the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Section 7 Habitats and Species of principle importance for conservation: <https://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/Environment-Wales-Act>
- Find the Regional Nature Partnership (Bionet) on social media at <https://www.facebook.com/NEWBioNet/> and <https://twitter.com/newbionet>



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EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS - DECISIONS TAKEN REPORTED TO CABINET – 15.06.21

Streetscene and Transportation

- **The Flintshire County Council – Crosstree Lane, Ash Lane, Glynne Way and Gladstone Way, Hawarden and Cotton Lane, Mancot – Proposed Prohibition of Waiting, Prohibition of Waiting at any Time and Limited Waiting**

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 Crosstree Lane, Ash Lane, Glynne Way and Gladstone Way, Hawarden and Cottage Lane, Mancot.

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 June 2021 TO 30 November 2021**

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
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	
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	

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	
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	

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	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 1809281	8/06/21	Overview and Scrutiny	End of Year Performance Monitoring Report 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 Economic Development, Cabinet Member for Planning and Public Protection, Cabinet Member for Streetscene
Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee	8/06/21	Planning, Environment and Economy	Biodiversity Duty Update This report will provide an update on progress delivering the Section 6 Biodiversity Duty to date, the updated 2020 – 2023 plan and key areas of biodiversity work.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Streetscene

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	8/06/21	Chief Executive's	Commencement of the Socioeconomic Duty To update Overview and Scrutiny of our preparedness for the commencement of the socio-economic duty	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council (Governance) and Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets
Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee	8/06/21	Streetscene and Transportation	Litter and Fly Tipping To receive an update as requested by the Committee on 9 February 2021.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Streetscene
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	
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	

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	End of Year Performance Monitoring Report 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 (Governance) and Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	10/06/21	Chief Executive's	Recovery Strategy Update To receive an update on the latest position with the recovery objectives.	Operational	
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	10/06/21	Chief Executive's	Commencement of the Socio-Economic Duty To update Overview & Scrutiny of our preparedness for the commencement of the socio-economic duty.	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council (Governance) and 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	15/06/21	Social Services	Developing Children's Residential Care Home Provision To seek approval for the strategic approach to developing In House Children's Residential Care.	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council (Partnerships) and Cabinet Member for Social Services
Cabinet	15/06/21	Streetscene and Transportation	NEWydd Catering and Cleaning - Annual Review To present the NEWydd three year business plan (2021/22 to 2023/24) for consideration, review and endorsement.	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council (Governance) and Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets
Cabinet	15/06/21	Housing and Assets	Procurement of Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) Envelope Works to Council Owned Properties To seek approval for the appointment of contractors to deliver the Councils Whole House Envelope programme, through the Procure Plus framework.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Housing

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Cabinet	15/06/21	Chief Executive's	Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report 2020/21 To receive the Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report 2020/21 and an overview of progress in complying with the Welsh Language Standards.	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council (Governance) and Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets
Cabinet	15/06/21	Planning, Environment and Economy	Update on the Biodiversity Duty To provide an update on progress delivering the Section 6 Biodiversity Duty to date, the updated 2020 – 2023 plan and key areas of biodiversity work.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Streetscene
Cabinet	15/06/21	Chief Executive's	End of Year Performance Monitoring To present the Performance Outturn for 2020/21.	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council (Governance) and 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	15/06/21	Chief Executive's	Mersey Dee Alliance (MDA) Economic Stimulus Package To seek support on the Mersey Dee Alliance (MDA) Economic Stimulus Package.	Strategic	Cabinet Member for Economic Development
Cabinet	15/06/21	Social Services	Welsh Government White Paper Consultation - Rebalancing Care and Support To consider the White Paper, note the consultation response submitted by the Council and approve the report.	Strategic	Deputy Leader of the Council (Partnerships) and Cabinet Member for Social Services
Flintshire County Council	15/06/21	Governance	Appointment of an Independent Member to the Standards Committee To present details of the preferred candidate for the Independent Member vacancy on the Standards Committee for approval.		

