

Public Document Pack

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To: Cllr David Evans (Chair)

Councillors: Glyn Banks, Mel Buckley, David Coggins Cogan, Chris Dolphin,
Ray Hughes, Richard Lloyd, Vicky Perfect, Mike Peers, Dan Rose,
David Richardson and Roy Wakelam

5 June 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

NOTICE OF REMOTE MEETING
ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, 11TH JUNE, 2024 at 10.00 AM

Yours faithfully

Steven Goodrum
Democratic Services Manager

The meeting will be live streamed onto the Council's website. The live streaming will stop when any confidential items are considered. 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.

AGENDA

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

Purpose: At the Annual Meeting, Council determined that the Labour Group will chair this Committee. The Committee is advised that Councillor David Evans is the Chair of the Committee for the municipal year.

2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

Purpose: To appoint a Vice-Chair for the Committee.

3 APOLOGIES

Purpose: To receive any apologies.

4 MINUTES (Pages 5 - 10)

Purpose: To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2024.

5 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

Purpose: To receive any Declarations and advise Members accordingly.

6 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING (Pages 11 - 20)

Report of Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee Facilitator

Purpose: To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Environment

7 WORKFORCE TRAVEL SURVEY REPORT (Pages 21 - 52)

Report of Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) - Cabinet Member for Planning, Public Health and Public Protection

Purpose: To approve the recommendations within the report

8 **CRACKS IN THE FOUNDATIONS BUILDING SAFETY IN WALES – AUDIT WALES REPORT** (Pages 53 - 68)

Report of Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) - Cabinet Member for Planning, Public Health and Public Protection

Purpose: To consider Audit Wales report “Cracks in the Foundations” and the recommendations made within that report and how key elements of the Building Safety Act 2022 are being implemented in Wales.

9 **DESTINATION MANAGEMENT** (Pages 69 - 88)

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

Purpose: To seek approval for the draft Destination Management Plan.

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

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ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE **5 MARCH 2024**

Minutes of the hybrid meeting of the Environment and Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held on Tuesday, 5 March 2024.

PRESENT: Councillor David Evans (Chair)

Councillors: Mike Allport, Mel Buckley, David Coggins-Cogan, Chris Dolphin, Ian Hodge, Richard Lloyd, Mike Peers, Vicky Perfect, Dan Rose and Roy Wakelam

APOLOGIES: Councillor Ray Hughes, and Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation)

CONTRIBUTORS:

Councillor Dave Hughes (Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Regional Transport Strategy), Councillor Chris Bithell (Cabinet Member for Planning, Public Health and Public Protection) Councillor Dave Healey (Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy), Councillor Paul Johnson (Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement), Chief Officer (Planning, Environment & Economy), Highway Network Manager, Transport Manager, Regulatory Services Manager, Operations Manager, Waste Strategy Manager, and Integrated Transport Unit Manager

IN ATTENDANCE: The Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Democratic Services Officers

74. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

75. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2024, were submitted.

Accuracy

Councillor Chris Bithell explained that he had joined the meeting later and asked that his attendance be noted.

Subject to the above amendment the minutes were approved as an accurate record as moved by Councillor Richard Lloyd and seconded by Councillor Mike Peers.

RESOLVED:

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

76. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING

The Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator presented the Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking report.

Councillor Mike Peers proposed that an item to consider the operation of the Connects Centres be added to the Forward Work Programme. The Chair advised that the request may come under the remit of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee and said enquiries would be made.

The recommendations in the report were moved by Councillor Mike Peers and seconded by Councillor Richard Lloyd.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That subject to the above request the Forward Work Programme be approved;
- (b) That the Facilitator, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises; and
- (c) That the Committee notes the progress made in completing the outstanding actions

77. AUDIT WALES ASSURANCE & RISK ASSESSMENT REVIEW – CARBON REDUCTION PLANS

The Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) provided background information and advised that the purpose of the report was to give an overview of the Assurance & Risk Assessment review and the action taken to date to address the recommendation. The Chief Officer presented the report and referred to the main points as detailed.

The Chief Officer responded to the questions raised by Councillor Mike Peers concerning a £22m funding gap (Authority's cost estimate in excess of £22m), resources being a barrier to meeting the targets, and the Authority's estimated costs to be compliant with the target (page 39 - £66m).

The Chief Officer responded to the further questions and comments raised by Members regarding the undertaking by Audit Wales of each Council's carbon commitment and action against the findings of their public sector wide report.

The recommendation in the report was moved by Councillor David Coggins-Cogan and seconded by Councillor Mike Peers.

RESOLVED

That the outcome of the Audit Wales report and support action being taken to address its recommendation be noted.

78. LOCAL TOILET STRATEGY REVIEW 2024

The Highway Network Manager presented a report to provide an update following the conclusion of the public consultation and present the final draft of the Strategy for adoption. He introduced the Operational Area Manager to the Committee who had overall responsibility for provision in the County.

The Highway Network Manager provided background information and referred to the main considerations as detailed in the report. He advised that the new Strategy aimed to reflect the ambition of the Council's Leadership to provide improved facilities for Flintshire's residents and visitors. The Flintshire County Council Local Toilet Strategy 2023-27 and Summary of Public Consultation Engagement were appended to the report.

Councillor Mike Peers commented on toilet provision in tourist areas and asked if local councils made a contribution towards the cost of the service. He also asked if the Authority had to provide funding for participating premises. The Highway Network Manager responded to the questions and referred to the current annual budget for Public Conveniences, and capital investment which was subject to bids to the Capital Board. He explained that subject to approval of the Strategy a 3 year bid programme would be submitted to the Board.

The Highway Network Manager drew attention to section 1.07 in the report in response to the comments raised by Councillor Richard Lloyd regarding the need for adequate toilet facilities.

The Chair raised a question on the needs assessment data detailed on page 63 of the report and commented on the special needs score for the Shotton area.

The recommendations in the report were moved by Councillor Richard Lloyd and seconded by Councillor Mike Peers

RESOLVED

- (a) That the work done to date on the results from the Local Toilet Strategy questionnaire and 12-week consultation be noted; and.
- (b) That the new revised Flintshire County Council Local Toilet Strategy 2024 and renewed action plan included within be supported.

79. RESOURCE AND WASTE STRATEGY

The Regulatory Services Manager presented the report to review the Council's waste strategy with the objective of achieving Welsh Government's statutory recycling target of 70%. She provided background information and advised that the report provided feedback on the consultation exercise which took place on the draft Resource and Waste Strategy and presented the final document for consideration.

The Regulatory Services Manager explained that if the Strategy was adopted it was proposed that a further report be submitted to Cabinet in June

outlining the Council's transition to a restricted capacity residual waste collection model as committed to in priority 2 of the Strategy. She advised that this action was fundamental in achieving the statutory recycling target of 70% and would be the first action to implement if the Strategy was adopted. The Strategy would be presented to the Minister for Climate Change for consideration with a detailed action plan for implementation to continue progress towards 70% recycling.

Councillor Mike Peers raised questions regarding the proposed actions and aspirations referred to in the report and the draft Resource and Waste Strategy. He referred to the problem of residents placing recyclable items in residual waste bins that could have been collected via the recycling collection service or at Household Recycling Centres (HRCs). He also asked what actions were being undertaken to encourage participation rates, and referred to priority 1 (page 82) to reduce overall waste arising within Flintshire and increase the amount reused to avoid disposal and said there were no timescales against the project plan (page 128).

Councillor Peers cross-referenced between the information contained in the report and the draft Resource and Waste Strategy which was appended. He raised further questions and concerns and referred to the following: the proposed actions listed in section 1.14 (page 83), the proposal for the Council's transition to a restricted capacity residual waste collection model as committed to in priority 2 of the Strategy (page 85, section 1.17), priority 2 (page 82) increase recycling, (page 83, section 1.14) and the aspiration to encourage greater recycling by either reducing the frequency of collections or reducing the capacity (size) of the black bin, and the final bullet point in the list of actions on page 130 of the report to restrict the amount of residual waste that residents can dispose of in the black bin to encourage greater recycling by all residents either by reducing the frequency of collections or the capacity of the bin.

Councillor Peers proposed that the third recommendation in the report be amended to read: "That Scrutiny agrees to a further report to be presented in June outlining the Council's proposals to increase recycling waste in line with Priority 2 and the draft Resource and Waste Strategy". He also proposed that the final bullet point on page 12 of the draft Resources and Waste Strategy be amended to read: "That the Council may consider restricting the amount of residual waste that residents can dispose of in the black bin to encourage greater recycling by all residents either by reducing the frequency of collections or the capacity of the bin". Councillor Richard Lloyd seconded the proposals.

Councillor Richard Lloyd and Councillor Dan Rose expressed concerns regarding recycling waste collection points and the locations. Councillor Richard Lloyd suggested there was a need for more detailed consultation with the local Member for the Ward around the need and siting of recycling waste collection points in local communities.

The Regulatory Services Manager responded to the comments and points raised.

The following recommendations were moved by Councillor Roy Wakelam and seconded by Councillor Richard Lloyd.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the progress made on achieving a robust and effective Resources and Waste Strategy to meet net zero targets, achieve statutory recycling targets, and mitigate against the risk of infraction fines, be noted;
- (b) That the Resource and Waste Strategy to meet net zero targets, achieve statutory recycling targets, and mitigate against the risk of infraction fines be supported; and
- (c) That Scrutiny agrees to a further report to be presented in June outlining the Council's proposals to increase recycling waste in line with Priority 2 and the draft Resource and Waste Strategy.
- (d) That the final bullet point on page 12 of the draft Resources and Waste Strategy be amended to read: "That the Council may consider restricting the amount of residual waste that residents can dispose of in the black bin to encourage greater recycling by all residents either by reducing the frequency of collections or the capacity of the bin".

80. **UPDATE ON BUS EMERGENCY SCHEME**

The Transport Manager introduced a report to provide an update following the announcement of the termination of the Bus Emergency Scheme Funding and the introduction of the Bus Transition Funding (BTF). He provided background information and advised that the report referred to the funding of commercial services post BTF, and the scope of the Welsh Government Bus Network Fund (BNG) which will be introduced in April 2024. The Transport Manager reported on the key points as detailed in the report.

The Chair asked if data was available on the subsidies other local authorities currently subscribed to bus transportation.

Councillor Mike Peers asked if a report could be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee on overall public transport provision in Flintshire.

The Transport Manager and Integrated Transport Unit Manager responded to the further comments and questions raised by Members around the sustainability of unviable transport routes, criteria for services in rural areas, and the collection of data to assess public need for services.

The recommendation in the report was moved by Councillor Mike Peers and seconded by Councillor Roy Wakelam

RESOLVED:

How public bus services have been funded during the pandemic, the impact on service levels, passenger numbers, and bus companies themselves, and future proposals, be noted

81. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

There were no members of the press or public in attendance.

(The meeting started at 10.00 a.m. and ended at 11.45 a.m.)

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Chair



ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 11 June 2024
Report Subject	Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking
Report Author	Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

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

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

RECOMMENDATION

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

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING
1.01	Items feed into a Committee's Forward Work Programme from a number of sources. Members can suggest topics for review by Overview & Scrutiny Committees, members of the public can suggest topics, items can be referred by the Cabinet for consultation purposes, or by County Council or Chief Officers. Other possible items are identified from the Cabinet Work Programme and the Improvement Plan.
1.02	<p>In identifying topics for future consideration, it is useful for a 'test of significance' to be applied. This can be achieved by asking a range of questions as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Will the review contribute to the Council's priorities and/or objectives?2. Is it an area of major change or risk?3. Are there issues of concern in performance?4. Is there new Government guidance of legislation?5. Is it prompted by the work carried out by Regulators/Internal Audit?6. Is the issue of public or Member concern?
1.03	In previous meetings, requests for information, reports or actions have been made. These have been summarised as action points. Following a meeting of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee in July 2018, it was recognised that there was a need to formalise such reporting back to Overview & Scrutiny Committees, as 'Matters Arising' was not an item which can feature on an agenda.
1.04	It was suggested that the 'Action tracking' approach be trialled for the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Following a successful trial, it was agreed to extend the approach to all Overview & Scrutiny Committees.
1.05	The Action Tracking details including an update on progress is attached at Appendix 2.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Action tracking for Environment & Economy OSC May 2024

Item/Date	Discussion	Action	By whom	Status
5 March 24	Cllr Mike Peers proposed than an item to consider the operation of Connects Centres be added to the FWP	Connects Centres are within the remit of Corporate Resources OSC. Facilitator to contact Steve Goodrum.	Facilitator	Completed

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Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2023/24

Date of Meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report/Presentation	Scrutiny Focus	Responsible/Contact Officer	Submission Deadline
<p>9 July 24 10.00 am</p>	<p>End of year performance monitoring report</p> <p>Flintshire & Wrexham Public Service Active Travel</p> <p>Investment Zone</p>	<p>To review the levels of progress in the achievement of activities and performance levels identified in the Council Plan.</p> <p>To update Scrutiny on the development of a Healthy Travel Charter for North Wales led by Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) Public Health Team.</p> <p>To provide a briefing on the development of the Investment Zone for Flintshire and Wrexham and seek support for the development work undertaken to date and the proposed governance arrangements.</p>	<p>Performance Monitoring</p>	<p>Chief Officers</p> <p>Chief Officer – Streetscene & Transportation</p> <p>Niall Waller</p>	
<p>10 Sept 24 10.00 am</p>	<p>Review of Highways Asset Management Plan and Highway and Car Park Inspection Policy</p>	<p>To provide Scrutiny with an update on the refreshed Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP) and reviewed Highway and Car Park Inspection Policy</p>		<p>Chief Officer – Streetscene & Transportation</p>	

ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME
APPENDIX 1

Date of Meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report/Presentation	Scrutiny Focus	Responsible/Contact Officer	Submission Deadline
8 Oct 24 10.00 am	Welsh Government Deposit Return Scheme update	As agreed at the meeting on 13 th June 2023	Information	Chief Officer - Streetscene & Transportation	
	Car Parking Strategy	To review the current strategy	Pre-decision	Chief Officer – Streetscene & Transportation	
	Enforcement	To receive an update	Assurance	Chief Officer – Streetscene & Transportation	
12 Nov 24 10.00 am	Conversion of the FCC fleet to electric or alternative fuels	To receive a progress report on the implementation of the conversion of the FCC fleet to electric and alternative fuels		Chief Officer – Streetscene and Transportation	
	Streetscene Standards	To consider feedback from the Task & Finish Group		Chief Officer – Streetscene and Transportation	
	Integrated Transport Strategy and Regional Transport Plan	To receive an update		Chief Officer – Streetscene and Transportation	
10 Dec 24 10.00 am	Access Barrier Review	To review the access barriers post implementation.	Post decision scrutiny	Tom Woodall	

ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME
 APPENDIX 1

Date of Meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report/Presentation	Scrutiny Focus	Responsible/Contact Officer	Submission Deadline
14 Jan 25 10.00 am					
11 Feb 25 10.00 am					
11 March 25 10.00 am					
8 April 25 10.00 am					
6 May 25 10.00 am					
10 June 25 10.00 am					
8 July 25 10.00 am					

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ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME
APPENDIX 1

Items to be added :-

Place Making Plan Buckley

Place Making Plan Holywell

Public Transport Provision in Flintshire

20 mph Speed Review

Update report on Bailey Hill in the Autumn with Site Visit in advance



ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	11 th June 2024
Report Subject	Employee Travel Survey 2023
Cabinet Member	Collective Responsibility
Report Author	Climate Change Project Officer (Climate Change Programme)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Each year the Council must calculate its carbon footprint and within this footprint are emissions sources from fleet, business mileage and employee commuting. The Employee Travel Survey questions were determined to improve our data and understanding of how staff travel and the levers we can utilise to help influence more sustainable travel behaviours.

The Employee Travel survey received a total of 628 responses during the period it was live (14/11/2023 – 22/12/2023).

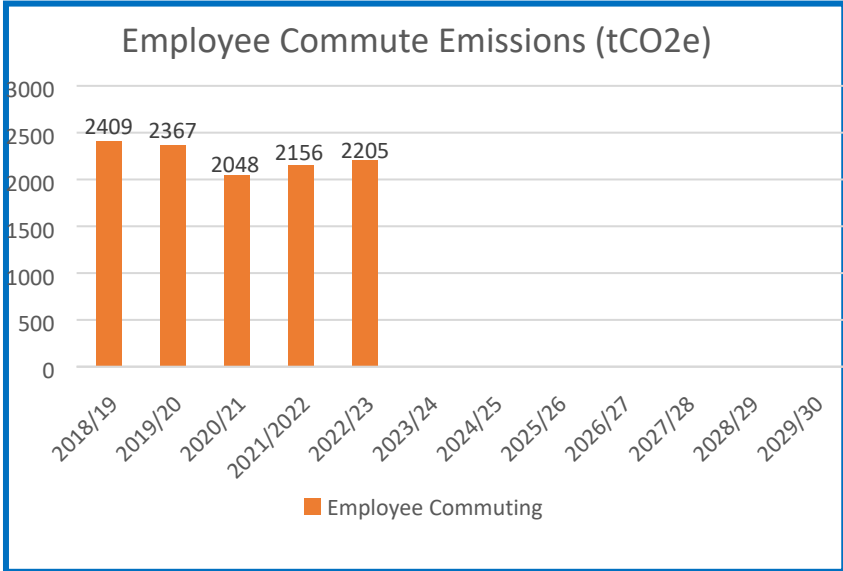
The Council has a target within the Mobility and Transport theme of its Climate Change Strategy to reduce emissions by 80% by 2030.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Scrutiny Committee support salary sacrifice schemes which provide employees an affordable and accessible means to transition from petrol or diesel vehicles to zero and ultra-low emission vehicles that provide sufficient range per charge.
2	Scrutiny Committee support the review of the Council's Cycle to Work scheme and its promotion; highlighting the benefits and information on local infrastructure.
3	Scrutiny Committee note and support the investigation and suitability of existing car-sharing platforms that are employee-led and identify ways in which using such a platform can be incentivised.
4	Scrutiny Committee note and support the investigation by officers of how the barriers to using Active Travel (safer routes) and public transport (bus services) can be addressed despite current limitations.

5	Scrutiny Committee support the review and updating of the methodology used to calculate employee commute carbon emissions, improving accuracy by including employee commute distances and modes of transport highlighted in the survey.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE EMPLOYEE TRAVEL SURVEY 2023												
1.01	<p>Background</p> <p>The Council has an ambition to become Net Zero Carbon by 2030 and aims to reduce emissions from Mobility and Transport by 80% by 2030.</p> <p>Emissions from Mobility and Transport have been difficult to address with only a 17.9% reduction since the baseline year of 2018/19. Under this theme, employee commute has seen the least reduction of just 8.5%. These emissions have also been increasing year on year since 2020/21 when Covid-19 had the greatest impact.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <table border="1" style="margin: 10px auto;"> <caption>Employee Commute Emissions (tCO2e)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Fiscal Year</th> <th>Employee Commuting (tCO2e)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2018/19</td> <td>2409</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2019/20</td> <td>2367</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2020/21</td> <td>2048</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2021/22</td> <td>2156</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2022/23</td> <td>2205</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div> <p>Figure 1 Flintshire County Council carbon emission from employee commute</p>	Fiscal Year	Employee Commuting (tCO2e)	2018/19	2409	2019/20	2367	2020/21	2048	2021/22	2156	2022/23	2205
Fiscal Year	Employee Commuting (tCO2e)												
2018/19	2409												
2019/20	2367												
2020/21	2048												
2021/22	2156												
2022/23	2205												
1.02	<p>Purpose</p> <p>The Employee Travel Survey looks to serve two key purposes: to increase the accuracy of employee commute methodology by better understanding employee travel methods, and to understand the barriers and opportunities to encourage employees to adopt more sustainable travel methods.</p>												
1.03	<p>Survey Demographic</p> <p>There were 628 responses to the survey, which is 10% of employees according to the headcount summary provided in May 2023. It should be noted that the respondents to this survey were primarily office based employees.</p> <p>In terms of demographics, 63.6% of respondents were female (347 employees) and 33% were male (180 employees). These accounted for</p>												

7.3% of females and 12% of males employed by the Council. 3.5% of respondents were employees who preferred not to say (19 employees). 56.8% of respondents were between the ages of 45-64.

Housing and Communities was the Portfolio that provided the most responses to the survey (25.8%). The Climate Change team visited Alltami Depot on two occasions to support employees who have limited or no access to equipment to complete the survey and work was undertaken with the internal Communications team to encourage engagement with community-based employees in both Housing and Streetscene. However, only 9% of Streetscene employees completed the survey demonstrating a shortfall in representation from community-based workers.

Q1. Your Portfolio

Skipped: 0

Answer Choice	Survey Share	Response Total	Proportion of Portfolio	Share of total FCC Staff
Chief Executives	4.6%	29	46%	1.0%
Education and Youth	8.8%	55	25%	4.6%
Governance	17.8%	112	59.9%	3.3%
Housing and Communities	25.8%	162	50.8%	5.3%
People and Resources	8.8%	55	26%	3.7%
Planning, Environment and Economy	14.3%	90	48.6%	3.2%
Schools	0%	0	0%	52.2%
Social Services	12.9%	81	8.3%	18.1%
Streetscene	7.0%	44	9.3%	8.6%

Table 1 share of respondents who are home/office based or work in the community.

1.04

Home Working and Energy

85.5% of respondents reported to work from the Office or Home at least one day per week. As described in the previous section, these figures reflect the cross section of respondents being primarily office based.

This data cannot be used as an apportionment of home workers across the whole organisation due to such a large a proportion of non-office based workers not being adequately represented. However, increased engagement with frontline workers, would provide a clearer understanding of the apportionment of office/home based employees and community based.

Q2. Please select the option below which best describes the nature of your work?

Skipped: 0

Answer Choice	Response Percent	
Office/home based	85.5%	
Community based e.g., Streetscene operative / tradesperson / home care worker	14.5%	
	Office/home Based	Community Based
Chief Executive	100%	
Education and Youth	72.7%	27.3%

Governance	98.2%	1.8%
Housing and Communities	77.7%	22.3%
People and Resources	100%	
Planning, Environment and Economy	95.5%	4.5%
Social Services	87.7%	12.3%
Streetscene	45.5%	54.5%

Table 2 share of respondents who are home/office based or work in the community.

122 (14.6%) employees reported to never work from home with 32.8% of those coming from Housing and Communities, the largest Portfolio with this response.

Of the respondents who reported to work at least one day per week from home, only 12.8% reported to have a green energy tariff, which is below the Great Britain figure of 33%, suggesting some respondents may not have a full understanding of the term 'green tariff'.

Gas is the main fuel used for home heating (79.6%) with oil being the second highest (9.8%).

1.05

Commuting Distance and Travel

Almost half (49.7%) of respondents live within 10 km from their place of work and a further 24.7% between 11 and 20 km.

The average travel distance from home to work for all respondents was 15.9km.

The results indicate that a large proportion of respondents are also Flintshire residents who, therefore, present an opportunity to influence others in their community.

Question 8 asked employees to state how many days per week they commuted by transport mode. This question was asked to better apportion the average number of days that employees use different transport modes so that this data can be utilised to determine employee commuting emissions.

A significant number of answers received for this question appear to provide erroneous data as some respondents claimed to use their car 5 days per week while also working from home 4 days per week (giving a total of 9 working days in a week), or some data was incomplete where the number of days selected for a mode of transport did not add up to the total number of days they work in a week.

Where data was found to be accurate, or minor adjustments made with confidence, it was found that 67.1% of working days involved commuting by private car alone, with home working the next highest response at 24.6%. This is based on a total of 249 responses out of 628.

Q8. Please specify the number of days in a week you typically use any of the following modes of transport?

Skipped: 48

Answer Choice

Response Total (%)

	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Private Car (alone)</td> <td>67.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Private electrical vehicle (alone)</td> <td>0.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Private motorbike/moped</td> <td>0.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Work vehicle (car or van)</td> <td>4.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Car share</td> <td>1.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Taxi</td> <td>0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bus</td> <td>0.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Train</td> <td>0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cycle</td> <td>0.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Walk</td> <td>1.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Work from home</td> <td>24.6%</td> </tr> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Several respondents stated they work from home, only travelling to a place of work on occasion for meetings. - Public transport is not available to arrive at the office at a suitable time - Respondent stated they would like to cycle to the Flint office more often but there is no where safe to lock the bike, nor are there showering facilities. 	Private Car (alone)	67.1%	Private electrical vehicle (alone)	0.5%	Private motorbike/moped	0.4%	Work vehicle (car or van)	4.4%	Car share	1.1%	Taxi	0%	Bus	0.5%	Train	0%	Cycle	0.3%	Walk	1.2%	Work from home	24.6%
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	<p>Table 4 frequency of when employees use a mode of transport.</p> <p>Petrol is the most used their fuel source for private vehicles at 52.2%, with 42.1% using diesel. Only 3.8% of responses stated their vehicles were electrified (hybrid/ plug-in hybrid or fully electric).</p> <p>Comments received for the fuel-type question stated electric and hybrid vehicles are too expensive, or that there is no charging infrastructure in work carparks.</p>																						
1.06	<p>Reasons for Current Travel</p> <p>Respondents were asked to provide the two main reasons why they use their current mode of transport (e.g., private vehicle, bus, etc.) with ‘convenience’ being the standout reason at 62.3%.</p> <p>The second most selected reason is because there is no alternative (35.3%) mode available for reasons outlined in the comments for ‘other’, such as vehicles were required for work, no alternatives are available and they have childcare commitments.</p>																						
1.07	<p>Walking and Cycling to Work</p> <p>Most respondents (59%) stated that there is no option that would encourage them to walk or cycle to work, with 31.9% selecting ‘other’ in which they provided comments stating that distances are too far, vehicles are required for their work, and bike safety is of concern.</p> <p>The third most popular response was the need for a safer route to the workplace (26.4%), which was reflected in respondent’s comments. This response suggests that using a private vehicle will continue to be the primary and/or only option for many employees in order to fit with both their work and personal commitments.</p>																						

