

Public Document Pack

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Prif Swyddog (Llywodraethu)



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To: Councillor Ian Roberts (Leader)

Councillors: Sean Bibby, Chris Bithell, Mared Eastwood, David Healey,
Dave Hughes, Paul Johnson, Christine Jones and Billy Mullin

15 November 2023

Dear Sir/Madam

NOTICE OF REMOTE MEETING
CABINET
TUESDAY, 21ST NOVEMBER, 2023 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.

A G E N D A

1 **APOLOGIES**

Purpose: To receive any apologies.

2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Purpose: To receive any declarations and advise Members accordingly.

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

Purpose: To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 17th October 2023.

TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING REPORTS

STRATEGIC REPORTS

4 **CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 – 2026/27** (Pages 17 - 52)

Report of Chief Executive, Corporate Finance Manager, Corporate Manager – Capital Programme & Assets - Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement

Purpose: To present the Capital Programme 2024/25 – 2026/27 for recommendation to Council.

5 **CAPITAL STRATEGY INCLUDING PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2024/25 – 2026/27** (Pages 53 - 72)

Report of Corporate Finance Manager - Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement

Purpose: To present the Capital Strategy 2024/25 – 2026/27 for recommendation to Council.

6 **WASTE STRATEGY CONSULTATION** (Pages 73 - 80)

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

Purpose: To seek approval for consultation for the authority's draft waste strategy.

OPERATIONAL REPORTS

7 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2023/24 (MONTH 6) (Pages 81 - 104)

Report of Corporate Finance Manager - Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement

Purpose: This regular monthly report provides the latest revenue budget monitoring position for 2023/24 for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account. The position is based on actual income and expenditure as at Month 6, and projects forward to year-end.

8 CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING 2023/24 (MONTH 6) (Pages 105 - 132)

Report of Corporate Finance Manager - Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement

Purpose: To present the Month 6 Capital Programme information for 2023/24.

9 COUNCIL TAX BASE FOR 2024/25 (Pages 133 - 140)

Report of Chief Officer (Governance) - Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement

Purpose: To approve the Council Tax Base for the financial year 2024/25 as part of the process of the revenue budget setting and Council Tax setting process for the new year.

10 SHARED PROSPERITY FUND (Pages 141 - 160)

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

Purpose: To provide an update on the development of the programme and the selection of projects to receive a grant award from the Flintshire SPF funding allocation.

11 **SOCIAL ENTERPRISE** (Pages 161 - 198)

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

Purpose: 1) provide an update on the Council's work to support social enterprises; 2) to respond to the Audit Wales review of social enterprise support in Wales; and 3) to present the Council's self-assessment on social enterprise support and refreshed social enterprise action plan.

12 **FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S CARBON FOOTPRINT REPORT 2022-23** (Pages 199 - 220)

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

Purpose: To provide an update on the Council's latest carbon footprint data following submission to Welsh Government.

13 **HOMELESS PRESSURES** (Pages 221 - 244)

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

Purpose: To present the proposed mitigating measures being explored with a view to reducing the budget pressure around emergency accommodation.

14 **CORPORATE DEBT POLICY – HOUSING RENT COLLECTION** (Pages 245 - 280)

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

Purpose: To approve changes to the Corporate Debt Recovery Policy to strengthen the collection of Housing Rent.

15 **ALLEVIATING FOOD POVERTY OVER THE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS** (Pages 281 - 288)

Report of Chief Executive - Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement

Purpose: To consider proposals following the Notice of Motion (NOM) presented to Council in September 2023.

16 **EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS** (Pages 289 - 290)

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

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

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

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

The public interest in withholding the information outweighs the interest in disclosing it until such time as the contract has been awarded.

17 **EXPANSION OF SPECIALIST EDUCATIONAL PROVISION** (Pages 317 - 326)

Report of Chief Officer (Education and Youth) - Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure

Purpose: To secure agreement for expansion of specialist provision.

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

The public interest in withholding the information outweighs the interest in disclosing it until such time as the contract has been awarded.

18 **AURA LEISURE AND LIBRARY SERVICES** (Pages 327 - 332)

Report of Corporate Manager – Capital Programme & Assets - Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure

Purpose: To provide an update on progress and raise matters for consideration.

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

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CABINET
17TH OCTOBER 2023

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet of Flintshire County Council held virtually via Zoom on Tuesday 17th October 2023.

PRESENT: Councillor Ian Roberts (Chair)

Councillors: Sean Bibby, Chris Bithell, Mared Eastwood, Dave Healey, Dave Hughes, Paul Johnson, Christine Jones and Billy Mullin.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Executive, Chief Officer (Governance), Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation), Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy), Chief Officer (Social Services), Finance Manager, Corporate Manager – Capital Programme and Assets, Corporate Manager, People and Organisational Development, Senior Manager, Portfolio Business Support and School Governance, Democratic Services Manager and Team Leader – Democratic Services.

OTHER MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor Bernie Attridge, Helen Brown and David Coggins Cogan.

Prior to the start of the meeting, Councillor Roberts welcomed Gill Murgatroyd to the meeting who was in attendance to observe as an independent member of the Council's Standards Committee.

60. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

61. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th September 2023 were submitted and confirmed as a correct record.

RESOLVED:

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

62. CORPORATE SELF ASSESSMENT

Councillor Mullin introduced the report and explained that Councils must produce a self-assessment report in respect of each financial year. The report must set out its conclusions on the extent to which it met the performance requirements during that year, and any actions it intended to take, or had already taken, to increase the extent to which it was meeting the performance requirements.

The self-assessment model followed a three-stage process:

- Stage One – 'desk based' analysis and evaluation
- Stage Two – opinion sourcing, consultation, and engagement

- Stage Three – final published assessment and improvement plan

The Chief Executive explained that the results of the Corporate Self-assessment identified that overall, the Council was performing well against the assessment; 3% Very Best Practice, 6% Very Best Practice / Good Evidence and 74% Good Evidence. The results of the Corporate Self-assessment also identified opportunities for improvement; 14% Evidence but Further Action Required and 2% Some Evidence but Lacking in Key Areas.

Councillor Healey welcomed the document and congratulated everybody involved in the process.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the findings of the Corporate Self-Assessment 2022/23 be accepted and approved; and
- (b) That the opportunities for improvement identified in the Corporate Self-Assessment 2022/23 be approved.

63. HOUSING STRATEGY ACTION PLAN PERFORMANCE UPDATE

Councillor Bibby introduced the report which provided an update on delivery of the Housing Strategy Delivery Plan 2019/2024 with particular emphasis on the financial year 2022/23.

The Housing Strategy had a delivery plan which set out three strategic priorities and related activity to achieve those priorities:

Priority 1: increase supply to provide the right type of homes in the right location

Priority 2: provide support to ensure people lived and remained in the right type of home

Priority 3: improve the quality and sustainability of homes

Details were provided on the progress against the action plan for the financial year 2022/23; planned development/delivery programme; progress against established measures; renewal of the housing strategy and action plan; and next steps. The next steps set out an outline framework for renewal of the strategy and the reporting timelines.

Councillor Johnson welcomed the report which clarified the level of challenge faced in the current economic climate.

The report had been submitted to Community and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee and there were no comments on the recommendations.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That comments on the Housing Strategy Action Plan 2019/24 be received; and
- (b) That the changes outlined in the report on the following be noted:
 - The PDP process and the move to an online portal
 - The removal of the 20% limitation on the budget for acquisitions
 - The alignment of standards and intervention rate for acquisitions under SHG with those from TACP

64. FLINTSHIRE HOUSING NEEDS PROSPECTUS

Councillor Bibby introduced the report and explained that Welsh Government (WG) required that each Local Authority (LA) develop a Housing Needs Prospectus to be updated on an annual basis.

The Chief Officer (Housing and Communities) reported that the current prospectus had been reviewed and an updated draft developed for approval. The format and content had not changed significantly to alter the direction of travel set out in last year's prospectus. The changes identified in the report reflected the increasing demand for social housing from the housing register and homelessness duties including significantly increased demand for temporary accommodation which was impacting on the homeless prevention team and the Councils revenue budget.

The report provided the annual update on the Council Housing Needs prospectus in order to ensure, that as part of the WG Grant framework, the LA identified their priorities for Social Housing Grant, in addition to providing a clear and concise summary of housing need and demand.

In response to a comment from Councillor Hughes, the Chief Officer (Housing and Communities) explained that further breakdowns on void management were being looked into which would provide further analysis on properties that there was little demand for.

The report had been submitted to Community and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee and there were no comments on the recommendations. A Task and Finish Group had been established and would report back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in December.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the content of the draft Flintshire Housing Need Prospectus be approved; and
- (b) That it be noted that the Local Housing Strategy 2019-2024 was due for review next year.

65. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2023/24 (MONTH 5)

Councillor Johnson introduced the report which provided Members with the first detailed overview of the budget monitoring position for the 2023/24 financial year for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account and presented the position, based on actual income and expenditure as at Month 5.

The projected year end position was as follows:

Council Fund

- An operating deficit of £3.660m (excluding the impact of the pay award which would need to be met by reserves – currently estimated as £2.727m) which was an adverse movement of £1.016m from the deficit figure reported at Month 4
- A projected contingency reserve available balance as at 31st March 2024 of £3.027m (after the estimated impact of pay awards)

Housing Revenue Account

- Net in-year revenue expenditure was forecast to be £0.006m higher than budget which was an adverse movement of £0.071m from the figure reported at Month 4
- A projected closing balance as at 31st March, 2024 of £3.191m

The economic outlook remained challenging due to inflation levels remaining high. The impacts of that, together with continued increases in service demand was becoming increasingly hard to deal with as the Councils funding failed to keep up with the scale of those pressures. To assist with managing those risks and mitigating the overall projected overspend, a moratorium through the review of non-essential spend and a vacancy management process continued.

The report went to Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee and answers to the question were provided either at the meeting or soon after.

The Finance Manager emphasised the need for services to be robust on spending freezes which were to be introduced. A workforce communication on a moratorium would be sent out to all staff.

RESOLVED:

That the report and the estimated financial impact on the 2023/24 budget be noted.

66. RENEWAL OF PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDERS – ALCOHOL AND DOG CONTROL

Councillor Bithell introduced the report and explained that Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) were an intervention to prevent individuals or groups committing anti-social behaviour in a public space. They were part of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

Active from 19th October 2017, Cabinet approved the making of a dog control

Public Space Protection Order following a period of consultation and other requirements under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. The PSPO required dog owners to:

1. Remove their dogs' waste from all public places within Flintshire
2. Have a means on their person to pick up dog waste
3. Place their dog on a lead when asked by an authorised officer, if the dog was causing a nuisance
4. Prohibit dogs from entering the playing areas of public marked sports pitches, formal recreation areas including but not exclusively bowling greens and tennis courts, fenced equipped children's play areas and all areas within school grounds
5. Keep their dog on a lead in cemeteries.

Under provisions of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Behaviour Act 2014, Flintshire's Alcohol Designated Public Place Order transitioned into a Public Space Protection Order on the same date. This order allowed Police Officers the power to ask members of the public to surrender alcohol if a member of the public was believed to be causing a nuisance in a public place. This was not a total alcohol ban in public areas, and was not applicable to licensed premises, but encouragement of sensible drinking.

Both Orders were renewed in 2020 and were now up for review and renewal or they would expire on 29th October 2023.

Any local authority that made a PSPO could extend the period for which it had effect if it was satisfied, on reasonable grounds, that doing so was necessary to prevent an occurrence or recurrence of the activities identified in the order, or an increase in the frequency or seriousness of those activities, after that time.

In addition to that, the Council had been approached by both Mold Town Council and Connah's Quay and District Angling Club to request that variations were made to the Dog Control PSPO to exclude dogs from Mold Memorial Gardens, Maes Bodlonfa, Mold and Rosie Waters, Wepre Park, Connah's Quay.

Consultation on the current prohibitions and the proposed variations took place in accordance with legal requirements for 6 weeks between June 5th and 14th July 2023. In total 881 responses were received. There was strong support to renew both PSPOs, as was detailed in the report, including the variations requested.

The Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) explained that a petition had been received in relation to the Mold memorial gardens and whilst it was acknowledged by the authority, strict processes meant that it could not be considered and the recommendation was to enforce the ban. It was important to note that the responses are outside of the consultation period which ended in July 2023. From that consultation, over 60% were in favour of banning dogs from the memorial garden in Mold. He clarified that during the consultation period the plans were online and on site too.

RESOLVED:

That the extension of Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) to cover dog control and alcohol control in Flintshire, as outlined below, be approved:

The dog control PSPO will require a person in charge of a dog to:

- I. Remove their dogs' waste from all public places within Flintshire
- II. Prohibit taking, or permitting the dog to enter or remain in
 - All areas within school grounds
 - The playing areas of formal recreational areas including but not exclusively bowling greens and tennis courts
 - Fenced footpath around The Rosie, Wepre Park, Connah's Quay as marked on the map shown as appendix 3
 - Mold Memorial Park, Maes Bodlonfa, Mold as shown as appendix 4
- III Keep their dogs on a lead within a cemetery
- IV Have appropriate means on their person, at all times, to pick up their dogs' waste from all public places in Flintshire
- V Put their dog on a lead, when directed by an authorised officer, if the dog is loose and causing a nuisance or annoyance to any other person, bird or animal

The alcohol control PSPO would impose the following prohibitions and/or requirements in public spaces in Flintshire, at all times:

- I. Any person who, without reasonable excuse, continues drinking intoxicating liquor in a public area within the Restricted Area when asked to stop by an authorised officer, commits an offence.
 - II. Any person who whilst in a public area within the Restricted Area, without reasonable excuse, fails to surrender any intoxicating liquor in their possession when asked to do so by an authorised officer, commits an offence.
 - III. An authorised officer who imposes a requirement under Article 4(a) and/or 4(b) must tell the person that failing, without reasonable excuse, to comply with the prohibition and/or requirement is an offence.
- (b) That subject to approval, the agreed Public Space Protection Orders covering dog control and alcohol control commence on 29th October 2023 following a notice period and publicity of the upcoming order.

67. DISABLED ADAPTATIONS POLICY

Councillor Bibby introduced the report and explained that the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 placed a mandatory duty on Local Authorities to provide disabled facilities grants (DFGs).

The grant was available for adapting or providing facilities for a disabled person in a dwelling. The report detailed the amendments to the policy that had been necessary to align adaptations for the private sector or with those for local authority council housing.

The statutory limit for any DFG was set by Welsh Government (WG) and was currently £36,000 per application within a five-year period. However, further applications could be made within this period if the customer's medical condition had changed. That case would then be reviewed with the Occupational Therapist upon application.

The council must ensure that any adaptation works would provide the most effective long-term solution to meet the needs of the disabled person.

Councillor Attridge, who was in attendance as an observer, declared a personal interest.

The Chief Officer (Housing and Communities) explained that the report had been considered at the Community and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee the previous month and the recommendations were supported. Questions were asked, and answered, on the availability of Occupational Therapists and land charges.

RESOLVED:

That the updated Disabled Adaptations policy which covered both private homes and council stock properties be supported and approved.

68. ELECTIONS ACT 2022 – VOTER IDENTIFICATION (VOTER ID) UPDATE

Councillor Mullin introduced the report and explained that The Elections Act 2022 made a number of changes to the elections process at UK Parliamentary and Police and Crime Commissioner elections. This did not apply to Flintshire County Council, Town and Community or Senedd elections.

Some of the changes included the requirement that voters produce an approved form of photo ID at the polling station, changes to absent voting rules, EU citizens' voting rights and 'votes for life' for overseas electors.

The report provided an update on the voter identification (ID) process and support provided to voters who did not have an acceptable form of photo ID. It also outlined work undertaken to promote Voter ID and planned communications ahead of the Police and Crime Commissioner elections scheduled for Thursday 2nd May 2024.

A discussion took place on the forms of ID that would be acceptable and the Chief Officer (Governance) said there were many, all of which were listed on the Council's website. He also said that people could apply for a postal vote or nominate a proxy voter on their behalf.

In response to a question from Councillor Bithell on informing residents, the Chief Officer explained that every household in Flintshire had been written to with the details, press releases had been issued and would continue to do so on the run up to elections.

Councillor Bibby asked what training would be provided to those staff working at the polling station. The Chief Officer explained that training to all polling station staff was provided before every election and it would be covered within that. The Council also liaised closely with North Wales Police throughout any election period.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the update on Voter ID be noted;
- (b) That the work undertaken and planned communications to promote Voter ID be supported.

69. CHANGES TO THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION

Councillor Bithell introduced the report which sought approval to delegate all matters and Council responses associated with Developments of National Significance (DNS) and Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP), to the Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy).

The changes to the Scheme of Delegation sought was outlined in the report and covered all steps in respect of both types of applications.

Examples of both types of projects were given by the Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the proposed changes to the Scheme of Delegation as set out in the report be endorsed; and
- (b) That the proposed changes to be actioned under Delegated Powers to the Leader of the Council as set out in the appendix to the report be endorsed.

70. EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS

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

Streetscene and Transportation

- **The Flintshire County Council (Cymau Road, Abermorddu; Blackbrook, Sychdyn; Crecas Lane, Ffordd Y Faenol Fach, Grange Lane and Ddreiniog Road, Carmel; Mountain Road, Cilcain; Bryn Yorlin Lane and Ffordd Las, Cymau; Duckers Lane, Mancot; Ffordd Y Gilrhos, Treuddyn; Ffordd Penrallt, Gwaenysgor; Cae Rhug Lane, Gwernaffield; Kelsterton Lane, Kelsterton; B5121, Parc Capel, Ffordd Gledlom, Unnamed Road, Unnamed Road, Ffordd Y Graig and Unnamed Road, Lixwm; Ffordd Llanfynydd, Llanfynydd; Ffordd Y Pentre, Ffordd Y Bryn and Henffordd, Nercwys; Penyfron Road, Pantymwyn; Brynford Road, Pentre Halkyn,**

High Street, Trelawnyd; Unnamed Road, Trelogan; Well Street, Buckley; and Wood Lane, Broughton) (20mph Speed Limit) Order 202x

To advise Members of the objections received following the advertisement of the 20mph speed limit on the roads listed above.

- **The Flintshire County Council (Various Roads Within Flintshire) (30mph Speed Limit) Order 202-**
To advise Members of the objections received following the advertisement of the above.
- **The Flintshire County Council (Drury New Road, Drury Lane, Bannel Lane and Padeswood Road South, Buckley) and (Station Road, Talacre)**
To advise Members of the objections received following the advertisement of the 40mph and 50mph speed limits on the roads as listed above.

Housing and Assets

- **Community Asset Transfer**
The report relates to the Community Asset Transfer of Connah's Quay Community Garden, Off Mill Lane, Connah's Quay, CH5 4HA.
- **Community Asset Transfer**
The report relates to the Community Asset Transfer of Connah's Quay Cricket Club, Central Park, Connah's Quay, CH5 4DZ.
- **Community Asset Transfer**
The report relates to the Community Asset Transfer of Ffynonngroyw Community Centre, Main Road, Ffynonngroyw, Flintshire, CH9 9SN.

NEWydd Catering and Cleaning

- **School Meal Price Increase**
Increases the price of meals within schools to continue to provide a quality service in line with sharply increasing costs, particularly those associated with both food and labour.

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

RESOLVED:

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

71. CHILDCARE AND EARLY YEARS CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022-2025

Councillor Jones introduced the report which outlined the proposed projects for phase 2 of the Childcare and Early Years capital programme. The projects within the

programme had been prioritised using Childcare Sufficiency Assessments and Welsh Government funding criteria.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed Childcare and Early Years capital (phase 2) programme and subsequent Business Justification Case submission to Welsh Government for capital funding be approved.

72. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

There were no members of the public in attendance.

(The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. and ended at 11.31 a.m.)

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Chair



CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 21 st November 2023
Report Subject	Capital Programme 2024/25 – 2026/27
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement
Report Author	Chief Executive Corporate Manager – Capital Programme and Assets Corporate Finance Manager
Report Type	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the proposed Capital Programme for the period 2024/25 – 2026/27 for recommendation to Council.

The Council's Capital Programme covers investment in assets for the long term to enable the delivery of high quality and value for money public services. Assets include buildings (such as schools and care homes), infrastructure (such as highways and ICT networks) and assets not owned by the Council (such as works to improve and adapt private sector homes). The proposed capital investments outlined within this report are closely aligned to portfolio service business plans and the Council Plan.

The Council has limited capital resources from Welsh Government to support Council priorities, needs and liabilities. However, it has the powers to fund capital schemes by borrowing - this is temporary and ultimately, the cost and repayment of any borrowing is charged to the Council's revenue budget. Schemes funded by borrowing are carefully considered due to the long-term impacts on the Council's revenue budget.

The report divides the Council Fund Capital Programme into three sections: -

1. Statutory / Regulatory - allocations to cover regulatory and statutory works.
2. Retained Assets - allocations to fund infrastructure works necessary to ensure service and business continuity.

3. Investment - allocations to fund works necessary to remodel services to deliver efficiencies outlined in portfolio business plans and invest in services as outlined in the Council Plan.

Historically, much of the Council's programme has been funded from capital receipts and grants. The Council's ability to generate significant capital receipts is challenging as the assets the Council has available for disposal diminish. Wherever possible every opportunity to identify assets for sale and other sources of funding such as specific grants and revenue contributions will be explored. However, the Council will need to use prudential borrowing to finance more of the programme going forward. In particular, the Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B programme, and other schemes included within the investment programme will need to be funded through prudential borrowing.

The Capital Strategy has been updated and is presented separately on the agenda.

The information in this report refers to the Council Fund (CF) programme only, not the housing programme which is funded from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and which is reported separately.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	To approve the allocations and schemes in Table 3 (paragraph 1.09) for the Statutory/Regulatory and Retained Assets sections of the Council Fund Capital Programme 2024/25 - 2026/27.
2	To approve the schemes included in Table 4 (paragraph 1.32) for the Investment section of the Council Fund Capital Programme 2024/25 - 2026/27.
3	To note that the shortfall in funding of schemes in 2024/25 and 2025/26 in Table 5 (paragraph 1.37) at this point in the approval process allows flexibility. Options including a combination of future capital receipts, alternative grants (if available), prudential borrowing or the re-phasing of schemes will be considered during 2024/25 and included in future Capital Programme reports.
4	To consider and approve the schemes included in Table 6 (paragraph 1.41) for the specifically funded section of the Council Fund Capital Programme which will be funded in part through borrowing.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 – 2026/27
1.01	<p>The Council’s Capital Programme encompasses investing significant resources in assets for the long term to enable the delivery of high quality, value for money public services. Assets include buildings (such as schools and care homes), infrastructure (such as highways and ICT networks), and assets not owned by the Council (such as works to improve and adapt private sector homes). The proposed capital investments outlined within this report are closely aligned to portfolio service business plans and the Council Plan.</p> <p>The Council has limited capital resources from Welsh Government (WG) to support Council priorities, needs and liabilities; however, it has the powers to fund capital schemes by borrowing, but this is temporary and ultimately the cost and repayment of any borrowing is charged to the Council’s revenue budget. Schemes funded by borrowing are carefully considered due to the long-term impacts on the Council’s revenue budget.</p> <p>The first half of this report covers parts of the Capital Programme where the Council invests in local infrastructure, facilities and assets, which will be funded from general capital resources (General Capital Grant, Unhypothecated Supported Borrowing and Capital Receipts). Regional programmes such as the Growth Deal for North Wales which will draw on national funds, and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme, which is separate and includes the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) work programme and Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme (SHARP), supplement the Council funded Capital Programme.</p> <p>The second half of the report covers parts of the Capital Programme which includes specific grants as far as information is available at the time of writing and borrowing. This includes the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme, delivered in partnership between the Council and WG.</p>
1.02	<p>General Capital Programme 2023/24 – 2025/26 Update</p> <p>The Council’s Capital Strategy divides the Capital Programme into three parts as follows.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Statutory / Regulatory section – to cover regulatory and statutory works. Examples include providing support to improve and adapt private sector homes (Disabled Facilities Grants), adaptations to schools for children with disabilities and any works required to keep buildings open by meeting Health and Safety requirements.2. Retained Assets section – to ensure service and business continuity. This includes schemes that enhance and improve retained assets and infrastructure to deliver services and meets significant need identified by service plans or through condition surveys etc.

3. **Investment section** – to fund costs incurred when remodelling and investing in services. This includes new schemes arising from portfolio business plans, the Council Plan, other relevant and emerging plans, and other strategies or emerging Council priorities approved through a selection process based on the provision of a business case.

1.03 Table 1 below summarises the updated Council funded Capital Programme for 2023/24 – 2025/26 as reported at Month 6 2023/24:

Table 1

ESTIMATED FUNDING 2023/24 - 2025/26				
	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Funding				
Un-hypothecated Supported Borrowing (USB) ¹	4.025	4.025	4.025	12.075
General Capital Grant (GCG) ¹	4.134	4.134	4.134	12.402
Capital Receipts Available	0.694	0.000	0.000	0.694
Surplus B/Fwd from 2022/23	4.139	0.000	0.000	4.139
Total Funding	12.992	8.159	8.159	29.310
Expenditure				
Total Capital Programme 2023/24 - 2025/26	10.065	8.951	8.298	27.314
	10.065	8.951	8.298	27.314
Surplus / (Shortfall)	2.927	(0.792)	(0.139)	1.996
¹ As per 2023/24 Final Settlement				

1.04 Table 1 shows the current position of the Capital Programme 2023/24 – 2025/26 as reported at Month 6 to Cabinet and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee, an overall surplus in funding of £1.996m, with a surplus in 2023/24 of £2.927m.

When the budget was set in January 2023, there was a shortfall in funding of schemes in 2024/25 and 2025/26 and surplus in 2023/24. At that point in the approval process the position was kept flexible and this was explained in the report to Council at that time. Options included a combination of future capital receipts, alternative grants, prudential borrowing or scheme phasing over several years which would be considered during 2023/24.

1.05 Given the current position in setting the Capital Programme for the next three years 2024/25 – 2026/27, careful consideration has been given to new schemes proposed for inclusion.

1.06

Projected General Funding Available 2024/25 - 2026/27

Table 2 below shows the general capital funding currently projected to be available to fund the Capital Programme over the next three years (2024/25 - 2026/27).

Table 2

ESTIMATED AVAILABLE FUNDING 2024/25 - 2026/27				
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Funding (Excluding Specific Funding)				
Un-hypothecated Supported Borrowing (USB) ¹	4.025	4.025	4.025	12.075
General Capital Grant (GCG) ¹	4.134	4.134	4.134	12.402
Surplus B/Fwd from 2023/24	2.927	0.000	0.000	2.927
Total	11.086	8.159	8.159	27.404
¹ As per 2023/24 Settlement				

1.07

Table 2 assumes that the Un-hypothecated Supported Borrowing allocation and the General Capital Grant received from WG in the years 2024/25 to 2026/27 remains as indicated in the 2023/24 final Financial Settlement for Welsh local government. The 2024/25 Provisional Settlement for Welsh local government announcement has been provisionally set for the 20th December 2023.

1.08

The figures in Table 2 relate to the Council Fund (CF) only, with the HRA Capital Programme being reported separately.

General Capital Programme 2024/25 – 2026/27

1.09

Statutory / Regulatory and Retained Asset Allocations – 2024/25 – 2026/27

Table 3 shows the proposed allocations for the period 2024/25 - 2026/27 for the Statutory / Regulatory and Retained Asset sections of the Capital Programme.

Table 3

PROPOSED ALLOCATIONS 2024/25 - 2026/27				
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Statutory / Regulatory Section				
Equalities Act - Individual pupils	0.500	0.500	0.500	1.500
Disabled Facilities Grants	1.500	1.500	1.500	4.500
Private Sector Housing Renewal	0.040	0.040	0.040	0.120
School building works	0.500	0.500	0.500	1.500
Corporate property works	0.300	0.300	0.300	0.900
School safeguarding works	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.300
Target Hardening	0.030	0.030	0.030	0.090
Total Statutory / Regulatory	2.970	2.970	2.970	8.910
Retained Assets Section				
School building works	1.000	1.000	1.000	3.000
Corporate property works	0.300	0.300	0.300	0.900
Highways Asset Management Plan	1.980	1.500	1.500	4.980
Play areas	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.600
Datacentre Relocation	1.892	0.000	0.000	1.892
ICT - Equipment at Datacentres	0.046	0.000	0.079	0.125
ICT - Server Technology Replacements	0.323	0.264	0.124	0.711
ICT - Laptop / PC Replacements	0.092	0.268	0.134	0.494
ICT - Storage Technology Replacement	0.000	0.850	0.031	0.881
ICT - Cyber Security	0.000	0.066	0.133	0.199
Schools WiFi and Networking Infrastructure	0.000	1.020	0.000	1.020
Base Provision for Leisure and Libraries Estate	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.600
Hawarden Cemetery Extension and Development	0.300	0.000	0.000	0.300
Buckley Cemetery Extension	0.190	0.000	0.000	0.190
Demolition of redundant units Greenfield Business Park 'Headroom'	0.200	0.000	0.000	0.200
	0.350	0.350	0.350	1.050
Total Retained Assets Section	7.073	6.018	4.051	17.142

1.10 The information in Table 3 in relation to the new and previously approved schemes is explained in more detail in paragraphs 1.11 to 1.31 below.

1.11 Equalities Act – Individual pupils

An annual allocation to adapt and modify schools for children who have disabilities to support and create increasingly inclusive school environments. These works help the Council to meet its obligations under disability legislation, and reduce the potential costs and disruption associated with transporting pupils to alternative sites.

No changes are proposed for 2024/25 to 2026/27.