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	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>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.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Housing
Community, Housing & Assets Overview & Scrutiny Committee	16/06/21	Housing and Assets	<p>Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) Update To provide an update on the WHQS specific to environmental works</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Housing
Community, Housing & Assets Overview & Scrutiny Committee	16/06/21	Housing and Assets	<p>Welfare Reform Update To provide an update on the impact of Welfare Reform on Flintshire Residents.</p>	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council (Governance) and 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	Housing Rent Income - Year end outturn and latest position for 2021/22 To provide the Year end outturn for 202021 and an operational update on rent collection and current arrear levels for 2021/22.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Housing
Community, Housing & Assets Overview & Scrutiny Committee	16/06/21	Housing and Assets	Communal Heating Charges 2021/22 To consider the proposed heating charges in council properties with communal heating systems for 2021/22 prior to Cabinet approval.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Housing
Community, Housing & Assets Overview & Scrutiny Committee	16/06/21	Overview and Scrutiny	End of Year Performance Monitoring Report 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

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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)
Joint Education, Youth & Culture and Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	17/06/21	Education and Youth	Multi Systematic Therapy Project To provide an update on the multi-agency service to provide intensive therapeutic support to young people.	Strategic	Deputy Leader of the Council (Partnerships) and Cabinet Member for Social Services
Joint Education, Youth & Culture and Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	17/06/21	Education and Youth	Safeguarding in Education To provide an update on the discharge of statutory safeguarding duties in schools and the Education portfolio	Operational	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education
Joint Education, Youth & Culture and Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	17/06/21	Education and Youth	Looked After Children To provide an update on the provision for Looked After Children	Operational	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education, Deputy Leader of the Council (Partnerships) and Cabinet Member for Social Services
Joint Education, Youth & Culture and Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	17/06/21	Education and Youth	Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Transformation To provide an update on the Authority's implementation plan and any national/regional updates	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)
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	Deputy Leader of the Council (Governance) and Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets
Education, Youth & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee	1/07/21	Education and Youth	Annual Report from Regional School Improvement Service, GwE To receive an update on the support provided by the regional school effectiveness and improvement service, GWE and its impact on schools	Operational	
Education, Youth & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee	1/07/21	Education and Youth	Social Media and Internet Safety To provide Members with an update on the Portfolio's Social Media and Internet Safety policy and provision	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)
Education, Youth & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee	1/07/21	Overview and Scrutiny	End of Year Performance Monitoring Report To review the levels of progress in the achievement of activities, performance levels and current risk levels as identified in the Council Plan.	Operational	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education
Education, Youth & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee	1/07/21	Overview and Scrutiny	Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking (EY&C) 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.	Operational	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education
Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	1/07/21	Overview and Scrutiny	End of Year Performance Monitoring Report 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 (Partnerships) and 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	1/07/21	Chief Executive's	Commencement of the Socioeconomic Duty To update Overview and Scrutiny of our preparedness for the commencement of the socio-economic duty	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council (Governance) and Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets
Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee Page 292	1/07/21	Social Services	Joint funded care packages To consider the implications of the lesser contribution by Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) towards joint-funded care packages.	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council (Partnerships) and Cabinet Member for Social Services
Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	1/07/21	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	Deputy Leader of the Council (Partnerships) and 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)
Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee	6/07/21	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
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	8/07/21	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Action Tracking To inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings.</p>	Operational	
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	8/07/21	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Forward Work Programme To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee.</p>	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	8/07/21	Chief Executive's	Employment and Workforce End of Year Update This report covers strategic updates in addition to the quarterly workforce statistics and their analysis.	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council (Governance) and Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	8/07/21	Finance	Revenue Budget Monitoring 2020/21 Month 4 and Capital Programme Monitoring 2020/21 (Month 12) The purpose of this report is to provide Members with the Revenue Budget Monitoring 2020/21 (Month 4) Report and the Capital Programme 2020/21 (Month 4) Report and Significant Variances.	Operational	
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	8/07/21	Finance	Capital Programme Monitoring 2020/21 (Outturn) To present the Outturn capital programme information for 2020/21.	Operational	

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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)
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	8/07/21	Chief Executive's	Joint funded care packages To consider the implications of the lesser contribution by Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) towards joint-funded care packages.	Operational	
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	Deputy Leader of the Council (Partnerships) and Cabinet Member for Social Services
Cabinet	13/07/21	Chief Executive's	Capital Programme Monitoring 2020/21 (Outturn) To present the Outturn Capital Programme information for 2020/21.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Streetscene