	<p>Respondents working in Housing and Communities were the highest to comment they required a vehicle for work commitments.</p>																																										
<p>1.08</p>	<p>Zero and Ultra-low Emission Salary Sacrifice 65.4% of respondents stated they would be interested in a salary sacrifice scheme for zero or ultra-low emission vehicle, with more than double of those interested opting for a hybrid vehicle (47.2%) over one that is fully electric (18.2%).</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="320 456 1251 748"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">Q12. If there was an option for a salary sacrifice scheme for a zero or ultra-low emission vehicle, would you be interested in this? Skipped: 45</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Answer Choice</th> <th>Response Percent</th> <th>Response Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Yes - electric</td> <td>18.2%</td> <td>106</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Yes - hybrid</td> <td>47.2%</td> <td>275</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>34.6%</td> <td>202</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Table 5 employee interest in salary sacrifice scheme by vehicle type With regards to levers to encourage the adoption of zero or low emission vehicles, the vast majority (69.5%) of respondents stated that an affordable scheme would encourage them to consider these vehicles, showing that high costs are a barrier.</p> <p>The second most selected answer was the need for greater battery range and charging speeds at 27.3%.</p> <p>A notable response was ‘improved charging infrastructure in the county’ with a 23% response, which would likely be influential in addressing concerns for greater battery range and charging speeds.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="320 1227 1262 1720"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">Q13. What would encourage you to consider a zero or ultra-low emission vehicle? Please select two options. Skipped: 45</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Answer Choice</th> <th>Response Percent</th> <th>Response Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>An affordable scheme</td> <td>69.5%</td> <td>405</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Greater battery range and charging speeds</td> <td>27.3%</td> <td>159</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Reliability</td> <td>15.4%</td> <td>90</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Better understanding of options available</td> <td>16.0%</td> <td>93</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Improved charging infrastructure at home</td> <td>13.9%</td> <td>81</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Improved charging infrastructure at work</td> <td>15.1%</td> <td>88</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Improved charging infrastructure in the county</td> <td>23.0%</td> <td>134</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Table 6 levers to increase use of zero or low-emission vehicles to commute to work.</p>	Q12. If there was an option for a salary sacrifice scheme for a zero or ultra-low emission vehicle, would you be interested in this? Skipped: 45			Answer Choice	Response Percent	Response Total	Yes - electric	18.2%	106	Yes - hybrid	47.2%	275	No	34.6%	202	Q13. What would encourage you to consider a zero or ultra-low emission vehicle? Please select two options. Skipped: 45			Answer Choice	Response Percent	Response Total	An affordable scheme	69.5%	405	Greater battery range and charging speeds	27.3%	159	Reliability	15.4%	90	Better understanding of options available	16.0%	93	Improved charging infrastructure at home	13.9%	81	Improved charging infrastructure at work	15.1%	88	Improved charging infrastructure in the county	23.0%	134
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<p>1.09</p>	<p>Car Sharing Employees were asked what two options would encourage them to car share more. There was an even split for the top two responses of ‘help to finding someone who does similar journeys’ and ‘other’ at 34.8% each, and currently only 5.7% of respondents stated they already car share to work.</p>																																										

Those who selected 'other' provided additional comments stating vehicles are required for work, childcare and convenience were barriers, with having someone doing the same shift would be helpful.

Q14. What would encourage you to car share? Please select two options.

Skipped: 45

Answer Choice	Response Percent	Response Total
Information about car sharing	14.6%	85
Guaranteed ride home	24.9%	145
I already car share to work	5.7%	33
Incentives and rewards	27.4%	160
Help to find someone who does a similar journey	34.8%	203
Other (please specify):	34.8%	203

Table 7 levers to increase car sharing to commute to work.

1.10

Public Transport

With regards to the use of public transport, most responses (50.9%) stated that nothing would encourage their greater use of public transport.

More direct (31%) and frequent (26.9%) bus services were the second and third most selected options showing there are several employees who feel public transport could become a viable option with the right improvements.

Comments in this section stated that vehicles are required for work, public transport is too complex, and availability and reliability of public transport is poor.

Q15. What would encourage you to use public transport to travel to work? Please select three options

Skipped: 45

Answer Choice	Response Percent	Response Total
I already use public transport for work	2.4%	14
Improved public transport waiting facilities	14.4%	84
More frequent rail services	2.6%	15
More direct rail services	5.7%	33
More frequent bus services	26.9%	157
More direct bus services	31.0%	181
Guidance on the safe use of public transport	1.2%	7
Discounted public transport ticket	22.6%	132
Information about public transport routes	5.8%	34
Nothing	50.9%	297
Other (please specify):	20.6%	120

Table 8 levers to increase public transport use to commute to work.

1.11

Next Steps

Despite issues with transport mode data (section 1.05), low use of car sharing (5.7%), cycling/walking (2.4%) and public transport (2.4%)

	<p>indicates that travel in privately-owned, petrol and diesel vehicles is by far the most used method for commuting to work.</p> <p>Responses highlighted many barriers that would prevent employees from moving away from privately-owned vehicles such as work duties, personal commitments, cost barriers and a lack of alternatives. It is likely that privately-owned vehicles will continue to be the primary and/or only option employees have to commute to work.</p> <p>With this in mind, and strong interest in a salary sacrifice scheme, methods should be investigated that support employees to transition away from private vehicles powered only by petrol and diesel, as well as using those vehicles more sustainably through car sharing.</p> <p>Transitioning to other modes of transport have additional challenges and less interest from respondents. However, these should not be discounted considering the number of employees who live a short distance from their workplace and the additional benefits that could be gained, such as mental and physical well-being.</p> <p>With many employees living within the County, there is also opportunity for them to become advocates of sustainable travel if they are informed and well-supported to make the transition.</p>
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	Officer time will be required to investigate the recommendations.
2.02	Costs of salary sacrifice schemes (car/cycle to work) will likely be borne by the employee using the scheme. However, it is not certain whether the Council will also need to finance such a scheme and so this will be investigated further.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	It would be beneficial to establish an effective process to ensure those employees who do not have easy computer access, are provided with the opportunity to complete future iterations of this survey – thus allowing a more representative reflection of the quantity and frequency of employee commuting and home working within our employee base.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	There is a risk of low uptake of sustainable travel methods despite the Council adding resource to encourage employees, therefore the results of the survey should only be seen as indicative.

4.02	Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact	
	Long-term	<p>Positive: The survey helps to steer efforts to reduce employee commute emissions well into the future.</p> <p>The survey also helps to understand the limitations employees experience to adopting more sustainable travel.</p>
	Prevention	<p>Positive: Emissions from employee commuting can be reduced through the adoption of levers to increase more sustainable commute. Adoption of active travel through improved measures can also help improve employee well-being.</p>
	Integration	<p>Positive: By understanding how to reduce carbon emissions from employee commute, the following priorities under the Council Plan could be supported; Green Council, Ambitious Council and Supportive Council. It integrates with the public service board objectives in the Environment priority of the Wellbeing Plan. It also integrates with the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and Welsh Government's decarbonisation of the public sector agenda.</p>
	Collaboration	<p>Positive: The recommendations will increase cross-departmental working (e.g., Streetscene, People and Resources, etc.) to identify the most suitable means of encouraging employee towards more sustainable travel</p>
	Involvement	<p>Positive: The survey takes into account the views, opportunities and limitations of employees across all portfolios.</p>
4.03	Well-being Goals Impact	
	Prosperous Wales	<p>Positive: Adoption of sustainable transport contributes to a lower carbon society. Increased demand for local charging infrastructure can</p>

		support local installers and the development of related skills.
	Resilient Wales	Positive: Resilience can be increased through reduced reliance on fossil fuels which can be volatile in cost. Monitoring of changes to employee commute can help determine next steps to reduce emissions further. Additionally, reducing emissions from employee commute may also result in reduce emission from business mileage.
	Healthier Wales	Positive: Supporting more employees to adopt active travel can improve health through walking/cycling to work, and walking to use public transport. transport. The adoption of zero or ultra-low emission vehicles can also contribute to improved urban air quality and respiratory health.
	More equal Wales	Positive: Supporting more employees to adopt active travel away from private vehicles can make travel more affordable, allowing people to apply savings on their other needs.
	Cohesive Wales	Neutral: No impact identified.
	Vibrant Wales	Neutral: No impact identified
	Globally responsible Wales	Positive: Reducing emissions from employee commute reduces the council's contribution to global climate change.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Employee Travel Survey 2023 Report

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None

7.00	OFFICER CONTACT DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Ben Turpin – Climate Change Project Officer Telephone: 01352 703393 E-mail: ben.turpin@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	<p>Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (CO₂e): a unit of measurement that compares the emissions from greenhouse gases on the basis of their global warming potential (GWP).</p> <p>Erroneous Data: Erroneous data is data that is abnormal or falls outside of what is acceptable. This is should be rejected where found.</p> <p>Green Energy: Tariffs are labelled as green if some or all of the units of electricity are ‘matched’ by units generated from a verified renewable energy source. For example, a wind farm, solar array or hydroelectric power station.</p> <p>Net Zero Carbon: Emissions of greenhouse gases are balanced by the removal of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere such as by trees, peatland and carbon capture and storage technologies.</p>

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Employee Travel Survey Report 2023

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1 Executive Summary

The Council calculates its carbon footprint annually, and within this footprint are emissions associated with business travel and employee commuting. The Council's current knowledge and understanding of how its employees travel to and from work is limited. An employee travel survey was issued to gain more accurate data on employee commuting, home working, and the barriers our employees have to adopting more low carbon / sustainable travel methods.

The Employee Travel Survey received a total of 628 responses during the period it was live (14/11/2023 – 22/12/2023). It should be noted that the respondents to this survey were primarily office-based employees. The survey was not open to school employees who represent a large proportion of Council staff, and access for frontline workers within Social Services, Housing and Communities and Streetscene and Transportation was limited.

85.5% of respondents stated they are office/home based, and a total of 80.6% of respondents work from home at least one day per week, with 12.8% of those having a green energy supply. These figures reflect the cross section of respondents being primarily office based.

With regards to the distance between employee's home and place of work, almost half have a commute of 10 km or less, and a further quarter between 11-20 km. The average distance between home and place of work is 15.9km.

Regarding the modes of transport that employees use to travel to work and how often they use them, was difficult to determine due to a large amount of data being considered unreliable as it suggested many employees commute to work more than 5 working days in a week. This indicates employees were uncertain on how to respond to that question.

The latter part of the survey asked respondents what would encourage them to adopt more sustainable modes of transport. When asked about private vehicles, a large portion (65.4%) were interested in a salary sacrifice scheme for hybrid (47.2%) and electric (18.2%) vehicles. However, respondents stated that such a scheme would need to be affordable and for vehicles to have a greater battery range and charging speeds.

Regarding active travel transport modes such as cycling and public transport, there were a number of barriers highlighted and respondents stating they would not adopt such methods. Such barriers to adoption are vehicles being required to conduct work duties, personal commitments like childcare or no alternatives being available. However, some respondents did suggest safer routes would encourage walking or cycling to work, more frequent and direct buses would encourage the use of public transport and help finding an employee who does a similar journey would encourage car sharing.

2 Introduction

Each year, the Council must calculate its carbon footprint. Within this footprint are emission sources from:

- Fleet Vehicles
- Business Mileage
- Employee Commuting

And these emission sources have varying levels of accuracy.

Emissions from fleet vehicles are determined by the volume of fuel used through bunkered fuel and vehicle fuel cards – this gives us an accurate picture of the fuel used by fleet vehicles. Emissions from business mileage are determined by the data included within business mileage claims – this gives us data for employee car types, fuel type used and distance travelled. Emissions from employee commuting are unable to be determined due to a lack of data around employee travel to and from the workplace.

Flintshire County Council has a target to become Net Zero Carbon by 2030 and aims to reduce emissions from Mobility and Transport by 80% by 2030.

Actions within this theme include providing electric vehicle charging infrastructure, transitioning fleet vehicles to ultra-low emissions vehicles, launch a salary sacrifice scheme for ultra-low emission vehicles, and promotion and collaborative working of active travel and public transport networks.

Between 14/11/2023 and 15/12/2023, the council conducted an employee travel survey to better understand our employee commute emissions, understand barriers to engaging with these actions, and plan interventions to decarbonise. The results of this have been summarised within this report.

3 Employee Travel Emissions

3.1 Employee Commute Emissions

Figure 1 shows the employee commute emissions for Flintshire County Council. The baseline year of 2018/19 had commute emissions of 2409 tCO₂e. There was a drop in emissions of 1.7% in the 2019/20 period, then a significant drop of 15% against the baseline in 2020/21 due to the Covid-19 pandemic and an increase of employee working from home.

In the 2021/22 period, emissions increased from the previous year as Covid-19 restrictions eased, however emissions were 10.5% lower than the baseline.

In the most recent reporting period of 2022/23, emissions increased again on the previous year, but overall remain 8.5% lower than the baseline year.

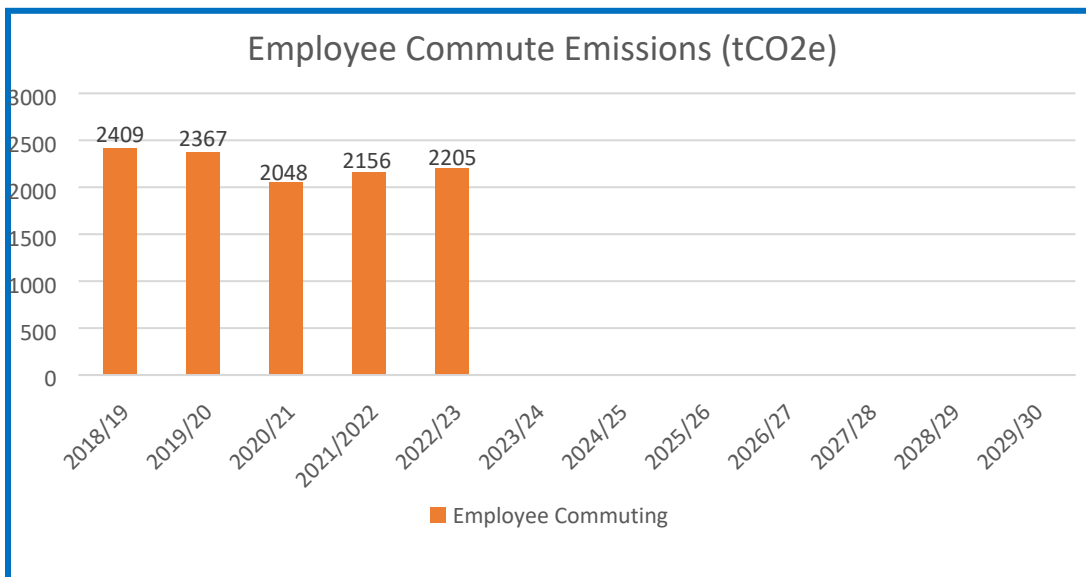


Figure 1 Flintshire County Council carbon emission from employee commute

4 Survey Results

This section presents the results from each travel question in the survey, highlighting the top response (or responses if more than one answer was requested), a summary of key comments provided by employees and commentary on what the results mean.