1.12	<p><u>Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG)</u></p> <p>An annual allocation to improve and adapt private sector homes comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled Facilities Grants – adaptations enabling residents to continue to live independently in their own homes • Partnership working with Care and Repair to support vulnerable residents <p>Reduction of £0.160m per annum are proposed for 2024/25 to 2026/27.</p>
1.13	<p><u>Private Sector Housing Renewal</u></p> <p>An annual allocation for private sector housing renewal and improvement loan management and administration. This had previously been reported under the DFG section before the services were disaggregated across portfolios.</p> <p>No changes are proposed for 2024/25 to 2026/27.</p>
1.14	<p><u>School building works</u></p> <p>An annual allocation to fund the most urgent property works required at schools split across the regulatory / statutory and retained assets sections of the Capital Programme.</p> <p>A programme of toilet upgrades in both primary and secondary schools to ensure compliance with Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 and Department for Education and Skills document "Toilets in Schools". There is currently a backlog of such works estimated to be in the region of £1.5m which is often reflected as a Health and Safety issue in Estyn inspections of schools, £0.100m per annum. When building new schools or extending current ones, the Council takes the approach to upgrade to the current standards at that time.</p> <p>Works to upgrade ventilation systems at school kitchens which are failing building regulations and gas safety legislation and are at risk of closure, £0.200m per annum.</p> <p>Fire Inspection Works at schools which are the responsibility of the Local Authority and have been identified during statutory fire risk assessments, £0.200m per annum.</p> <p>No changes are proposed for 2024/25 to 2026/27.</p>
1.15	<p><u>Corporate property works</u></p> <p>An annual allocation to fund the most urgent property works required at non-school premises split across the regulatory / statutory and retained assets sections of the Capital Programme, including managing risks from legionella, fire safety, asbestos, accessibility and health and safety.</p>

	No changes are proposed for 2024/25 to 2026/27.
1.16	<p><u>School safeguarding works</u></p> <p>There is a requirement to carry out works/adaptations at schools, to address safeguarding concerns raised about access at main entrances and site. These works are required to ensure both children and adults can attend schools in a safe and secure environment.</p> <p>No changes are proposed for 2024/25 to 2026/27.</p>
1.17	<p><u>Target Hardening</u></p> <p>The target hardening budget requires replenishment over the next three year period to prevent unauthorised use of land or buildings within the County.</p> <p>No changes are proposed for 2024/25 to 2026/27.</p>
1.18	<p><u>Highways Asset Management Plan (HAMP)</u></p> <p>An annual allocation of £1.5m to fund the HAMP which includes resurfacing of the classified Highway Network, replacement programme for street lighting columns and structural maintenance, with £0.100m to be top sliced for 'streetscape' improvements.</p> <p>Whilst the Council has a statutory duty to maintain the Highways Network in a safe condition for travel, how the Council does this is not defined. WG set targets for road condition indices and invested a significant amount of grant funding in the network, however this funding ceased after the 2021/22 financial year. The condition of the highway network will naturally continue to deteriorate each year and without sufficient annual investment the overall condition of the network will decline.</p> <p>See paragraph 1.53 for more detail in regard to the position on the potential development of the HAMP.</p> <p>One off increase proposed in 2024/25 and no changes for 2025/26 to 2026/27.</p>
1.19	<p><u>Play areas</u></p> <p>An annual allocation of £0.200m to fund the most urgent requirements to replace play equipment that has reached the end of its useful life at play areas, as well as upgrades to play areas. This will be delivered by Aura as the Council's management partner.</p> <p>No changes are proposed for 2024/25 to 2026/27.</p>
1.20	<p><u>Datacentre Relocation</u></p> <p>Previously, £0.510m had been approved in the 2020/21 (£0.120m) and 2022/23 (£0.390m) programme for 2024/25, relating to the replacement</p>

	<p>networking technologies solutions and uninterruptable power supplies within the current datacentre at County Hall. This was to replace outdated systems with the technologies required to deliver effective datacentres and improve connection to end users devices.</p> <p>Following this allocation, higher than expected increases in inflation and changes by the manufacturer has led to an additional request of £0.413m, resulting in a total requirement of £0.923m.</p> <p>Equipment at the current datacentre is at end of support in February 2025. If these works are completed at the current site, the equipment cannot be moved once installed. Alternatively, the datacentre can be relocated to Ty Dewi Sant in 2024/25, with the funding discussed above being used to mitigate some of the relocation costs.</p> <p>The current equipment in County Hall will be used whilst the new datacentre is completed. Once operational, the old datacentre will be decommissioned. This would release a significant site constraint in the redevelopment of the County Hall Campus.</p>
1.21	<p><u>ICT - Equipment at Datacentres</u></p> <p>Previously approved was the upgrade to the Council’s telephone solution in 2024/25 costing £0.046m.</p> <p>New bids include the replacement of networking technologies to provide segregation of online systems from internal systems, £0.045m and networking technologies at remote sites replacements, £0.034m. Both are required in 2026/27.</p>
1.22	<p><u>ICT - Server Technologies (Business Systems and SQL Servers)</u></p> <p>In 2024/25 and 2025/26 the server infrastructures currently used to deliver business systems through Citrix, will come to the end of their useable life and could lead to a degradation of service if not replaced, at a cost of £0.253m and £0.264m. This has previously been approved along with £0.070m in 2024/25, for the replacement of servers used to support business systems that utilise SQL as a database technology.</p> <p>A further bid has been received for replacement servers infrastructure that will come to the end of its useful life in 2026/27, at a cost of £0.124m.</p>
1.23	<p><u>ICT - Laptop / PC Replacements</u></p> <p>The project will deliver a programme of device replacement based on the “just in time” principle of replacement to ensure the Council maximises the useable life of its laptop assets. It will ensure that the devices used by members of staff are fit for purpose and can deliver the required level of service, and can support the latest operating systems and security software.</p> <p>The absence of a replacement budget for replacement devices will result in devices that perform poorly and will not be able to accommodate the</p>

	<p>operating system and security software require to ensure the required level of performance. The inability to operate up to date security software poses a significant cyber security risk.</p> <p>Capital funding is required over a three year programme.</p>
1.24	<p><u>ICT - Storage Technology Replacement</u></p> <p>The Council uses storage technologies that allow the allocation of storage to systems as and when they need it. It prevents unused storage sitting against systems and is the most efficient and cost-effective way of allocating storage against all systems used by the Council, from business applications to the general file share.</p> <p>The Councils corporate storage technology requires replacing in 2025/26 at a cost of £0.850m. The storage system specifically allocated to the Council's Graphic Designers will cost £0.031m and would require replacement in 2026/27.</p>
1.25	<p><u>ICT – Cyber Security</u></p> <p>£0.066m has previously been approved in the programme in 2025/26 for the replacement of firewall and email scanning technologies.</p> <p>A new bid included is for the Council's main firewalls which are the main and first line of defence from cyber-attack. This ensures the Council's technology is up to date and current, in order to provide the required level of protection. This is needed in 2026/27 at a cost £0.133m.</p>
1.26	<p><u>Schools WiFi and Networking Infrastructure</u></p> <p>Flintshire, along with all other authorities in Wales were awarded a significant amount of money to replace old and outdated networking infrastructures within all school by WG. This has provided the schools with a sound digital platform to deliver the curriculum for a number of years. The school infrastructures formed part of the Hwb programme (WG programme) and subsequent funding has been directed towards end users devices.</p> <p>A condition of the grant was that Local Authorities put in place sustainability plans to fund replacement infrastructures when they need replacement.</p> <p>The current networking and wireless equipment is two years old, and the wireless equipment will have reached the end of its usable life in 2025/26.</p> <p>The networking equipment replacement is expected in 2027/28, which is anticipated to cost £1.4m.</p> <p>No change is proposed for 2025/26.</p>

1.27	<p><u>Base Provision for Leisure and Libraries Estate</u></p> <p>An annual allocation to fund the most urgent property works required across the Leisure and Libraries estate. The Council recognises its landlord responsibilities, it has retained ownership of all buildings from which Aura, its strategic Leisure and Libraries partner, delivers its business plan and operates these facilities in accordance with the service contract.</p> <p>No changes are proposed for 2024/25 to 2026/27.</p>
1.28	<p><u>Hawarden Cemetery Extension and Development</u></p> <p>Following the initial allocation of funding in a previous programme to purchase a newly identified site, funding is required to implement the necessary interment infrastructure which will include Burial plots, Cremation plots, Columbaria, Natural burial area, garden of remembrance and garden for the scattering of ashes.</p> <p>The development will provide in excess of 100 years burial capacity in Hawarden as well as enabling the Council to develop alternative burial and cremation provision in the future such as Resomation and Cremation. This will require the relevant permissions granted by UK Government and the construction of the required infrastructure will be subject to a further funding request outside of this application.</p> <p>Development of such alternatives will have the potential to bring the burial trend in Flintshire, in line with the rest of the UK.</p> <p>New scheme included in 2024/25.</p>
1.29	<p><u>Buckley Cemetery Extension</u></p> <p>The existing cemetery will reach capacity within four years, or sooner depending upon burial rates. Unfortunately, there is no option for extension.</p> <p>There is an area of low-lying land within the existing cemetery that has yet to be utilised for burials, however, ground investigations have determined that a shallow water table exists in this area making it both unsuitable and dangerous for grave excavation due to the levels of saturation.</p> <p>Following engagement with specialists in burial solutions, the proposal is to install burial chambers and develop infrastructure to support the installation. The proposed utilisation of unsuitable land at Buckley Cemetery for further burials will ensure that burial provision for local residents in those areas continues for at least the next 15 to 20 years.</p> <p>Use of burial chambers at the site would be a first for Flintshire. All other graves are earth graves apart from those faiths who require or request a bricked vault for burial. The use of chambers would be a significant change from the normal practice, however, there are no faith implications associated with their use.</p> <p>New scheme included in 2024/25.</p>

1.30	<p><u>Demolition of redundant business units Greenfield Business Park</u></p> <p>There are three units on this site which have fallen into disrepair and are no longer lettable or economic to repair. They are creating a nuisance for neighbouring businesses on the Business Park and cost the Council upwards of £0.040m each year in business rates and to maintain and keep secure from vandalism. It is proposed to demolish all three units to leave clear platforms for future development, through land sale or Council development. This is the first phase of planned regeneration on the Business Park.</p> <p>This proposal would pay back in five years and would make the land available for future developments discussed in paragraph 1.58, providing a revenue stream to the Council.</p>
1.31	<p><u>Funding ‘Headroom’</u></p> <p>‘Headroom’ has been built into the Capital Programme to enable the programme to be more flexible so that funding can be allocated to small schemes as they present in year either as a result of opportunities or unforeseen circumstances (£0.350m per annum). An example would be the need to complete further highways works as a result of an exceptionally severe winter over and above any planned works funded from the annual allocation.</p> <p>No changes are proposed for 2024/25 to 2026/27.</p>
1.32	<p>Investment Section of the Capital Programme 2024/25 – 2026/27</p> <p>Table 4 below shows the proposed schemes for the period 2024/25 - 2026/27 for the Investment section of the Capital Programme. Details are provided in paragraphs 1.33 to 1.36.</p>

Table 4

PROPOSED INVESTMENT SCHEMES 2024/25 - 2026/27				
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Investment Section				
<u>Previously Approved</u>				
Joint Archive Facility, FCC and DCC	0.000	0.019	2.618	2.637
Croes Atti Residential Care Home	4.800	0.000	0.000	4.800
	4.800	0.019	2.618	7.437
<u>New Schemes for Approval</u>				
Re:Fit Framework	1.000	0.500	0.000	1.500
Development of Children's Residential Care	0.000	0.600	0.400	1.000
	1.000	1.100	0.400	2.500
Total Investment Section	5.800	1.119	3.018	9.937

1.33

Joint Archive Facility, Flintshire and Denbighshire Councils

This scheme recognises and responds to the need and demand of the two Councils' archive services. Both services occupy old buildings, unfit for purpose. They lack suitable public spaces and appropriate storage, are too full to accept new collections and are listed buildings lacking scope for adaptation, requiring expensive maintenance. The proposal is to construct a new building adjacent to Theatr Clwyd, Mold, to house both the physical archives and the new service operations.

The funding application for Heritage Horizon Award was unsuccessful, and the project board had sought alternative grant funding from the National Lottery Fund Wales, however this was at a significantly reduced funding level.

Further work was undertaken to develop a scaled back scheme, which still delivers against the business case for both authorities, and a funding application was submitted to National Lottery Fund Wales in November 2021. The application was regrettably withdrawn in March 2022, when it became clear that the temporary facility for the theatre, would not have vacated the proposed archive site in sufficient time to manage the project timescales.

After this setback, both Councils reviewed the project in January 2023, and whilst Cabinet endorsed the project, Denbighshire County Council's (DCC) Cabinet requested that feasibility work be carried out on vacant land and underutilised buildings that it owns in Denbighshire, as an alternative to Ruthin Gaol for a DCC archive, prior to considering any out of County investment proposal for a joint archive facility.

Given the delays, the site adjacent to Theatr Clwyd will now be available in sufficient time, and the programme and costs were reviewed in June 2023, with a view to a further National Lottery Fund Wales funding application in November 2023. The delays have caused the overall project cost to increase due to construction inflation, but this year NLHF raised the maximum value of the grant funding available for individual projects. Further to discussion with NLHF and the Project Board, the grant application to be made for this scheme will now be £7m, as opposed to the £5m of the last grant application.

The need for the project remains. DCC's Cabinet will consider the preferred option for a joint archive proposal on the site adjacent to Theatr Clwyd in October 2023, after which an update will be provided to the Council.

Direct Costs:

- Estimated funding available for the project is £12.5m, with £7.4m from grant funding, £3.079m from FCC and £2.052m from DCC. £0.442m included in a previous programme, which included core funding of £0.197m.
- It has been assumed that borrowing will be required to fund this project. The estimated revenue costs associated with borrowing £2.882m over 50 years totals £9.797m. In year 1 revenue debt costs are estimated to be £0.172m, rising to £0.228m in year 50, with an average of £0.196m over 50 years.

Direct Benefits:

- Sustainable and improved archive service for Denbighshire and Flintshire via the creation of a single shared service.
- The construction of a new purpose built environmentally friendly building adjacent to Theatr Clwyd, Mold, to house both the physical archives and the new service operations. Provide a sustainable archive repository for the region for the foreseeable future from the perspective of storage space and building maintenance and management.
- The overall revenue impact is an estimated saving of £11,647 per annum once the new building is open, with a potential further revenue saving once the joint service is running.

Indirect Benefits:

- Share knowledge and skills between the workforce of both Councils
- Sphere of health, education and wellbeing (connectivity, involvement, identity) can be achieved.
- The transferrable skills of our volunteers will develop will contribute to increasing their employability.
- Deliver the long-term development of a resilient, relevant service: inspiring communities in North East Wales and enacting the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act; securing historic collections, diversifying audiences, volunteers and depositors.
- Cost avoidance of £10,000 per annum additional revenue storage costs, and in excess of £0.718m to address the need for

	<p>environmental management equipment, compliant storage areas and upgrading public facilities and access.</p>
<p>1.34</p>	<p><u>Croes Atti Residential Care Home</u></p> <p>The care sector in Flintshire is working within an increasingly challenging environment as a result of a range of factors, including the complexity of need, an ageing population, rising costs, increasing expectations and regulation and difficulties with recruitment and retention of high-quality staff. As a result of these pressures there is limited resilience and Flintshire is particularly challenged, with only a small number of independent providers who are part of a reducing and fragile market. As a Council, we are taking a positive approach to rebalancing the care home provision, taking a lead as a local authority to develop care homes that value older people and provide good quality support that would place the Council in a good position for the future.</p> <p>Croes Atti is a single storey 31 bed care home purpose built for older people, which was refurbished in 2005. The 31 bedrooms are small and less than 12 square metres which makes it increasingly difficult to support people with complex physical care needs and there are only three bedrooms with an en-suite facility. The living and day time spaces are well used and whilst we have a number of assisted bathing / shower rooms, they are not all DDA complaint. The existing accommodation does not meet new RISCA regulations in relation to bedrooms and living space and any capital investing into refurbishment or new build must take into account of the new regulatory requirements. The care home is popular locally, is always at capacity and often with a waiting list for support. The home is regulated by the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and achieves good inspection reports.</p> <p>The Council was awarded ICF grant, to fund feasibility works for a potential new build which will increase capacity for a further 25 placements. The design and development work has now concluded, and the Council have been provided with a final costs from the scheme contractor to consider prior to entering into a contract to move ahead with construction of the facility; this is subject to WG funding approval being released into the scheme.</p> <p>Current construction costs for the scheme are £17.3m. Construction is set to begin in October 2023 with a view to complete in March 2025.</p> <p>The service has submitted grant bids applications to WG for the construction stage of the project totalling £11.3m, with the Council awaiting the outcome of the bids. If successful the Councils contribution would be £6.050m, resulting in an intervention rate of 35%.</p> <p>Should the project not go ahead then the Council's design and development cost of £1m cannot be capitalised and would be a charge to the Council's revenue account.</p>

Direct Costs:

- Capital investment required is £6.050m. £1.250m included in the previous year's programme. It has been assumed that £3.5m of borrowing will be required to fund part of the Councils contribution. The estimated revenue costs associated with borrowing this over 50 years totals £11.9m. In year 1 revenue debt costs are estimated to be £0.209m, rising to £0.277m in year 50, with an average of £0.238m over 50 years.
- Social Services colleagues, in close partnership with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB), are currently developing the model of care that will be delivered on site upon completion. The expected annual revenue cost for this is £1.521m, with BCUHB providing a revenue contribution of at minimum £0.200m per annum. This will support the operation of the building and ensure that appropriate health capacity is available to the building to manage the pull-on resources, facilitating residents wellbeing and recovery. This will result in a net annual revenue cost of £1.321m which is built into the MTFS. However, this is expected to mitigate the cost of increasing out of county provision and reduce the reliance on external providers.

Direct Benefits:

- Additional provision of residential care placements and through release of placements in other locations across Flintshire currently using step-up/step-down beds
- Additional provision of short term beds in a community setting to allow for more appropriate assessment of need for individual and as a viable alternative to a hospital admission/delayed discharge
- Purpose built accommodation and bespoke service provision to maximise independence and support reablement
- Increase in placements for citizens living in the west of Flintshire to link to acute service provision, supporting greater choice and ability to be in a location of their choosing

Indirect Benefits:

- Integrated provision of multi-professional support needed to reduce organisational boundaries and improve outcomes for individuals
- Discharge to Reable and Assess ethos and environment to support improved longer term planning within an enabling environment
- Free up bed space within independent sector care homes, where existing fragilities and lack of capacity are a significant factor and ongoing risk
- At a population level, the equivalent number of beds are available within the care sector to promote choice when long term care is the most appropriate option
- Reduction in risks associated with long term hospital stay
- Potential avoidance of people entering into long term care where this may be unnecessary
- The building will be built to achieve Net Zero Carbon in operation

1.35	<p><u>Re:Fit Framework</u></p> <p>The Re:fit framework is part of Local Partnerships - a joint venture between the Local Government Association, HM Treasury and WG. The partnership works solely for the benefit of the public sector and bring public and private sector experience that provides confidence, capacity, and capability, helping councils achieve and maintain financial resilience.</p> <p>The framework provides a guaranteed 100% of the energy saving or generation (kWh) via a contractual agreement for the payback period of the project. This key feature is helping to remove risk of failure with new developments, plus protecting the client and their investment.</p> <p>Re:fit uses a competitively tendered and OJEU-compliant framework which can be utilised by any public sector organisation in England and Wales and covers the retrofit of buildings and assets to save energy and carbon. This includes a large range of technologies and measures such as: heat networks, lighting and controls, BMS controls, heat recovery, solar thermal, heat pumps, solar PV, insulation, draught proofing, street lighting, etc.</p> <p>Re:fit would also aid in addressing capacity issues, as officers can only procure and implement a given number of projects per year. Through Re:fit, an energy services company (ESCO) is appointed in order to review the built estate, identify energy and carbon saving opportunities and implement on a wider scale than would likely be possible 'in-house'.</p> <p>Direct Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital investment required is £1.5m. Based on preliminary data potential savings have been calculated at £0.230m per annum, with an estimated payback period of 7 years. Following this, savings generated will benefit the Council's revenue budgets. <p>Direct Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow the Council to accelerate the push towards achieving NZC by 2030 • Provide external support and expertise, supplementing and expanding the works that the Council are currently undertaking • Achieve potential annual CO2 savings of 892 tonnes • Meeting the priorities and objectives set within the Council Plan under 'Green Society and Environment' theme • Contributing towards the achievement of WG targets and obligations under the Climate Change Act, Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and Environment Act • Implementing this project will provide mitigation against future utility price increases
1.36	<p><u>Development of Children's Residential Care</u></p> <p>There is a need to expand our in-house residential care for children. There is a statutory duty to ensure that we have sufficient registered placements to meet the placement needs of looked after children. Traditionally we have commissioned 'out of county' placements for looked after children</p>

requiring residential care. However, WG's strategy to 'eliminate profit' from the children's residential care market is likely to lead to a reduction in placement availability and requires local authorities to proactively expand in-house provision at pace to avoid us having to set up services that operate without registration and risk prosecution against the local authority.

WG's strategy is to rebalance the market so that the duties on local authorities in relation to looked after children are not contracted out to for-profit companies and remain with public sector or not-for-profit providers. Under the strategy new legislation will require:

- independent providers to demonstrate a not-for-profit status, based on a new pre-defined definition of non-profit, by 1 April 2026
- any current "for profit" providers will need to transition to, and register with Care Inspectorate Wales, as not-for-profit by 1 April 2027

If we do not have sufficient placements, we will breach our duty to secure sufficient accommodation for looked after children (Section 75) and increase the risk of needing to set up bespoke unregistered services to support looked after children.

The out of county placement revenue budgets continue to have significant pressures, with ongoing high demand for placements where children and young people cannot be supported within in-house provision. Market supply limitation factors and inflationary pressures are leading to higher costs, with current in year projected overspends of £1.078m. Services continue to do everything to manage these risks, with this development of in-house provision helping to mitigate against these pressures.

Direct Costs:

- Capital funding required is £1m, split over two financial years. It has been assumed that borrowing will be required to fund this project. The estimated revenue costs associated with borrowing £1m over 50 years totals £3.4m. In year 1 revenue debt costs are estimated to be £0.060m, rising to £0.079m in year 50, with an average of £0.068m over 50 years.
- WG have allocated £0.561m for 2024/25 to support their strategic intent. This money can contribute to the initial phase in the design, consultancy, and support of developments in the financial year.

Direct Benefits:

- The cost of residential care is escalating and likely to continue as market demand outstrips placement sufficiency. In-house services enable the authority to better control the cost of provision
- The expansion of residential care will help ensure sufficiency of safe, high quality, supportive placements that support looked after children to develop the skills and resilience to lead fulfilled lives
- Placing our looked after children locally will provide increased opportunity for children to maintain local links with appropriate friends, family and support networks as well as the opportunity to maintain local education provision

- Aligns to WG's not for profit agenda
- Demonstrate that we have met our duty to ensure market sufficiency enable us to meet the current placement needs of our looked after children

Indirect Benefits:

- Reduced travel costs and time with children placed locally

1.37

Summary (Generally funded) Capital Programme 2024/25 – 2026/27

Table 5 below summarises the generally funded Capital Programme and available funding.

Table 5

SUMMARY (GENERALLY FUNDED) CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 - 2026/27				
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Statutory / Regulatory Section	2.970	2.970	2.970	8.910
Retained Assets Section	7.073	6.018	4.051	17.142
Investment Section	5.800	1.119	3.018	9.937
Total (All Sections)	15.843	10.107	10.039	35.989
Estimated available general funding ¹	11.086	8.159	8.159	27.404
Total	11.086	8.159	8.159	27.404
Surplus / (Shortfall) - no borrowing	(4.757)	(1.948)	(1.880)	(8.585)
Schemes requiring funding by borrowing:				
Joint Archive Facility, FCC and DCC	0.000	0.019	2.618	2.637
Croes Atti Residential Care Home	3.500	0.000	0.000	3.500
Re:Fit Framework	1.000	0.500	0.000	1.500
Development of Children's Residential Care	0.000	0.600	0.400	1.000
Total	4.500	1.119	3.018	8.637
Surplus / (Shortfall) - with borrowing	(0.257)	(0.829)	1.138	0.052

¹ As per 2023/24 Settlement

1.38

Table 5 shows that before any prudential borrowing is considered there is an overall shortfall in projected funding of £8.585m over the three year period, with an estimated shortfall of £4.757m in 2024/25.

It has previously been approved that the schemes for the Joint Archive Facility and Croes Atti Residential Care Home be funded from borrowing with the associated costs of borrowing included as revenue pressures within the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

1.39	<p>Table 5 shows that after prudential borrowing is considered, there is an overall surplus in projected funding of £0.052m over the three year period, with an estimated shortfall of £0.257m in 2024/25.</p> <p>The Council has developed a prudent policy of allocating its own capital receipts to fund capital projects only when receipts are actually received rather than when it is anticipated the receipt will be received, and this position continues to be the case.</p> <p>In recent years, much of the Council's programme has been funded from capital receipts. However, the Council's ability to generate significant capital receipts is getting harder and is almost exhausted. Although the Council will, wherever possible, seek to identify assets for sale (as appropriate) to fund the Capital Programme.</p> <p>Options to fund shortfalls include a combination of future capital receipts, alternative grants, and scheme phasing as the expenditure profile of large complex projects such as those included in the investment section of the programme could change. Every effort will be made to ensure that other sources of funding are utilised to fund the programme.</p> <p>Ultimately, should other sources of funding not materialise the Council will need to use prudential borrowing to finance any shortfalls. This could be short term during the three years, or if necessary, long term to fund any overall shortfalls.</p>
1.40	<p>Specific Grants and Borrowing</p> <p>Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B Programme</p> <p>WG has approved the Council's in principle submission for Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B, with a funding envelope of £85m. The programme is to be funded from specific grant from WG at an agreed intervention rate, with the Council's contribution to be funded by prudential borrowing. The WG intervention rate for funding the Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B programme has increased from 50% to 65% for schools, 75% for Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) and Additional Learning Needs (ALN) provision, and 81% for Mutual Investment Models (MIM).</p> <p>Each of the remaining schemes are subject to individual approval to ensure that each meets the Council's continuing priorities and is affordable in the context of the Council's MTFS.</p> <p>Currently, the following Band B schemes are yet to be fully costed or brought forward within the Councils capital programme are: Elfed High School, Buckley and Saltney / Broughton Area.</p> <p>Schemes currently in progress are Ysgol Croes Atti, Flint and Drury Primary School.</p> <p>Various global issues have been impacting prices in the construction market. The key causes are Brexit, COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine. These causes have conflated and the impact on projects being:</p>

an increase in demand for construction (post covid); Supply chain disruption, long lead in time and an ongoing energy crisis. The consequences of this are: the lack of construction materials; high inflation and price volatility; high raw material prices; high energy prices and increased uncertainty.

In the present market Contractors are now more risk averse when pricing packages. Previously accepted market practice of D&B Contractors fixing a construction price for a significant period is no longer viable. The cost increases are being seen across all sectors. Analysis of the market is suggesting that nothing is likely to improve in terms of prices dropping or even levelling out in the foreseeable future. Consequently, this will have a significant impact on the current securing price certainty on schemes.

Given the current volatility of the construction markets, flexibility and consideration will need to be given around timescales and expected costs of each scheme to ensure the Council stays within the Band B funding envelope. Any increase in the cost of any of the exiting schemes, may result in pushing schemes or making the difficult decisions to pull schemes to form part of the next iteration of the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme.

Other projects included in this category were Hawarden High School, Flint High School and Mold Alun High School. Early intelligence suggests that the WG are moving away from prescriptive timing on its onward investment programme as LA's and FEI's in Wales have made differing progress in their schools and colleges investment programmes. Instead, LA's and FEI's in Wales will be asked to bring forward their investment programmes based on local timing and funding. The intervention rates for the WG onward investment programme are currently unknown.

There is also a growing pressure on the ALN section relating to increased capacity across the special school's network which will need to be monitored and considered within the programme moving forward.