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	Chief Executive's	Revenue Budget Monitoring Report (Outturn) To present the Outturn Revenue Budget Monitoring Report information for 2020/21.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Streetscene
Cabinet	13/07/21	Governance	Digital Flintshire To review and update the Council's current Digital Strategy, reflecting achievements, changes and ambitions.	Strategic	Deputy Leader of the Council (Governance) and Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets
Cabinet	13/07/21	Governance	Digital Flintshire To review and update the Council's current Digital Strategy, reflecting achievements, changes and ambitions	Strategic	Deputy Leader of the Council (Governance) and Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets
Governance and Audit Committee	28/07/21	Chief Executive's	Draft Statement of Accounts 2020/21 To present the draft Statement of Accounts 2020/21 for Members' information only at this stage.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Streetscene

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	28/07/21	Chief Executive's	Supplementary Financial Information to Draft Statement of Accounts 2020/21 To provide Members with supplementary financial information to accompany the draft accounts as per the previously agreed Notice of Motion.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Streetscene
Governance and Audit Committee	28/07/21	Chief Executive's	Treasury Management Annual Report 2020/21 and Treasury Management Update Q1 2021/22 To provide Members with the Treasury Management annual report 2020/21 and first quarterly update for 2021/22.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Streetscene
August					
September					
Governance and Audit Committee	8/09/21	Chief Executive's	Risk Management Update To receive an update on actions to mitigate the strategic risks contained within the Council Plan.	Strategic	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)
Community, Housing & Assets Overview & Scrutiny Committee	15/09/21	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	15/09/21	Housing and Assets	Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 To provide an update on the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 following it becoming fully enacted.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Housing
Community, Housing & Assets Overview & Scrutiny Committee	15/09/21	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

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	16/09/21	Overview and Scrutiny	Forward Work Programme (CROSC) To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Corporate Resources O & S Committee	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council (Governance) and Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	16/09/21	Overview and Scrutiny	Action Tracking (CROSC) To inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council (Governance) and Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	16/09/21	Finance	Revenue Budget Monitoring 2021/22 (Month 4) and Capital Programme (Month 4) The purpose of this report is to provide Members with the Revenue Budget Monitoring 2020/21 (Month 4) Report and the Capital Programme 2020/21 (Month 4) Report and Significant Variances	Operational	Cabinet Member for Finance, Social Value and Procurement

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Cabinet	21/09/21	Streetscene and Transportation	Shotton Master Plan To present the Master Plan, as agreed by Cabinet in their February 2021 meeting and following the update presented during Cabinet's July meeting.	Strategic	Cabinet Member for Economic Development
October					
Community, Housing & Assets Overview & Scrutiny Committee	13/10/21	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	14/10/21	Overview and Scrutiny	Forward Work Programme (CROSC) To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Corporate Resources O & S Committee	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council (Governance) and 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)
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	14/10/21	Overview and Scrutiny	Action Tracking (CROSC) To inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council (Governance) and Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	14/10/21	Finance	Revenue Budget Monitoring 2021/22 (Month 5) This regular monthly report provides the latest revenue budget monitoring position for 2021/22 for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account. The position is based on actual income and expenditure as at Month 5, and projects forward to year-end.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Finance, Social Value and Procurement
November					

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	10/11/21	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking (CH & E)</p> <p>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.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Housing
<p>P R O C O S C</p> <p>Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee</p>	11/11/21	Finance	<p>Revenue Budget Monitoring 2021/22 (Month 6) and Capital Programme (Month 6)</p> <p>The purpose of this report is to provide Members with the Revenue Budget Monitoring 2020/21 (Month 6) Report and the Capital Programme 2020/21 (Month 6) Report and Significant Variances</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Finance, Social Value and Procurement
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	11/11/21	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Forward Work Programme (CROSC)</p> <p>To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Corporate Resources O & S Committee</p>	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council (Governance) and 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)
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	11/11/21	Overview and Scrutiny	Action Tracking (CROSC) To inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings.	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council (Governance) and Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets

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