4.1 Survey Overview

There were 628 responses to the survey, which is 10% of employees according to the headcount summary provided in May 2023. It should be noted that the respondents to this survey were primarily office-based employees. The survey was not open to school employees, and access for frontline workers within Social Services, Housing and Communities and Streetscene and Transportation was limited.

Many questions were “skipped”, where employees did not give an answer. Some of these will be a result of the survey providing additional questions for employees who have working from home days, so those who did not work from home were not provided these questions (e.g., Question 5).

The number of skipped questions is provided for each question in Section 4.2.

In terms of demographic, 63.6% of respondents were female (347 employees) and 33% were male (180 employees). These accounted for 7.3% of females and 12% of males employed by the council. 3.5% of respondents were employees who preferred not to say (19 employees).

The age demographic for respondents is show in **Table 1** below with 84 respondents choosing to skip this question.

Answer Choice	Response Percent	Response Total
16 - 24 years	6.1%	33
25 - 34 years	14.5%	79
35 - 44 years	20.4%	111
45 - 54 years	27.9%	152
55 - 64 years	28.9%	157
65 - 74 years	2.2%	12
75 and above	0.0%	0

Table 1 age demographic of survey respondents

4.2 Survey Responses

This section will present the results of each question asked, supported by commentary on the findings, and a summary of key comments from respondents where a question allowed.

In tables, the top responses are highlighted in **Blue** for ease of identifying.

Q1: Your Portfolio

Table 2 shows the number of responses that were received from each portfolio and the share of employees from each portfolio that responded (data source for comparison is the Council’s headcount and diversity report issued May 2023).

The Housing and Communities portfolio was the largest responder of the travel survey with 162 responses, with the Chief Executives providing the fewest responses. However, when the responses are weighted against the number of employees within each portfolio, Governance were the most engaging with the survey.

Q1. Your Portfolio
Skipped: 0

Answer Choice	Survey Share	Response Total	Share of Portfolio	Share of FCC Staff
Chief Executives	4.6%	29	46%	1.0%
Education and Youth	8.8%	55	25%	4.6%
Governance	17.8%	112	59.9%	3.3%
Housing and Communities	25.8%	162	50.8%	5.3%
People and Resources	8.8%	55	26%	3.7%
Planning, Environment and Economy	14.3%	90	48.6%	3.2%
Schools	0%	0	0	52.2%
Social Services	12.9%	81	8.3%	18.1%
Streetscene	7.0%	44	9.3%	8.6%

Table 2 number of responses received from portfolios, and % share of employees in those portfolios.

Q2: Please select the option below which best describes the nature of your work?

This question was asked to determine the apportionment of employees who work from home during their working week. Table 3 shows most respondents work either from an office, at home or both, with only 14.5% of respondents being community-based. As described in the previous section, these figures reflect the cross section of respondents being primarily office based. This data cannot be used as an apportionment of home workers across the whole organisation due to such a large proportion of non-office based workers not being adequately represented. Work was undertaken with the internal Comms team to encourage engagement with community based employees in both Housing and Streetscene. The Climate Change team visited Alltami Depot on two occasions to support employees who have limited or no access to equipment to complete the survey. However, better engagement with frontline workers would provide a clearer understanding of the apportionment of office/home based employees and community based.

Q2. Please select the option below which best describes the nature of your work?		
Skipped: 0		
Answer Choice	Response Percent	
Office/home based	85.5%	
Community based e.g., Streetscene operative / tradesperson / home care worker	14.5%	
	Office/home Based	Community Based
Chief Executive	100%	
Education and Youth	72.7%	27.3%
Governance	98.2%	1.8%
Housing and Communities	77.7%	22.3%
People and Resources	100%	
Planning, Environment and Economy	95.5%	4.5%
Social Services	87.7%	12.3%
Streetscene	45.5%	54.5%

Table 3 share of respondents who are home/office based or work in the community.

Q3: How many days OR hours per week are you contracted to work?

This question was asked to determine a baseline for the number of days employees worked per week so that this could link to Q4 determining the number of days worked from home, and Q8 determining the number of those days that employees used different travel modes. The average number of working days in the week reported by respondents is 4.7 (data removed where hours were added in the 'day' column or no answer provided).

Respondent's working hours average for a week averaged 35, of which 411 reported working 37 hours per week or more (one response stated a 40-hour week).

There were a few cases of erroneous data which was either adjusted where possible (e.g., 37 hours stated in the 'days' section was converted to 5 days) or removed where it was not clear enough to make an adjustment.

Q3. How many days OR hours per week are you contracted to work?		
Skipped: 1		
Answer Choice	Average	Responses
Days	4.7	338
Hours	35.2	492

Table 4 number of days or hours worked per week by employees.

Q4: How many days a week do you work from home?

This question allowed us to determine the number of days employees are working from home so that we can use this data rather than the high level data that was collated previously. As can be seen in Table 5, most respondents (20.9%) work 4 days per week at home, with the second largest response (18.3%) working 3 days per week at home.

122 employees reported to never work from home with 32.8% coming from Housing and Communities, the largest portfolio with this response.

Note that working from home days may be limited by the number of days a respondent works in a week. Again, these figures reflect the home working days of the survey respondents (approx. 10% of Council employees) and not Council employees as a whole.

Q4. How many days a week do you work from home?		
Skipped: 0		
Answer Choice	Response Percent	Response Total
1	11.9%	75
2	13.4%	84
3	18.3%	115
4	20.9%	131
5	16.1%	101
I never work from home	19.4%	122

Table 5 number of days employees work from home.

Q5. If you work from home, do you purchase a Green energy tariff at home?

Question 5 asked employees who worked from home at least one day per week whether their home is powered using a green energy tariff, otherwise known as renewable electricity tariff. Those who do not work from home were not asked this question. This question was asked to allow us to utilise this accurate data on emissions from home working rather than a national average fuel type calculation.

According to the Centre for Alternative Technology, these tariffs are labelled as green if some or all of the units of electricity are ‘matched’ by units generated from a verified renewable energy source. For example, a wind farm, solar array or hydroelectric power station.

A large majority (87.2%) of respondents reported they do not have green energy tariffs. However, according to the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), 9 million British (England, Scotland and Wales) households are on green energy tariffs, this equates to 33%.

This suggests respondents may not have a full understanding of what ‘green tariff’ means.

Q5. If you work from home, do you purchase a Green energy tariff at home? Skipped: 129	
Answer Choice	Response Percent
Yes	12.8%
No	87.2%

Table 6 number of employees who are on a green energy tariff.

Q6. If you work from home, what is your home heating source?

For employees working from home, the survey asked what energy source was used to power their heating. As previous, this allows us to utilise this data within our carbon emission calculation from home working rather than the national average methodology.

Almost 80% of respondent’s homes are heated using gas (79.6%), with oil (also known as heating oil or kerosene) is used by 9.8% of respondent’s homes.

Q6. If you work from home, what is your home heating source? Skipped: 129	
Answer Choice	Response Percent
Gas	79.6%

Oil	9.8%
Electric	4.4%
Renewable	0.8%
Multi-fuel	3.6%
Other	1.8%

Table 7 energy sources employees use for home heating.

Q7. What is your travel distance – one way – to your usual place of work?

This question allows us to more accurately determine the average distance employees are travelling to their workplace so that emissions associated with employee commuting can be more accurately calculated. Table 8 shows that almost half (49.7%) of respondents live up to 10 km from their place of work, and a further 24.7% between 11 and 20 km.

The average travel distance from home to work was 15.9km.

The results indicate that a large proportion of respondents are also Flintshire residents, therefore present an opportunity to influence others in their community.

Some data has been excluded from calculations as the question was either skipped (45) or distances were significantly high, and employees are not working from home (e.g., 405km). These may be a typing error but as it cannot be sure, have been removed.

Q7. What is your travel distance – one way – to your usual place of work? Skipped: 45		
Answer Choice km	Number	Percentage
0-10	290	49.7%
11-20	144	24.7%
21-30	65	11.1%
31-40	44	7.5%
41-50	18	3.1%
51-60	12	2.1%
61-70	2	0.3%
71-80	1	0.2%
81-90	1	0.2%
91+	4	0.7%

Table 8 the distance (km) employees commute from home to work (one direction). Excludes data that wasn't provided (45)

Q8. Please specify the number of days in a week you typically use any of the following modes of transport?

Question 8 asked employees to state how many days per week they commuted by transport mode. This question was asked to better apportion the average number of days that employees use different transport modes so that this data can be utilised to determine employee commuting emissions.

Unfortunately, a significant number of answers received for this question appear to be erroneous data as some employees claimed to use their car 5 days per week while also working from home 4 days per week (giving a total of 9 working days in a week), or some data was incomplete where the number of days selected for a mode of transport did not add up to the total number of days they work in a week.

Where data was found to be accurate, or minor adjustments made with confidence, it was found that 67.1% of working days involved commuting by private car alone, with home working the next highest response at 24.6%. This is based on a total of 249 responses out of 628.

Q8. Please specify the number of days in a week you typically use any of the following modes of transport?	
Skipped: 48	
Answer Choice	Response Total (%)
Private Car (alone)	67.1%
Private electrical vehicle (alone)	0.5%
Private motorbike/moped	0.4%
Work vehicle (car or van)	4.4%
Car share	1.1%
Taxi	0%
Bus	0.5%
Train	0%
Cycle	0.3%
Walk	1.2%
Work from home	24.6%
<p>Note: Not clear in question whether this means for work only or combined work and personal use, this is supported by comments (line 25, 36, 47 as examples)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Several respondents stated they work from home, only travelling to a place of work on occasion for meetings. - Public transport is not available to arrive at the office at a suitable time - Respondent stated they would like to cycle to the Flint office more often but there is no where safe to lock the bike, nor are there showering facilities. 	

Table 9 frequency of when employees use a mode of transport.

Q9. If using a private vehicle, what is the fuel type of that vehicle?

This question was asked to determine more accurate employee commuting emissions. Table 10 shows that most respondent’s private vehicles use petrol as their fuel source at 52.2%, with 42.1% using diesel. Only 3.8% of responses stated that vehicles were electrified whether hybrid/ plug-in hybrid or fully electric.

Some respondents stated ‘other’ where they used different vehicles for their commute or liquefied petroleum gas (LPG).

Using UK Government Data from 2023, a column has been included with the table to demonstrate the tailpipe emissions in kilograms of carbon dioxide equivalent (kgCO₂e) per km for each average sized car.

Q9. If using a private vehicle, what is the fuel type of that vehicle? Skipped: 70		
Answer Choice	Response Percent	kgCO ₂ e per km
Petrol	52.2%	0.16391
Diesel	42.1%	0.16983
Electric	0.9%	0
Hybrid/Plug-in Hybrid	2.9%	0.11898 / 0.06588
Other (please specify):	2.0%	0.19662 (LPG)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LPG - Split use of petrol, diesel and electric - Electric and Hybrid cars are too expensive, maintain car myself to keep costs down - We would consider an electric car but we don't have the infrastructure in the car park for the time being. 		

Table 10 fuel types that are used in employee private vehicles.

Q10. What influences your travel choices: Please select two options.

Question 10 asked respondents to provide the two main reasons why they use their current mode of transport (e.g., private vehicle, bus, etc.) with ‘convenience’ being the standout reason at 62.3%. This question was asked to identify barriers to employees using different types of transport to travel to work.

The second most common reason is because there is no alternative (35.3%) mode available for reasons outlined in the comments for ‘other’.

This response suggests that using a private vehicle will continue to be the primary and/or only option for many employees in order to fit with both their work and personal commitments.

Q10. What influences your travel choices: Please select two options. Skipped: 45		
Answer Choice	Response Percent	Response Total
Cost	31.4%	183
Convenience	62.3%	363
Childcare considerations	13.7%	80
Environmental concerns	4.5%	26
Use of company car	1.4%	8

Fitness/exercise	5.0%	29
Disabilities	2.9%	17
No alternative	35.3%	206
Other (please specify):	11.0%	64
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vehicle is required for work - No alternatives available (e.g., public transport in rural areas) - Childcare commitments 		

Table 11 reasons that determine how an employee commutes to work.

Q11. What would encourage you to walk or cycle to work? Please select three options.

This question was asked to identify barriers to employees utilising active travel for commuting to the workplace. Table 12 below shows the response for Question 11 which asks employees to state three options that they would require to consider walking or cycling to work.

Most respondents (59%) stated that there is no option that would encourage them to walk or cycle to work, with 31.9% selecting 'other' in which they provided comments stating that distances are too far, vehicles are required for their work, and bike safety is of concern to name a few.

The third most answered was the need for a safer route to the workplace (26.4%), which was also reflected in respondent's comments.

Respondents working in Housing and Communities were the highest to comment they required a vehicle for work commitments.