The estimated costs of these schemes are outlined in the table below:

Band B	Total Cost	WG funded	Council funded
	£m	£m	£m
Ysgol Croes Atti, Flint	13.348	8.676	4.672
Drury CP	4.800	3.120	1.680
Total	18.148	11.796	6.352

The benefits and costs of the school improvement programme scheme are:

Direct Benefits:

- Enabling 65%-81% external investment in schools
- Continuing to raise educational standards
- Reduction in backlog maintenance costs
- Reduction in fixed costs associated with buildings and leadership focuses investment on learners

- At Drury CP, the removal of mobile classrooms and increase in permanent capacity to meet local demand
- Ysgol Croes Atti, Flint, will be Flintshire's first new build Welsh Medium primary school and is strategically linked to the Council's Welsh Education Strategic Plan (WESP)
- Energy efficiency improvements

Direct Costs:

- Part of bigger development programme in Band B, £85.4m.
- Estimated revenue borrowing costs associated (interest and minimum revenue provision) with each scheme are as follows:

Band B	Year 1	Year 50	Average over 50 years
	£m	£m	£m
Ysgol Croes Atti, Flint	0.279	0.370	0.317
Drury CP	0.100	0.133	0.114
Total	0.379	0.503	0.431

Indirect Benefits:

- Improving learner outcomes by ensuring that school buildings are effective in creating the conditions for learners to succeed
- Alignment with the Council's School Modernisation Strategy to ensure schools are fit for purpose
- A more secure school estate
- A school estate with reduced vandalism
- Upgrading ICT provision and enabling new methods of curriculum delivery
- Provision of appropriate capacity of school network
- Economic benefits of local contractor and sub-contractor spend
- Supports with the Councils net zero carbon aims

1.41

Details of schemes funded by specific grant and borrowing is shown in Table 6 below:

Table 6

SPECIFICALLY FUNDED SCHEMES 2024/25 - 2026/27				
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Specifically Funded Schemes				
Sustainable Communities for Learning - Band B	9.483	12.430	8.840	30.753
Total Schemes	9.483	12.430	8.840	30.753
Funding				
Specific Capital Grants	6.164	8.080	5.746	19.990
Unsupported (Prudential) Borrowing	3.319	4.350	3.094	10.763
Total Schemes	9.483	12.430	8.840	30.753

1.42	At the time of setting the budget, the details of many capital grants have not been released by WG, and so are not included in Table 6 above. As details become available they will be reported to Members via the quarterly 2024/25 Capital Programme monitoring reports.																																																																																
1.43	All of the schemes proposed for inclusion within the Capital Programme invest in assets and / or reconfigure models of service provision. They are pivotal to support the delivery of the Council's strategic priorities outlined in portfolio business plans and the Council Plan.																																																																																
1.44	<p>Summary Total Council Fund Capital Programme 2024/25 - 2026/27</p> <p>Table 7 summarises the total proposals for the 2024/25 - 2026/27 Capital Programme.</p> <p><u>Table 7</u></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="5" style="text-align: center;">SUMMARY CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 - 2026/27</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: center;">2024/25</th> <th style="text-align: center;">2025/26</th> <th style="text-align: center;">2026/27</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Total</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: center;">£m</th> <th style="text-align: center;">£m</th> <th style="text-align: center;">£m</th> <th style="text-align: center;">£m</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td colspan="5">Expenditure</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Statutory / Regulatory Section</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2.970</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2.970</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2.970</td> <td style="text-align: right;">8.910</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Retained Assets Section</td> <td style="text-align: right;">7.073</td> <td style="text-align: right;">6.018</td> <td style="text-align: right;">4.051</td> <td style="text-align: right;">17.142</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Investment Section</td> <td style="text-align: right;">5.800</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1.119</td> <td style="text-align: right;">3.018</td> <td style="text-align: right;">9.937</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Specific Section</td> <td style="text-align: right;">9.483</td> <td style="text-align: right;">12.430</td> <td style="text-align: right;">8.840</td> <td style="text-align: right;">30.753</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total Programme (All Sections)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">25.326</td> <td style="text-align: right;">22.537</td> <td style="text-align: right;">18.879</td> <td style="text-align: right;">66.742</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="5">Funding</td> </tr> <tr> <td>General Funding ¹</td> <td style="text-align: right;">11.086</td> <td style="text-align: right;">8.159</td> <td style="text-align: right;">8.159</td> <td style="text-align: right;">27.404</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grant Funding</td> <td style="text-align: right;">6.164</td> <td style="text-align: right;">8.080</td> <td style="text-align: right;">5.746</td> <td style="text-align: right;">19.990</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Unsupported (Prudential) Borrowing</td> <td style="text-align: right;">7.819</td> <td style="text-align: right;">5.469</td> <td style="text-align: right;">6.112</td> <td style="text-align: right;">19.400</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total Projected Funding</td> <td style="text-align: right;">25.069</td> <td style="text-align: right;">21.708</td> <td style="text-align: right;">20.017</td> <td style="text-align: right;">66.794</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Surplus / (Shortfall)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">(0.257)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">(0.829)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1.138</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0.052</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="5"><small>1 As per 2023/24 Provisional Settlement</small></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	SUMMARY CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 - 2026/27						2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Total		£m	£m	£m	£m	Expenditure					Statutory / Regulatory Section	2.970	2.970	2.970	8.910	Retained Assets Section	7.073	6.018	4.051	17.142	Investment Section	5.800	1.119	3.018	9.937	Specific Section	9.483	12.430	8.840	30.753	Total Programme (All Sections)	25.326	22.537	18.879	66.742	Funding					General Funding ¹	11.086	8.159	8.159	27.404	Grant Funding	6.164	8.080	5.746	19.990	Unsupported (Prudential) Borrowing	7.819	5.469	6.112	19.400	Total Projected Funding	25.069	21.708	20.017	66.794	Surplus / (Shortfall)	(0.257)	(0.829)	1.138	0.052	<small>1 As per 2023/24 Provisional Settlement</small>				
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1.46	<p>Sustainable Communities for Learning</p> <p>The WG schools investment programme is expected to continue into a more fluid rolling 'Band C' programme, with the expectation is that this will run from 2025 to 2030.</p>																																																																																

	<p>Unknown's at this stage are the WG intervention rates and also whether WG will be using MIM funding in Band C. Early indications from WG officials are that this will remain at the current rates.</p> <p>WG have introduced additional criteria for Net Zero Carbon (NZC) requirements for schools. Buildings will be required to be NZC in operation, which means producing zero or negative carbon emissions as part of their operational energy. The first generation of schools and colleges under the new rules will also be required to demonstrate a 20% reduction on the amount of embodied carbon, which is the carbon emitted through construction materials and the construction process, with further reductions required in future, in line with the WG's broader NZC plans. Industry indications have confirmed this will increase construction costs by up to 20%.</p> <p>Whilst there are a lot of unknowns currently, early modelling work is already being undertaken in forming the Councils potential Band C programme. This work will be presented at a later date.</p>
1.47	<p>Llys Gwenffrwd, Holywell – Residential Care Home Review</p> <p>Llys Gwenffrwd is a 31 bed, three storey care home built in the 1970s which was refurbished in early 2000. There are challenges associated with the current building as it is built on a sloping site, as a result there are a number of levels requiring the need for ramps to access many areas both inside and outside. It includes the provision of a single undersized lift to reach the three stories which does not meet DDA requirements and there are a number of living and day spaces which are some distance from the bedroom areas. Outside space is difficult to access because of the site levels and parking can be difficult. The Holywell locality has the fewest number of care home placements available and would benefit from a new build facility on a different more accessible site which requires further consideration. A relocated new build meets the needs of an ageing population in alignment with the strategic service priorities.</p>
1.48	<p>Residential Care Home Provision – North East Flintshire</p> <p>Consideration has been made as to whether the Council can introduce in-house residential care to the North East region of Flintshire, to support with capacity and future proofing the care market in the area. Currently, a site mapping exercise is being undertaken to understand if there is a site with sufficient space to house a sufficiently sized facility.</p>
1.49	<p>Additional Learning Needs Reform</p> <p>In previous Cabinet reports, the need for specialist Autism and Moderate Learning Difficulties facilities had been highlight as short/medium term ambition. In reviewing the impact of Additional Learning Needs (ALN) transformation, extending existing ALN provision would also be a requirement along with consideration for a Secondary Phase Behaviour, Emotional & Social Difficulties (BESD) Resourced Unit, the County only has primary provision currently. A technical feasibility is currently being undertaken to provide a range of options with high level cost estimates</p>

	<p>around effective building solutions. As an alternative option to a Council funded solution, it would be prudent to consider whether ALN transformation could be included as a project (or series of projects) from 2024. For larger value cost options it would be prudent to consider the next phase of the WG Sustainable Communities for Learning (Band C) investment programme, given that the current intervention rate in this programme for ALN provision is 75% WG funded, with the Councils contribution being 25%.</p>
1.50	<p>County Hall Campus</p> <p>The requirement to take forward the redevelopment of the site so to address the future needs of the Council and other public sector partners; to provide a range of options and an integrated approach around the Courts, Theatr Clwyd and joint Archive service together with a wider site development.</p>
1.51	<p>Register Office, Llwynegryn Hall</p> <p>This plan is to develop Llwynegryn Hall as a complete venue for civil marriages/partnerships in Flintshire. The intention is to upgrade internal accommodation, to include Floor 1, to offer more choice to couples for their wedding. The building has potential to be available and booked as part of a wedding package, which has the potential to generate additional income.</p>
1.52	<p>Review of Industrial Estates</p> <p>The Council's industrial estates are widely dispersed throughout the County and provide much needed commercial accommodation to many local businesses, preventing them from leaving the County and maintaining local sources of employment. They also bring into the Council significant revenue through rental income but are of an age where they are now likely to require investment. The most pressing issue is that of Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) which will become increasingly stringent over the next eight years and which the Council must adhere to if they are able to continue to let the units.</p> <p>There is a study currently being undertaken which will assist with understanding the likely level of investment required. This will be an integral part of an estate-by-estate review which follows the work already undertaken on two of our estates as part of the feasibility work in relation to the potential to access the Levelling Up Fund. We will consider additional factors such as regeneration, employment opportunities, sustainability and economic viability. Some of this work may determine that existing vacant buildings are demolished which will require funding.</p>
1.53	<p>Highways Asset Management Plan</p> <p>The core Capital Programme includes £1.5m per annum for the HAMP. It has been estimated that the investment required to maintain current network performance is £3.2m per annum, an increase of £1.7m per annum.</p>

1.54	<p>Digital Strategy</p> <p>A planned programme of projects required to increase the number and range of services available digitally are under consideration. The projects have an impact across a range of services, rather than in a single specific service e.g., web payment portal that will be used for all payments to the Council. These will be used to enhance the ability of customers to interact with the Council on line.</p> <p>The capital costs of purchasing new software will be calculated on a project by project basis at the time each project is ready to proceed in order to accurately capture not only the technical requirements for the software but also the costs prevailing at the time.</p> <p>The range of cross cutting projects under consideration include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A generic web booking system to allow customers to make appointments for services online • Integration of webchat and email into the Customer Relationship Manager application • A generic facility for customers to upload and store commonly needed documents e.g., proof of entitlement to benefits • Software to link information held in separate databases so that we can update them all at once in a single contact with the customer
1.55	<p>Deeside Leisure Centre</p> <p>Deeside Leisure Centre (DLC) is 50+ years old and reaching the end of its economic useful life. It is the largest sports facility in the County at 15,000m² and is of strategic importance in terms of sports participation and health and wellbeing. It is an ageing building occupying too large a footprint with inefficient energy systems. The building is not sustainable beyond the medium term.</p> <p>DLC was partially occupied by the Health Board until April 2022 with the ice rink arena being used as a COVID-19 vaccination centre. The ice rink is currently undergoing reinstatement works to return the facility to its original purpose. The ice rink is due to re-open in autumn 2022 meaning the leisure centre will be returned to full use.</p> <p>The Council, and its strategic partner Aura, has undertaken a feasibility study and business case of options for the leisure centre going forward, and will review the impact this may have on the Capital Programme and any future potential revenue savings.</p>
1.56	<p>Homelessness – Young Persons Hub</p> <p>Responding to the needs of young people and particularly those who may be at a risk of homelessness is a key focus for the Council. Consideration needs to be given to not only accommodation needs but also support to assist young people with the key life skills needed to live independently and reduce risks of homelessness. When looking at best practice in this area of work, there are a number of examples of positive practice which</p>

	<p>seek to not only provide accommodation, but also co-ordinate support and service delivery.</p> <p>The Housing & Communities Portfolio is considering opportunities for the development of a Young Persons Hub which will seek to provide a number of units of self-contained accommodation with support onsite. This could potentially extend to provision of housing and homelessness advice and support and facilities for co-location of young person focussed services within a “housing hub”. A feasibility study will be considered to inform this approach once a site is identified, which may consider the provision of office and community space to ensure a joined-up approach within a multi-disciplinary team model.</p> <p>Subject to the outcome of feasibility works, capital funding may be required to deliver on this agenda. External funding streams will also be considered in order to maximise opportunities to develop the Young Persons Hub. This activity is referenced within the Councils Housing Prospectus.</p> <p>The service is currently revisiting and refining the details of the brief and developing a revised specification with youth justice, homelessness, youth services and social services colleague for a “Hub” and arranging visits to existing hubs in other authorities to understand the best designs and service configurations.</p>
1.57	<p>Homelessness – Emergency Bed Provision</p> <p>In late 2019, the Council undertook work to develop an Emergency Bed provision for people who are homeless and may otherwise face the prospect of sleeping rough. Significant works were completed within the Glanrafon Resource Centre in Queensferry to transform the building into a Night Shelter offering up to 12 Emergency Beds. The Council, as the owner of the building, completed refurbishment works and then partnered with The Wallich, to deliver the support required to safely operate the Night Shelter.</p> <p>At present there are 23 individual accommodation units on site offering self-contained accommodation but this is not of a standard we wish to sustain and need to develop a purpose built provision offering high quality self-contained accommodation. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, further guidance has been issued by WG regarding the future direction of homelessness service. In the guidance there is a clear steer towards offering high quality self-contained accommodation for people experiencing homelessness.</p> <p>The Glanrafon Homeless Hub was always considered a short to medium term solution for rough sleeping in Flintshire but the pandemic has prolonged the need for the provision and the model has developed significantly. The next iteration of the Homeless Hub is identified as a priority activity within the Councils Housing Prospectus and Social Housing Grant can be prioritised in order to deliver on this activity. Sites are presently being considered and feasibility work for supported homeless provision underway.</p>

1.58	<p>Greenfield Business Park</p> <p>The units in the Council ownership at Greenfield Business Park are mostly at the end of their serviceable life and can't, in most cases, be upgraded further. Their size and condition would make them very unlikely to be lettable in the future as they no longer meet modern business needs. There will be a need to consider their future with options including a) demolition with no further units being constructed, b) demolition for future Council development or private sale, c) wholesale redevelopment and construction of new business units. Capital funds may be required to cover some of these costs including acting as match funding should external capital funding become available.</p>
1.59	<p>Connah's Quay Docks</p> <p>There are two potential pressures that may require capital investment in the future. Firstly, the Connah's Quay Docks area suffers from considerable anti-social behaviour and criminal activity which is exacerbated by poor lighting and no CCTV coverage. A scheme for improvements to this is being designed with North Wales Police and a future investment programme may be brought for consideration especially if external capital investment can be found which requires match funding. Secondly, the two Council-owned docks in Connah's Quay are expected to require medium-term investment to prevent further deterioration in their condition.</p>
1.60	<p>Town Centre Regeneration</p> <p>The strategic approach to town centre regeneration approved by Cabinet includes the following priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify potential future development sites and develop options for their future assembly and redevelopment; • diversify land uses to maintain the vitality and viability of town centres including the acquisition of properties; • develop potential projects for future capital funding opportunities; • start, subject to the availability of capital resources and detailed investigation into commercial viability, to acquire key sites for redevelopment; <p>Limited capital funds are available from WG to support these priorities but they require either repayment loans or a minimum of 30% match funding to be available from grants. Both would represent a future call on the capital programme if projects are to be proposed to WG for funding.</p> <p>The Council is developing Place Plans to steer investment in each town and capital projects are expected to arise from this process.</p>

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS																
2.01	Financial consequences for capital resources are as set out within the report.																
2.02	<p>As previously stated, there are revenue consequences of borrowing in interest costs and revenue provision for debt repayment which will bear on the MTFS as new pressures.</p> <p>The pressures for previously approved school building works, the Joint Archive Facility and Croes Atti Residential Care Home have been built into the current MTFS. Pressures for borrowing for new schemes, will be built into future MTFS calculations as necessary.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Pressure in Year 1</th> <th>Pressure in Year 50</th> <th>Average Annual Pressure</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>£m</th> <th>£m</th> <th>£m</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Development of Children's Residential Care</td> <td>0.060</td> <td>0.079</td> <td>0.068</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>0.060</td> <td>0.079</td> <td>0.068</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Pressure in Year 1	Pressure in Year 50	Average Annual Pressure		£m	£m	£m	Development of Children's Residential Care	0.060	0.079	0.068	Total	0.060	0.079	0.068
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Total	0.060	0.079	0.068														

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT		
3.01	Any decisions made which involve the Council's assets and its Capital Programme often have very large and long term financial implications. As it seeks approval for its Capital Programme, the Council is required to produce indicators assessing the affordability, prudence and sustainability of the capital plans. These are called the Prudential Indicators and are included in the Capital Strategy report.		
3.02	<p>Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Long-term</td> <td> <p>The development a new facility Joint Archive Facility will provide a sustainable archive repository for the region along with providing annual revenue savings once the service is running.</p> <p>Cemetery extensions will be providing greatly improved capacity whilst also enabling the Council to develop a long-term sustainable bereavement strategy.</p> <p>Capital funding assists in securing the future of schools in their local communities.</p> </td> </tr> </table>	Long-term	<p>The development a new facility Joint Archive Facility will provide a sustainable archive repository for the region along with providing annual revenue savings once the service is running.</p> <p>Cemetery extensions will be providing greatly improved capacity whilst also enabling the Council to develop a long-term sustainable bereavement strategy.</p> <p>Capital funding assists in securing the future of schools in their local communities.</p>
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	Prevention	<p>Target Hardening budget prevents unauthorised use of land or buildings within the County.</p> <p>Works at Croes Atti residential care home will give additional provision of short term beds in a community setting to allow for more appropriate assessment of need for individual and as a viable alternative to a hospital admission/delayed discharge.</p>
	Integration	<p>The investment on the Highway Network is required to enable maintenance of good transportation infrastructure to support the local economy and public transport links for commuters. This includes school pupils attending schools where the Council is also investing in order to improve the quality of education being delivered. Investment in IT infrastructure supports the Council to deliver these changes along with school digital connectivity and broadband improvements.</p> <p>Development of the Croes Atti residential care home is a joint venture with close working required from both Flintshire County Council and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board. The success of the project and operational model will be essential to achieving both bodies' well-being goals.</p>
	Collaboration	<p>The Joint Archive Facility identifies collaboration between both Flintshire County Council and Denbighshire County Council to meet the need and demand of the two local Councils archive services. This will allow a sustainable and improved service via the creation of a single shared service and it will improve knowledge and skill sharing between both.</p> <p>The highway asset management plan helps with collaboration by enabling the local authority to working with other public bodies, private contractors, community groups and stakeholders to deliver highway maintenance services in a coordinated and efficient way.</p> <p>Engaging with users, customers and residents to understand their needs,</p>

		expectations and feedback on the highway services.
	Involvement	<p>The Joint Archive Facility will deliver a revolutionary archive offer to the public, which will deliver long-term development of a resilient, relevant service, inspiring communities in North East Wales. The facility will secure historic collections, diversify audiences, volunteers and depositors.</p> <p>The proposed schools projects will help promote greater community integration/use/involvement.</p>
Well-being Goals Impact		
	Prosperous Wales	<p>Investment in schools will improve learner outcomes by ensuring that school buildings are effective in creating the conditions for learners to succeed which develops a skilled and well-educated population in the economy.</p> <p>Capital investment directly benefits local supply chain/economy. A percentage of local expenditure is a requirement of the grant funding for school investment.</p>
	Resilient Wales	<p>Use of sustainable and recycled materials during construction, more energy efficient, potential reduction in carbon emissions.</p> <p>The further development of alternative burial / cremation options will enable the Council to develop a long-term sustainable bereavement strategy and may serve as a blue print for North Wales. Areas will also be available for open access to Green Space for local residents</p>
	Healthier Wales	<p>The Council is investing in residential care, to provide additional services, beds and multidisciplinary support in a community setting. This provides permanent residential beds, as well as beds which prevent hospital admissions, expedites hospital discharges and allows appropriate assessment to reduce care packages to support people in the long term.</p>

		Improved physical infrastructure and facilities at schools will positively impact on the wellbeing of the school and its community.
	More equal Wales	<p>Educational opportunities will enabling people to develop the skills and knowledge to be fulfilled.</p> <p>Reduces social inequalities by ensuring that the highway assets are maintained to a safe and serviceable condition, that the needs and preferences of different user groups are considered, and that the benefits and costs of highway maintenance are distributed fairly.</p>
	Cohesive Wales	<p>Allocation to the Highways Network includes resurfacing, street lighting improvements and structural maintenance which allows residents in the County to travel in safe conditions.</p> <p>Placing our looked after children locally will provide increased opportunity for children to maintain local links.</p> <p>Cemetery development allows the local community to retain burial provision in the area as this is of significant importance to them, and also allow them to enjoy the additional open space area available to them.</p>
	Vibrant Wales	<p>Investment in Welsh Medium schools that supports the Council's Welsh Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and enables continued support and potential growth for Welsh Medium provision.</p> <p>Target Hardening will ensure that facilities are available for Community.</p> <p>Enhancing the historic and natural features of the highway network and promoting the use of Welsh language in the communication and signage of highway maintenance.</p>
	Globally responsible Wales	Construction of net zero carbon schools and residential care homes to support WG commitment to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

		<p>Schools capital investment, delivers a more sustainable product, local spend and added benefits for apprenticeships, work experience in construction.</p> <p>Retrofit of buildings and assets to save energy and carbon.</p>
<p>The impacts above include a range across several of the schemes the Council are looking at investing in over the next three years. The main body of the report breaks down the benefit for each scheme separately.</p>		
3.03	<p>Integrated Impact Assessments</p> <p>An integrated impact assessment is not required for statutory / regulatory and retained assets elements of the capital programme, as this investment is required to meet specific obligations (for example improvements and adaptations to private sector homes (Disabled Facilities Grants), adaptations to schools for children with disabilities and works required to keep buildings open by meeting Health and Safety standards) and to ensure business continuity.</p> <p>Individual integrated impact assessments have not been completed for each investment scheme as these programmes of works will be brought back to Cabinet for approval and the integrated impact assessments will be completed as part of the scheme specific reports.</p>	

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
4.01	<p>The proposed Capital Programme will be referred to the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee for comment at its meeting on 16 November 2023, with their comments being fed back to Cabinet verbally before being discussed at County Council in December 2023.</p>

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Business Case forms completed by Portfolios.

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Chris Taylor, Strategic Finance Manager Telephone: 01352 703309 E-mail: christopher.taylor@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	<p>Asset Management Plan - A plan maintained by an authority of the condition and suitability of its assets, updated regularly and utilised to assess future capital needs</p> <p>Capital Expenditure - Expenditure on the acquisition of Non-current Assets or expenditure that extends the life or value of an existing asset</p> <p>Capital Programme - The Council's financial plan covering capital schemes and expenditure proposals for the current year and a number of future years. It also includes estimates of the capital resources available to finance the programme</p> <p>Capital Receipt - Receipts (in excess of £10,000) from the disposal of an asset</p> <p>Capital Scheme - An individual capital project which is monitored and managed in isolation. The aggregate of all schemes comprises the Capital Programme</p> <p>Capital Strategy - A corporate document providing clear strategic guidance about an authority's objectives, priorities and spending plans, demonstrating the link to key corporate and service objectives. May be combined with the Asset Management Plan (AMP) to form a single document</p> <p>Council Fund - The fund to which all the Council's revenue and capital expenditure is charged</p> <p>Disposal - The decommissioning or transfer of an asset to another party</p> <p>Non-current Asset - A resource controlled (but not necessarily owned) by the Council, from which economic benefits or service potential are expected to flow to the Council for more than 12 months</p> <p>Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 (RISCA) - The act builds on the success of regulation in Wales and reflects the changing world of social care. It places service quality and improvement at the heart of the regulatory regime and strengthens protection for those who need it. Regulation will move beyond compliance with minimum standards, and focus more on the quality of services and the impact which they have on people receiving them</p> <p>Prudential Code - The Code of Practice drawn up by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) to underpin the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003 in respect of an authority's duty to</p>

determine the affordability, prudence and sustainability of its capital investment needs

Prudential Indicators - Required by the **Prudential Code**, these take the form of limits, estimates or actual figures used to support the local decision making process for capital investment

Unsupported Prudential Borrowing - Borrowing administered under the **Prudential Code**, whereby authorities can set their own policies on acceptable levels and types of borrowing. The Prudential Framework allows authorities to take out loans in response to overall cash flow forecasts and other factors provided they can show that the borrowing is to meet planned capital expenditure in the current year or the next three years.

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CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 21 st November 2023
Report Subject	Capital Strategy Including Prudential Indicators 2024/25 to 2026/27
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement
Report Author	Corporate Finance Manager
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report updates the Council's Capital Strategy and seeks Cabinet's recommendation to Council.

The report explains the need for the Strategy, its key aims, and the content of each of its sections.

Under the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the Prudential Code), authorities are required to set a range of Prudential Indicators (PI's). The Capital Strategy includes details of the Council's Prudential Indicators for 2024/25 – 2026/27.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Cabinet approves and recommends the Capital Strategy to County Council.
2	<p>Cabinet approve and recommends to Council:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Prudential Indicators for 2024/25 - 2026/27 as detailed within Tables 1, and 4 – 8 of the Capital Strategy. • Delegated authority for the Corporate Finance Manager to effect movements between the separately agreed limits within the authorised limit for external debt and the operational boundary for external debt (Table 6 of the Capital Strategy).

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	CAPITAL STRATEGY 2024 – 2027
1.01	The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy’s Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2021 Edition (the Code), requires that the Council has in place a Capital Strategy (the Strategy). The guidance to the Code defines the specific requirements of the Strategy. This report updates the Strategy for Council’s consideration.
1.02	The key aims of the Strategy are to explain the ways in which the capital programme is developed and funded, the potential impact it has on the Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and the way in which it relates to the Council’s Treasury Management Strategy. The Strategy is an overarching document and refers to other documents such as the Capital Programme, the Treasury Management Strategy, and the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy. The Strategy is split into a number of sections as described below. The Strategy is enclosed as Appendix 1.
1.03	Capital Expenditure This section defines capital expenditure. There is some limited local discretion in the definition as reflected in the Council’s accounting policies.
1.04	Resources This section explains the way in which the Capital Programme is funded. The Council has a number of funding sources, but these sources are limited and in some cases, particularly capital receipts, diminishing. Some of those sources, particularly prudential borrowing, add pressure to the Council’s MTFS.
1.05	Prioritisation of Capital Expenditure This section explains the way in which the Capital Programme is divided into three sections and how decisions are made as to which schemes to include in each section in each year.
1.06	Governance This section explains the governance arrangements in place in the development and monitoring of the capital programme.
1.07	Capital Expenditure Plans This section refers to the Council’s capital expenditure plans as agreed in its Capital Programme. It covers: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Capital expenditure plans• The way in which those plans are expected to be financed• Minimum Revenue Provision• Estimates of the Capital Financing Requirement, a measure of unfinanced expenditure

1.08	<p>Treasury Management</p> <p>This section covers the way in which the Strategy relates to the Council's treasury management activity. It covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council's Borrowing Strategy • The relationship between the Council's debt portfolio and its Capital Financing Requirement • The Authorised Limit and Operational Debt Limits for borrowing, ensuring the limits on the Council's exposure to debt are set • The Council's Investment Strategy • Treasury management governance.
1.09	<p>Commercial activities</p> <p>This section reports that the Council has limited commercial activity, having a limited portfolio of investment properties (agricultural properties and industrial units). The Council does not borrow to invest for the primary purpose of financial return.</p>
1.10	<p>Liabilities</p> <p>This section explains the liabilities which the Council has, in particular the deficit on its pension fund, and links with the Council's Statement of Accounts.</p>
1.11	<p>Revenue budget implications</p> <p>This section shows the impact of the capital financing costs on the revenue stream of the Council's budget.</p>
1.12	<p>Knowledge and skills</p> <p>This section details the skills of officers involved in developing and managing the capital programme and treasury management activity, and explains that the Council makes use of external advisers to assist with this activity.</p>
1.13	<p>Prudential Indicators</p> <p>The Council is required by the Code to develop and monitor Prudential Indicators. These are contained within the various sections of the Strategy, and are indicated as such.</p>

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	Financial consequences for capital resources are as set out within the report and in Appendix 1.
2.02	Financial consequences for revenue resources are as set out within the report and in Appendix 1.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT								
3.01	Decisions made which involve the Council's assets and its Capital Programme often have very large and long-term financial implications. The purpose of the Capital Strategy includes setting a clear framework within which such decisions can be made, therefore mitigating the risks involved.								
3.02	Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact								
	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Long-term</td></tr> <tr><td>Prevention</td></tr> <tr><td>Integration</td></tr> <tr><td>Collaboration</td></tr> <tr><td>Involvement</td></tr> </table>	Long-term	Prevention	Integration	Collaboration	Involvement	The impacts upon sustainable development principles of the Capital Programme which influences the Capital Strategy are listed in the Capital Programme 2024/25 – 2026/27 report included elsewhere on this agenda.		
Long-term									
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3.03	Well-being Goals Impact								
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Prosperous Wales									
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Vibrant Wales									
Globally responsible Wales									
3.04	Integrated Impact Assessments								
	The integrated impact assessment of the Capital Programme which influences the Capital Strategy are discussed in the Capital Programme 2024/25 – 2026/27 report included elsewhere on this agenda.								

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT	
4.01	The Capital Strategy and the proposed Capital Programme will be referred to the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee for comment at its meeting on 16 th November 2023, with their comments being fed back to Cabinet verbally before being discussed at County Council in December 2023.	

5.00	APPENDICES	
5.01	Appendix 1 – Capital Strategy 2024/25 – 2026/27	

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Chris Taylor, Strategic Finance Manager Telephone: 01352 703309 E-mail: christopher.taylor@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

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<p>Unsupported Prudential Borrowing - Borrowing administered under the Prudential Code, whereby authorities can set their own policies on acceptable levels and types of borrowing. The Prudential Framework allows authorities to take out loans in response to overall cash flow forecasts and other factors provided they can show that the borrowing is to meet planned capital expenditure in the current year or the next three years</p>

CAPITAL STRATEGY

2024/25 TO 2026/27

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION
2	CAPITAL EXPENDITURE
3	RESOURCES
4	PRIORITISATION OF CAPITAL EXPENDITURE
5	GOVERNANCE
6	TREASURY MANAGEMENT
7	COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES
8	LIABILITIES
9	REVENUE BUDGET IMPLICATIONS
10	KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

CAPITAL STRATEGY REPORT 2024/25

1. INTRODUCTION

The creation and approval of a capital strategy is now a requirement of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2021 Edition (the CIPFA Code).

The Code requires the Council to set Prudential Indicators in relation to its Capital Programme. This document includes those Prudential Indicators in tables 1 and, 4 - 8.

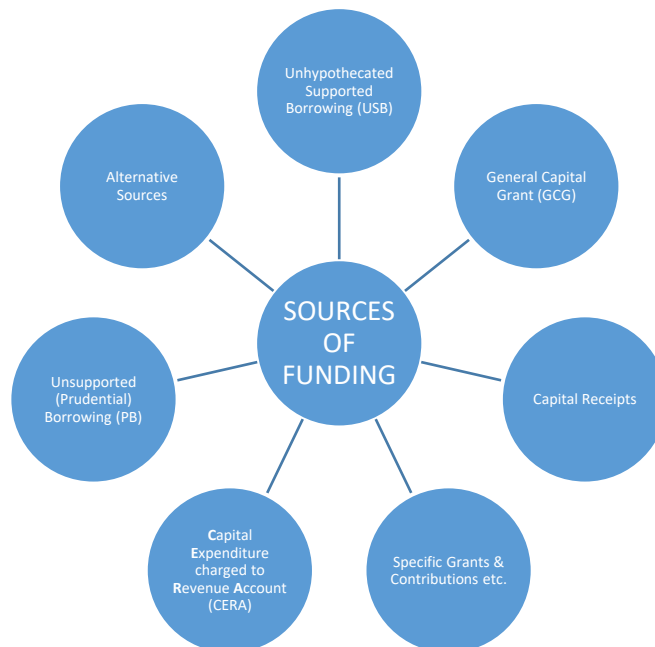
This document updates the capital strategy approved by Council in January 2023. It gives a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of local public services along with an overview of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability.

2. CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

Capital expenditure occurs when the Council spends money on assets, such as property or vehicles, which will be used for more than one year. In local government this includes spending on assets owned by other bodies, and loans and grants to other bodies enabling them to buy assets.

3. RESOURCES

The sources of funding available to the Council are described below:



Unhypothecated Supported Borrowing (USB), commonly referred to as Supported Borrowing

Each year Welsh Government provides councils with a Supported Borrowing capital allocation. Councils can then borrow to fund capital expenditure up to that annual allocation, and Welsh Government will include funding to cover the revenue costs associated with that level of borrowing in future years within the Revenue Support Grant. The Council decides how this funding is spent.

General Capital Grant (GCG)

This is the annual capital grant from Welsh Government. The Council decides how this funding is spent.

Supported borrowing and general capital grant will be used to fund capital schemes which:

- invest in, or maintain the life of, existing assets which will be retained for future service delivery
- are statutory / regulatory in nature

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) equivalent is known as the Major Repairs Allowance (MRA).

Capital Receipts

These are funds raised from the sale of council assets, usually, but not restricted to, land and buildings. Other examples include repayments of loans for capital purposes and release of restrictive covenants.

Capital finance regulations dictate that capital receipts can only be used to fund capital expenditure or repay debt. In the past, regulations required a proportion of all receipts be set aside to repay debt, but this requirement was removed some time ago for the Council Fund and was removed for the HRA with the introduction of self-financing. The Council's policy is to use capital receipts to fund capital expenditure rather than voluntarily set aside to repay debt. The Council sets a Minimum Revenue Provision policy each year which sets out our prudent methods for repayment of debt.

The current policy of pooling all capital receipts to allocate to capital schemes in accordance with the Council's strategic aims and priorities will continue. Capital receipts will not be 'ring-fenced' to fund schemes in the same service or geographical areas (with the exception of the HRA). Capital receipts represent a finite funding source based on a planned approach to asset disposals in support of the Council's priorities. They will be used to fund new capital investment schemes.

Generation of capital receipts depends on our ability to identify assets that are surplus to requirements, and to sell them at an appropriate time which will be subject to local economic factors. In recent years this has been challenging, and will continue to be so. Careful and prudent planning around the timing of capital receipts is needed to ensure schemes funded by capital receipts don't begin until we have received the receipt.

Capital receipts will be generated by continuing with our agricultural disposal policy, our policy to reduce the number of assets that we have and the review of the commercial estate.

Our assets are also supporting the Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme (SHARP) in innovative ways. We have identified surplus Council owned sites which will be used to develop new housing. This input will need to continue throughout the life of the programme. The impact of this on the generation of capital receipts will need to be carefully mapped and reflected within the wider Capital Programme.

Specific Grants and Contributions etc.

Specific Grants

These are grant allocations received from a range of sponsoring bodies including Welsh Government, Lottery, etc. for associated specific programmes and projects, with limited local discretion on how the funding is spent. Often the terms and conditions of such funding will require unused funding to be returned, and can require the Council to match fund. In times where capital resources are declining the Council will seek to maximise such funding streams, subject to the initiative/scheme reflecting both the third party's agenda and the Council's priorities.

Specific Contributions

These are contributions from developers towards the provision of public assets or facilities. Sometimes these are to mitigate the impact of their development on communities and are often referred to as Section 106 contributions. Contributions are earmarked for specific purposes in planning agreements and often relate to infrastructure projects including play areas, open spaces, and schools, but also including affordable housing. Developers also contribute to highways infrastructure developments through Section 38 and 278 agreements.

Specific Capital Loans

Increasingly, as Welsh Government's funding comes under pressure, capital funding that was previously issued as a specific capital grant is converted into a repayable loan, examples include the Home Improvement Loans fund, and Town Centre Loans funding. Grant funding will always be preferable to loan funding as it does not require repayment, however, loan funding does have benefits. Its use to date has been to provide recyclable loan funding for regeneration purposes. The benefit is that rather than being used to fund a single project, the funding can be recycled and used to fund a number of projects over the term of the loan.

Capital Loans are also available, and have been used, from other sources such as Salix in relation to energy saving projects.

As with grants, the Council will seek to maximise such developments that are in line with its priorities, whilst carefully considering the additional administrative burden in issuing and collecting loans, and the risk it carries from loan defaults.

Local Government Borrowing Initiative (LGBI)

In recent years, as Welsh Government funding has been under pressure, schemes that would have been funded by capital grant have been funded by LGBI. Welsh Government provides the revenue support for borrowing costs incurred by the Council in borrowing to fund capital schemes (the difference with supported borrowing being that it's for a specific purpose aligned to Welsh Government priorities). LGBI has been used for highways maintenance and used to part fund the Welsh Government element of the Sustainable Communities for Learning – 'Band A'.

Capital Expenditure charged to Revenue Account (CERA)

Capital expenditure can be funded via a direct contribution from revenue funding (note: capital financing regulations mean it is not possible to use capital funding to fund revenue expenditure). This method of funding is extensively used by the HRA and will continue to be in the future. Its use for Council Fund activity is generally quite limited as this would add pressure to the revenue budget as forecast in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

Unsupported Prudential Borrowing (commonly referred to as Prudential Borrowing)

The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities supports local authorities in determining their programmes for capital investment in assets (we are required by regulation to follow its requirements). The Prudential Code gives councils discretion to undertake borrowing to fund capital projects with the full cost of borrowing funded from future council revenue resources subject to the Council demonstrating, within a clear framework, that the capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable. A range of prudential indicators must be produced and approved demonstrating the impact of the programme. This option for funding additional capital developments is one which is funded from within existing revenue budgets or from generating additional and ongoing income streams, there is no support from any external funding which is a major constraint on its use as any scheme funded by prudential borrowing will add to the forecast budget deficit in the MTFS.

To date, limited use has been made of the option following cautious and prudent consideration of long term impacts. This approach will continue to be used with schemes that have a clear financial benefit such as 'invest to save', 'spend to earn', and those that generate returns over and above the costs of debt. The focus will be to fund schemes that are the Council's priorities, attract third party funding and generate revenue benefits in future financial years in the form of revenue savings, income generation or increasing Council Tax yield. In addition, prudential borrowing will be used to fund the Council element of Sustainable Communities for Learning – 'Band B', Croes Atti Residential Care Home and the HRA SHARP schemes.

Alternative Sources

There are a number of other alternative sources of capital funding which the Council could make use of, depending on circumstances and cost:-

- Finance Leases - Leases that transfers (to the lessee) substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership of an asset, even though ownership may not be transferred. This method was used for the equipment at Deeside Leisure Centre and the Jade Jones Pavilion, Flint.
- Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) - This is a broad term for various arrangements in which the Council has a longer and more intensive relationship with a private sector supplier than it does under a traditional contract. It includes:-
 - PFI contracts;
 - Local Asset Backed Vehicles (LABVs);
 - Strategic partnering;
 - Sale and Lease back;
 - Joint Ventures;
 - Deferred Purchase, and
 - Mutual Investment Model (MIM)

To date, the Council has made very limited use of alternative funding options listed above. In future all options, along with any new initiatives, will be explored and used carefully. Capital schemes funded from alternative sources are likely to increase the Council's debt liability, therefore use will be restricted and considered in the same way as prudential borrowing.

4. PRIORITISATION OF CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

The purpose of the Capital Programme is to optimise the Council’s use of capital resources by allocation to those areas identified as representing the strategic priorities of the Council. The Programme is split into 3 sections;

- Statutory / Regulatory Programme consisting of an annual allocation to fund schemes of a statutory / regulatory nature. Examples include providing financial support to repair, improve and adapt private sector homes, and adapting schools for disabled children. Service areas will be required to submit plans for approval before the start of each financial year.
- Retained Asset Programme consisting of an annual allocation to fund schemes that maintain, improve or lengthen the economic life of the assets that we retain to use in delivering services where there is already a significant amount of capital work needed, identified by service plans / condition surveys etc. Service areas identified are: schools, highways, and corporate office accommodation. Service areas are required to submit plans for approval before the start of each financial year.
- Investment Programme consisting of allocations to fund new schemes arising from Portfolio Business Plans. Such schemes will be necessary to achieve revenue efficiencies included within Portfolio Business Plans, the MTFS and our strategic priorities as included in the Council Plan. Approval of such schemes will be through the submission of a full business case identifying the source of capital funding and the asset’s lifetime costs going forward.

Funding of schemes will be allocated as shown below:

Statutory / Regulatory Programme	Retained Asset Programme	Investment Programme	
General Capital Grant	Supported Borrowing	Capital Receipts	Debt and Alternative Sources of Funding

Capital Programmes will be set every year covering a timeframe of the next 3 financial years on a rolling basis, reflecting that capital schemes don’t match financial years and span more than 1 financial year. Schemes starting in that first financial year will be approved along with any costs and funding required in the subsequent 2 financial years. Schemes starting later than the first financial year will be given indicative support to enable services to plan, but will ultimately require formal approval through the process of approving the subsequent years’ Capital Programme.

Sufficient ‘headroom’ will be built into the Capital Programme to facilitate more flexibility, thus allowing smaller schemes to be presented, considered and approved by Cabinet in year. Such schemes arise in year due to, for example, grants that require an element of match funding or unforeseen events such as regulatory works etc.

The development of the Capital Programme will be considered in the context of its impact on the Council’s MTFS and in particular the added pressure the Capital Programme may bring to the revenue budget.

5. GOVERNANCE

Planning for the Capital Programme is determined in parallel with service and revenue budget planning process within the framework of the MTFS.

New investment capital schemes will be rigorously appraised through submission of full business cases which will include schemes funded by grants or contributions from 3rd parties. Large schemes which are programmes in their own right will be subject to gateway reviews at stages during the programme, for example Sustainable Communities for Learning and SHARP. This ensures that the evidence and the case for change when the scheme was initially approved is still valid, and that lessons learned from early stages can be applied to future stages.

Those portfolios with core allocations will submit annual plans for assessment and challenge by the Capital and Assets Programme Board to ensure compliance with the Capital Strategy and the Asset Management Plan.

The Capital Programme, where possible, will be set for each coming financial year before the annual budget, and will include indicative figures spanning the same time frame as the MTFS.

Monitoring of the annual Capital Programme will be undertaken at a Portfolio level by the Capital and Technical Accounting Team, with progress updates given to the Capital and Assets Programme Board. Reporting to Members will take place quarterly to Cabinet and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee including:

- New schemes or additions to existing schemes
- Removal of or reductions to schemes
- Slippage on schemes, and impact on future years capital programme
- Funding virements between schemes
- Other necessary revisions to the scheme

The Capital and Assets Programme Board will develop processes for monitoring the outcomes of capital schemes and measures to monitor the performance of assets.

Capital expenditure plans

The Council's planned capital expenditure for the period 2024/25 to 2026/27 is summarised below:

Table 1: Prudential Indicator: Estimates of Capital Expenditure in £ millions

	2024/25 Estimate *	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate
Council Fund	28.626	29.737	26.079
Housing Revenue Account	29.846	28.509	29.683
Total	58.472	58.246	55.762

*£3.3m of capital expenditure in 2024/25 arises from a change in the accounting for leases and does not represent cash expenditure.

The Council's Capital Programme is due to be approved by Council in December 2023, and details can be found on the Council's website.

The Council is planning a number of significant investments during the period of this strategy. In particular, it is investing substantially in its schools in conjunction with Welsh Government through the Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B programme; build of a new Croes Atti Residential Care Home, to develop care homes that value older people and provide good quality support; has plans, and in conjunction with its partners, to create a new archive building to deliver a single archive service for North East Wales. More detail is available in the Capital Programme 2024/25 – 2026/27 report.

The HRA is a ‘ring-fenced’ account which ensures that council housing does not subsidise, or is itself subsidised by, other local services. HRA capital expenditure is therefore recorded separately. The Council has plans to invest significantly in housing assets over the period of the strategy, including the building of new homes as part of the SHARP, as well as maintaining its stock in line with the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS).

In addition, part of SHARP is to build new homes for rent at intermediate rent levels (between social housing rents and market rents). This is achieved by making capital loans to the Council’s wholly owned subsidiary, North East Wales Homes Ltd (NEW Homes) to build affordable homes.

All capital expenditure must be financed, either from external sources (government grants and other contributions), the Council’s own resources (revenue, reserves and capital receipts) or debt (borrowing, leasing etc.). The planned financing of the above expenditure is as follows, broken down into the sources detailed above:

Table 2: Capital Financing in £ millions

	2024/25 Estimate *	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate
Council Fund			
<u>External Sources</u>			
USB	4.025	4.025	4.025
GCG	4.134	4.134	4.134
Specific Grants/Contrib's/Loans	9.464	15.280	12.946
<u>Own Resources</u>			
Capital Receipts	2.927	0.000	0.000
<u>Debt</u>			
Prudential Borrowing	8.076	6.298	4.974
Sub Total - Council Fund	28.626	29.737	26.079

Housing Revenue Account			
<u>External Sources</u>			
MRA	4.978	4.978	4.978
Specific Grants/Contrib's/Loans	1.900	0.300	0.300
<u>Own Resources</u>			
CERA	14.815	15.078	16.252
<u>Debt</u>			
Prudential Borrowing	8.153	8.153	8.153
Sub Total - HRA	29.846	28.509	29.683
TOTAL	58.472	58.246	55.762

*£3.3m of capital expenditure in 2024/25 arises from a change in the accounting for leases and does not represent cash expenditure.

Debt is only a temporary source of finance, as any loans or leases must be repaid. Local authorities are required each year under regulations, to set aside some of their revenue resources as provision for the repayment of debt. The annual charge to the revenue account for repaying debt is known as the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). Planned MRP is as follows:

Table 3: Replacement of prior years' debt finance in £ millions

	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate
Council Fund	3.563	3.982	4.341
Housing Revenue Account	1.762	1.893	2.028

Local authorities are required to set a policy for MRP each financial year. The Council sets its annual MRP policy in February each year and this is available on its website.

Alternatively, capital receipts may be used to repay debt by applying capital receipts to the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR).

The Council's cumulative outstanding amount of capital expenditure financed by debt is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). This increases with new debt-financed capital expenditure and reduces with MRP and any capital receipts used to repay debt. Based on the above figures for expenditure and financing, the Council's estimated CFR is as follows:

Table 4: Prudential Indicator: Estimates of Capital Financing Requirement in £ millions

	2024/25 Estimate *	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate
Council Fund	322.415	330.272	340.555
Housing Revenue Account	142.334	148.594	154.719
Total	464.749	478.866	495.274

*£75m of the CFR increase in 2024/25 arises from a change in the accounting for leases.

6. TREASURY MANAGEMENT

Treasury Management is concerned with keeping sufficient but not excessive cash available to meet the Council's spending needs as they fall due, while managing the risks involved. Surplus cash is invested until required, while a shortage of cash will be met by borrowing, to avoid excessive credit balances or overdrafts in the bank current account. The Council is typically cash rich in the short-term as revenue income is received before it is spent, but cash poor in the long-term as capital expenditure is incurred before being financed. The revenue cash surpluses are offset against capital cash shortfalls to reduce overall borrowing.

Due mainly to decisions taken in the past, the Council currently (30th September 2023) has £293m long term borrowing at an average interest rate of 4.5%, and no short term borrowing. It also has £33m treasury investments at an average interest rate of 5.08%.

Borrowing strategy: The Council's main objectives when borrowing are to achieve a low but certain cost of finance while retaining flexibility should plans change in future. These objectives are often conflicting, and the Council therefore seeks to strike a balance between cheaper short-term loans (currently available at around 5.5%) and long-term fixed rate loans where the future cost is known but higher (currently 5.6% to 5.8%).

The Council does not borrow to invest for the primary purpose of financial return and therefore retains full access to the Public Works Loans Board.

Projected levels of the Council's total outstanding debt (which comprises borrowing and leases) are shown below, compared with the capital financing requirement (see above).

Table 5: Prudential Indicator: Gross Debt & the Capital Financing Requirement in £ millions

	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate
Debt (Incl Leases)	419.803	432.232	445.785
Capital Financing Requirement	464.749	478.866	495.274

Statutory guidance is that debt should remain below the Capital Financing Requirement, except in the short-term. As can be seen from Table 5, the Council expects to comply with this in the medium term.

Affordable borrowing limit: The Council is legally obliged to set an affordable borrowing limit (also termed the authorised limit for external debt) each year and to keep it under review. In line with statutory guidance, a lower “operational boundary” is also set as a warning level should debt approach the limit.

Table 6: Prudential Indicators: Authorised Limit & Operational Boundary for external debt in £m

	2024/25 Limit	2025/26 Limit	2026/27 Limit
Authorised Limit - Borrowing	485	499	515
Authorised Limit - Other long term liabilities	35	35	35
Authorised Limit - Total External Debt	520	534	550
Operational Boundary - Borrowing	410	425	443
Operational Boundary - Other long term liabilities	75	74	72
Operational Boundary - Total External Debt	485	499	515

Treasury Investment strategy: Treasury investments arise from receiving cash before it is paid out again. Investments made for service reasons or for pure financial gain are not generally considered to be part of treasury management.

The Council’s policy on treasury investments is to prioritise security and liquidity over yield that is to focus on minimising risk rather than maximising returns. Cash that is likely to be spent in the near term is invested securely, for example with the government, other local authorities or selected high-quality banks, to minimise the risk of loss. Money that will be held for longer terms is invested more widely, including in bonds, shares and property, to balance the risk of loss against the risk of receiving returns below inflation. Both near-term and longer-term investments may be held in pooled funds, where an external fund manager makes decisions on which particular investments to buy and the Council may request its money back at short notice.

Governance: Decisions on treasury management investment and borrowing are made daily and are therefore delegated to the Corporate Finance Manager and the Treasury Management team, who must act in line with the Treasury Management Strategy approved annually by the Council in February. Quarterly reports on treasury management activity are presented to the Governance and Audit Committee. The Governance and Audit Committee is responsible for scrutinising treasury management decisions.

The Council sets a Treasury Management Policy Statement, an annual Treasury Management Strategy and Treasury Management Schedules and Practices which contain further details on the Council’s borrowing strategy, investment strategy and treasury management governance which are available on its website.

7. COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES

The Council has a portfolio of investment properties, in the form of agricultural property and industrial units. Although these are classified as investment properties, they are legacy assets and the Council is managing down its agricultural portfolio and is reviewing its position in regard to industrial units. The Council does not borrow to invest for the primary purpose of financial return.

Table 7: Prudential Indicator: Net Income from Commercial and Service Investments to Net Revenue Stream

	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate
Total net income from service and commercial investment	1.652	1.652	1.652
Proportion of net revenue stream	0.46%	0.46%	0.46%

8. LIABILITIES

In addition to debt of £293m detailed above, the Council is committed to making future payments to cover any required pension fund deficit (valued at £78m, March 2023). It has also set aside £1m to cover the risks associated with the aftercare of former landfill sites, and £3.3m as a provision against bad debts.

The Council is also at risk of having to pay for any additional works necessary at landfill sites, payments in respect of historic insurance, abuse and housing disrepair claims, costs involved in some employment tribunal cases, and has given pension guarantees on behalf of various alternative service delivery models. The Council has not set aside any funds because of a lack of certainty in estimating the size and timing of these liabilities.

Governance: Decisions on incurring new discretionary liabilities are taken by Chief Officers in consultation with the Corporate Finance Manager. The risk of liabilities crystallising and requiring payment is monitored by corporate finance and reported as required to Cabinet.

Further details on liabilities and guarantees are in the contingent liability section in Note 34 of the Council's 2022/23 Statement of Accounts available on its website.

9. REVENUE BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Although capital expenditure is not charged directly to the revenue budget, interest payable on loans and MRP are charged to revenue. The net annual charge is known as financing costs; this is compared to the net revenue stream i.e. the amount funded from Revenue Support Grant, Council Tax and business rates (NNDR) for the Council Fund, and the HRA equivalent is the amount to be met from Welsh Government grants and rent payers.

Table 8: Prudential Indicator: Proportion of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream

	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate
Council Fund	4.17%	4.43%	4.56%
HRA	16.11%	16.82%	17.13%

Sustainability: Due to the very long-term nature of capital expenditure and financing, the revenue budget implications of expenditure incurred in the next few years will extend for up to 50 years into the future. The Corporate Finance Manager is satisfied that the proposed Capital Programme is prudent, affordable and sustainable because the impact of the existing Capital Programme on the MTFS has been considered, and the revenue implications of future capital schemes are included when considering the approval of the capital budget.

Other revenue implications of capital expenditure are included in business cases and are factored into the MTFS.

10. KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

The Council employs professionally qualified and experienced staff in senior positions with responsibility for making capital expenditure, borrowing and investment decisions. For example, the Corporate Finance Manager is a qualified accountant with significant experience. The Council pays for junior staff to study towards relevant professional qualifications, including CIPFA and AAT.

Where Council staff do not have the knowledge and skills required, use is made of external advisers and consultants that are specialists in their field. The Council currently employs Arlingclose Limited as treasury management advisors. This approach is more cost effective than employing such staff directly and ensures that the Council has access to knowledge and skills commensurate with its risk appetite.



CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 21 st November 2023
Report Subject	Resources and Waste Strategy Consultation
Cabinet Member	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Regional Transport Strategy
Report Author	Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation)
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council supports the declarations made by Welsh Government for the Public Sector to become net zero by 2030 and in Dec 2019 the Cabinet Members approved a motion to develop a clear Climate Change strategy, which will set key aims and actions for creating a carbon neutral organisation. Reducing consumption and increasing reuse and recycling to save precious resource is a key part of reaching net zero.

The draft Resources and Waste Strategy sets out the strategic direction to reduce waste and exceed Welsh Government statutory recycling targets. Without action the Authority is at risk of circa £1.13m fines for failing to achieve these targets in 2021/2022 and 2022/2023, as well as a further risk of similar fines in 2023/2024. The new Strategy demonstrates to the Minister our commitment to make change.

This report seeks approval to undertake a consultation exercise on the draft Resources and Waste Strategy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Cabinet acknowledges the progress made on achieving a robust and effective Resources and Waste Strategy to meet net zero targets and mitigate against the risk of fines and achieve statutory recycling targets.
2	That Cabinet approves the commencement of a consultation exercise on the authority's draft Resources and Waste Strategy

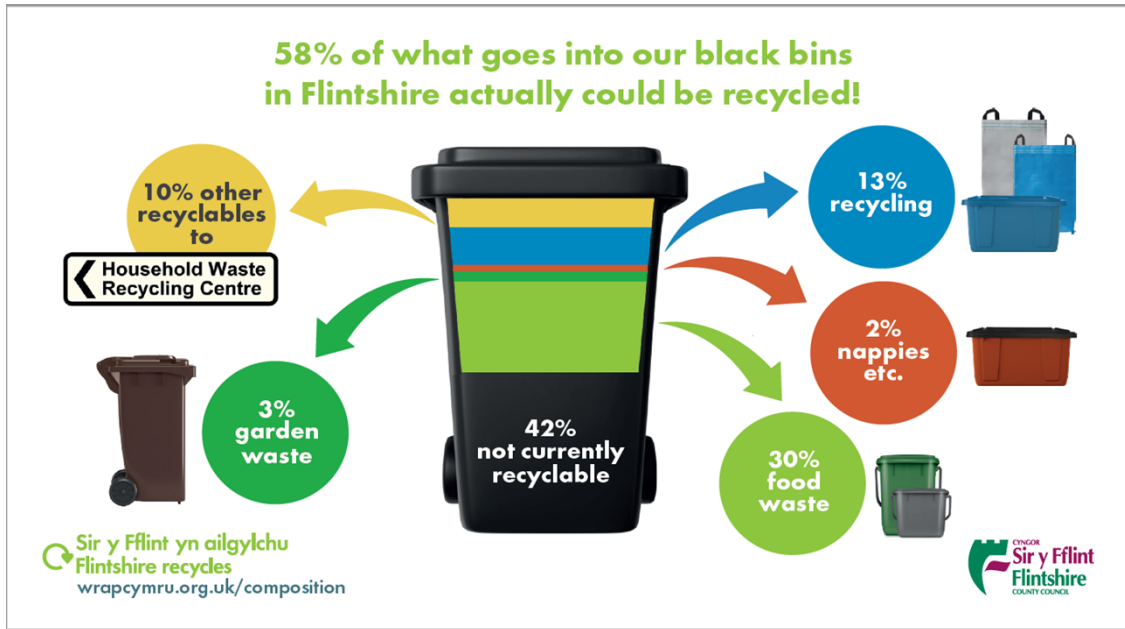
REPORT DETAILS

1.00	WASTE STRATEGY CONSULTATION																		
1.01	<p>The Council supports the declarations made by Welsh Government for the Public Sector to become net zero by 2030 and in Dec 2019 the Cabinet Members approved a motion to develop a clear Climate Change strategy, which will set key aims and actions for creating a carbon neutral organisation.</p> <p>Unsustainable consumption of precious resources and waste disposal has a significant impact on our environment and cannot be decoupled from its impact on our climate. Taking steps to reduce consumption and move away from traditional linear resource models of make, buy, dispose, to a circular model is a must.</p>																		
1.02	<p>It is clear that we cannot make the required step changes alone and a collective effort from residents, the workforce and the wider community will be essential to reduce consumption and improve our recycling performance.</p> <p>Furthermore, as a public body we must ensure we work with our communities to protect the long-term impact of our decisions in line with the Well-Being and Future Generations Act (2015) and the Environment Act (2021).</p>																		
1.03	<p>As reported previously we are guided by the Welsh National Waste Strategy, Towards Zero Waste (2010) and the Beyond Recycling, which is a Strategy to make the Circular Economy in Wales a reality (2021).</p> <p>The Welsh Government has set an overall zero waste target by 2050 and challenging recycling targets for councils in the interim. The current recycling rate in Flintshire of 61.51% (2022/23) is well below the level required to achieve current and future targets.</p> <p>The tables show our performance over the last three years, where we have continually missed the target, and shows that the future target of 70% needs to be achieved in 2024/25.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Target</th> <th>Actual Performance</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2020/21</td> <td>64%</td> <td>63.98%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2021/22</td> <td>64%</td> <td>60.08%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2022/23</td> <td>64%</td> <td>61.51%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2023/24</td> <td>64%</td> <td>61.61 % (Q2)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2024/25</td> <td>70%</td> <td>???</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Target	Actual Performance	2020/21	64%	63.98%	2021/22	64%	60.08%	2022/23	64%	61.51%	2023/24	64%	61.61 % (Q2)	2024/25	70%	???
Year	Target	Actual Performance																	
2020/21	64%	63.98%																	
2021/22	64%	60.08%																	
2022/23	64%	61.51%																	
2023/24	64%	61.61 % (Q2)																	
2024/25	70%	???																	
1.04	<p>The Waste (Wales) Measure (2010) made the targets for reuse, recycling and composting statutory from 2012-13 and beyond. This status allows Welsh Government to levy financial penalties against Councils that fail to achieve them. The statutory targets are weight based and have increased gradually over time.</p> <p>We have continually reported that the Council faces significant fines for not achieving the statutory recycling targets for 2021/22 and 2022/23 that we are likely to meet the same challenge for 2023/24. These fines for missing the targets over the two years equate to circa £1.13M.</p> <p>The targets increase further from 1 April 2024 and the Council faces increasing fines per annum on current recycling levels.</p>																		

1.05

On review of our current Waste Strategy in early 2023 officers made it explicitly clear that without significant service changes we were unlikely to achieve the statutory targets in future years due to the high volumes of recyclable items being placed in the residual waste bin that could have been collected via the weekly recycling collection service or at the household recycling centres (HRCs).

The pictorial diagram below shows the latest compositional analysis from 2022 of this waste and the percentage of waste that could have been diverted to recycling:



Using data from 2022/23, to achieve the 70% recycling target, we need to divert 7,600 tonnes of material from the residual waste stream to the existing kerbside recycling services. The compositional analysis shows that 13,410 tonnes of material in the residual waste bin could have been recycled using the existing services and, of this, 6,940 tonnes was food waste. The following table summarises the materials found in the black bin.

Materials	% of Kerbside Residual	Mass of Materials (t)
Food Waste	30%	6,940
Dry Recycling	13%	3,010
Other Recycling	10%	2,310
Garden Waste	3%	690
Absorbent Hygiene Products (AHP)	2%	460

The remaining 42%, 9,710 tonnes, is non-recyclable waste that should have been presented in the residual waste bin.