Q11. What would encourage you to walk or cycle to work? Please select three options.		
Skipped: 45		
Answer Choice	Response Percent	Response Total
I already walk/cycle to work	2.4%	14
Secure cycle parking	9.1%	53
Information about walking/cycle routes	6.3%	37
Lockers and drying facilities	11.8%	69
Free adult cycle training	1.9%	11
Having someone to cycle with	2.9%	17
Free bicycle maintenance sessions at work	1.9%	11
A safer route to the workplace	26.4%	154
Nothing	59.0%	344
Provision for basic maintenance in the workplace	3.8%	22
Cost of salary sacrifice scheme is prohibitive	4.3%	25
Other (please specify):	31.9%	186

- Distance to work is too far
- Vehicle is required for work
- If I worked closer, I would walk or cycle to work
- Need to carry work equipment is prohibitive
- Safety on a bike is a concern, with safe cycle routes suggested

Table 12 levers to increase walking or cycling to work to commute to work.

Q12. If there was an option for a salary sacrifice scheme for a zero or ultra-low emission vehicle, would you be interested in this?

Question 12 asked employees whether they would be interested in using a salary sacrifice scheme to purchase a zero or ultra-low emission vehicle.

65.4% of respondents stated they would be interested in a salary sacrifice scheme for zero or ultra-low emission vehicle, with more than double of those interested opting for a hybrid vehicle (47.2%) over one that is fully electric (18.2%).

Over a third (34.6%) of respondents felt they would not be interested in a salary sacrifice scheme for a zero or ultra-low emission vehicle. It is not specifically known whether the scheme or the fuel-type is the main issue for those who selected 'no'.

Q12. If there was an option for a salary sacrifice scheme for a zero or ultra-low emission vehicle, would you be interested in this?		
Skipped: 45		
Answer Choice	Response Percent	Response Total
Yes - electric	18.2%	106
Yes - hybrid	47.2%	275
No	34.6%	202

Table 13 employee interest in salary sacrifice scheme by vehicle type.

Q13. What would encourage you to consider a zero or ultra-low emission vehicle? Please select two options.

This question looked to identify barriers to utilising a an ultra low emissions vehicle. Table 14 shows the responses to Question 13 which asked Employees to state the two options that would encourage them to consider a zero or ultra-low emission vehicle.

The vast majority (69.5%) of respondents stated that an affordable scheme would encourage them to consider these vehicles, showing that high costs are a barrier. This is a similar response to those who selected ‘yes’ in Question 12.

The second most selected answer was the need for greater battery range and charging speeds at 27.3%.

A notable response was ‘improved charging infrastructure in the county’ with a 23% response, which would likely be influential on addressing concerns for greater battery range and charging speeds.

Q13. What would encourage you to consider a zero or ultra-low emission vehicle? Please select two options.		
Skipped: 45		
Answer Choice	Response Percent	Response Total
An affordable scheme	69.5%	405
Greater battery range and charging speeds	27.3%	159
Reliability	15.4%	90
Better understanding of options available	16.0%	93
Improved charging infrastructure at home	13.9%	81
Improved charging infrastructure at work	15.1%	88
Improved charging infrastructure in the county	23.0%	134

Table 14 levers to increase use of zero or low-emission vehicles to commute to work.

Q14. What would encourage you to car share? Please select two options.

Employees were asked what two options would encourage them to car share. There was an even split for the top two responses of ‘help to finding someone who does similar journeys’ and ‘other’ at 34.8% each, and currently only 5.7% of respondents stated they already car share to work.

Those who selected ‘other’ provided several additional comments stating reasons why they cannot or would not car share such as requiring a vehicle for their work commitments, convenience or simply wishing to not travel with others.

Q14. What would encourage you to car share? Please select two options.		
Skipped: 45		
Answer Choice	Response Percent	Response Total
Information about car sharing	14.6%	85
Guaranteed ride home	24.9%	145
I already car share to work	5.7%	33
Incentives and rewards	27.4%	160
Help to find someone who does a similar journey	34.8%	203
Other (please specify):	34.8%	203
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is not convenient to share a car/ not flexible - Own vehicle is required for work - Childcare commitments - Preference not to travel with others - Having someone doing the same shifts would be helpful 		

Table 15 levers to increase car sharing to commute to work.

Q15. What would encourage you to use public transport to travel to work? Please select three options

The final travel-related question in the survey asked employees which three options would encourage them to use public transport for work.

Most responses (50.9%) stated that no option would encourage the use of public transport, with comments provided from respondents giving some reasoning such as a vehicle is required for their work.

More direct (31%) and frequent (26.9%) bus services were the second and third most selected options showing there are several employees who feel public transport could become a viable option with the right improvements.

Q15. What would encourage you to use public transport to travel to work? Please select three options		
Skipped: 45		
Answer Choice	Response Percent	Response Total
I already use public transport for work	2.4%	14
Improved public transport waiting facilities	14.4%	84
More frequent rail services	2.6%	15
More direct rail services	5.7%	33
More frequent bus services	26.9%	157
More direct bus services	31.0%	181
Guidance on the safe use of public transport	1.2%	7
Discounted public transport ticket	22.6%	132
Information about public transport routes	5.8%	34
Nothing	50.9%	297
Other (please specify):	20.6%	120
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Availability and reliability of public transport is poor with no bus stop near Alltami Depot - Complex public transport (e.g., multiple bus changes) - Pool vehicle at work would support using public transport - Vehicle is required for work 		

Table 16 levers to increase public transport use to commute to work.

4 Next steps and recommendations

Despite issues with transport mode data, low use of car sharing (5.7%), cycling/walking (2.4%) and public transport (2.4%) indicates that travel in privately-owned, petrol and diesel vehicles is by far the most used method for commuting to work.

Responses highlighted many barriers that would prevent employees from moving away from privately-owned vehicles such as work duties, personal commitments, cost barriers and a lack of alternatives. It is likely that privately-owned vehicles will continue to be the primary and/or only option employees have to commute to work.

With this in mind, and strong interest in a salary sacrifice scheme, methods should be investigated that support employees to transition away from private vehicles powered only by petrol and diesel, as well as using those vehicles more sustainably through car sharing.

Transitioning to other modes of transport have additional challenges and less interest from respondents. However, these should not be discounted considering the number of employees who live a short distance from their workplace and the additional benefits that could be gained, such as mental and physical well-being.

With many employees living within the county, there is also opportunity for them to become advocates of sustainable travel if they are informed and well-supported to make the transition.

Recommendations are as follows:

- Investigate salary sacrifice schemes which provide employees an affordable and accessible means to transition from Petrol or Diesel vehicles to zero and ultra-low emission vehicles that provide sufficient range per charge.
- Following a review of the council's Cycle to Work scheme, actively promote the scheme, highlighting the benefits and information on local infrastructure.
- Investigate suitability of existing car-sharing platforms that are employee-led, and identify ways in which using such a platform can be incentivised.
- Investigate how the barriers to using active travel (safer routes) and public transport (bus services) can be addressed despite current limitations.

- Review and update the methodology used to calculate employee commute carbon emissions, improving accuracy by including employee commute distances and modes of transport highlighted in the survey.
- Establish an effective process to ensure those employees who do not have easy computer access, are provided the opportunity to complete future iterations of this survey – thus allowing a more representative reflection of the quantity and frequency of employee commuting and home working within our employee base.

5 Appendix 1 – Glossary

Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (CO₂e): a unit of measurement that compares the emissions from greenhouse gases on the basis of their global warming potential (GWP).

Erroneous Data: Erroneous data is data that is abnormal or falls outside of what is acceptable. This is should be rejected where found.

Green Energy: Tariffs are labelled as green if some or all of the units of electricity are ‘matched’ by units generated from a verified renewable energy source. For example, a wind farm, solar array or hydroelectric power station.

Net Zero Carbon: Emissions of greenhouse gases are balanced by the removal of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere such as by trees, peatland and carbon capture and storage technologies.

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ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 11th June 2024
Report Subject	Audit Wales Cracks in the Foundations – Building Safety in Wales
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Planning, Public Health and Public Protection
Report Author	Chief Officer (Planning, Environment & Economy)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following the Grenfell Tower fire in 2017 an independent review into Building Regulations and fire safety was undertaken by Dame Judith Hackett with the findings published in 2018. The review exposed long-standing and serious issues with the building safety regime and recommended a new framework to replace the complex system that had grown over decades. In addressing the findings and recommendations of the Hackett Review, the Building Safety Act was introduced in 2022 and represents the biggest changes of building safety regulations in Wales (and England) since 1984.

The 2022 Act aims to improve the safety of high rise and other in scope buildings by establishing new regulations for the design, construction, maintenance and occupation of such buildings. It also sets a requirement for all practicing Building Control Inspectors to demonstrate competency at one of three levels (Domestic, General and Specialist) and to become registered by 1st October 2024.

In August 2023, Audit Wales published a report on Building Control in Wales entitled 'Cracks in the Foundations' to understand how well the Welsh Government, local authorities and their partners are strengthening and improving Building Control and building safety services following the introduction of the Building Safety Act 2022. The Audit Wales report looked at all Building Control Authorities in Wales and how each is prepared to take on the enhanced responsibilities and requirements of the 2022 Act. It focused on the resilience of existing services and the robustness of building safety assurance systems.

The findings from the report give a critical oversight and raise concerns that not enough priority is being given to Building Control services. It suggests that there is an absence of robust planning and clear decision making and inadequate resources raising fears that the new responsibilities and requirements of the 2022 Act will not be delivered as intended in Wales.

Eight recommendations were made by Audit Wales, four directed at Welsh Government and four directed at Local Authorities.

The purpose of this report is to give an overview of the Audit Wales review, their recommendations and the response to those recommendations and actions required.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Members note the outcome of the Audit Wales report and supports the actions to be taken to address the four recommendations made for Local Authorities.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE AUDIT WALES REPORT AND ITS RECOMMENDATIONS & THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE
1.01	<p>Building Regulations are a set of legal requirements for the design and construction of new buildings, extensions and material alterations to, and certain changes of use of, existing buildings. They help to ensure that new buildings, conversions, renovations and extensions (domestic or commercial) are safe, accessible and energy efficient.</p> <p>The Building Regulations are defined by Welsh Government and cover specific topics including structural integrity, fire protection, accessibility, electrical installations, standards for drains, ventilation and protection against contamination amongst other matters. These are set out in Approved Documents.</p> <p>There are two routes by which developers and building owners can seek approval for their works. They can choose to pay for either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a local authority inspector from the local council and run through Local Authority Building Control (LABC); or • an approved inspector from a government-approved private building control company <p>They both work in the same way, checking plans prior to work commencing, physically inspecting works during the development, advising any changes as necessary and any re-inspections as required before signing the works off.</p> <p>However, only the local authority has powers of enforcement and prosecution where breaches of the Regulations have occurred.</p>

1.02	<p>The building regulations regime has remained unchanged for many years until the Grenfell Tower fire in 2017 in which 72 people died. An independent review into Building Regulations and fire safety was commissioned by the UK Government (known as the Hackett Inquiry) and the review's report was published in May 2018.</p> <p>The report recommended a new framework to replace the complex system that had grown over decades and both the Welsh and UK Governments prioritised work on addressing the review findings which culminated in the Building Safety Act 2022. The Act aims to improve the safety of buildings in England and Wales by establishing a new set of regulations for the design, construction, maintenance and occupation of buildings. It also sets a requirement for all practicing Building Control inspectors to demonstrate competency at one of three levels (domestic, general, specialist) and to become registered by 6 April 2024.</p>
1.03	<p>In August 2023, Audit Wales published a report on Building Control in Wales entitled "Cracks in the Foundations – Building Safety in Wales." Their approach was to understand how well the Welsh Government, local authorities and their partners are strengthening and improving building control and building safety following the Building Safety Act 2022 coming into force. They looked at the robustness of needs information, plans and policies, the resilience of existing services and plans to strengthen these and considered the robustness of assurance systems.</p> <p>The overall conclusion reached by Audit Wales was that responsible bodies – particularly local authorities and fire and rescue – are unable to effectively discharge their responsibilities and ensure buildings in Wales are safe.</p> <p>Other key findings from their review include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Welsh and UK Governments are diverging in key policy areas and some doubt remains on how the 2022 Act will be implemented in Wales, mainly because decisions in key areas are yet to be decided and agreed. This is creating uncertainty and plans that set out how new and revised responsibilities are to be delivered are yet to be developed. • As a profession, Building Control and building safety face significant staffing challenges, with an ageing workforce, poor succession planning, a wider lack of investment in services and training and development that highlight that these services are neither resilient nor fit for the future. • Concerns were raised around the financial management of building control, concluding that some authorities' current practices are not operating in line with regulations and guidance. Whilst the Covid-19 pandemic helped some local authorities to modernise their services (such as moving to more online cloud-based IT and remote working) their resilience remains weak with opportunities to strengthen services by exploring collaboration and regionalisation not being prioritised. • An absence of a national framework for monitoring and evaluating Building Control and building safety means that local authorities and