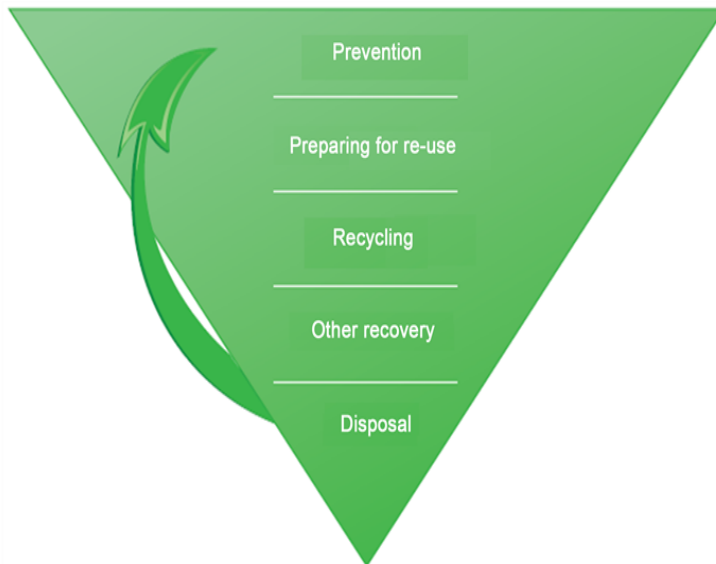
Due to the current risk of infraction fines and inability to achieve statutory targets this has been highlighted as a strategic risk rated RED for the authority.

1.06

Following the waste strategy review in early 2023, and the recommendations put forward to introduce an operating model that could result in achieving the 70% target in 2024/25, Cabinet made the decision not to make any changes to the Waste Strategy, but to undertake a further period of monitoring to see if recycling rates could be achieved through education and enforcement alone.

	<p>An action plan, including this approach and other opportunities, such as finding a recycling solution for some hard to recycle waste streams such as absorbent hygiene products (AHP), was presented to the Minister for Climate Change for consideration in deciding whether to levy a fine. This action plan was not accepted by the Minister as being sufficient to give assurance of the council’s approach in meeting the current and future targets.</p> <p>Further work was requested by the Minister for the authority to provide a more well thought through, realistic and evidenced based action plan and Resources and Waste strategy.</p> <p>The Minister has yet to make a decision on the infraction fines for 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 and is also monitoring Flintshire’s performance in 2023/2024 closely. In arriving at a decision, the Minister has stipulated that the evidence that the authority provides relating to its plan for, and commitment to, improving its performance to achieve the statutory minimum targets is of fundamental importance and the plan needs to be credible, in terms of the actions proposed and the commitment from the Authority in place to deliver them.</p>
1.07	<p>Since that time, dialogue with the Minister for Climate Change and senior Welsh Government officials has led to the development of a new Resources and Waste Strategy to address the performance of the Authority and mitigate against the risk of fines.</p> <p>Whilst reviewing the Authority’s performance and whilst seeking to develop the action plan, the following challenge have been identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing budgets and accessible funding • Instilling long term behavioural change of our residents • Political support • Reducing residual waste arisings • Encouraging use of the food waste recycling service • Increasing all recycling streams • Providing opportunities for increased reuse of items • Providing effective recycling services to flats and houses of multiple occupancy (HMOs) • Bridging barriers to utilising the service (accessibility, storage, containers) • Finding sustainable recycling outlets for some waste items (carpets, AHP, flexible plastics) • Procurement of sustainable disposal outlets • Our waste infrastructure capacity • Staff resilience, retention, and recruitment • Changing legislation (workplace recycling/deposit return scheme/extended producer responsibility)
1.08	<p>The Strategy starts by presenting the global, national, and local context that the waste strategy sits within. It has then been developed in line with the waste hierarchy, supporting the principles of waste prevention and minimisation, supporting re-use, recycling and finally residual recovery and landfill for items not suitable for re-use or recycling.</p>

The waste hierarchy principles are:



The focus of the new Resources and Waste Strategy is to support our residents and communities to avoid waste and promote the reuse of valuable materials and, where that is not possible, then to enable residents to present items for recycling and make access to the recycling service the easiest option with disposal through the residual streams to recovery, the last resort.

Supporting our residents and communities to recycle and embed long term behaviour change is core to our Resources and Waste Strategy.

This aligns in with our Council Plan 2023/28 priority Circular Economy, sitting in the Green Society and Environment theme, where we have committed to:

- Achieving Welsh Government recycling targets
- Developing a recycling waste transfer station for the deposit and processing of recyclable materials
- Promoting the option to reuse and repair unwanted items at household recycling centres by partnering with local charities or social enterprises.
- Working in partnership, actively support and engage with community led groups by developing recycling initiatives.

1.09

The engagement and support of elected members is crucial in shaping the policies and procedures that will be necessary to support the delivery of the new Resources and Waste Strategy. Several member workshops have taken place over the years, explaining how the waste and recycling services operate, highlighting the statutory targets and what we need to do to achieve these, and the impact of failing to meet them. These sessions have proven fundamental in developing council's strategy in the past.

It is clear that we cannot make the required changes alone and a collective effort is required. It is important that residents and our communities have the opportunity to shape proposals and therefore we recommend that a full consultation takes place on the draft Resources and Waste Strategy.

It is proposed that the consultation will take place over a period of six weeks from 1st December 2023 until 12th January 2024. The consultation will take the form of a short online survey. Where access to the online survey is not possible, paper surveys will be provided and available.

	<p>To deliver the consultation to as many key stakeholders as possible a programme is being developed, highlighting methods of communication and engagement. These will include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An online survey • Drop-in events at connects centres/libraries. • Press release and social media campaign • Promotion at the household recycling centres (HRCs) • Promotion via GovDelivery email service (c.30,000 subscribers) • Briefings for MPs/MSs/Town and Community Councils. • Briefings/Workshops for Members
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	<p>The work is being supported by Local Partnerships and Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP) Cymru. There is no additional resource implication for undertaking the public consultation, however support will be required through the corporate communications team.</p>

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	<p>A full integrated impact assessment will be undertaken on the draft Resources and Waste Strategy to be included in future reports.</p>
3.02	<p>We are highly unlikely to achieve the statutory recycling targets without making significant changes to improve recycling performance and reduce the amount of waste in the residual waste bin.</p>
3.03	<p>The risk of not achieving the statutory recycling targets could result in a significant financial penalty for the Council (£200 for every tonne not recycled) if Welsh Government were to choose to levy the infraction fines. This equates to £1.13m for failing to achieve the targets in 2021/2022 and 2022/2023, and potentially in excess of £1M per annum from 2024/25, for which there is no available budget and would equate to a 1% rise in council tax.</p>
3.04	<p>Continuing to accept the volume of residual waste at the current rates has resulted in increased expenditure on disposal costs. Diverting this waste to recycling would reduce the gate fee on some recycling streams (e.g. food) and would create an income for others (e.g. paper/glass/metal/plastic). It would also reduce residual waste disposal costs, which currently costs the authority over £3.4M annually.</p>
3.05	<p>The lack of appetite to improve recycling performance and implement changes could result in the loss of the Sustainable Waste Management Grant from Welsh Government to invest in Flintshire. The value of this grant to Flintshire is currently £0.742m.</p>

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED
4.01	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Regional Transport Strategy.
4.02	Flintshire residents.
4.03	Elected members.
4.04	Town and Community Councils.
4.05	Members of the Senedd.
4.06	Members of Parliament.
4.07	Flintshire County Council officers and employees.
4.08	Contractors.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Towards Zero Waste Municipal Waste Sector Plan - Collections blueprint Beyond Recycling Strategy Climate Change Strategy Council Plan

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: Ruth Tulley, Regulatory Services Manager Telephone: 01352 704796 E-mail: ruth.tulley@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	None.

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CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 21 st November, 2023
Report Subject	Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2023/24 (Month 6)
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement
Report Author	Corporate Finance Manager
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This monthly report provides the latest detailed overview of the budget monitoring position for the 2023/24 financial year for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account and presents the position, based on actual income and expenditure as at Month 6.

The projected year end position is as follows:

Council Fund

- An operating deficit of £3.559m (excluding the impact of the pay award which will need to be met by reserves – currently estimated as £2.727m) which is a favourable movement of £0.101m from the deficit figure reported at Month 5. It should be noted that the financial impact of the recent storm Babet is not currently included in the projection but is expected to be significant.
- A projected contingency reserve available balance as at 31 March 2024 of £3.776m (after the estimated impact of pay awards and taking account of the Balances released to Reserves at Month 5)

Housing Revenue Account

- Net in-year revenue expenditure is forecast to be (£0.069m) lower than budget which is a favourable movement of (£0.075m) from the figure reported at Month 5.
- A projected closing balance as at 31 March, 2024 of £3.266m

The economic outlook remains challenging due to inflation levels remaining high.

The impacts of this, together with continued increases in service demand is becoming increasingly hard to deal with as our funding fails to keep up with the scale of these pressures.

To assist with managing these risks and mitigating the overall projected overspend, a moratorium on non-contractually committed spend has been put in place alongside a vacancy management process which continues.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	To note the report and the estimated financial impact on the 2023/24 budget.
2	To approve the change of use for £0.100m of an earmarked reserve for the Carelink service as outlined in 1.22.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2023/24
1.01	<p>The projected year end position is as follows:</p> <p>Council Fund</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An operating deficit of £3.559m (excluding the impact of the pay award which will need to be met by reserves – currently estimated as £2.727m) which is a favourable movement of £0.101m from the deficit figure reported at Month 5. A projected contingency reserve available balance as at 31 March 2024 of £3.776m (after the estimated impact of pay awards and taking account of the Balances released to Reserves at Month 5). It should be noted that the financial impact of the recent storm Babet is not currently included in the projection but is expected to be significant. <p>Housing Revenue Account</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Net in-year revenue expenditure forecast to be (£0.069m) lower than budget which is a favourable movement of (£0.075m) from the figure reported at Month 5. A projected closing balance as at 31 March, 2024 of £3.266m <p>To assist with managing these risks and mitigating the overall projected overspend, a moratorium on non contractually committed spend has been put in place alongside a vacancy management process which continues.</p>
1.02	Hardship Funding from Welsh Government helped secure £16m of direct financial help in 2022/23 for areas such as self-isolation payments, statutory sick pay enhancement, free school meals direct payments and winter fuel payments. However, this funding ceased on 31 March 2023.

1.03 **Table 1. Projected Position by Portfolio**

The table below shows the projected position by portfolio:

Portfolio/Service Area	Approved Budget	Projected Outturn	In-Year Over / (Under) spend
	£m	£m	£m
Social Services	86.803	87.333	0.530
Out of County Placements	17.285	18.579	1.293
Education & Youth (Non-Schools)	9.902	9.765	(0.136)
Schools	114.081	114.273	0.193
Streetscene & Transportation	40.745	41.901	1.155
Planning Env & Economy	7.057	6.645	(0.412)
People & Resources	4.339	4.267	(0.072)
Governance	11.460	11.450	(0.011)
Assets	11.045	10.838	(0.208)
Housing & Communities	15.698	18.468	2.770
Chief Executive	1.608	1.617	0.008
Central & Corporate Finance	32.096	30.545	(1.551)
Total	352.121	355.680	3.559

There has been one virement to the approved budget since Month 5, being £0.018m transferred from Social Services Administration Team to People & Resources Human Resources & Organisational Design Team for a 0.6 FTE post to support the Imperago Time and Attendance System.

1.04 The reasons for the monthly movements over £0.025m are shown in Appendix 1, overall projected variances over £0.050m are summarised within Appendix 2 together with a summary of minor variances for each portfolio.

Significant Movements from Month 5

1.05 **Out of County Placements £0.215m**

Net impact of 5 new placements, rate changes and placements that have ended.

1.06 **Schools £0.193m**

The reasons for the adverse movement are as follows:

- Redundancy costs £0.250m over budget after taking account of reserves carried forward.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free School Meals price increase and take up totalling £0.126m <p>The above variances are mitigated by (£0.100m) underspend in pension added years and a number of minor variances each below (£0.025m).</p>
1.07	<p>Central & Corporate Finance (£0.349m)</p> <p>The Central Loans and Investment Account (CLIA) is projecting a further positive improvement of (£0.300m) due to the Council not taking out any new short or long-term borrowing and continuing to invest a significant amount of short-term cash flow funds gaining an investment return. This pattern has continued from the previous financial year and through 2023/24 to date and is partly due to continued high and increasing bank interest rates. The budget has also benefited from a 'one off' windfall NDR credit of (£0.048m).</p>
1.08	<p>Cumulative minor variances across the Council of (£0.158m) account for the remainder of the total monthly movement.</p>
1.09	<p>Tracking of In-Year Risks and Emerging Issues</p> <p>Members were made aware when setting the budget that there were a number of open risks that would need to be kept under close review. An update on these is provided below.</p>
1.10	<p>Council Tax Income</p> <p>The 'in-year' collection level is 56.6% compared to 57% the previous year. The reduction in collections of 0.4% is mainly because the rising costs-of-living are impacting on the ability of some households to make payment of council tax on time. Other local authorities in Wales are also seeing similar reductions in collections.</p>
1.11	<p>Pay Award (Teacher and Non-Teacher)</p> <p><u>NJC (Green Book)</u></p> <p>The pay offer for NJC (Green Book) employees for the current year (2023/24) has now been accepted by all Trade Unions following the GMB union accepting the full and final pay offer in late October. This is at a similar level to that awarded in 2022/23 with an increase on each scale point of £1,925. This equates to more than the 5% included in the 2023/24 budget. The amount of the final award in excess of the 5% will need to be funded from reserves in the current financial year. It will also have the impact of increasing the budget requirement for 2024/25.</p> <p>The estimated impact of the current pay offer is an additional £2.727m which is included in the forecast but may be subject to change.</p> <p>The assumptions for the 2024/25 pay award is an increase of 5%.</p> <p><u>Teachers Pay</u></p> <p>Assumptions for teachers' pay calculations are in line with current awards by</p>

	<p>the Minister for Education and Welsh Language. They are an increase of 6.5% from September 2022 and an increase of 5% in September 2023. These have not been accepted by all teaching unions and a formal dispute is ongoing.</p> <p>The 2023/24 budget contained funding for a 5% pay award for Teachers from September 2022. The Minister has increased the pay award to 8%, with 1.5% being a non-consolidated payment, leaving a recurring element of 6.5% which is now included in the forecast.</p> <p>Grant funding has been made available by Welsh Government to fully fund the additional September 2022 pay award in financial years 2022/23 and 2023/24 (over and above the 5% originally awarded).</p> <p>However, in relation to funding from 2024/25 onwards, it has been confirmed that there will not be any additionality for the shortfall of the annual cost to the council – an amount of £1.118m has been included in the MTFS forecast.</p> <p><u>Pay Modelling</u> No figures are currently included for any impact of the pay modelling review which is needed to try and address the difficulties currently being experienced in recruitment and retention. It is due to be completed later this year.</p>
1.12	<p>Waste Recycling Infraction Charge</p> <p>The Council did not meet the statutory minimum target, (64%) in 2021/22, for the percentage of municipal waste which must be recycled, prepared for re-use and composted, as specified in Section 3 of the Waste (Wales) Measure 2010. Welsh Government can therefore take steps to impose a penalty on the Council by way of an infraction fine. A potential penalty of up to £0.663m has been confirmed so presents a significant financial risk to the Council.</p> <p>Discussions took place in March,2023 between Welsh Government (WG) and the Council as to the reasons for not achieving the target. The Council has subsequently been instructed by WG to engage with the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) and Local Partnerships to review our waste strategy and develop a new action plan. A report will go to the Committee cycle in November 2023. Depending on the outcome of the review, the Minister will take a decision at that point whether to levy the fine.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the statutory recycling targets have not been achieved in 2022/23 too (non-verified), which means that a further infraction fine could be levied of around £0.470m should WG choose to do so, and monitoring of the authority’s recycling performance for 2023/24 to date shows that the rates of recycling and residual waste tonnages are not improving, which could lead to not achieving the targets in 2023/24 also.</p>
1.13	<p>Homelessness</p>

	<p>There is a significant and growing demand within the Homelessness service. The Council has a statutory duty to provide suitable temporary accommodation for Homeless persons and families who meet the Welsh Government eligibility criteria which are less stringent than in England. The growth in demand commenced in the second half of 2022/23 and has accelerated markedly since the start of 2023.</p> <p>One of the more significant influences of many is the sparsity of affordable accommodation in the private rented sector which is being influenced by the cost-of-living crisis and an increase in the numbers of no-fault evictions as many private rented sector landlords are leaving the sector and seeking to sell their properties. There is also an acute shortage of suitable available accommodation within the Council's own HRA housing stock and with other Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) within the area. This is particularly the case for single persons below age 55 which make up the highest proportion of those who are currently homeless in Flintshire. The Flintshire position in terms of both demand and supply pressures is known to be consistent on both a regional and national basis within Wales.</p> <p>The Council will continue to lobby Welsh Government via the WLGA in conjunction with other Welsh LA's who are experiencing these pressures to seek additional financial support.</p> <p>WG are currently providing support via the No One Left Out grant for which the 2023/24 allocation is currently £0.382m. One favourable impact of the increase in costs and demand is the ability to recover additional Housing Benefit income over and above the amount budgeted which is currently helping to offset the projected overspend by £0.470m.</p>
1.14	<p>Storm Babet</p> <p>Storm Babet was an intense extratropical cyclone which affected many parts of the County from 19 October through to the end of 21 October 2023. This was followed rapidly by Storm Ciaran, which although saw less impact, still necessitated significant resources in response.</p> <p>The storm caused severe disruption to travel with many roads closed, railways flooded, schools closed, and properties being affected by flood water.</p> <p>The Council is now calculating the financial impact of the emergency response, damage to infrastructure and the scope of remedial works to be carried out in the aftermath.</p> <p>There is an Emergency Financial Assistance Fund (EFAS) that Welsh Government have in place. However, Authorities are expected to make reasonable provision in their budgets to deal with contingencies. Therefore, if an Emergency Financial Assistance Scheme is activated, the authority affected will be expected to meet all eligible expenditure up to the level of its threshold.</p> <p>Thresholds are calculated at 0.2% of authority's annual budget requirement and apply to the whole financial year, not to each incident within the</p>

	<p>financial year and for Flintshire, this amounts to emergency funding being provided at 85% for costs over and above the threshold of £0.711m.</p> <p>There is a Severe Weather Earmarked Reserve totalling £0.250m which could assist in funding some of these costs.</p> <p>The financial impact of the storms will be included in subsequent reports.</p>
1.15	<p>Other Tracked Risks</p> <p>In addition, there are a number of risks being tracked which may be subject to change and these are summarised below.</p>
1.16	<p>Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Impact</p> <p>Cabinet considered the latest projection for the MTFS in September which showed an additional budget requirement of £32.386m together with an update on the work completed over the summer on potential cost reduction options. These, together with service cost pressures, have been considered at individual overview and scrutiny meetings during October and a summary of the feedback from these meetings has been reported back to Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 16 November.</p> <p>All Portfolios consider their financial position, the risks within their service and the impacts on the Medium Term on a monthly basis as part of their Portfolio Management Team meetings.</p>
1.17	<p>Out of County Placements</p> <p>The risks include continued high demand for placements where children and young people cannot be supported within in-house provision, and market supply limitation factors and inflationary pressures leading to higher costs. An additional amount of £1m was approved in the 2023/24 budget to reflect this.</p> <p>However, there remains a projected overspend for the current cohort of placements of circa £1.293m, although with 6 months of the year remaining this is likely to increase and a contingency of £0.500m is currently built into the outturn position for this, £0.250m for Children’s Services and £0.250m for Education placements.</p> <p>The service areas within this pooled budget will continue to do everything possible to manage these risks and additional investment has already been made to further develop in-house provision to help to mitigate against such financial pressures.</p>
1.18	<p>Streetscene & Transportation</p> <p><u>Fleet Contract Renewal</u></p> <p>The current fleet contract, which has been running for 7 years, was renewed for a temporary period of 6 months from October 2023. Due to the current market conditions in re-procurement of contracts of this type, the cost of the new contract is considerably more than what was previously being paid, due to being protected from inflationary increases during the previous contract</p>

	<p>life. The cost of the contract will further increase from April 2024 and provision is being made within the 2024/25 budget considerations for this.</p> <p><u>Sustainable Waste Management Grant (SWMG)</u></p> <p>The Minister for Climate Change has confirmed that the SWMG grant will be retained at the same level for this financial year. However, those local authorities that are not yet meeting the statutory recycling target of 70% will be required to use the grant to reach 70% and be required to demonstrate this. It has also been confirmed that the SWMG grant will likely become part of the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) funding from 2024/25. The current value of the grant is £0.742m per annum, but it is not yet confirmed whether the proportion that Flintshire will receive within the RSG settlement going forward will be similar to current levels.</p>
1.19	<p>Education & Youth (Non-Schools)</p> <p><u>Inclusion and Progression</u></p> <p>The services that the Inclusion and Progression teams provide within Education and Youth portfolio are under significant pressure.</p> <p>Prior to the pandemic the service had seen increasing numbers of children and young people presenting with an increased level of significant and complex needs, resulting in the council being dependent on non-Flintshire provision.</p> <p>Post pandemic the situation has worsened with increasing numbers of pre-school children needing support and challenging behaviour causing concern across both primary and secondary schools. In addition, there are increased rates of emotionally based school avoidance. As a result, levels of attendance have reduced, whilst all forms of exclusions have increased. All of which contributes to a requirement for more specialist and bespoke intervention.</p> <p>The service is taking steps to actively manage demand, alongside reviewing provision, and seeking to develop and enhance in house provision.</p> <p>The pressures are being experienced across Wales, at a time when schools and central services are implementing the Additional Learning Need (ALN) reforms.</p> <p>Welsh Government have made additional grants available to support schools and councils. However, there are risks over reliance on temporary grant funding and its ability to meet demand within existing budgets and available grants.</p>
1.20	<p>Harpur Trust vs Brazel Case</p> <p>The potential financial impacts are still being determined in response to the Employment Appeal Tribunal (EAT) decision in the case of Harpur Trust v Brazel. The Supreme Court upheld the EAT judgment in the Brazel case in July 2022 which impacts on the calculation of holiday pay entitlements for</p>

	<p>staff who work for part of the year (i.e., term time). An approved carry forward from 2022/23 for £0.254m will provide some funding towards these costs.</p>
1.21	<p>Achievement of Planned In-Year Efficiencies</p> <p>The 2023/24 budget contains £9.265m of specific efficiencies which are tracked and monitored throughout the year. The Council aims to achieve a 95% rate in 2023/24 as reflected in the MTFs KPI's and fully achieved all efficiencies in the previous financial year.</p> <p>It is projected that 99% of efficiencies will be achieved in 2023/24 and further details can be seen in Appendix 3.</p>
1.22	<p>Earmarked Reserves – request for change of use</p> <p><u>Carelink service</u></p> <p>There is currently an urgent need to fund expenditure of £0.100m in respect of ongoing work within the Carelink service to comply with a requirement to convert systems to digital technology by 2025.</p> <p>This work was scheduled to take place during 2024/2025, however an urgent technical problem has come to light which can be addressed via this work being undertaken.</p> <p>Bringing the scheduled work forward will provide assurances and minimise disruption to ensure residents safety is assured. As part of the total investment needed for this digital switchover there is an urgent need to provide sim cards for a total of 1,181 alarms used by customers of the Carelink service.</p> <p>There is no funding source available to provide these sim cards for service continuity although an amount of £0.285m is currently held in earmarked reserves relating to Welfare Reform.</p> <p>It is requested to temporarily utilise this reserve pending the costs being recovered through customer service charges in 2024/25 when the Welfare Reform earmarked reserve will be fully replenished.</p>
1.23	<p>Unearmarked Reserves</p> <p>The final level of Council Fund Contingency Reserve brought forward into 2023/24 was £9.508m as detailed in the 2022/23 outturn report (subject to Audit).</p> <p>The brought forward balance on the Hardship Reserve was £3.743m. Internal claims for Quarter 1 in 2023/24 totalling £0.152m for Holywell Leisure Centre and Cambrian Aquatics have been approved with some other claims across various services being compiled for consideration in Quarter 2. The current balance is £3.591m.</p> <p>A projected contingency reserve available balance as at 31 March, 2024 is £3.776m (after the estimated impact of final pay awards) and is shown in Appendix 4.</p>

1.24	Housing Revenue Account The 2022/23 Outturn Report to Cabinet on 18th July 2023 showed an un-earmarked closing balance at the end of 2022/23 of £3.786m and a closing balance of earmarked reserves of £2.690m.
1.25	The 2023/24 budget for the HRA is £39.418m which includes a movement of (£0.589m) from reserves.
1.26	Net in-year revenue expenditure forecast to be (£0.069m) lower than budget with a projected closing balance as at 31 st March, 2024 of £3.266m. This is a favourable movement of (£0.075m) since Month 5. A breakdown of the variance is in Appendix 5.
1.27	The budget contribution towards capital expenditure (CERA) is £12.712m.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	As set out within the report.

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

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	None specific.

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

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Various budget records.
7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS

7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Dave Ledsham Strategic Finance Manager</p> <p>Telephone: 01352 704503</p> <p>E-mail: dave.ledsham@flintshire.gov.uk</p>
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8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
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8.01	<p>Budget: a statement expressing the Council’s policies and service levels in financial terms for a particular financial year. In its broadest sense it includes both the revenue budget and capital programme and any authorised amendments to them.</p> <p>Council Fund: the fund to which all the Council’s revenue expenditure is charged.</p> <p>Financial Year: the period of twelve months commencing on 1 April.</p> <p>Housing Revenue Account: the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is a local authority account showing current income and expenditure on housing services related to its own housing stock. The account is separate from the Council Fund and trading accounts and is funded primarily from rents and government subsidy.</p> <p>Projected Outturn: projection of the expenditure to the end of the financial year, made on the basis of actual expenditure incurred to date.</p> <p>Regional Integration Fund (RIF): funding provided by Welsh Government to encourage integrated working between local authorities, health and housing.</p> <p>Reserves: these are balances in hand that have accumulated over previous years and are held for defined (earmarked reserves) and general (general reserves) purposes. Councils are required to regularly review the level and purpose of their reserves and to take account of the advice of the Chief Finance Officer.</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>Variance: difference between latest budget and actual income or expenditure. Can be to date if reflecting the current or most up to date position or projected, for example projected to the end of the month or financial year.</p> <p>Virement: the transfer of budget provision from one budget head to another. Virement decisions apply to both revenue and capital expenditure heads, and between expenditure and income, and may include transfers from contingency provisions. Virements may not however be approved between capital and revenue budget heads.</p>
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MONTH 6 - SUMMARY

Service	Movement between Periods (£m)	Narrative for Movement between Periods greater than £0.025m
Social Services		
Older People		
Localities	0.049	The adverse variance for home care of £0.077m is due to service demand. This was offset by decreases to staff costs of (£0.024m). The balance in the movement of (£0.004m) is from minor variances.
Resources & Regulated Services	-0.072	There has been additional Regional Integration Fund (RIF) grant funding and an increase in projected property income.
Adults of Working Age		
Children to Adult Transition Services	-0.043	This is caused by a decrease in anticipated costs for placements
Professional and Administrative Support	-0.041	Due to a decrease in admin staff costs
Professional Support	-0.029	There are posts which continue to be vacant and there was a reduction to projected contract costs
Minor Variances	-0.006	
Children's Services		
Residential Placements	0.110	There is a shortfall in RIF funding and a partners costs for short breaks has increased
Professional Support	0.035	Direct Payments for children with disabilities have increased due to meeting a young persons service needs
Minor Variances	-0.026	
Safeguarding & Commissioning		
Management & Support	0.039	Increased legal costs through required use of an external agency
Minor Variances	0.003	
Total Social Services (excl Out of County)	0.018	
Out of County		
Children's Services	0.259	Impacts of 5 new placements less one ended placements plus numerous rate changes including one significant change with an impact of £0.086m alone
Education & Youth	-0.044	Net impacts of rate changes and ended placements
Total Out of County	0.215	
Education & Youth		
Archives	-0.029	Reduction in recharge from DCC for joint service costs
Minor Variances	-0.042	
Total Education & Youth	-0.072	
Schools	0.193	Redundancy costs £0.250m over budget after taking account of reserves carried forward, Free School Meals price increase and take up totalling £0.126m, mitigated by (£0.100m) underspend in pension added years and a number of minor variances each below (£0.0250m).
Streetscene & Transportation		
Service Delivery	-0.077	Changes to the security provision in the Alltami Depot, Greenfield transfer station and HRC sites have generated savings.
Other Minor Variances	0.051	
Total Streetscene & Transportation	-0.026	
Planning, Environment & Economy		
Minor Variances	0.023	
Total Planning & Environment	0.023	
People & Resources		
HR & OD	-0.010	
Corporate Finance	0.005	
Total People & Resources	-0.005	
Governance		
Minor Variances	-0.013	
Total Governance	-0.013	
Assets		
Caretaking & Security	-0.038	Additional staffing savings
Industrial Units	-0.038	Additional rent income
Minor Variances	-0.005	
Total Assets	-0.080	
Housing and Community		
Minor Variances	-0.012	
Total Housing and Community	-0.012	
Chief Executive's	0.009	
Central & Corporate Finance	-0.353	At Month 6 a further review of the CLIA indicates further benefit from not taking out any new short or long term borrowing and continuing to invest a significant amount of funds (£0.300m). In addition, an NDR windfall of (£0.048m) for the corporate windfall account as the credit has remained unclaimed. The Council are unable to refund the credit as the company has been dissolved and the administration is now complete.
Grand Total	-0.101	

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Budget Monitoring Report - Month 6

Service	Approved Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Annual Variance (£m)	Last Month Variance (£m)	In-year Moratorium (£m)	Cause of Major Variances greater than £0.050m	Action Required
Social Services							
Older People							
Localities	23.196	23.002	-0.194	-0.243		The Older People residential care budget is projecting an underspend of £0.222m, due to client income from property recharges and expected reimbursements where we are waiting on decisions for deputyships and assets held in trust . Homecare is £0.040m overspent. Locality workforce and professional support budgets are overspent by £0.015m and day care is underspending by £0.027m.	
Minor Variances	10.794	10.817	0.023	0.095			
Adults of Working Age							
Resources & Regulated Services	33.469	33.324	-0.145	-0.154		The PDSI (Physically Disabled and Sensory Impaired) budget is reporting a £0.307m overspend due to the net costs of care packages. The in-house Supported Living Service is £0.134m overspent due to care hours and agency costs, a £0.350m contribution from reserves is offsetting further costs. The care package costs for independently provided care for Learning Disability Services is £0.507m underspent. The Learning Disability day provision budget is £0.078m underspent.	
Children to Adult Transition Services	1.001	0.892	-0.109	-0.066		This is the cost of care packages for young adults transferring from Childrens Services to Adult Social Services. Care packages are usually new within this financial year and frequently have to be estimated in the first instance, this can result in projected costs changing during the year as service costs are finalised.	
Professional and Administrative Support	0.421	0.371	-0.050	-0.009		Vacancies within this service are resulting in the in-year underspend.	
Residential Placements	2.607	2.893	0.286	0.284		This is the overall cost of mental health care packages for adults. This is a volatile service and additional service needs can be identified throughout the year leading to increased costs.	
Minor Variances	3.596	3.496	-0.101	-0.054			
Children's Services							
Family Group Meetings	0.122	0.175	0.053	0.053		Demand for this service is resulting in increased sessional worker hours	
Family Placement	3.175	3.011	-0.164	-0.148		This underspend is due to the number of in-house foster carers within the service being less than the number we have historically had.	
Integrated Working	0.206	0.264	0.059	0.059		Cost pressures are due to contributions towards the Integrated Family Support Service and a shortfall in Supported People Funding	
Legal & Third Party	0.262	0.531	0.269	0.278		Legal costs are overspent by £0.136m due to the number of cases going through the courts and some use of external professionals. Client support and Section 17 costs are overspent by £0.121m. Direct Payments are overspending by £0.012m due to demand.	
Residential Placements	1.595	1.307	-0.288	-0.398		The in-house residential care provision continues to expand with an additional group home planned to open this financial year. Some in-year costs for the service are being offset by a significant Welsh Government grant. The grant has been confirmed for 2023/24 and 2024/25, but is not expected to be extended beyond this time.	