	<p>their partners are not working to agreed appropriate outcome measures, targets or benchmarks.</p>
1.04	<p>Eight recommendations were made by Audit Wales. Four were directed at Welsh Government (R1 to R4) and four were directed at Local Authorities (R5 to R8).</p> <p>The recommendations made for Welsh Government include providing greater clarity on the implementation and expectations of the Building Safety Act 2022 to ensure local authorities are able to deliver their new responsibilities and duties; ensure it has sufficient resources to deliver the legislative and policy changes for Building Safety; review the mixed market approach to building control and conclude whether it continues to be appropriate and effective in keeping buildings in Wales safe; and increase its oversight and management of the building control sector to ensure there is a robust assurance system in place for building control and safety.</p> <p>The four recommendations made for Local Authorities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> R5 Develop local action plans that articulate a clear vision for Building Control to be able to plan effectively to implement the requirements of the 2022 Act. R6 Urgently review their financial management of Building Control and ensure they are fully complying with Regulations. R7 Work with partners to make better use of limited resources by exploring the potential for collaboration and regionalisation to strengthen resilience through a cost benefit analysis of partnering with neighbouring authorities, establishing joint ventures and/or adopting a regional model where beneficial. R8 Review risk management to ensure risks are systematically identified, recorded, assessed, mitigated and subject to regular evaluation and scrutiny
1.05	<p>With regards to R5, ongoing discussions are being held with Local Authority Building Control (LABC) who are the body representing Building Control authorities in England and Wales and with other local authorities on a format and approach to Local Action Plans. It is acknowledged that producing a Local Action Plan is an important piece of work and is currently in progress.</p>
1.06	<p>R6 recommends that Local Authorities urgently review their financial management of the Building Control function. This piece of work is already underway with a review of the Council's fees and charges for Building Regulations.</p> <p>This is also an area of work identified to be looked at with colleagues from Internal Audit as part of their programme for audits for 2024/25.</p>
1.07	<p>R7 says that local authorities should work with partners to make better use of limited resources, exploring collaboration and regionalisation to strengthen resilience.</p> <p>The Building Control team works closely with partners and stakeholders already, including local police and fire services, local builders and others to</p>

	ensure the best use of resources. Staff recruitment and retention is a nationwide issue and not just restricted to Building Control or Flintshire. Flintshire's Building Control Team is well staffed compared to neighbouring authorities, particularly in Denbighshire and Conwy.
1.08	<p>R8 says Local Authorities should review risk management processes to ensure that risks are systematically identified, reviewed and recorded.</p> <p>Risk Management will form part of the internal audit review of the Building Control service which, in turn, will inform and shape the risk management processes for this service. This will have regard to the Council's Risk Management Strategy and Framework and will seek to apply best practice to the identification, assessment and control of key risks within the Building Control service.</p>
1.09	<p>Appendix 1: Cracks in the Foundations – Updates & Actions gives additional information in respect of the four recommendations outlined above.</p> <p>Whilst some progress has been made on some of the recommendations made in the Audit Wales report, it is acknowledged that this has been slow to date and needs to be accelerated. The priority for the Building Control Service has been to recruit into the three vacant posts and to ensure all Building Control Officers have progressed their registration requirements in line with the new Building Control Competency Registration Framework. Without such registration the Service would not be able to operate and in order to fully appreciate the recommendations of the Audit Wales report it has been important to ensure the Service is fully resourced.</p>
1.10	As at 31 st May 2024, all Building Control Officers have undertaken and passed their exams required under the new Building Control Competency Registration Framework and submitted their registration to the Building Safety Regulator for England and Wales. All officers are now registered to practice.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	<p>Revenue: there are no immediate implications for the approved revenue budget for this service for the current financial year. However, the ongoing review of fees and charges for building control services will improve the budget position for future financial years as it seeks to recover the costs of the service whilst also seeking to remain competitive within the market.</p> <p>Capital: there are no implications for the approved capital programme for either the current financial year or for future financial years</p> <p>Human Resources: there are no immediate implications for additional capacity or for any change to current workforce structures or roles. However, as work around R7 progresses and local authorities explore better use of resources by exploring the potential for collaboration and regionalisation then workforce structures and roles may need to be adapted/reviewed.</p>

	Technology: additional development work is required to fulfil the full potential of the Building Control service back office system (AGILE). At present, full agile working for inspectors when on site is limited as a result of technology and this is an area identified for further development work with our business support officers and our external systems partner.
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3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	The principal risk(s) identified have been around sufficient resource and also to ensure that the requirements of the Building Control Competency Registration Framework have been achieved by the deadlines set by Welsh Government and the Building Safety Act 2022. Without registration, Building Control Officers would not be able to operate and the Building Control Service would not be provided. This would severely impact on the service's ability to bring in fees and charges in connection with Building Regulations applications. As outlined at 1.10 all Flintshire County Council Building Control Officers are now successfully registered to practice in line with the new requirements.
3.02	Additional risks already identified include the functionality of the back office system and development work required to realise the full potential for agile working functions for the building control surveyors when on site. This would significantly speed up the delivery of building regulations for customers.
3.03	The Building Control Service has been identified as an area for internal Audit to assist in their programme of work for 2024/25, particularly around the review of fees and charges and introducing a more robust risk management approach and the processes for doing so.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	No consultations required/carried out, however, it is worth noting that following the Audit Wales report, dialogue continues at both a regional and national level, aided by LABC & LABC Cymru to identify a consistent approach around the format and content for Local Action Plans and around the issue of collaboration and regionalisation to strengthen resilience.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1: Audit Wales – Cracks in the Foundations – Actions/Update 2024

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	'Cracks in the Foundations – Building Safety in Wales' – Report by the Auditor General for Wales August 2023

	https://audit.wales/sites/default/files/2023-07/Cracks_in_the_Foundations_Building_Safety_in_Wales_English_0.pdf
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7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: Matthew Parry Davies – Service Manager (Development) Telephone: 01352 703248 E-mail: matthew.parry-davies@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS These are provided corporately on the Infonet (link) and maintained by the Executive Office
8.01	<p>Wales Audit Office: works to support the Auditor General as the public sector watchdog for Wales. They aim to ensure that the people of Wales know whether public money is being managed wisely and that public bodies in Wales understand how to improve outcomes.</p> <p>Financial Year: the period of 12 months commencing on 1 April</p> <p>Revenue: a term used to describe the day to day costs of running Council services and income deriving from those services. It also includes charges for the repayment of debt, including interest, and may include direct financing of capital expenditure.</p> <p>Building Control Service: the Council's team responsible for ensuring that building work is carried out in accordance with the Building Regulations.</p> <p>Building Regulations: set out certain standards that must be met during the design and construction of building work carried out in domestic and commercial premises. These standards ensure the health and safety of people around and within buildings and also provide for such factors as access to buildings for disabled people, means of escape in case of fire and energy conservation.</p> <p>Approved Documents: The Building Regulations have various parts. Each part is supported by its "Approved Document" which contains practical and technical guidance on ways in which the requirements can be met. They cover subjects such as structure, fire safety, ventilation, drainage, energy conservation and access and facilities for disabled people. The most recent versions of the Approved Documents can be viewed via the Planning Portal https://www.planningportal.co.uk/applications/building-control-applications/building-control/approved-documents</p> <p>LABC: Local Authority Building Control. This organisation represents all local authority building control teams in England and Wales with a network of around 3,500 professional surveyors.</p>

Appendix 1: Audit Wales – Crack in the Foundations Report – Actions/Update 2024

Audit Wales Report Date	Title	Recommendations	Response & RAG (if applicable)	Target Completion Date
August 2023	Cracks in the Foundations – Building Safety in Wales	Recommendation/Proposals for improvement:		
		<p>R1 The Welsh Government should provide greater clarity on the implementation and expectations of the Building Safety Act to ensure local authorities are able to deliver their new responsibilities and duties. This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clarifying the detailed requirements for competency and registration to enable local authorities to plan for these changes; • a specific timetable for development and adoption of Welsh guidance to ensure local authorities and others can deliver their duties; and • the Welsh Government should work with key stakeholders, such as LABC Cymru, to support understanding and implementation when guidance is issued. 	This recommendation is targeted to Welsh Government	N/A
		<p>R2 The Welsh Government should ensure that it has sufficient resources to deliver the legislative and policy changes for Building Safety to reduce implementation risks</p>	This recommendation is targeted to Welsh Government	N/A
		<p>R3 The Welsh Government should review the mixed market approach to building control and conclude whether it continues to be appropriate and effective in keeping buildings in Wales safe. This should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assess the status quo against potential changes, such as the model of delivery in Scotland; • be framed around a SWOT analysis of costs, benefits, threats, and risks; • draw on existing research to identify good practice; and 	This recommendation is targeted to Welsh Government	N/A

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be published and agree a way forward. <p>R4 The Welsh Government should increase its oversight and management of the building control sector to ensure there is a robust assurance system in place for building control and safety by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating a national performance framework with clear service standards to promote consistency of service. • <p>This should also include outcome measures to monitor performance and an evaluation and reporting framework for scrutiny.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing a national building safety workforce plan to address the most significant risks facing the sector. This should include regular data collection and publication, as well as coverage of priorities, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a greater focus on trainees to mitigate succession risks; ○ establishing aligned, national job roles matched to competency levels; ○ increasing the diversity of the sector to ensure it reflects modern Wales; and ○ specific funding to enable surveyors to obtain and maintain competence should also be considered. • the Welsh Government should explore with the further education sector how best to provide building control training in Wales to support succession planning, skills development, and competency. <p>R5 Local authorities should develop local action plans that articulate a clear vision for building control to be able to plan effectively to implement the requirements of the Act. The Plans should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be based on an assessment of local risks and include mitigation actions; • set out how building control services will be resourced to deliver all their statutory responsibilities; 	<p>This recommendation is targeted to Welsh Government</p> <p>We don't currently have a Local Action Plan that articulates a clear vision for how BC plan to effectively implement the requirements of the Act. This needs to be developed and put in place. This would include</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>End of August 2024</p>
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- illustrate the key role of building control in ensuring safe buildings and be linked to well-being objectives and other corporate objectives; and
- include outcome measures that are focused on all building control services, not just dangerous structures.

amongst other things the 4 bulleted points in R5.

Work with other local authorities across Wales supported by LABC Cymru continues around further discussion on Local Action Plans and their format and approach and whether any best practice has been identified within other local authorities. Next meeting is due in May 2024.

The Building Control Service at Flintshire has also been 3 members of staff down due to vacancies for the past 2 years, which amounts to around a third of the overall team. This has included 2 technical support posts and one Building Control Officer post. The priority has been to recruit into these posts to build in resilience within the team and all three posts have now been filled.

Additionally, the introduction of new Building Control Competency Registration requirements has meant that in order to continue to practice, all Building Control Officers have to

undertake their registration process by 6 April 2024. There are 3 levels of competency: domestic, general and specialist. The deadline was extended until 6 October 2024 to allow building control inspectors across Wales to undertake exams and assessments and all officers within Flintshire's Building Control Service have undertaken their exams and assessments and waiting on their results. In the meantime, in order to allow them to continue to practice whilst the validation process and exam results are ongoing, all officers have temporary registration in place that will see them through until 6 October 2024. This has been a very high priority for the service as without registration the service will be unable to operate.

As at 31st May 2024, all Flintshire County Council Building Control Officers have successfully completed and passed their exams required to enable them to register under the new requirements and the Council now has Building Control

			<p>Officers registered with the Building Safety Regulator for England & Wales at all three levels of competency.</p>	
		<p>R6 Local authorities should urgently review their financial management of building control and ensure they are fully complying with Regulations. This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishing a timetable of regular fee reviews to ensure charges reflect the cost of services and comply with the Regulations; • annually reporting and publishing financial performance in line with the Regulations; • ensuring relevant staff are provided with training to ensure they apply the Regulations and interpret financial reporting correctly; and, • revise fees to ensure services are charged for in accordance with the Regulations. 	<p>Fees for Building Regulations are set locally by Flintshire County Council. Fees were last comprehensively reviewed in 2018. A review of Fees will take place in 2024 and will include a comparison with other local Councils, particularly neighbouring Councils in North Wales. The Service will also be assisted by internal Audit who have programmed Building Control into their 2024/25 work and this will also include work around fees and charges.</p> <p>Building Control is a competitive service. Customers can use other means to secure their Building Regulations outside of the Council (e.g. use independent Approved Inspectors) so a review and any subsequent review of Fees will need to ensure we remain competitive and do not out price the Council's services out of the market.</p>	<p>End of September 2024</p>

			<p>A review of the fees and charges will reflect the cost of the service and ensure the service is complying with the new Regulations. Such fees must be CIPFA compliant.</p> <p>Additionally, the Building Control budget is monitored and reviewed regularly by the Service Manager for Development with Finance colleagues (monthly budget reviews)</p> <p>The Service provides training for its staff to ensure compliance with Regulations. Officers are also required to maintain their qualifications under the new competency framework.</p>	
		<p>R7 Local authorities should work with partners to make better use of limited resources by exploring the potential for collaboration and regionalisation to strengthen resilience through a cost benefit analysis of partnering with neighbouring authorities, establishing joint ventures and/or adopting a regional model where beneficial.</p>	<p>This will require discussion at regional level to explore the potential for collaboration and establishing a regional model.</p> <p>Local Authority Building Control (LABC) Partnership Authority Scheme is already in place which is shared by all LA building control teams in England and Wales and this allows customers to work</p>	<p>End of 2024</p>

			<p>with any LA building control team to undertake all pre-app and design vetting work, regardless of the project's geographical location. We already provide this service for Iceland Foods. We vet their plans for new stores and re-fits regardless of where they are located geographically.</p> <p>Further discussion with local authorities through LABC and LABC Cymru networks and regional meetings will continue, sharing best practice and further exploring the potential for collaboration.</p>	
		<p>R8 Local authorities should review risk management processes to ensure that risks are systematically identified, recorded, assessed, mitigated and subject to regular evaluation and scrutiny.</p>	<p>A review of risk management processes needs to be undertaken. There are a number of risks already identified including the functionality of the back office system and a lack of agile working functions (for surveyors on site) & the new requirements for registering as Registered Building Inspectors from 6 April 2024.</p>	<p>End of 2024</p>