Budget Monitoring Report - Month 6

Service	Approved Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Annual Variance (£m)	Last Month Variance (£m)	In-year Moratorium (£m)	Cause of Major Variances greater than £0.050m	Action Required
Professional Support	5.824	6.680	0.856	0.821		To support adequate levels of child protection, the established staffing structure needs to be at a sufficient level to meet mandatory safeguarding standards. Vacancies are minimised and additional temporary posts are sometimes required to meet the challenges and demands of the service, the resulting overspend from such arrangements is £0.176m. Two managed agency teams are currently being contracted to support the service, reserves are being used to mitigate most of the costs but there is a projected overspend of £0.454m as a result, costs may change if there is a requirement to extend the contracts further. The Leaving Care budget, which supports young people who were Looked After Children, is overspending by £0.114m due to increasing numbers of care leavers. The cost of some external service contracts are £0.080m overspent due to inflationary pressures. Cost of Direct Payments to provide support to children with disabilities is £0.032m overspent due to demand for services.	
Minor Variances	0.694	0.718	0.024	0.026			
Safeguarding & Commissioning							
Business Systems & Financial Assessments	0.937	1.026	0.089	0.078		A new social service IT system is being implemented which requires additional project management and development costs.	
Charging Policy income	-3.321	-3.476	-0.155	-0.143		This is the income from service users who are charged a contribution towards the care they receive	
Minor Variances	2.226	2.302	0.076	0.033			
Total Social Services (excl Out of County)	86.803	87.333	0.530	0.512	0.000		
Out of County							
Children's Services	12.281	13.352	1.070	0.811		The service is facing continued high demand for placements together with supply market challenges and inflationary pressures with 26 new placements made in the year to date and contingency provision of £0.250m for new placements.	
Education & Youth	5.004	5.227	0.223	0.267		The service is facing continued high demand for placements together with supply market challenges and inflationary pressures with 17 new placements made in the year to date and contingency provision of £0.250m for new placements.	
Total Out of County	17.285	18.579	1.293	1.078	0.000		
Education & Youth							
Integrated Youth Provision	0.947	0.879	-0.068	-0.059		Mainly due to staff vacancies	
School Improvement Systems	1.836	1.743	-0.093	-0.084		There has been a projected reduction in the Early Entitlement service in payments to settings due to demography. Top up subsidy continuing and other Welsh Government grants, allowing core budget to be released within the Service. There is also a reported £0.022m underspend within Schools Improvement Service. This is an underspend on the £0.028m pressure for the Digital Advisor post. The role has been appointed to, but did not start until September, 2023, creating a saving against the additional budget received.	
Minor Variances	7.118	7.143	0.025	0.078			
Total Education & Youth	9.902	9.765	-0.136	-0.065	0.000		

Budget Monitoring Report - Month 6

Service	Approved Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Annual Variance (£m)	Last Month Variance (£m)	In-year Moratorium (£m)	Cause of Major Variances greater than £0.050m	Action Required
Schools	114.081	114.273	0.193	0.000	0.000	The variance relates to redundancy costs being £0.250m over budget after also taking account of reserves carried forward. Free School Meals increase in both price and take up results in a £0.126m variance. This is mitigated by a (£0.100m) underspend on added years and a combination of smaller underspends each below (£0.050m).	
Streetscene & Transportation							
Service Delivery	9.808	10.028	0.220	0.297	-0.077	Service Delivery have implemented tight controls to the allocation of PPE, materials and receptacles through the in-house stores. Changes to the security provision in the Alltami Depot, Greenfield transfer station and HRC sites have generated savings as per the 2023/24 moratorium, following a review of the service needs. Cleaning costs have also been reviewed and reduced. The service is subject to increasing inflationary pressures and demand for temporary repairs on the road network, largely due to a lack of funding and investment in the highway network and fluctuating costs of tar and traffic management for repairs. Any overall overspend, is partly offset by the performance of the in-house construction team delivering work in-house more cost effectively rather than contracting the work externally.	
Highways Network	8.514	9.248	0.734	0.710		The renewal of the fleet contract through contract extension from October 2023 has realised an in-year overspend of £0.658m. The remaining variance of £0.170m is attributable to increases in costs on road fuel and streetlighting energy, plus increased insurance premiums, and defective highway network infrastructure repairs that are necessary.	Further year increases on the Fleet Contract are being considered within the MTFS and 2024/25 budget.
Regulatory Services	11.305	11.525	0.220	0.199		The overspend variance is due to sustained high volumes of residual black waste being collected, together with the reduction in income levels for both recyclable materials and a reducing return on electricity generation from gas and solar at the former landfill sites.	
Other Minor Variances	11.118	11.100	-0.018	-0.025			
Total Streetscene & Transportation	40.745	41.901	1.155	1.181	-0.077		
Planning, Environment & Economy							
Development	0.024	-0.305	-0.328	-0.308		Receipt of a one-off high value Planning Fee (£0.300m for Northern Gateway)	
Access	1.544	1.706	0.162	0.142		Variance relates to estimated costs for Ash Die Back Tree works to March, 2024	
Climate Change	0.165	0.102	-0.062	-0.062		Staff savings from vacant posts	
Regeneration	0.846	0.796	-0.050	-0.050		Staff savings from vacant posts and Wales Rally GB Budget not required	
Management & Strategy	1.354	1.148	-0.206	-0.220		Staff savings from vacant posts	
Minor Variances	3.125	3.197	0.072	0.063			
Total Planning & Environment	7.057	6.645	-0.412	-0.435	0.000		
People & Resources							
HR & OD	2.257	2.199	-0.058	-0.048		Staff savings from vacant posts	
Corporate Finance	2.082	2.068	-0.014	-0.019			
Total People & Resources	4.339	4.267	-0.072	-0.067	0.000		
Governance							
Legal Services	0.942	1.143	0.201	0.200		Additional costs for locum services covering vacant posts	

Budget Monitoring Report - Month 6

Service	Approved Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Annual Variance (£m)	Last Month Variance (£m)	In-year Moratorium (£m)	Cause of Major Variances greater than £0.050m	Action Required
Democratic Services	2.411	2.480	0.069	0.069		Backdated Superannuation costs and current level of Members Allowances	
ICT	5.168	5.235	0.067	0.064		In year pressure following the delay in Agile Apps Project requiring additional funding	
Customer Services	1.040	0.897	-0.143	-0.128		Staff savings from vacant posts and higher than anticipated fee income levels	
Revenues	0.566	0.374	-0.192	-0.194		Projected surplus on the Council Tax Collection Fund	
Minor Variances	1.333	1.321	-0.012	-0.010			
Total Governance	11.460	11.450	-0.011	0.003	0.000		
Assets							
CPM & Design Services	0.674	0.581	-0.093	-0.093		Due to increased fee income	
Minor Variances	-0.674	-0.581	-0.114	-0.034			
Total Assets	11.045	10.838	-0.208	-0.128	0.000		
Housing and Community							
Housing Solutions	2.232	4.980	2.748	2.763		The Housing Solutions service is currently reflecting a net projected overspend of £2.748m. This is mainly due to a projected overspend of £3.547m on temporary accommodation within Hotels and B and B provision, which is being offset by additional Housing Benefit income of (£0.470m). There are also other projected underspends and mitigation impacts within the wider Housing Solutions service amounting to a net figure of £0.329m, including use of reserves, minor salary savings due to vacancies and use of WG grant income. The service are actively exploring a number of mitigation measures, some of which may have operational impacts on other parts of the wider Housing service, which when approved will be incorporated within an action plan to reduce the current level of projected overspend within the Homelessness service.	
Minor Variances	13.466	13.488	0.022	0.018			
Total Housing and Community	15.698	18.468	2.770	2.782	0.000		
Chief Executive's							
	1.608	1.617	0.008	-0.001	0.000		
Central & Corporate Finance							
	32.096	30.545	-1.551	-1.198	0.000	The projection on the Central Loans and Investment Account (CLIA) at Month 4 was an underspend of (£1m) which was further increased by £0.250m at Month 5 and by a further £0.300m again at Month 6 where the Council has not taken out any new short or long term borrowing and continues to invest a significant amount of funds. This pattern has continued from the previous financial year resulting in no short term borrowing costs being incurred and the Council generating increased income from investments, which have increased in line with bank interest rates. The favourable variance has increased further following the benefit of a £0.048m NDR windfall.	
Grand Total	352.121	355.680	3.559	3.660	-0.077		

2023/24 Efficiencies Outturn Tracker - Month 6

Efficiency Description	Accountable Officer	Efficiency Target	Projected Efficiency	(Under)/Over Achievement	Efficiency Open/Closed (O/C)	Reason for variation	Mitigating Action if Amber or Red
		2023/24 £m	2023/24 £m	2023/24 £m			
Portfolio							
Corporate							
Reduction In CLIA	Chris Taylor	0.364	0.364	0.000	C		
Actuarial Review	Gary Ferguson	1.874	1.874	(0.000)	C		
NI Reversal	Rachel Parry Jones	0.474	0.474	0.000	C		
Total Corporate Services		2.712	2.712	(0.000)			
Chief Executives / Assets							
Transport Savings	Neal Cockerton	0.010	0.010	0.000	C		
Vacancy Savings	Neal Cockerton	0.048	0.048	0.000	C		
3rd Sector Budget	Neal Cockerton	0.041	0.041	0.000			
Total Chief Executives		0.099	0.099	0.000			
People & Resources							
Modern Apprentices HR&OD	Sharon Carney	0.072	0.072	0.000	C		
Vacancy Savings Corporate Finance	Gary Ferguson	0.086	0.086	0.000	C		
Transport and Training Savings Corporate Finance	Gary Ferguson	0.016	0.016	0.000	C		
Total People & Resources		0.174	0.174	0.000			
Assets - ADMs							
Newydd	Rachael Corbelli	0.019	0.019	0.000	C		
Newydd NI	Rachael Corbelli	0.023	0.023	0.000	C		
Total Assets - ADMs		0.042	0.042	0.000			
Housing & Communities							
CTRS Reduction	Vicky Clark	0.147	0.147	0.000	C		
Total Housing & Communities		0.147	0.147	0.000			
Governance							
Members Support Budget	Gareth Owen	0.016	0.016	0.000	C		
Members Allowances	Gareth Owen	0.060	0.060	0.000	C		
Central Despatch	Gareth Owen	0.022	0.022	0.000	C		
Mold & Buckley Connects	Gareth Owen	0.060	0.060	0.000	C		
Total Governance		0.158	0.158	0.000			
Planning, Environment & Economy							
Vacancy Savings	Andrew Farrow	0.020	0.020	0.000	C		
Fee Income	Andrew Farrow	0.180	0.180	0.000	C		
Total Planning, Environment & Economy		0.200	0.200	0.000			
Streetscene & Transportation							
Enhanced Enforcement for Recycling	Katie Wilby					Side waste enforcement is already taking place with FPNs being issued, but the next steps for enforcing against those who do not habitually recycle will be to take enforcement action if residents place recyclable waste in their black bin. To introduce this will first require a period of education and engagement. Additional x3 recycling officers are currently being recruited and, once appointed, the aim is for these officers to support with door-knocking campaigns and community events in advance of introducing enhanced enforcement	Likely introduction is January 2024.
		0.046	0.046	0.000	O		
Part night Street Lighting	Katie Wilby	0.018	0.000	(0.018)	O	Difficult to implement in year due to the consultation required, and the limited opportunity following previous roll-outs. This will also require investment in the equipment to allow the switch-offs	Discussions being held with an update to come how we can achieve this saving.
Review Provision of Public Conveniences	Katie Wilby	0.012	0.000	(0.012)	O	The efficiency is largely reliant on the review of sites following the implementation of the Local Toilet Strategy and capital investment in FY 24/25-26/27.	
Extend, Repair & Reuse Initiatives	Katie Wilby	0.010	0.000	(0.010)	O	When this was put forward, we stated that the initiative would be dependent on investment funding either from WG Circular Economy grant funding or capital programme. We are still awaiting the outcome of our bid to WG, which is now unlikely given the current economic climate. Without the grant funding the initiative cannot be introduced and the efficiency will not be met.	
Waste & Recycling Round Review	Katie Wilby	0.075	0.075	0.000	C		
In House Highways Service	Katie Wilby	0.025	0.025	0.000	C		
Review of Security Arrangements Alltami Depot	Katie Wilby	0.050	0.050	0.000	C		
Apprenticeship Trainee Scheme Reduction	Katie Wilby	0.035	0.035	0.000	C		

Efficiency Description	Accountable Officer	Efficiency Target	Projected Efficiency	(Under)/Over Achievement	Efficiency Open/Closed (O/C)	Reason for variation	Mitigating Action if Amber or Red
		2023/24 £m	2023/24 £m	2023/24 £m			
Portfolio							
Increase Car Parking Charges	Income Generation	Katie Wilby	0.187	0.187	0.000	C	Decision approved and new charges will come into effect from October 2023 (original date planned was July 2023). Additional initiatives e.g. Free after Three and extension to parking times will mean that the original efficiency will be difficult to achieve unless the utilisation levels increase beyond current levels. Delays in being implemented.
Introduce Car Parking Charges on all Council Owned Car Parks	Income Generation	Katie Wilby	0.035	0.000	(0.035)	O	
Fleet Workshop	Income Generation	Katie Wilby	0.010	0.010	0.000	C	
Training Facility	Income Generation	Katie Wilby	0.010	0.010	0.000	C	
Funeral Services	Income Generation	Katie Wilby	0.010	0.010	0.000	C	
Total Streetscene & Transportation			0.523	0.448	(0.075)		
Social Services							
Contribution to Regional Team	Reduction in Contribution	Neil Ayling	0.050	0.050	0.000	C	
Reduced Contribution to EDT	Contract Costs Reduced	Neil Ayling	0.011	0.011	0.000	C	
Retendering of HFT	Contract Costs Reduced	Neil Ayling	0.040	0.040	0.000	C	
Total Social Services			0.101	0.101	0.000		
Education & Youth							
Central Management Budget	Vacant Post	Claire Homard	0.060	0.060	0.000	O	
ALN Advocacy	Offset costs from LAEG ALN Grant	Claire Homard	0.020	0.020	0.000	O	
ALN Legal	Offset costs from LAEG ALN Grant	Claire Homard	0.010	0.010	0.000	O	
ALN Resource Provisions	Offset costs from LAEG ALN Grant	Claire Homard	0.100	0.100	0.000	O	
Early Years Entitlement	Budget Reductions	Claire Homard	0.095	0.095	0.000	O	
Youth Club Buildings	Building Closure	Claire Homard	0.017	0.017	0.000	O	
Youth Services	Vacant Posts (1 FTE 1 PT)	Claire Homard	0.056	0.056	0.000	O	
Youth Justice	Offset costs from Grant	Claire Homard	0.016	0.016	0.000	O	
Total Education & Youth			0.374	0.374	0.000		
Schools							
3% Reduction in Delegated Funding		Claire Homard	3.103	3.103	0.000	O	
NI Reversal (Schools & Teachers)		Claire Homard	0.857	0.857	0.000	O	
Actuarial Review		Claire Homard	0.776	0.776	0.000	O	
Total Schools			4.736	4.736	0.000		
Total 2023/24 Budget Efficiencies			9.265	9.190	(0.075)		

	%	£
Total 2023/24 Budget Efficiencies	100	9.265
Total Projected 2023/24 Budget Efficiencies Underachieved	-1	(0.075)
Total Projected 2023/24 Budget Efficiencies Achieved	99	9.190
Total 2023/24 Budget Efficiencies (Less Previously agreed Decisions)	100	0.000
Total Projected 2023/24 Budget Efficiencies Underachieved	0	0.000
Total Projected 2023/24 Budget Efficiencies Achieved	0	0.000

Movements on Council Fund Unearmarked Reserves

	£m	£m
Total Reserves as at 1 April 2023	19.162	
Less - Base Level	(5.769)	
Total Reserves above base level available for delegation to Cabinet		13.393
Less - COVID-19 Hardship Funding Allocation		3.743
Less - Children's Services Legal Costs		0.142
Add - Transfer to Reserve Budget 2023/24		0.006
Less - Clwyd Theatr Cymru (Month 2)		0.100
Less - estimated impact of the pay award		2.727
Add - Total Balances Released to Reserves (Month 5)		0.648
Less - Month 6 projected outturn		3.559
Total Contingency Reserve available for use		3.776

Brought Forward 9.508

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Budget Monitoring Report
Housing Revenue Account Variances

MONTH 6 - SUMMARY

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Last Month Variance (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Housing Revenue Account						
Income	(38.829)	(38.590)	0.239	0.284	There is a net pressure relating to void properties of £0.252m. This relates to costs such as void rent loss, council tax charges and service charges and is net of additional income relating to new build properties and voids moving to target rent. We are anticipating a variance of approximately £0.023m on garage rents. At Month 6, forecasting a reduction in the requirement to top up the Bad Debt Provision of (0.025). Other minor variances of (£0.012m).	
Capital Financing - Loan Charges	7.010	7.010				
Estate Management	3.125	2.873	(0.253)	(0.254)	Projected vacancy savings of approximately (£0.269m) which is being offset by agency costs of £0.147m. Additional allocation of Housing Support Grant (£0.100m). Other minor variances of (£0.031m).	
Landlord Service Costs	1.617	1.517	(0.100)	(0.064)	Projected vacancy savings of approximately (£0.148m). We are also forecasting an increase in fleet costs of £0.028m and materials and hire of £0.046m. At Month 6, there is an anticipated reduction in subcontractor spend of (£0.021m). Other minor variances of (£0.005m).	
Repairs & Maintenance	12.150	12.193	0.043	0.044	Projected vacancy savings of approximately (£0.114m) . Increased Fleet Contract renewal costs of £0.126m. Other minor variances of £0.031m.	
Management & Support Services	2.678	2.681	0.003	(0.006)	Projected vacancy savings of approximately (£0.076m). Insurance Costs £0.040m. Other minor variances of £0.039m.	
Capital Expenditure From Revenue (CERA)	12.712	12.712				
HRA Projects	0.126	0.126	0.000	0.003		
Contribution To / (From) Reserves	(0.589)	(0.589)				
Total Housing Revenue Account	(0.000)	(0.069)	(0.069)	0.006		

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CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 21 st November 2023
Report Subject	Capital Programme Monitoring 2023/24 (Month 6)
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement
Report Author	Corporate Finance Manager
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report summarises changes made to the Capital Programme 2023/24 since it was set in January 2023 to the end of Month 6 (September 2023), along with expenditure incurred to date and the projected outturn.

The Capital Programme has seen a net decrease in budget of (£4.422m) during the period which comprises of:-

- Net budget decrease in the programme of (£1.342m) (See Table 2 - Council Fund (CF) £4.326m, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) (£5.668m);
- Net Carry Forward to 2024/25 approved at Month 4 of (£3.080m)

Actual expenditure was £27.517m (See Table 3).

Capital receipts received in the second quarter of 2023/24 total £0.043m. This provides a revised projected surplus in the Capital Programme at Month 6 of £1.996m (from a Month 4 funding surplus of £1.953m) for the 2023/24 – 2025/26 Capital Programme, prior to the realisation of additional capital receipts and/or other funding sources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

	Cabinet are requested to:
1	Approve the overall report.
2	Approve the carry forward adjustments, as set out at 1.12.
3	Approve the additional allocations, as set out in 1.14.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE 2023/24 CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING POSITION – MONTH 6
1.01	Background Council approved a Council Fund (CF) Capital Programme of £33.041m and a Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme of £29.457m for 2023/24 at its meeting on 24 January 2023.
1.02	For presentational purposes the Capital Programme is shown as a whole, with sub-totals for the Council Fund and HRA. The HRA programme is 'ring fenced' and can only be used for HRA purposes.
1.03	Changes since Budget approval Table 1 below sets out how the programme has changed during 2023/24. More detailed cumulative information relating to each Portfolio is provided in Appendix A:-

Table 1

REVISED PROGRAMME	Original Budget 2023/24	Carry Forward from 2022/23	2023/24 Previously Reported		Changes - This Period	Revised Budget 2023/24
			Changes	Carry Forward to 2024/25		
			£m	£m		
People & Resources	0.350	0.150	(0.058)	0.000	(0.055)	0.387
Governance	0.357	0.294	0.530	(0.143)	0.055	1.093
Education & Youth	3.696	8.462	1.087	(0.197)	3.715	16.763
Social Services	3.680	0.171	2.210	(1.337)	0.000	4.724
Planning, Environment & Economy	0.040	1.018	1.232	(0.508)	0.299	2.081
Streetscene & Transportation	1.500	5.756	9.398	(0.046)	0.294	16.902
Housing and Communities	1.660	0.186	0.986	0.000	0.001	2.833
Capital Programme and Assets	21.758	1.992	0.681	(0.849)	0.017	23.599
Council Fund Total	33.041	18.029	16.066	(3.080)	4.326	68.382
HRA Total	29.457	0.000	2.491	0.000	(5.668)	26.280
Programme Total	62.498	18.029	18.557	(3.080)	(1.342)	94.662

1.04

Carry Forward from 2022/23

Carry forward sums from 2022/23 to 2023/24, totalling £18.029m (all CF), were approved as a result of the quarterly monitoring reports presented to Cabinet during 2022/23.

1.05

Changes during this period

Funding changes during this period have resulted in a net decrease in the programme total of (£1.342m) (CF £4.326m, HRA (£5.668m)). A summary of the changes, detailing major items, is shown in Table 2 below:-

Table 2

CHANGES DURING THIS PERIOD		
	Para	£m
<u>COUNCIL FUND</u>		
Increases		
Schools Modernisation	1.06	2.680
Education - General	1.07	1.035
Other Aggregate Increases		0.858
		4.573
Decreases		
Other Aggregate Decreases		(0.247)
		(0.247)
Total		4.326
<u>HRA</u>		
Decreases		
SHARP Programme	1.08	(5.668)
		(5.668)
Total		(1.342)

1.06 Introduction of grant funding from Welsh Government for Ysgol Croes Atti Flint, to support the new Welsh Medium Primary School as part of the school modernisation programme.

1.07 Introduction of Welsh Government grant funding to support learning environments for those with Additional Learning Needs and increase accessibility to promote inclusive practice, support learning and pupil wellbeing.

1.08 Re-profiling of prudential borrowing for the Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme (SHARP), due to schemes progressing into 2024/25.

1.09 **Capital Expenditure compared to Budget**
 Expenditure incurred as at Month 6, across the whole of the Capital Programme was £27.517m. The breakdown of expenditure is analysed in Table 3, along with the percentage spend against budget.
 This shows that 29.07% of the budget has been spent (CF 25.81%, HRA 37.56%). Corresponding figures for Month 6 2022/23 were 24.43% (CF 17.21%, HRA 41.27%).

1.10 The table also shows a projected underspend (pending carry forward and other adjustments) of £1.213m on the Council Fund and a break-even position on the HRA.

Table 3

EXPENDITURE	Revised Budget	Cumulative Expenditure Month 6	Percentage Spend v Budget	Projected Outturn	Variance Budget v Outturn (Under)/Over
	£m	£m	%	£m	£m
People & Resources	0.387	0.000	0.00	0.387	0.000
Governance	1.093	0.611	55.90	1.081	(0.012)
Education & Youth	16.763	3.571	21.30	16.433	(0.330)
Social Services	4.724	0.773	16.36	4.724	0.000
Planning, Environment & Economy	2.081	0.249	11.97	1.864	(0.217)
Streetscene & Transportation	16.902	4.649	27.51	16.402	(0.500)
Housing & Communities	2.833	1.156	40.80	2.833	0.000
Capital Programme & Assets	23.599	6.637	28.12	23.445	(0.154)
Council Fund Total	68.382	17.646	25.81	67.169	(1.213)
Disabled Adaptations	1.100	0.445	40.45	1.100	0.000
Energy Schemes	5.235	2.218	42.37	5.235	0.000
Major Works	1.714	0.682	39.79	1.714	0.000
Accelerated Programmes	0.595	0.146	24.54	0.595	0.000
WHQS Improvements	13.436	5.577	41.51	13.436	0.000
Modernisation / Improvements	2.200	0.000	0.00	2.200	0.000
SHARP Programme	2.000	0.803	40.15	2.000	0.000
Housing Revenue Account Total	26.280	9.871	37.56	26.280	0.000
Programme Total	94.662	27.517	29.07	93.449	(1.213)

1.11 Details of the variances for individual programme areas are listed in Appendix B, which includes the reasons, and remedial actions which may be required, where those variances exceed +/- 10% of the revised budget. In addition, where carry forward into 2024/25 has been identified, this is also included in the narrative.

1.12 **Carry Forward into 2024/25**
During the quarter, carry forward requirements of £1.213m (all CF) have been identified which reflects reviewed spending plans across all programme areas. These amounts can be split into two areas, those required to meet the cost of programme works and/or retention payments in 2024/25.

1.13 Information relating to each programme area is contained in Appendix B and summarised in Table 4 below:

Table 4

CARRY FORWARD INTO 2024/25					Total
	Month 4	Reversed	Sub Total	Month 6	
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Governance	0.143	0.000	0.143	0.012	0.155
Education & Youth	0.197	0.000	0.197	0.330	0.527
Social Services	1.337	0.000	1.337	0.000	1.337
Planning, Environment & Economy	0.508	0.000	0.508	0.217	0.725
Streetscene & Transportation	0.046	0.000	0.046	0.500	0.546
Capital Programme & Assets	0.898	(0.049)	0.849	0.154	1.003
Council Fund	3.129	(0.049)	3.080	1.213	4.293
TOTAL	3.129	(0.049)	3.080	1.213	4.293

1.14

Additional Allocations

Additional allocations have been identified in the programme in this quarter as follows:

- Registry Office - £0.023m. Following a recent inspection, new record cabinets are required in order to ensure compliance with statutory and legal standards in order to meet our responsibility for the safe custody of registrations within Flintshire.

This can be funded from within the current 'headroom' provision.

1.15

Savings

No savings have been identified in the programme in this quarter.

1.16

Funding of 2023/24 Approved Schemes

The position at Month 6 is summarised in Table 5 below for the three year Capital Programme between 2023/24 – 2025/26:-

Table 5

FUNDING OF APPROVED SCHEMES 2023/24 - 2025/26		
	£m	£m
Balance carried forward from 2022/23		(0.937)
Increases		
Surplus in 2023/24 to 2025/26 Budget	(0.365)	
		<u>(0.365)</u>
Decreases		
Actual In year receipts	(0.694)	<u>(0.694)</u>
Funding - (Available)/Shortfall		(1.996)

1.17 Capital receipts received in the second quarter of 2023/24, total £0.043m. This provides a revised projected surplus in the Capital Programme at Month 6 of £1.996m (from a Month 4 funding surplus of £1.953m) for the 2023/24 – 2025/26 Capital Programme, prior to the realisation of additional capital receipts and/or other funding sources.

1.18 **Investment in County Towns**
At its meeting on 12th December 2017, the Council approved a Notice of Motion relating to the reporting of investment in county towns. The extent and format of the reporting was agreed at the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 14th June 2018.

1.19 Table 6 below shows a summary of the 2022/23 actual expenditure, the 2023/24 revised budget and budgets for future years as approved by Council at its meeting of 24th January, 2023. Further detail can be found in Appendix C, including details of the 2023/24 spend to Month 6.