			The Building Control Team/function is included as an area supported by an internal Audit Review as part of their programme for work in 2024/25.	
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ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 11th June 2024
Report Subject	Destination Management Plan
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy
Report Author	Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Tourism generates an estimated annual contribution to the Flintshire economy of £325m, supporting around 3,300 jobs. The draft Destination Management Plan has been co-produced with a wide partnership of businesses and partner agencies to take a co-ordinated approach to supporting the development of the visitor economy sector and responding to the challenges and opportunities that will be faced over the next few years.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Members consider and endorse the draft Destination Management Plan.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	Explaining the Destination Management Plan
1.01	Tourism is an important economic driver for the County and the wider region. It is currently worth an estimated £325 million to the Flintshire economy generated from 3.7 million visitors. It supports in the region of 3,300 jobs. (STEAM data 2022).
1.02	Destination Management is concerned with managing the destination in its widest form for the benefit of all.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It covers all the aspects of a destination that contribute to a visitor's experience, taking account of the needs of visitors, residents, businesses, and the environment. 2. It focuses on the elements that attract visitors, as well as the infrastructure and services that support their visit. The term 'visitor' applies to those spending their holidays in an area as tourist, but it also includes local people visiting an area for a day or less. 3. Destination Management recognises the wider impact of people including those who live relatively nearby and who use services, infrastructure and enjoy local assets. It extends to all aspects of the economy and requires collaboration to run effectively and sustainably. 4. Destination Management ideally involves the physical, financial, and operational management of a destination, but also its planning, development, and marketing.
1.03	The Council, together with the Destination Flintshire Partnership, has developed a draft Destination Management Plan to take collective actions across the partners to support the development of the visitor sector, improve the appeal of the County to visitors and increase the economic impact of the sector.
1.04	<p>The Destination Flintshire Partnership brings together the key partners responsible for managing Flintshire as a destination. Representatives from: tourism businesses; Flintshire Tourism Association; Clwydian Range Tourism Group; and local food and drink groups sit alongside: Coleg Cambria; Aura; Theatr Clwyd; North East Wales Heritage Forum; town centre partners; and a range of Flintshire County Council functions including Regeneration, Countryside Services, Planning, Streetscene and Place-Making.</p> <p>The role of the group is to develop, implement and monitor an effective action plan to improve the management of Flintshire as a destination. The draft Destination Management Plan was developed in consultation with this group.</p>
1.05	The Destination Management Plan for Flintshire considers the national strategic drivers from Welsh Government including Welcome to Wales 2020-2025 and the National Events Strategy for Wales 2022-2030 as well as the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.
1.06	Locally, the Destination Management Plan contributes to the Council Plan 2017-2030 and will be delivered in conjunction with the development of the Flintshire Coast Park and town centre Place Making Plans.
1.07	<p>The Destination Management Plan sets out four priorities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. People, skills, and employment – closing skills and employment gaps in the sector and addressing the poor perceptions of working in the industry. 2. Marketing and communication – developing a clear brand for the area, extending tourism into the off-peak season and encouraging visitors to explore beyond the most popular locations.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Great products and places – development of the Flintshire Coast Park and Place Making Plans, supporting business investment and responding to the changing regulatory landscape for visitor businesses. 4. Partnership and engagement – continue to grow cross-border partnerships in North East Wales and North West England and with local tourism and food and drink groups.
1.08	<p>An action plan has been produced for the period 2024-26 and is included within the Destination Management Plan. It is expected to be an organic document, which will adapt to funding, marketing and environment changes and respond to new opportunities and issues. In balance to this, it also provides an outline monitoring framework for the plan against which to review progress.</p>
1.09	<p>The action plan will be monitored to ensure that it makes progress towards the outcomes anticipated, offers good value for the investments made and realises wider benefits from tourism to the County. Progress towards delivering this plan will be reported to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Flintshire Destination Management Partnership 2. Flintshire County Council Cabinet and Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3. Relevant partner organisations or funding bodies
1.10	<p>There are a number of work streams currently underway which are contributing to the delivery of the Destination Management Plan, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development of the Flintshire Coast Park funded through UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund in addition to the day-to-day management of the coast for local people and visitors by the Council. 2. Development of Place Making Plans funded through a combination of Welsh Government Transforming Towns funding and UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund. 3. Tourism grant programme funded through UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund. 4. Town centre events and activities grants funded through UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund. 5. Business decarbonisation projects funded through UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund. 6. Development work in Greenfield Valley funded through UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund. 7. Activities by individual town councils to improve and promote their towns for visitors and to run or support events. 8. Day to day promotion of the County to visitors at both local and regional level.
1.11	<p>At this stage, the Destination Management Plan does not take any account of the proposed National Park for the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley area as it is too early to know whether it will be agreed and when. If approved, though, it could be expected to have a significant positive impact on the visitor economy of the County as well as potentially bringing</p>

	destination management resources, opportunities, and pressures to manage.
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	No resource implications arise directly from this report. The work on Destination Management already features within the work programmes and budgets of the relevant Council teams. Development work on Destination Management will continue to be supported by externally funding wherever it can be secured.

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>The approach taken to Destination Management seeks to manage the key destinations in the County in a sustainable way – reducing the impact of visitors while maximising the economic benefits.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prevention</td> <td>No change</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Integration</td> <td rowspan="2">The approach taken to Destination Management brings together all the relevant partners to manage the visitor destinations.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Collaboration</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Involvement</td> <td>No change</td> </tr> </table> <p>Well-being Goals Impact</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Prosperous Wales</td> <td>The approach taken to Destination Management seeks to manage the key destinations in the County in a sustainable way – reducing the impact of visitors while maximising the economic benefits.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Resilient Wales</td> <td>No impact.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Healthier Wales</td> <td>No impact.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>More equal Wales</td> <td>No impact.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cohesive Wales</td> <td>No impact.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vibrant Wales</td> <td>Destination Management includes supporting the cultural assets of the County.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Globally responsible Wales</td> <td>The approach taken to Destination Management seeks to manage the key destinations in the County in a sustainable way – reducing the impact of visitors while maximising the economic benefits.</td> </tr> </table>	Long-term	The approach taken to Destination Management seeks to manage the key destinations in the County in a sustainable way – reducing the impact of visitors while maximising the economic benefits.	Prevention	No change	Integration	The approach taken to Destination Management brings together all the relevant partners to manage the visitor destinations.	Collaboration	Involvement	No change	Prosperous Wales	The approach taken to Destination Management seeks to manage the key destinations in the County in a sustainable way – reducing the impact of visitors while maximising the economic benefits.	Resilient Wales	No impact.	Healthier Wales	No impact.	More equal Wales	No impact.	Cohesive Wales	No impact.	Vibrant Wales	Destination Management includes supporting the cultural assets of the County.	Globally responsible Wales	The approach taken to Destination Management seeks to manage the key destinations in the County in a sustainable way – reducing the impact of visitors while maximising the economic benefits.
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	Risk	Mitigation
	Public sector budget pressures	Destination management already represents a series of compromises between how the visitor destinations in the County could be managed to maximise their appeal versus the available private and public sector resources. Further cuts to public sector budgets will create a need to revisit these compromises on a case-by-case basis. The Destination Flintshire Partnership, though, enables a co-ordinated approach to reviewing impacts and finding mitigation measures where possible.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	The draft Destination Management Plan was co-produced with members of the Destination Flintshire Partnership.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Draft Destination Management Plan

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: Niall Waller (Enterprise and Regeneration Manager) Telephone: 07342 093133 E-mail: niall.waller@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
	<p>Shared Prosperity Fund – UK Government funded programme with projects selected locally by the Council. Runs until March 2025.</p> <p>STEAM – Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Model – a commercial model that extrapolates visitor information from businesses to generate an estimate of the County’s economic benefit from the sector.</p> <p>Transforming Towns – Welsh Government funding programme to support town centres.</p>

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Flintshire Destination Management Plan 2024-2026

Setting the scene

Tourism is an important economic driver for the County and the wider region. It is currently worth an estimated £325 million to the economy, generated from 3.7 million visitors. (STEAM data 2022).

Visitors, more than ever, want to explore an area, learn about it and come away with a sense of having experienced somewhere different, somewhere unique.

The county has two exceptional natural assets. The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which is recognised for its nationally important landscape which runs down the west of the county. The Dee Estuary is one of the most important wildlife sites in Europe. Although both areas are widely used for recreation and tourism more can be done to increase access and interpretation, whilst protecting their valuable but sensitive environment.

Visitors, more than ever, want to explore an area, learn about it and come away with a sense of having experienced somewhere different, somewhere unique.

The plan will support our communities and tourism businesses across Flintshire to improve, grow sector value, whilst benefiting our visitors and residents. It will allow us to play a role in ensuring that Flintshire has a sustainable and buoyant visitor economy, which seeks to gain national and international recognition for our sense of place and for everything we offer our communities and visitors.

Our Vision for Flintshire's Visitor Economy 2023-26

We want Flintshire's tourism industry to be one which will make use of the superb natural environment, along with the richness of its Welsh heritage, culture, language, and products, to invite people to explore, understand and enjoy the County. The diverse offer will be complemented by a commitment to quality; easy access to information; and by striving to ensure that every facet of the visitors' experience meets their expectations.

What is a Destination Management Plan?

Destination Management is concerned with managing the destination in its widest form for the benefit of all.

- It covers all the aspects of a destination that contribute to a visitor's experience, taking account of the needs of visitors, residents, businesses, and the environment.

Flintshire is remarkably rich in historical remains, simply because it's been frontier country for centuries. Strategically placed Iron Age hillforts, such as Penycloddiau and Moel y Gaer, dominate the skyline of the Clwydian Range and Halkyn Mountain.

The county is dotted with castles built during the ongoing power struggle between the Welsh princes and Anglo-Norman kings. Ewloe and Caergwrle were built by Welsh hands, but Flint was the first in the mighty chain of 13th-century fortresses built by Edward I all along the North Wales coast as far as Harlech.

Flintshire was important spiritually too. St Winefride's Well was one of the most revered places of Christian pilgrimage in Europe and the now ruined Basingwerk Abbey was wealthy and influential. Our picturesque village churches and chapels bear testament to the key role religion played in everyday life.

The 18th and 19th centuries brought new prosperity to Flintshire, changing the face of the countryside and transforming our towns and villages. Greenfield Valley was one of the cradles of the Industrial Revolution in Wales and Halkyn Mountain was pitted and scarred by a lead mining and quarrying boom.

- It focuses on the elements that attract visitors, as well as the infrastructure and services that support their visit. The term ‘visitor’ applies to those spending their holidays in an area as tourist, but it also includes local people visiting an area for a day or less.
- Destination Management recognises the wider impact of people including those who live relatively nearby and who use services, infrastructure and enjoy local assets. It extends to all aspects of the economy and requires collaboration to run effectively and sustainably.
- Destination Management ideally involves the physical, financial, and operational management of a destination, but also its planning, development, and marketing.

The Destination Flintshire Partnership brings together the key partners responsible for managing Flintshire as a destination. Representatives from tourism businesses, Flintshire Tourism Association, Clwydian Range Tourism Group, local food and drink groups sit alongside Coleg Cambria, Aura, Theatr Clwyd, North East Wales Heritage Forum, Town Centre partners and a range of Flintshire County Council functions: Regeneration, Countryside Services, Planning, Streetscene and Place-Making.

The role of the group is to develop, implement and monitor an effective action plan to improve the management of Flintshire as a destination.

Communication will be vitally important to the group and will include:

- The members of the Partnership are expected to communicate with their wider memberships or stakeholders so that the work of the Partnership is based on a broad information base.
- An annual event with the wider community is held to provide an update on progress and to refresh the priorities for the future.
- An e-bulletin will be distributed to businesses and other stakeholders to keep them abreast of events, new initiatives and wider developments.
- The Partnership will report progress regularly to the ‘Economic Recovery’ and ‘Place Making’ groups to ensure a complementary approach is taken.

There are many factors driving the need for Flintshire’s Destination Management Plan to make it ready to work with the challenges and opportunities of 2023 and beyond.

This plan will have to respond to the following Destination Management and Flintshire corporate priorities: -

- The changing visitor profile i.e., converting day visitors into overnight visitors.
- Growth in unlicensed short-term lets (Airbnb properties).
- An increase through digital presence of existing online platforms to reach a wider audience, how we respond and engage to raise awareness of tourism products and the visitor offer.
- Skills and employment gaps in the sector.
- The physical risk of climate change, along with the increasing pressure of visitor numbers on the environment.
- Protection and promotion of the Welsh language.
- Second home policies and taxes.
- Proposals for an introduction of a visitor levy in Wales on visitors staying overnight in visitor accommodation.
- Supporting local businesses in their efforts to reduce their carbon footprint and become more resource efficient.

- Building upon the success of partnership working develop it further by looking towards greater integration with regeneration activity in the county, as well as developing stronger partnerships with organisations in North West England.

Strategic context

The Destination Management Plan aims to consider and support the wider strategic objectives identified in local, regional and national policies.

Welsh Government Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Act has seven well-being goals. Together they provide a shared vision for the public bodies listed in the Act to work towards. They are a set of goals; the Act makes it clear the listed public bodies must work to achieve all of the goals, not just one or two. The 2023-26 Destination Management Action Plan aims to support Flintshire County Council in achieving these goals.