Table 6

INVESTMENT IN COUNTY TOWNS			
	2022/23	2023/24	2023 -
	Actual	Revised	2025
	£m	Budget	Budget
		£m	£m
Buckley / Penyffordd	0.745	5.065	9.288
Connah's Quay / Shotton	2.225	1.428	0.000
Flint / Bagillt	2.135	6.810	16.541
Holywell / Caerwys / Mostyn	4.195	1.246	0.000
Mold / Treuddyn / Cilcain	5.713	24.413	22.079
Queensferry / Hawarden / Sealand	0.520	2.669	0.000
Saltney / Broughton / Hope	1.250	0.298	16.000
Unallocated / To Be Confirmed	0.980	6.443	16.600
Total	17.763	48.372	80.508

1.20 The inclusion of actuals for 2022/23 and approved schemes for future years allows a slightly fuller picture of investment plans. However, expenditure which has occurred in years prior to 2022/23 has not been included, and the expenditure and budgets reported should be considered in that context.

1.21 There are two significant factors which increase allocations to areas, which are homes developed under SHARP, and new or remodelled schools. The impact of these can be seen in the detail shown in Appendix C.

1.22 Some expenditure cannot yet be allocated to specific towns as schemes are not yet fully developed or are generic in nature and not easily identifiable to one of the seven areas. As such schemes are identified the expenditure will be allocated to the relevant area.

1.23 Information on the split between internal and external funding can be found in Appendix C.

1.24 In addition to the information contained in Appendix C, there is also considerable capital expenditure on the HRA Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS), which was originally outside the scope of this analysis. A summary is provided in Table 7 below, albeit using a slightly different catchment area basis.

Table 7

WHQS Programme		
	2022/23 Actual £m	2023/24 Budget £m
Holywell	3.380	4.210
Flint	1.450	1.390
Deeside & Saltney	2.250	1.390
Buckley	1.060	1.390
Mold	3.000	3.451
Connah's Quay & Shotton	1.970	1.390
Total	13.110	13.221

1.25 The 2021 Prudential Code introduced a new requirement that monitoring of prudential indicators should be reported quarterly as part of capital monitoring. This update is provided in Appendix D.

2.00 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

2.01 Financial implications - As set out in the body of the report.

2.02 Personnel implications - None directly as a result of this report.

3.00 IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

3.01 The legacy impacts of the pandemic along with the supply and demand of materials, leading to cost increases, higher tender prices and project delays will continue to be monitored closely during the year. Due to the re-profiling of schemes from 2022/23 and resources available to manage and deliver schemes, the levels of planned expenditure in 2023/24 may be affected, resulting in a high level of carry forward requests to re-phase budgets into the 2024/25 programme.

Grants received will also to be closely monitored to ensure that expenditure is incurred within the terms and conditions of the grant. The capital team will work with project leads to report potential risks of achieving spend within timescales and assist in liaising with the grant provider.

The Council has a prudent policy of allocating its own capital receipts to fund capital projects only when receipts are received rather than when it is anticipated the receipt will be received, and this position continues to be the case. In line with current policy no allowance has been made for these receipts in reporting the Council's capital funding position.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	No consultation is required as a direct result of this report.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix A: Capital Programme - Changes during 2023/24
5.02	Appendix B: Variances
5.03	Appendix C: Investment in Towns
5.04	Appendix D: Prudential Indicators – Quarter 2 2023/24

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Capital Programme monitoring papers 2023/24.

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: Chris Taylor, Strategic Finance Manager Telephone: 01352 703309 E-mail: christopher.taylor@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	<p>Budget Re-profiling: Capital schemes are very dynamic and a number of factors can influence their timing and funding. Budget re-profiling assures that the correct resources are available in the correct accounting period to finance the actual level of expenditure.</p> <p>Capital Expenditure: Expenditure on the acquisition of non-current assets or expenditure which extends the useful life of an existing asset</p> <p>Capital Programme: The Council's financial plan covering capital schemes and expenditure proposals for the current year and a number of future years. It also includes estimates of the capital resources available to finance the programme.</p> <p>Capital Receipts: Receipts (in excess of £10,000) realised from the disposal of assets.</p> <p>Carry Forward: Carry forward occurs when schemes due to be completed in a given financial year are delayed until a subsequent year. In this case the relevant funding is carried forward to meet the delayed, contractually committed expenditure.</p>

CERA: Capital Expenditure charged to Revenue Account. The Council is allowed to use its revenue resources to fund capital expenditure. However the opposite is not permissible.

Council Fund (CF): The fund to which all the Council's revenue and capital expenditure is charged.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA): The fund to which all the Council's revenue and capital expenditure relating to its housing stock is charged.

MRA: Major Repairs Allowance. A general capital grant from WG for HRA purposes.

Non-current Asset: A resource controlled (but not necessarily owned) by the Council, from which economic benefits or service potential are expected to flow to the Council for more than 12 months.

Section 106: Monies are received from developers/contractors pursuant to Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990. These sums are available for use once the relevant terms of the individual agreement have been met. The monies are most commonly used for educational enhancement, play areas, highways and affordable housing.

Target Hardening: Measures taken to prevent unauthorised access to Council sites.

Unhypothecated Supported Borrowing (USB), commonly referred to as Supported Borrowing - Each year Welsh Government provide Councils with a Supported Borrowing allocation. Councils borrow to fund capital expenditure equivalent to that annual allocation, Welsh Government then include funding to cover the revenue costs associated with the borrowing for future years within the Revenue Support Grant. The Council decides how this funding is spent.

Unsupported (Prudential) Borrowing: Borrowing administered under the Prudential Code, whereby Authorities can set their own policies on acceptable levels and types of borrowing. The Prudential Framework allows Authorities to take out loans in response to overall cash flow forecasts and other factors provided they can show that the borrowing is to meet planned capital expenditure in the current year or the next three years.

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CAPITAL PROGRAMME - CHANGES DURING 2023/24

	Original Budget 2023/24	Carry Forward from 2022/23	2023/24 Previously Reported		Changes (Current)	Revised Budget 2023/24
			Changes	Carry Forward to 2024/25		
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Council Fund :						
People & Resources						
'Headroom'	0.350	0.150	(0.058)	0.000	(0.055)	0.387
	0.350	0.150	(0.058)	0.000	(0.055)	0.387
Governance						
Information Technology	0.357	0.294	0.530	(0.143)	0.055	1.093
	0.357	0.294	0.530	(0.143)	0.055	1.093
Education & Youth						
Education - General	0.650	6.999	0.936	(0.197)	1.035	9.423
Primary Schools	1.000	0.813	(0.524)	0.000	0.005	1.294
Schools Modernisation	1.546	0.000	(0.651)	0.000	2.680	3.575
Secondary Schools	0.000	0.560	1.326	0.000	(0.005)	1.881
Special Education	0.500	0.090	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.590
	3.696	8.462	1.087	(0.197)	3.715	16.763
Social Services						
Services to Older People	1.250	0.097	1.000	(1.337)	0.000	1.010
Learning Disability	2.430	0.000	0.031	0.000	0.000	2.461
Children's Services	0.000	0.074	1.179	0.000	0.000	1.253
	3.680	0.171	2.210	(1.337)	0.000	4.724
Planning, Environment & Economy						
Closed Landfill Sites	0.000	0.250	0.000	(0.250)	0.000	0.000
Engineering	0.000	0.383	0.000	(0.258)	0.000	0.125
Energy Services	0.000	0.000	0.207	0.000	0.142	0.349
Ranger Services	0.000	0.035	0.105	0.000	0.000	0.140
Town Centre Regeneration	0.000	0.320	0.858	0.000	0.188	1.366
Private Sector Renewal/Improv't	0.040	0.030	0.062	0.000	(0.031)	0.101
	0.040	1.018	1.232	(0.508)	0.299	2.081
Streetscene & Transportation						
Waste Services	0.000	3.805	0.217	0.000	0.000	4.022
Cemeteries	0.000	0.259	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.259
Highways	1.500	1.640	0.867	0.000	(0.156)	3.851
Local Transport Grant	0.000	0.006	8.314	0.000	0.450	8.770
Solar Farms	0.000	0.046	0.000	(0.046)	0.000	0.000
	1.500	5.756	9.398	(0.046)	0.294	16.902

	Original Budget 2023/24	Carry Forward from 2022/23	2023/24 Previously Reported		Changes (Current)	Revised Budget 2023/24
			Changes	Carry Forward to 2024/25		
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Housing & Communities						
Affordable Housing	0.000	0.000	0.700	0.000	0.000	0.700
Disabled Facilities Grants	1.660	0.186	0.286	0.000	0.001	2.133
	1.660	0.186	0.986	0.000	0.001	2.833
Capital Programme & Assets						
Administrative Buildings	0.663	0.325	0.034	(0.028)	0.000	0.994
Community Asset Transfers	0.000	0.597	0.227	(0.548)	0.000	0.276
Leisure Centres & Libraries	0.395	0.419	0.259	(0.245)	0.000	0.828
Play Areas	0.200	0.376	0.161	0.000	0.017	0.754
Theatr Clwyd	20.500	0.275	0.000	(0.028)	0.000	20.747
	21.758	1.992	0.681	(0.849)	0.017	23.599
Housing Revenue Account :						
Disabled Adaptations	1.100	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.100
Energy Schemes	2.311	0.000	2.924	0.000	0.000	5.235
Major Works	1.836	0.000	(0.122)	0.000	0.000	1.714
Accelerated Programmes	1.121	0.000	(0.526)	0.000	0.000	0.595
WHQS Improvements	13.221	0.000	0.215	0.000	0.000	13.436
Modernisation / Improvements	2.200	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.200
SHARP Programme	7.668	0.000	0.000	0.000	(5.668)	2.000
	29.457	0.000	2.491	0.000	(5.668)	26.280
Totals :						
Council Fund	33.041	18.029	16.066	(3.080)	4.326	68.382
Housing Revenue Account	29.457	0.000	2.491	0.000	(5.668)	26.280
Grand Total	62.498	18.029	18.557	(3.080)	(1.342)	94.662

PEOPLE & RESOURCES

Capital Budget Monitoring 2023/24 - Month 6

Programme Area	Total Budget £m	Actual Exp. £m	Projected Outturn £m	Variance (Under)/ Over £m	Variance %age %	Variance Prev Qtr £m	Cause of Variance	Action Required	Comments
'Headroom'	0.387	0.000	0.387	0.000	0	0.000		Corporate provision - to be allocated as requested and approved.	Any unspent allocation will be the subject of a carry forward request at outturn.
Total	0.387	0.000	0.387	0.000	0	0.000			

GOVERNANCE

Capital Budget Monitoring 2023/24 - Month 6

Programme Area	Total Budget £m	Actual Exp. £m	Projected Outturn £m	Variance (Under)/ Over £m	Variance %age %	Variance Prev Qtr £m	Cause of Variance	Action Required	Comments
Information Technology	1.093	0.611	1.081	(0.012)	-1	(0.143)	Laptop replacement scheme to continue into 2024/25.	Carry Forward - Request approval to move funding of £0.012m to 2024/25.	
Total	1.093	0.611	1.081	(0.012)	-1	(0.143)			

Variance = Budget v Outturn

EDUCATION & YOUTH

Capital Budget Monitoring 2023/24 - Month 6

Programme Area	Total Budget £m	Actual Exp. £m	Projected Outturn £m	Variance (Under)/ Over £m	Variance %age %	Variance Prev Qtr £m	Cause of Variance	Action Required	Comments
Education - General	9.423	2.510	9.423	0.000	0	(0.197)			
Primary Schools	1.294	0.472	1.294	0.000	0	0.000			
Schools Modernisation	3.575	0.088	3.575	0.000	0	0.000			
Secondary Schools	1.881	0.506	1.881	0.000	0	0.000			
Special Education	0.590	(0.005)	0.260	(0.330)	-56	0.000	DDA expenditure now likely cross over financial years fall into 2024/25.	Carry Forward - Request approval to move funding of £0.330m to 2024/25.	
Total	16.763	3.571	16.433	(0.330)	-2	(0.197)			

Variance = Budget v Outturn

SOCIAL SERVICES

Capital Budget Monitoring 2023/24 - Month 6

Programme Area	Total Budget £m	Actual Exp. £m	Projected Outturn £m	Variance (Under)/ Over £m	Variance %age %	Variance Prev Qtr £m	Cause of Variance	Action Required	Comments
Services to Older People	1.010	0.238	1.010	0.000	0	(1.337)			
Learning Disability Services	2.461	(0.010)	2.461	0.000	0	0.000			
Children's Services	1.253	0.545	1.253	0.000	0	0.000			
Total	4.724	0.773	4.724	0.000	0	(1.337)			

Variance = Budget v Projected Outturn

PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY

Capital Budget Monitoring 2023/24 - Month 6

Programme Area	Total Budget £m	Actual Exp. £m	Projected Outturn £m	Variance (Under)/ Over £m	Variance %age %	Variance Prev Qtr £m	Cause of Variance	Action Required	Comments
Closed Landfill Sites	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0	(0.250)			
Engineering	0.125	0.000	0.027	(0.098)	-78	(0.258)	Works at Greenfield reservoir are to be determined and scheduled in 2024/25 following an inspection.	Carry Forward - Request approval to move funding of £0.098m to 2024/25.	
Energy Services	0.349	(0.155)	0.349	0.000	0	0.000			
Ranger Services	0.140	0.083	0.140	0.000	0	0.000			
Townscape Heritage Initiatives	1.366	0.288	1.247	(0.119)	-9	0.000	The Historic Building Repair Grant expenditure is incurred as and when suitable grant applications are received, £0.089m. The Shotton Green Infrastructure works are to progress into 2024/25, £0.030m.	Carry Forward - Request approval to move funding of £0.119m to 2024/25.	
Private Sector Renewal/Improvement	0.101	0.033	0.101	0.000	0	0.000			
Total	2.081	0.249	1.864	(0.217)	-10	(0.508)			

Variance = Budget v Outturn

STREETSCENE & TRANSPORTATION

Capital Budget Monitoring 2023/24 - Month 6

Programme Area	Total Budget £m	Actual Exp. £m	Projected Outturn £m	Variance (Under)/ Over £m	Variance %age %	Variance Prev Qtr £m	Cause of Variance	Action Required	Comments
Waste Services	4.022	0.000	4.022	0.000	0	0.000			
Cemeteries	0.259	0.000	0.259	0.000	0	0.000			
Highways	3.851	0.244	3.351	(0.500)	-13	0.000	Decarbonisation of fleet vehicles project to progress into 2024/25.	Carry Forward - Request approval to move funding of £0.500m to 2024/25.	
Local Transport Grant	8.770	4.405	8.770	0.000	0	0.000			
Solar Farms	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		(0.046)			
Total	16.902	4.649	16.402	(0.500)	-3	(0.046)			

Variance = Budget v Outturn

HOUSING & COMMUNITIES

Capital Budget Monitoring 2023/24 - Month 6

Programme Area	Total Budget	Actual Exp.	Projected Outturn	Variance (Under)/ Over	Variance %age	Variance Prev Qtr	Cause of Variance	Action Required	Comments
	£m	£m	£m	£m	%	£m			
Affordable Housing	0.700	0.000	0.700	0.000	0	0.000			
Disabled Facilities Grants	2.133	1.156	2.133	0.000	0	0.000			DFG spend is customer driven and volatile.
Total	2.833	1.156	2.833	0.000	0	0.000			

Variance = Budget v Outturn

CAPITAL PROGRAMME & ASSETS

Capital Budget Monitoring 2023/24 - Month 6

Programme Area	Total Budget	Actual Exp.	Projected Outturn	Variance (Under)/ Over	Variance %age	Variance Prev Qtr	Cause of Variance	Action Required	Comments
	£m	£m	£m	£m	%	£m			
Administrative Buildings	0.994	0.160	0.970	(0.024)	-2	(0.028)	Expenditure is incurred as and when unauthorised encampments occur which prompt target hardening vulnerable locations.	Carry Forward - Request approval to move funding of £0.024m to 2024/25.	
Community Asset Transfers	0.276	0.276	0.276	0.000	0	(0.548)			
Leisure Centres & Libraries	0.828	0.517	0.828	0.000	0	(0.245)			
Play Areas	0.754	0.242	0.624	(0.130)	-17	0.000	Works to progress into 2024/25.	Carry Forward - Request approval to move funding of £0.130m into 2024/25.	Playarea spend is volatile and is driven by the replacement rolling programme.
Theatr Clwyd	20.747	5.442	20.747	0.000	0	(0.028)			
Total	23.599	6.637	23.445	(0.154)	-1	(0.849)			

Variance = Budget v Outturn

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

Capital Budget Monitoring 2023/24 - Month 6

Programme Area	Total Budget £m	Actual Exp. £m	Projected Outturn £m	Variance (Under)/ Over £m	Variance %age %	Variance Prev Qtr £m	Cause of Variance	Action Required	Comments
Disabled Adaptations	1.100	0.445	1.100	0.000	0	0.000			
Energy Services	5.235	2.218	5.235	0.000	0	0.000			
Major Works	1.714	0.682	1.714	0.000	0	0.000			
Accelerated Programmes	0.595	0.146	0.595	0.000	0	0.000			
WHQS Improvements	13.436	5.577	13.436	0.000	0	0.000			
Modernisation/Improvements	2.200	0.000	2.200	0.000	0	0.000			
SHARP	2.000	0.803	2.000	0.000	0	0.000			
Total	26.280	9.871	26.280	0.000	0	0.000			

Variance = Budget v Outturn

SUMMARY

Capital Budget Monitoring 2023/24 - Month 6

Programme Area	Total Budget £m	Actual Exp. £m	Projected Outturn £m	Variance (Under)/ Over £m	Variance %age %	Variance Prev Qtr £m	Cause of Variance	Action Required	Comments
People & Resources	0.387	0.000	0.387	0.000	0	0.000			
Governance	1.093	0.611	1.081	(0.012)	-1	(0.143)			
Education & Youth	16.763	3.571	16.433	(0.330)	-2	(0.197)			
Social Services	4.724	0.773	4.724	0.000	0	(1.337)			
Planning, Environment & Economy	2.081	0.249	1.864	(0.217)	-10	(0.508)			
Streetscene & Transportation	16.902	4.649	16.402	(0.500)	-3	(0.046)			
Housing & Communities	2.833	1.156	2.833	0.000	0	0.000			
Capital Programme & Assets	23.599	6.637	23.445	(0.154)	-1	(0.849)			
Sub Total - Council Fund	68.382	17.646	67.169	(1.213)	-2	(3.080)			
Housing Revenue Account	26.280	9.871	26.280	0.000	0	0.000			
Total	94.662	27.517	93.449	(1.213)	-1	(3.080)			

Variance = Budget v Outturn

INVESTMENT IN COUNTY TOWNS - 2022/23 ACTUAL SPEND

APPENDIX C

TOWN FUNDING	22/23 ACTUAL £000	BUCKLEY		CONNAH'S QUAY		FLINT		HOLYWELL		MOLD		QUEENSFERRY		SALTNEY		UNALLOCATED		TOTALS			
		Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Total £000	
EXPENDITURE																					
HOUSING - HRA																					
SHARP	4,278	32		402		255		3,456		10		33				90		4,278	0	4,278	
EDUCATION & YOUTH																					
Ysgol Glanrafon	428									332	96							332	96	428	
Ysgol Croes Atti, Flint	431					128	303											128	303	431	
Ysgol Croes Atti, Shotton	556			297	259													297	259	556	
SOCIAL SERVICES																					
Ty Nyth, Children's Residential Care	1,408									812	596							812	596	1,408	
Croes Atti Newydd Residential Care Home, Flint	913					913												913	0	913	
Relocation of Tri-Ffordd Day Service provision	239												239					239	0	239	
PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY																					
Solar PV Farms	759			759														759	0	759	
STREETSCENE & TRANSPORTION																					
Improvements to Standard Yard Waste Transfer Station	249		249															0	249	249	
Highways Maintenance	2,312	331		309				545		595		286		68		179		2,313	0	2,313	
Transport Grant	2,992		133		199	15	521	11	183		75		201	70	873		711	96	2,896	2,992	
CAPITAL PROGRAMME & ASSETS																					
Theatr Clwyd - Redevelopment	3,197										3,197							0	3,197	3,197	
	17,762	363	382	1,767	458	1,311	824	4,012	183	1,749	3,964	319	201	377	873	269	711	10,167	7,596	17,763	
AREAS TOTAL			745		2,225		2,135		4,195		5,713		520		1,250		980				

INVESTMENT IN COUNTY TOWNS - 2023/24 REVISED BUDGET

APPENDIX C (Cont)

TOWN FUNDING	REVISED BUDGET £000	BUCKLEY		CONNAH'S QUAY		FLINT		HOLYWELL		MOLD		QUEENSFERRY		SALTNEY		UNALLOCATED		TOTALS			
		Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Total £000	
EXPENDITURE																					
HOUSING - HRA																					
SHARP	2,000						14		736								1,250		0	2,000	2,000
EDUCATION & YOUTH																					
Ysgol Croes Atti, Flint	5,496						5,496												0	5,496	5,496
Ysgol Penyffordd Extension	882	882																	882	0	882
SOCIAL SERVICES																					
Croes Atti Newydd Residential Care Home, Flint	1,000						1,000												0	1,000	1,000
Relocation of Tri-Ffordd Day Service provision	2,461									2,461									2,461	0	2,461
STREETSCENE & TRANSPORTION																					
Improvements to Standard Yard Waste Transfer Station	3,622	3,405	217																3,405	217	3,622
Highways Maintenance	2,694				43				16					11			2,613		2,694	0	2,694
Transport Grant	8,770		561		1,385		300	6	488		505		2,658		287	111	2,469	117	8,653	8,770	
CAPITAL PROGRAMME & ASSETS																					
Theatr Clwyd - Redevelopment	20,747									8,747	12,000								8,747	12,000	20,747
HOUSING & COMMUNITIES																					
Attractable Housing	700									700									700	0	700
	48,372	4,287	778	43	1,385	0	6,810	22	1,224	11,908	12,505	11	2,658	11	287	2,724	3,719	19,006	29,366	48,372	
AREA TOTAL			5,065		1,428		6,810		1,246		24,413		2,669		298		6,443				

AREA TOTAL

5,065

1,428

6,810

1,246

24,413

2,669

298

6,443

INVESTMENT IN COUNTY TOWNS - 2023/24- MONTH 6

APPENDIX C (Cont)

TOWN FUNDING	ACTUAL TO DATE £000	BUCKLEY		CONNAH'S QUAY		FLINT		HOLYWELL		MOLD		QUEENSFERRY		SALTNEY		UNALLOCATED		TOTALS			
		Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Total £000	
EXPENDITURE																					
HOUSING - HRA																					
SHARP	804						14		736								54		0	804	804
EDUCATION & YOUTH																					
Ysgol Croes Atti, Flint	84						84												0	84	84
Ysgol Penyffordd Extension	111	111																	111	0	111
SOCIAL SERVICES																					
Croes Atti Newydd Residential Care Home, Flint	238						238												0	238	238
STREETSCENE & TRANSPORTION																					
Highways Maintenance	227			43				16				11		11		146			227	0	227
Transport Grant	4,405				1,326		71	2	15		278		2,396		178		139		2	4,403	4,405
CAPITAL PROGRAMME & ASSETS																					
Theatr Clwyd - Redevelopment	5,441										5,441								0	5,441	5,441
	11,310	111	0	43	1,326	0	407	18	751	0	5,719	11	2,396	11	178	146	193	340	10,970	11,310	
AREA TOTAL				111	1,369	407	769	5,719	2,407	189	339										

INVESTMENT IN COUNTY TOWNS - 2024- 2026 BUDGET

APPENDIX C (Cont)

TOWN FUNDING	FUTURE BUDGET £000	BUCKLEY		CONNAH'S QUAY		FLINT		HOLYWELL		MOLD		QUEENSFERRY		SALTNEY		UNALLOCATED		TOTALS			
		Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Internal £000	External £000	Total £000			
EXPENDITURE																					
EDUCATION & YOUTH																					
Joint Archive Facility, FCC and DCC	3,079									3,079									3,079	0	3,079
Ysgol Croes Atti, Flint	10,404					4,672	5,732												4,672	5,732	10,404
Drury County Primary	4,800	1,680	3,120																1,680	3,120	4,800
Elfed High School	4,488	1,571	2,917																1,571	2,917	4,488
Sallney/Broughton Area	16,000													5,600	10,400				5,600	10,400	16,000
SOCIAL SERVICES																					
Croes Atti Newydd Residential Care Home, Flint	6,137					6,137													6,137	0	6,137
STREETSCENE & TRANSPORTION																					
Highways Asset Management Plan	3,000																3,000		3,000	0	3,000
CAPITAL PROGRAMME & ASSETS																					
Theatr Clwyd - Redevelopment	19,000									19,000									0	19,000	19,000
HOUSING & COMMUNITIES																					
Affordable Housing	13,600																13,600		13,600	0	13,600
	80,508	3,251	6,037	0	0	10,809	5,732	0	0	3,079	19,000	0	0	5,600	10,400	16,600	0	39,339	41,169	80,508	
AREA TOTAL			9,288		0		16,541		0		22,079		0		16,000	16,600					

Prudential Indicators Q2 2023/24

The Council measures and manages its capital expenditure, borrowing and commercial and service investments with references to the following indicators.

It is now a requirement of the CIPFA Prudential Code that these are reported on a quarterly basis.

Table 1 - Capital Expenditure in £ millions: The Council has undertaken and is planning capital expenditure as summarised below. The increase in forecasted expenditure between 2022/23 to 2023/24, in the main relate to works at Theatr Clwyd and the Band B schools programme.

	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Budget *	2025/26 Budget
Council Fund	30.016	67.169	28.626	29.737
Housing Revenue Account	24.997	26.280	29.846	28.509
Total	55.013	93.449	58.472	58.246

* £3.3m of capital expenditure in 2024/25 arises from a change in the accounting for leases and does not represent cash expenditure.

Table 2 - Capital Financing Requirement in £ millions: The Council's cumulative outstanding amount of debt finance is measured by the capital financing requirement (CFR). This increases with new debt-financed capital expenditure and reduces with MRP and capital receipts used to replace debt.

	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Budget *	2025/26 Budget
Council Fund	218.939	234.594	322.415	330.272
Housing Revenue Account	133.623	135.942	142.334	148.594
Total	352.562	370.536	464.749	478.866

* £75m of the CFR increase in 2024/25 arises from a change in the accounting for leases.

Table 3 - Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement in £ millions: Statutory guidance is that debt should remain below the capital financing requirement, except in the short term. The Authority has complied and expects to continue to comply with this requirement in the medium term as is shown below.

	2022/23 Actuals	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Budget	2025/26 Budget
Debt (Incl Leases)	297.951	314.336	419.803	432.232
Capital Financing Requirement	352.562	370.536	464.749	478.866

Table 4 - Debt and the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary in £ millions: The Council is legally obliged to set an affordable borrowing limit (also termed the Authorised Limit for external debt) each year. In line with statutory guidance, a lower “operational boundary” is also set as a warning level should debt approach the limit.

	2023/24 Limit	30.09.23 Actual
Operational Boundary - Total	403	298
Authorised Limit - Total	438	298

Since the operational boundary is a management tool for in-year monitoring it is not significant if the boundary is breached on occasions due to variations in cash flow, and this is not counted as a compliance failure.

Table 5 - Net Income from Commercial and Service Investments to Net Revenue Stream in £ millions: The Council’s income from commercial and service investments as a proportion of its net revenue stream has been and is expected to be as indicated below.

	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Budget	2025/26 Budget
Total net income from service and commercial investment	1.672	1.652	1.652	1.652
Proportion of net revenue stream	0.51%	0.47%	0.46%	0.46%

Table 6 - Proportion of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream in £ millions: Although capital expenditure is not charged directly to the revenue budget, interest payable on loans and MRP are charged to revenue.

The net annual charge is known as financing costs; this is compared to the net revenue stream i.e. the amount funded from Council Tax, business rates and general government grants.

	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Budget	2025/26 Budget
Council Fund	3.6%	3.9%	4.2%	4.4%
HRA	17.2%	17.7%	16.1%	16.8%



CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 21 st November 2023
Report Subject	Council Tax Base for 2024/25
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement
Report Author	Chief Officer (Governance)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Setting of the council tax base is integral to the revenue budget and council tax setting process for 2024/25. It allows the council, Police & Crime Commissioners Office for North Wales, and town/community councils to also calculate next year's council tax precept.

The base for has been calculated at 66,081 band 'D' equivalent properties, after considering the total number of properties that will be subject to council tax, including those that are subject to the council tax premium rates, less those which are exempt from council tax or where statutory household discounts apply.

Setting the tax base at 66,081 band 'D' equivalents also incorporates the continuation of the council tax premium rates of 75% for Long Term Empty properties and 100% for Second Homes. Overall, this represents growth in the tax base of 0.4% compared to the previous year, representing to an extra 266 band D equivalent properties.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Approve the tax base of 66,081 band D equivalent properties for tax setting purposes (as shown in Appendix 1) for the financial year 2024/25.
2	Continue to set a 'nil' discount for properties falling within any of the Prescribed Classes (A, B or C) and for this to apply to the whole of the county area.