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

Welcome to Wales: priorities for the visitor economy 2020 to 2025 (National)

The ambition is to: 'Grow tourism for the good of Wales', and the approach is: High quality, year-round experiences, and 'Inherently Welsh' but with a global outlook (Bro & Byd) The core offer is outstanding natural landscapes, creative culture, and epic adventure. There are four priorities for actions: -

- Great products and places
- Quality visitor experiences
- Innovative brand
- An Engaged and vibrant sector.

The National Events Strategy for Wales 2022 – 2030

There are three strands:

- Align the industry – a long term 'build' approach supporting the capacity to grow, sustainably.
- Authenticity – Welshness and alignment with the Wales brand
- All of Wales – ensuring geographical spread, inclusive and community connections.

AONB Sustainable Tourism Strategy (Regional – emerging)

Emerging themes are around sustainable destination and businesses, positioning and marketing and business engagement.

Flintshire Council Plan 2017-30 (Local)

Flintshire County Council's Plan has six themes:

1. Poverty
2. Affordable and Accessible Housing
3. Green Society and Environment

4. Economy
5. Personal and Community Well-being
6. Education and Skills

The most relevant theme to this Plan is Economy i.e., regenerate & reinvent our town centres, enable business continuity and encourage appropriate investment, develop and promote effective transport connectivity and work with partners to support individuals to gain employment.

Flintshire Coast Park Study (Local)

Building foundations for an accessible Coast Park in Flintshire which celebrates the natural environment and heritage of our Welsh coast by:

- Delivering a 5-year development plan with a costed business case
- Producing and implementing a marketing and branding plan
- Establishing the working arrangements for the future administration of the coast park
- Delivering a series of pilot initiatives to enhance green infrastructure, including tree, hedge planting and access projects.
- Strengthening the connection of the coast with the local community and businesses through volunteering opportunities, stakeholder engagement and events.
- Creating spatial plans and feasibility studies for the coast park hubs

Flintshire Placemaking Plans (Local – emerging)

In Flintshire, the Council has committed to developing and implementing Place Making Plans for the towns of: Buckley, Connah’s Quay, Flint, Holywell, Mold, Shotton and Queensferry to increase the appeal of the town centres to the local population and day visitors.

Our Aims

The plan will aim to:

- Develop a stronger sense of place for Flintshire and raise the quality of the location as a visitor destination.
- Increase the value of business and activity tourism in Flintshire.
- Improve the awareness of our visitor offer and provide ease of access to information for residents and visitors.
- Further improve the quality of accommodation and attractions
- Support the development of new infrastructure and attract and invest in high calibre staff.
- Monitor the impact of tourism and the effectiveness of interventions.
- Support industry partners with decarbonisation.

Headline Priorities 2023-26

Actions within the plan are grouped under four headline priorities: -

Priority	Challenges	Opportunities
People, Skills and Employment	Poor perceptions of working in the tourism industry Skills and employment gaps in the sector	School involvement and education to increase engagement of children learning about their place, environment and looking after it sustainably.

		<p>Flintshire Tourism Ambassador Course – learning & improving knowledge about unique qualities of the area.</p> <p>Educate and develop skills among local people – create a career.</p>
<p>Marketing & Communication</p>	<p>Developing a clearer brand for the area</p> <p>Changing visitor profiles</p> <p>Seasonality – do more to grow off-peak tourism.</p> <p>Spread – ‘honey pot’ sites are very busy.</p>	<p>The visitor economy can bring multiple benefits to the local community, but there is an opportunity for these to be developed and better communicated.</p> <p>Our culture, heritage, uniqueness is undersold. Opportunity to improve awareness of places through signage and celebrating local identity and brand.</p> <p>Becoming a more sustainable destination – embracing sustainability is an opportunity for Flintshire to further develop its brand.</p>
<p>Great Products and Places</p>	<p>Public Transport Access – less served by public transport, especially rail.</p> <p>** New rules for Second Homes and holiday lets may have a disproportionate impact on businesses where tourism is not as a high. **</p> <p>Growth / current lack of quality assurance in short term Air BnB lets. Need to understand and build relationship with this market.</p> <p>The physical risk of climate change, along with the increasing pressure of visitor numbers on the environment.</p>	<p>Developing foundations for an accessible Flintshire Coast Park celebrating the natural environment and heritage of the coast.</p> <p>Place Making Programme</p> <p>Wales Coast Path – investment in infrastructure, marketing, and development of the coastal path.</p> <p>Potential for new National Park status in North East Wales.</p> <p>Shared Prosperity Fund programme.</p> <p>Making our products more visible to communities and visitors e.g., heritage sites</p>

	<p>Seasonality – extending the season. Do more to grow off-peak tourism.</p> <p>Spend – encouraging visitors to stay longer and spend more.</p>	<p>Programme of investment in tourism products.</p>
<p>Partnership & Engagement</p>	<p>Funding and resources</p>	<p>Continue to strengthen the cross-border partnerships, particularly the North-East Wales Partnership. It provides a vehicle to promote the wider area, attract funding and achieve economies of scale.</p> <p>Continued development of partnerships e.g., Destination Flintshire Partnership and Local Tourism / Food & Drink Groups.</p>

** Increase to the maximum level of council tax premiums for second homes, as well as new local tax rules for holiday lets. The change increased thresholds to being available to let for at least 252 days and actually letting for at least 182 days in any 12-month period.

Delivery

It is expected, in delivering this plan, that Flintshire County Council will continue to play a vital role in leading and co-ordinating the various activities of the partners and in supporting their work. The Local Authority will continue to use its own resources, in partnership with the Destination Management group, to make targeted investments in tourism to enhance the offer, increase visitor numbers and continue to develop activities that will improve visitor experiences and the value of the tourism economy to make use of the opportunities that external funding can present.

An action plan has been produced for the initial period 2023-26. It is expected to be an organic document, which will adapt to funding, marketing and environment changes and respond to new opportunities and issues. In balance to this, it also provides an outline monitoring framework for the plan against which to review progress.

Monitoring the Action Plan

The action plan will be monitored to ensure that it makes progress towards the outcomes anticipated, offers good value for the investments made and realises wider benefits from tourism to the county.

Progress towards delivering this plan will be reported to:

- Flintshire Destination Management Partnership
- Flintshire County Council and the reporting structures within the organisation
- Relevant partner organisations or funding bodies

Monitoring the strategy will include several tiers:

- Many of the activities within the action plan will themselves have their own targets developed to ensure that they are effective, offer good value for money and meet the needs of its funding partners.
- The collective actions within the plan will deliver a range of outcomes, summarised in the table below. Progress towards achieving these will be monitored over the lifetime of the action plan and actions will be adjusted to reflect progress.
- The plan seeks to maximise the benefit of tourism in Flintshire, especially in terms of visitor expenditure and increasing the number of staying visitors.

The broad aims of the Destination Management Plan are to: -

Outcome	Baseline 2022	Broad aim 2027
Increase in number of staying visitors and high-yield visitors to the region	860,000 (STEAM 2022)	Increase by 10%
Increase in the number of FTE jobs supported by tourism spend	3,342 (STEAM 2022)	Increase by 5%
Increase in the economic impact of tourism (£)	£325 million (STEAM 2022)	Increase by 10%
Increase in the number of Flintshire Tourism Ambassadors (online course)	25	500

Flintshire Destination Management Action Plan 2023-26

Headline Priority 1: People, Skills and Employment

Ref	Action	Delivery Partners	Priority		
			2024	2025	2026
1.1	Work closely with and support local FE Colleges with linking businesses into employability schemes and providers	FCC, CC, FTA, CRTG, CRFDG, NEW	✓	✓	✓
1.2	Engage with schools, colleges, and Local Authority Education Services to encourage careers in the tourism and hospitality industry.	FCC, FTA, CRTG, CC	✓	✓	✓
1.3	Work with industry partners to develop methods for monitoring and gathering data on skills related issues in the sector e.g., the challenges of recruitment and retention. Utilise this data to develop promotional and engagement campaigns that will support in raising awareness of career opportunities for future generations.	FTA, CRTG, CC, VW	✓		
1.4	Flintshire Tourism Ambassador Course – continue the development of this accredited online knowledge and learning platform, including the introduction of new modules to increase awareness of local and regional destinations and share knowledge that has been learned with visitors.	FCC, NEW, FTA, CRTG, CRFDG	✓	✓	✓

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Headline Priority 2: Marketing and Communication

Ref	Action	Delivery Partners	Priority		
			2024	2025	2026
2.1	Work with industry partners to strengthen the Come to Wales brand and marketing activity to promote our visitor offer	FTA, FCC	✓	✓	✓
2.2	Maximise number of PR opportunities through press releases and blogs on the Come to Wales and North East Wales platforms	FCC, NEW	✓		
2.3	Develop and run promotional campaigns that will encourage visitors to consider a broader range of sites across the county to relieve pressure on 'honeypot' destinations	DFP, FCC	✓	✓	✓
2.4	Develop clear and consistent imagery and messages based on Flintshire's strengths and encourage their use across other industry sectors and organisations.	FCC, FTA, CRTG, NEW	✓	✓	✓
2.5	Encourage industry partners to work together to form clusters and develop marketing packages – identify opportunity areas, provide the vehicle for networking and discussions, identify, and promote good practice.	FCC, DFP	✓	✓	✓
2.6	Develop and co-ordinate an appropriate and effective distribution service to ensure current marketing material is available to the public, developing new outlets as appropriate.	FCC	✓		
2.7	Review and develop the tourist information point network to enhance the impact of the local distribution of information.	FCC, FTA, CRTG	✓	✓	
2.8	Collaborate with partners to develop and run group travel promotion campaigns that will increase the number of coach tour operators visiting destinations in Flintshire.	FCC, DFP	✓	✓	

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Headline Priority 3: Great Products and Places

Ref	Action	Delivery Partners	Priority		
			2024	2025	2026
3.1	Work with local heritage sites and industry partners to raise the profile of the heritage offer with visitors and raise awareness of other places of interest across the County.	DFP, NEWHF, FCC	✓		
3.2	Contribute to the development of the coast park, advocating on behalf of the visitor sector and helping to ensure that the needs of the sector are reflected in the emerging strategies, policies and governance.	DFP, FCC	✓	✓	✓
3.3	Improve Flintshire's profile as a high-quality food and drink destination through promotion of local food and drink producers with industry partners	CRFDG, FCC, DFP	✓	✓	✓
3.4	Identify strategic alignment between the Place Making Plans and the Destination Management Plan and ensuring the actions emerging from each are mutually supportive and beneficial for industry partners and visitors.	FCC, DFP	✓	✓	✓
3.5	Work with industry partners to deliver the provision for a new visitor centre building at Flint Castle and Foreshore.	FCC, DFP	✓	✓	✓
3.6	Conduct and maintain an audit of all tourism sites and visitor attractions which are available across Flintshire to provide a current baseline of information to raise awareness and increase footfall, celebrate and promote the offer we have. Encourage the providers to cross refer and collaborate. i.e., Bailey Hill, Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Park in the Past.	DFP, FCC	✓		
3.7	Collaborate with visitor accommodation providers to establish better links with the construction industry to accommodate construction workers within the county, to contribute to the local visitor economy and supply chain e.g., construction projects such as new build residential homes and schools.	FCC, DFP, FTA, CRTG, VW	✓	✓	✓
3.8	Engage with industry partners to: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ build an evidence base on what the visitor sector needs in terms of transport to influence national and regional transport planning. 	FCC	✓	✓	✓

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide a clear view on what facilities the sector needs to improve its visitor experience in key destinations e.g., public conveniences, EV charging, car parking, accessible rights of way. Use this evidence base to influence regional and local plans and service delivery. 				
3.9	Improving the visibility of our assets through implementing a programme of new & upgraded tourist and boundary sign packages for sites of cultural, heritage & natural significance and to develop use of open spaces along the Dee Coastline.	FCC	✓		
3.10	Ensure the Destination Management Partnership is kept informed on the Council's future work programme to review rural issues and encourage the sector to participate in the any consultations to better understand the needs of rural areas in the county.	FCC	✓	✓	✓

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Headline Priority 4: Partnership & Engagement

Ref	Action	Delivery Partners	Priority		
			2024	2025	2026
4.1	Continue to implement and develop an effective two-way communication with the trade, other organisations, and public sector organisations. Collaborate with the Flintshire Tourism Association to encourage tourism industry use of the Business 2 Business opportunities on the Come to Wales digital platform.	DFP, FTA, FCC	✓	✓	✓
4.2	Support development of local tourism groups and building capacity (FTA, CRTG, CRFD) to enhance their status as the collective voice of the tourism industry in Flintshire.	DFP, FCC	✓	✓	✓
4.3	Support the development of community involvement in tourism. Consider the most effective approach of how we reach out to communities to develop and improve relationships for the good of tourism e.g., using the Flintshire Tourism Ambassador Course as a tool for engagement.	DFP, FCC	✓		
4.4	Encourage the industry to engage with financial and business support which is available for the sector to develop and implement decarbonisation / net zero projects.	FCC	✓	✓	✓
4.5	Continue to strengthen the North East Wales brand and marketing activity to promote our regional offer e.g. capitalise on Visit Wales' "Year of" and Wales Way campaigns to drive traffic and engagement – in partnership with Denbighshire and Wrexham Councils.	NEW, FCC, VW	✓	✓	✓

Legend:

- AONB - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management
- CC - Coleg Cambria
- CRFDG - Clwydian Range Food and Drink Group
- CRTG - Clwydian Range Tourism Group
- DFP - Destination Flintshire Partnership
- FCC - Flintshire County Council
- FTA - Flintshire Tourism Association
- NEWHF - North East Wales Heritage Forum
- NEW - North East Wales Marketing Area Partnership
- VW - Visit Wales

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