3	For the purposes of setting the tax base, the base incorporates the continuation of the council tax premium scheme and setting the rates at 75% for Long Term Empty Properties and 100% for Second Homes.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE COUNCIL TAX BASE FOR 2024/25
1.01	The council fulfils the role of 'billing authority' for the collection of council tax and each year is required to set the council tax base for the following tax year.
1.02	The calculation of the base, expressed as an equivalent number of band 'D' properties, is always set as at the end of the calendar year which then allows the council, the Police & Crime Commissioner for North Wales and town/community councils to calculate the next financial year's council tax precepts.
1.03	Last year the council decided to use discretionary powers to charge a 75% council tax premium on long term empty homes and 100% a premium on second homes. The Tax base for 2024/25 continues to reflect those premium rates.
1.04	Once approved, the tax base calculations (before adjusting for the assumed losses in collection) are also supplied to Welsh Government and are then used for the calculation of entitlements to Revenue Support Grant and this figure will appear in The Local Government Finance Report (No 1) (Wales) 2024/25. This information will also be published in a national statistical release in January 2024.
1.05	The calculation of the tax base is the measure of the annual taxable capacity for all areas in the county, including the additional taxable capacity for the council tax premium, and is calculated in accordance with prescribed rules. The starting point for determining the base is the Valuation List supplied by the Valuation Office Agency. The total number of properties in each band is then reduced by exemptions, disregards, and discounts. Discounts include, for example, reductions for single-persons or students.
1.06	Due to housebuilding and good tax base management, reviewing discounts and exemptions the number of band D equivalent properties has increased by 0.4% or 266 properties.
1.07	The latest tax base has been calculated using a projected collection level of 98.8% - the same level as the previous years' tax base. In other words, setting an assumed collection level of 98.8% is the level at which the council may eventually collect from what is due to be paid - allowing for an overall provision of 1.2% for potential bad debts.
1.08	To determine the final level of the base, the council is required to determine what discount, if any, is awarded to owners of second homes

	(otherwise known as Prescribed Discount Class A and B properties) or long-term empty properties (Prescribed Discount Class C).
1.09	The council tax base for 2024/25 has also been calculated in line with current policies of not awarding discounts to any Prescribed Class. The fact that some properties are liable to pay the premium rates, effectively increases the size of the tax base by $\frac{3}{4}$ of a band D property for every band D long term empty property and an extra one band D property for every band D second home.
1.10	The continuation of the council tax discount scheme for Local Authority Foster Carers from April 2024 is not incorporated into the tax base since locally funded discretionary discounts or exemptions made by billing authorities under section 13a of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 are specifically excluded from the tax base calculations. This is because any decrease in the tax base made because of such discounts or exemptions would lead to an increase in entitlement to Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and hence to the discounts being funded by central government rather than local government.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	Setting the tax base is part of an annual process of determining council tax charges for the next financial year as part of the council's budget preparations.
2.02	The tax base is also used by the Police & Crime Commissioner and town/community council's to set their new council tax precepts, and which will be included in the 2024/25 bills sent to every council taxpayer.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	The council has a statutory duty to set a council tax base no later than 31st December and the proposed tax base is a complex calculation across 34 town and community areas requiring an accurate forecast for the next financial year of the number of chargeable properties after considering new builds, property exemptions and discount schemes, including those properties that are subject to the council tax premium scheme.
3.02	The tax base is based on current property data and discounts but includes a bad debt provision of 1.2% for non-collection, giving an eventual collection rate of 98.8%
3.03	The council tax base at 66,081 sets a Base at an accurate level to ensure, as far as possible, that a deficit does not occur in the Collection Fund.
3.04	Officers carefully track and monitor the tax base and Collection Fund performance and the results feed into corporate monthly budget monitoring

	and reporting processes.
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4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	None.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 to this report shows the breakdown of the tax base for 2024/25 by town and community area.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Government Finance Act 1992 – sections 22b(7) and 68 • Local Authorities (Calculation of Council tax base) (Wales) Regs 1995 • The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council tax base) (Wales) (Amendment) Regs 2016 • Council tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (Wales) Regs 2004 • Housing (Wales) Act 2014 – section 139

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: David Barnes, Revenues & Procurement Manager Telephone: 01352 703652 E-mail: david.barnes@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	<p>Revenue Support Grant: the annual amount of money the Council receives from Welsh Government to partly fund services, alongside revenue from Council tax and other income the Council raises locally. Councils can decide how to use this grant across services although the freedom to allocate according to local choice can be limited by guidelines set by Government.</p> <p>Tax base: is a measure of the Councils 'taxable capacity' taking into account the number of chargeable properties after exemptions and discounts.</p> <p>Chargeable Dwellings: are properties deemed to fall liable to Council tax which are listed in the Valuation List.</p>

Prescribed Discount Classes: Special rules apply to certain dwellings where no-one is resident. In these cases, a Welsh billing authority may decide to apply a lower rate of discount or, to apply no discount at all. These classes are:

- Class A – property which is unoccupied and furnished but where occupation is prohibited by law for over 28 days each year.
- Class B – property which is unoccupied and furnished and occupation is not prohibited by law.
- Class C – property which is unoccupied and substantially unfurnished beyond the normal exemption period.

Council tax premium: an additional amount of Council tax of up to 300% (a premium) can be charged by local authorities in Wales for property defined as either being second homes or long-term empty property.

For the purposes of charging a premium a long-term empty home is defined as a property which is unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for a continuous period of at least 1 year. A second home is defined as a dwelling which is not a person's sole or main residence and is substantially furnished. There are some exceptions from the Council tax premium, some of which are time limited.

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APPENDIX 1 - COUNCIL TAX BASE FOR 2024-25

Community	2024-25 Properties at Band 'D' Equivalent	2023-24 Properties at Band 'D' Equivalent
Argoed	2,543.48	2,547.81
Bagillt	1,471.65	1,470.89
Broughton & Bretton	2,752.50	2,760.78
Brynford	481.59	482.42
Buckley	6,775.24	6,744.92
Caerwys	640.09	650.69
Cilcain	754.61	751.83
Connahs Quay	6,229.16	6,218.73
Flint	5,062.87	5,041.16
Gwernaffield & Pantymwyn	1,025.88	1,032.13
Gwernymynydd	593.54	590.74
Halkyn	1,353.13	1,363.63
Hawarden	6,398.85	6,390.19
Higher Kinnerton	894.93	893.72
Holywell	3,427.02	3,403.23
Hope	1,836.54	1,853.48
Leeswood	861.65	857.00
Llanasa	2,037.05	2,023.97
Llanfynydd	884.86	892.45
Mold	4,518.45	4,508.13
Mostyn	738.22	716.22
Nannerch	281.80	286.96
Nercwys	306.80	304.71
Northop	1,587.78	1,584.76
Northop Hall	837.24	842.98
Penyffordd	2,293.99	2,220.75
Queensferry	708.85	712.04
Saltney	1,946.15	1,953.65
Sealand	1,554.24	1,458.01
Shotton	2,215.01	2,202.35
Trelawnyd & Gwaenysgor	427.18	425.04
Treuddyn	767.82	763.80
Whitford	1,182.63	1,178.07
Ysceifiog	690.20	687.76
Total Band 'D' Equivalent Properties	66,081.00	65,815.00

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CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 21 st November 2022
Report Subject	Shared Prosperity Fund
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy
Report Author	Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) will deliver £2.5bn of investment until March 2025 across the UK. The aim of the programme is “to build pride in place and increase life chances”. United Kingdom (UK) Government have allocated £126m to North Wales to deliver the programme between 2022/2023 and 2024/2025, with £11m allocated to Flintshire for the core programme.

Cabinet approved the criteria and process for allocating funding from the programme to projects on 22 November 2022 and gave delegated authority to the Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) and Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy to do so.

The report provides an update on the allocation of SPF funds to projects and what the expected outcomes of the programme are for Flintshire communities. In addition, the report sets out recommendations for how the residual SPF funding and any unallocated funding arising during the delivery of the programme should be allocated.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Members are asked to note the progress made in developing the SPF programme both regionally and locally.
2	Members are asked to review and approve the recommended approach to allocating any residual SPF money and delegate authority to the Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) and the Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy to operate this approach and to manage changes within the projects approved.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE SHARED PROSPERITY FUND
1.01	<p>The guidance for the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) programme was released on 13 April 2022. The programme is being managed by local government across the UK. A Regional Investment Strategy setting out the approach to delivering the programme in North Wales was submitted to UK Government on 1 August 2022 and approved in late 2022.</p>
1.02	<p>The Shared Prosperity Fund will deliver £2.5bn of investment until March 2025 across the UK. The aim of the programme is “to build pride in place and increase life chances”. The investment priorities set by UK Government are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community and Place - Strengthening our social fabric and fostering a sense of local pride and belonging. To build resilient and safe neighbourhoods. • Supporting Local Business - Creating jobs and boosting community cohesion by supporting local businesses. Promoting networking and collaboration and stimulating innovation and growth. Targeted support to help businesses grow - e.g. innovation, productivity, energy efficiency, low carbon and exporting. • People and Skills - Boosting core skills and support adults to progress in work. Supporting disadvantaged people to access the skills they need. Funding local skills needs and supplementing local adult skills provision. Reducing levels of economic inactivity and supporting those furthest from the labour market. <p>In addition to this “core” programme, there is funding to deliver the Multiply programme which is targeted solely towards accredited training for adult numeracy. There are ongoing discussions with UK Government, Welsh Government and the Welsh Local Government Association about this latter programme as the criteria are felt to be overly restrictive and adult numeracy is a devolved area with existing Welsh Government programmes already in place.</p>
1.03	<p>Gwynedd County Council act as the regional administrative body for the SPF programme through an agreement between the six Councils which establishes programme governance, operating procedures and risk management arrangements. The regional administrative body is responsible for the operation and financing of the programme through contracts with each project sponsor and with UK Government. Each Council retains decision-making power for the allocation of the SPF funds.</p>
	<p><u>Project selection process</u></p>
1.04	<p>Cabinet approved the criteria and process for allocating funding from the programme to projects on 22 November 2022 and gave delegated authority to the Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) and Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy to do so.</p>

1.05	<p>In preparation for the submission of the Investment Strategy, each local authority held consultation events locally to identify priorities for the programme. In addition, regional events were held to identify skills and employment priorities. The local priorities identified by stakeholders were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for town centre regeneration and street markets • Creating and improving green spaces and green infrastructure • Support for local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities • Investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups • Contributing to tackling cost of living crisis • Improving digital infrastructure • Improving tourist facilities • Support for business innovation, learning and decarbonisation • Supporting social businesses • Providing support to those furthest from labour market • Meeting local business skills needs • Support for young people post-Covid • Tackling mental ill-health <p>These priorities are consistent with the priorities of the Council Plan and the Flintshire Wellbeing Plan. Cabinet approved the use of these local priorities in selecting projects to receive support from the programme in Flintshire.</p>
1.06	<p>Each project proposal was asked to demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • its ability to meet the UK Government criteria for the programme and deliver outcomes from the programme framework; • fit with local needs and that it will complement and not duplicate existing local provision; • thorough engagement with local stakeholders and potential beneficiaries; • its contribution to meeting the strategic needs of the area as set out in the Council Plan, Wellbeing Plan and other relevant strategies; • deliverability within the short timeframe for the programme; • the experience and capability of the project sponsor; • an ability to identify and manage risks effectively; • value for money, match funding availability and confirmation that the project can't be funded elsewhere; • that UK Government subsidy control regulations can be complied with; and • that delivery will take account of equality duties, the Welsh language and environmental good practice. <p>Due to the relatively small scale of the programme in Flintshire large capital build projects, although technically eligible, were not supported. Capital expenditure as a smaller element within a wider revenue-based project was accommodated as were projects which disburse small capital grants or works across multiple communities, groups or businesses.</p>
1.07	<p>In line with UK Government expectations, each County has established a multi-agency partnership (or panel) to advise on the selection of projects</p>

	and the management of the programme. In Flintshire, Cabinet agreed that the existing Economic Recovery Group should act in this capacity and the membership and terms of reference of the group were amended to enable it to fulfil this role.
1.08	The process used to select projects for SPF support is summarised below. In advance of the process operating, the Council hosted a series of online briefing sessions for potential project applicants to enable them to ask questions and to be kept up to date with the programme's development. These were very well-attended.
1.09	<p>Stage One</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The application window opened 31st January 2023 with a closing deadline of 24th February. • All applications were submitted on-line using a portal hosted by the Isle of Anglesey Council and operated by the regional administrative body on behalf of all six local authorities. • Flintshire received 90 applications (including 3 duplicates) requesting an SPF total in the region of £30m compared to an available budget of £12.7m.. • Initial assessment and appraisal of Stage 1 applications was undertaken by Council officers using the criteria agreed by Cabinet. • Where relevant, applications were shared with other FCC services and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to ensure that there is no duplication with existing provision, to confirm whether any local engagement had taken place and clarify whether the project would address local needs. • Regional projects were circulated by the regional administrative body to regional stakeholders including the DWP, North Wales and Mersey Dee Business Council, the Regional Skills Partnership and Welsh Government for their opinion on strategic fit and potential duplication. • Several applications were rejected on the basis that they did not meet significant gateway criteria, for example, not meeting the minimum project value or implementing activity beyond the programme end date. • The Economic Recovery Group met in March 2023 to consider the project assessments and to recommend projects for refusal or further development. • The Chief Officer for Planning, Environment & Economy and Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy also then met in March to consider the recommendations of the Economy Recovery Group and to agree which projects should be rejected and which ones should be invited to submit a Stage Two application • As a result of the process 31 projects (14 Flintshire only, 17 regional) were shortlisted requesting a total value of just under £16 million of SPF funding. Appendix 2 lists the unsuccessful projects.
1.10	Stage Two

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All projects were given 30 days to submit their Stage Two applications following notification of success at Stage One. Projects covering more than one county needed to wait for Stage One decisions from all counties in North Wales before they could be invited into Stage Two. • Some regional projects were unable to proceed because too few counties supported them at Stage One for them to be operational and/or eligible. One regional project opted to become a Flintshire-only project. • Applicants were encouraged to reduce the value of their SPF requirements to help the limited budget stretch to more projects and many applicants proactively did this. • The assessment process and criteria were similar to those for Stage One. Projects were considered in more detail in three tranches. The key areas for appraisal were project impact, project risk, value for money and management / governance / exit strategy. • For private sector and third sector applicants a more comprehensive due diligence exercise was undertaken including a review of insurance policies, governance documents and structures. In addition, two years' accounts were appraised by the FCC Finance team to provide an indicator of risk. None of the applicant organisations were identified as being a likely risk. • Initial feedback was provided to applicants on technical issues, such as key information or documentation missing, inaccuracies with spreadsheet numbers, costings, targets etc and applicants were given the opportunity to respond within a few days • The appraisal of projects was based solely on the content of the application and the responses provided to key questions. Even where the assessment team had a thorough knowledge of the project sponsor or the project proposed, assumptions on the merits of the project or the organisation's capability were not made or taken into consideration. • The Economic Recovery Group met three times to consider the Stage 2 assessments, scoring and proposed budget allocation. The Chief Officer for Planning, Environment & Economy and Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy also met three times to consider the recommendations of the Economy Recovery Group and to agree which projects should be approved. • As a result of the process, 23 projects (14 Flintshire only, 9 regional) were approved requesting a total value of just over £11 million of SPF funding. Appendix 2 lists the unsuccessful projects.
1.11	<p>The Council submitted its approval decisions and project assurance to the regional administrative body who undertook further checks on applications. The regional administrative body has now issued SPF Grant Funding Agreements to each project sponsor and, in most cases, delivery is already underway.</p>
	<p><u>The SPF programme in Flintshire</u></p>
1.12	<p>A summary of the projects approved for operation in Flintshire is appended (Appendix 1). The project sponsors' sectors are shown below.</p>

Organisation Type	Number of projects
College/University	8
Local authority	5
Public Body	2
Private not for profit	2
Voluntary organisation	2
Social enterprise/cooperative	1
Community group	1
Charity	1
Private for profit	1
TOTAL	23

1.13 The allocation of funding against the indicative profile provided in the Regional Investment Strategy is shown below.

Theme	Indicative profile	Allocated	Balance
Communities and Place	£5,097,808	£3,243,874	£1,853,934
Supporting Local Business	£2,532,996	£2,810,331	-£277,334
People and Skills	£3,459,856	4,312,720	-£852,864
Total core programme	£11,090,660	£10,366,925	£723,735
Multiply	£1,578,666	£865,122	£713,544

The Council, in allocating any the residual SPF funding, will need to give priority where possible to activities which contribute to the Communities and Place theme as this is currently under-resourced compared to the original indicative profile.

1.14 A summary of the outputs to be delivered by the approved SPF projects in Flintshire is shown below.

Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support	457
Number of enterprises receiving grants	151
Number of people supported to access basic skills courses	123
Number of people supported to participate in education	650
Number of people attending training sessions	1983
Number of people participating in Multiply funded courses	165
Number of people supported to engage in life skills	1535
Number of people supported to gain a qualification	898
Number of volunteering opportunities supported	825
Number of organisations receiving non-financial support	60
Number of organisations receiving grants	52

	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Number of commercial buildings completed or improved</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Amount of green or blue space created or improved (sq m2)</td> <td>280224</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of amenities/facilities created or improved</td> <td>38</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of Tourism, Culture or Heritage assets created or improved</td> <td>49</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of local events or activities supported</td> <td>69</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of feasibility studies developed as a result of support</td> <td>21</td> </tr> </table>	Number of commercial buildings completed or improved	20	Amount of green or blue space created or improved (sq m2)	280224	Number of amenities/facilities created or improved	38	Number of Tourism, Culture or Heritage assets created or improved	49	Number of local events or activities supported	69	Number of feasibility studies developed as a result of support	21
Number of commercial buildings completed or improved	20												
Amount of green or blue space created or improved (sq m2)	280224												
Number of amenities/facilities created or improved	38												
Number of Tourism, Culture or Heritage assets created or improved	49												
Number of local events or activities supported	69												
Number of feasibility studies developed as a result of support	21												
1.15	<p>Project sponsors will each be in a contractual arrangement with the regional administrative body who will process their claims for payment and will monitor their delivery in line with the project application. In addition, each Council will support those projects operating in their area to maximise their chances of success and ensure their work dovetails with wider provision. Local Councils will also monitor progress to get the earliest possible warning if projects face risks to delivery or if they cannot use their full funding allocation.</p>												
	<p><u>Delivering the remainder of the Shared Prosperity Fund programme</u></p>												
1.16	<p>There is £723,735 unallocated in the core SPF programme and a further £713,544 unallocated within Multiply. In addition, due to the very short duration of the programme there is a risk that projects will not be able to fully achieve their planned activities and expenditure before the programme closes which would leave the Council with funding to reallocate very late in the programme lifespan.</p> <p>The UK Government guidance allows the Council to allocate SPF funding through three mechanisms:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Open call for proposals – this is now complete and there is no time to repeat the exercise. The Council is also able, through the regional administrative body, to allocate further funding to existing approved projects 2. Direct delivery by the Council 3. Direct commissioning by the Council 												
1.17	<p>The Council will need to be very responsive to changes in project performance and to decisions by UK Government about the use of funding to ensure that the unallocated funding in the SPF programme is used effectively. It is therefore proposed that delegated authority is given to the Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) and Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy to establish processes to proactively manage any unallocated funds in line with the UK Government guidance above and in consultation with the regional administrative body.</p>												
1.18	<p>It is anticipated that this could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deallocation – the Council and the regional administrative body will closely monitor projects and will encourage project sponsors to decommit money from their projects where they do not have a clear plan to spend all of it. This will enable it to be reallocated to other activities on a timely basis. 												

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocate additional money – if projects are overachieving compared to their original applications and could achieve more with additional money then this could be allocated to them. • Managing risks – if projects are facing overspends or cost over-runs due to circumstances outside of their control then additional money could be allocated to them to enable the project to still be delivered and its outputs achieved. • New activities – new activities could be delivered or commissioned by the Council that contribute to the programme priorities (above). This would be subject to ratification by the Economic Recovery Group and approval by the regional administrative body.
1.19	The delegated authority would also include the establishment of processes to consider and approve change requests by project sponsors, in liaison with the regional administrative body.
1.20	Reports will be brought to Cabinet and to Scrutiny Committee on a six monthly cycle to highlight the allocation and expenditure of the programme, progress towards achieving targets and any significant risks and issues arising.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	Four percent of the value of the programme can be drawn down by the regional lead body for programme governance, administration and monitoring and evaluation. Funds can be allocated from this sum to each local authority to cover programme management costs so the programme should not present an additional burden to Council finances.
2.02	Match funding is not required by UK Government for the SPF programme. The Council therefore does not face any additional financial pressures from the delivery of the programme.

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 Council has prioritised projects that can demonstrate an impact beyond the two and a half year duration of the programme.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prevention</td> <td>The Council has prioritised projects that can demonstrate that they address underlying issues rather than merely tackling their symptoms.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Integration</td> <td rowspan="3">The Council held consultation on the priorities for the programme. The Council established open calls for proposals so that a wide range of organisations could contribute to the delivery of the priorities. The Council used the existing multi-sector</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Collaboration</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Involvement</td> </tr> </table>	Long-term	The Council has prioritised projects that can demonstrate an impact beyond the two and a half year duration of the programme.	Prevention	The Council has prioritised projects that can demonstrate that they address underlying issues rather than merely tackling their symptoms.	Integration	The Council held consultation on the priorities for the programme. The Council established open calls for proposals so that a wide range of organisations could contribute to the delivery of the priorities. The Council used the existing multi-sector	Collaboration	Involvement
Long-term	The Council has prioritised projects that can demonstrate an impact beyond the two and a half year duration of the programme.								
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Collaboration									
Involvement									

	<p>Economic Recovery Group to provide oversight of the programme and link it to wider programmes and initiatives.</p> <p>The Council prioritised projects that could demonstrate that they were integrated into wider local partnerships and programmes rather than established solely for the purpose of securing funding from this programme.</p>							
<p>Well-being Goals Impact</p>								
<table border="1"> <tr><td>Prosperous Wales</td></tr> <tr><td>Resilient Wales</td></tr> <tr><td>Healthier Wales</td></tr> <tr><td>More equal Wales</td></tr> <tr><td>Cohesive Wales</td></tr> <tr><td>Vibrant Wales</td></tr> <tr><td>Globally responsible Wales</td></tr> </table>	Prosperous Wales	Resilient Wales	Healthier Wales	More equal Wales	Cohesive Wales	Vibrant Wales	Globally responsible Wales	<p>The Council asked projects to set out how they could contribute towards the Well-being Goals.</p>
Prosperous Wales								
Resilient Wales								
Healthier Wales								
More equal Wales								
Cohesive Wales								
Vibrant Wales								
Globally responsible Wales								
<p>Risk management</p>								
<table border="1"> <tr> <th>Risk</th> <th>Mitigation</th> </tr> <tr> <td>Short timescale for delivery leading to money not being spent</td> <td>The report sets out how the Council will proactively manage the funding to ensure that underspends are minimised as far as practicable.</td> </tr> </table>	Risk	Mitigation	Short timescale for delivery leading to money not being spent	The report sets out how the Council will proactively manage the funding to ensure that underspends are minimised as far as practicable.				
Risk	Mitigation							
Short timescale for delivery leading to money not being spent	The report sets out how the Council will proactively manage the funding to ensure that underspends are minimised as far as practicable.							

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	<p>Consultation events were held with stakeholders in May 2022 as part of the development of the regional investment strategy. The Council met again with consultees in October 2022 to provide an update on the development of the programme and raise awareness of forthcoming funding opportunities.</p>

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	<p>Appendix 1 Flintshire SPF projects Appendix 2 Projects not awarded SPF funding</p>

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund prospectus https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus

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

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
	<p>Match funding – money provided by a project applicant towards the costs of delivering their project.</p> <p>Multiply – a mandatory element of the Shared Prosperity Fund programme to tackle adult numeracy.</p> <p>Regional administrative body – the lead local authority for North Wales (Gwynedd County Council) who will administer the programme on behalf of the region under a formal agreement between the six authorities.</p> <p>Regional Investment Strategy – a high level strategy produced for UK Government indicating how the SPF programme will be delivered in North Wales</p> <p>Shared Prosperity Fund – a funding programme from UK Government operating over the 2022-2025 financial years “to build pride in place and increase life chances”.</p>

Appendix 1

Flintshire Shared Prosperity Fund projects

November 2023

Flintshire only projects

Accelerating Decarbonisation and Productivity through Technology and Skills (ADAPTS) **Supporting Local Business**

£811,083 SPF

ADAPTS is a business intervention program that will provide Flintshire manufacturers with unparalleled access to advanced manufacturing technology engineers and demonstrators, knowledge transfer, training and upskilling in digital and decarbonisation strategies. AMRC Cymru are the primary deliverer of the support, alongside partners in Small World Consulting & College Cambria.

Flintshire Sustainable Decarbonised Future (FAST)

Supporting Local Business

£623,322 SPF

The FAST project aims to not only legally incorporate the already-established decarbonisation forum, but also targets the development of a bespoke deliverable roadmap which informs and empowers all sectors to catalyse and accelerate the transition to Net Zero. This project will deliver on a number of key areas with immediate and visible primary benefits. ARMC Cymru is Project Lead with the project managed through a cross-sector, multi organisation management board.

The Flintshire Fund

Supporting Local Business

£297,294 SPF, £37,500 match funding

The project proposal is the provision and management of 3 grant funds to provide first stage support. Antur Cymru is the Lead Partner, and the grants are designed to support businesses to take their first steps on the zero carbon and R and D journeys and to provide funding to support local business networks which provide peer to peer support and information sharing and will add value to the business grants by both providing peer to peer support.

Flintshire Green Digital Academy

Supporting Local Business

£273,867 SPF

This project expands the highly successful Green Digital Academy UKCRF pilot project to businesses in Flintshire. It provides expert evaluation and mentoring support to SMEs to improve their Digital and Net Zero capabilities in line with their core business strategy, supporting businesses to accelerate efficiency, productivity, carbon reduction and to reduce costs. Activities will be delivered and led by Grwp Llandrillo Menai (GLLM)

Supporting Tourism and Sector Key Fund

Supporting Local Business

£679,000 SPF, £195 match funding

The project will be delivered by Cadwyn Clwyd and deliver across Flintshire with particular focus on the tourism and experience economy (as defined in the North Wales Economic Framework), the project will contribute towards the Levelling Up agenda in boosting productivity, pay, jobs

and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging.

Town Centre Investment Programme

Community and Place

£1,178,452 SPF, £630,311 match funding

The proposed programme comprises 8 projects that will be delivered by Flintshire County Council and implemented across 7 town centres/ adjacent communities. Projects consist of Town Centre Property Investment Grant Scheme, Development of projects for future investment, Investment in Green Spaces, Employment of Promotion and Engagement Officer for Town Centre Markets Team, Town Centre Events & Activities Grant Scheme, Place Making Plan Development, Tailored Business Support Provision, and Communications & PR Project. In addition to the programme of 8 above projects there is an external evaluation of the programme.

Connecting to Coast and Countryside

Community and Place

£335,040 SPF, £18,500 match funding

Flintshire County Council will focus on connecting people to our coast and countryside, and our cultural & heritage assets by delivering two main areas of interventions.

1. Building foundations for an accessible Coast Park in Flintshire which celebrates the natural environment and heritage of our Welsh coast
2. 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.

Greenfield Valley Heritage Park Improvement Programme

Community and Place

£597,500 SPF, £33,000 match funding

This project constitutes a programme of nine related revenue projects which have been identified as key building blocks and enablers to the delivery of the 10-year strategy for the Greenfield Valley. The programme will be delivered by Greenfield Valley Trust with the dual aims of providing important benefits for the local community and visitors in the short term, whilst also facilitating progress on the Strategy's longer term overall objectives by doing the groundwork to enable larger scale investment, (particularly capital investment) in future years.

Flintshire Community Key Fund

Community and Place

£703,850 SPF

The project will be delivered across the whole of Flintshire by Cadwyn Clwyd and Flintshire Local Voluntary Council (FLVC) with particular emphasis on local communities and grass roots services within Flintshire. The project will support community led and / or community owned venues / facilities / spaces / groups to develop, strengthen and enhance community infrastructure and community-based projects.

LEAP (Learn Explore, Achieve, Perform)

People and Skills

£913,847 SPF

Flintshire County Council will deliver a wide number of education services and interventions that will be tailored to individual needs. The project seeks to improve the life chances of Flintshire residents through the provision of new education support packages not currently available. The needs of our

children and our more vulnerable adult population have changed greatly since Covid, and this programme will allow the authority to provide a comprehensive package to support children and adults into a positive outcome.

Project 11

People and Skills

£497,392 SPF

Flintshire Youth Justice Services will lead a multi-agency and multi-modal approach to reducing exploitation, violence and organised crime in order to create safe neighbourhoods. The project will provide specialist targeted 1:1 intervention and community outreach as well as responding to community profile information to support, deter and promote positive engagement and purposeful activity/skills development / volunteering for those engaging or at risk of criminal activity / Exploitation in our communities. The project will promote peer mentoring, diversionary activities and re-engagement in positive opportunities including education, training, sport and employment.

Minding the Gaps of the Young People in Flintshire

People and Skills

£562,600 SPF, £50,000 match funding

WeMindTheGap will deliver pathway of programmes to support a gap in engagement provision to meet the post covid needs of young people aged 16 – 25. From working in community and digitally to demonstrate a clear demand for a pathway of programmes designed to meet the needs of the post covid generation. Starting with digital, moving to employability programmes, and finally an alumni family to create a unique continuum of opportunities and support.

Camau Cefnogol – Supportive Steps

People and Skills

£767,381 SPF

To be delivered by Coleg Cambria Supportive Steps will provide a bespoke package of mentoring support for participants aged 16-25 transitioning into Further Education, who require additional help, supporting their learning journey through college utilising progression routes into potential employment. The project seeks to achieve a reduction in the number of learners dropping out of FE and becoming NEET.

Strength in Numbers

Multiply

£640,400 SPF

The Strength in Numbers project will be delivered by Flintshire County Council and deliver targeted interventions and provision to start adult learners on their numeracy journey, develop learners' numeracy skills, offer creative and personalised programmes of study with accreditation, promote the importance of numeracy and establish a robust numeracy workforce. The Project will offer free, flexible opportunities for adults aged 19 or over to improve their numeracy skills and gain a qualification.

Regional projects

Employer Skills North Wales/Sgiliau Cyflogwyr Gogledd Cymru

People and Skills

£1,840,398 Total SPF, £975,893 Flintshire SPF

As project partners Coleg Cambria and Grwp Llandrillo Menai will support employers in identifying and meeting training needs and skills gaps to achieve future growth and strategic objectives within

their business. The project will ensure that employers can access support for the skills that will help their business and allow their employees to develop additional skills. This will increase the skills base of the local economy.

Working Sense

People and Skills

£437,786 Total SPF, £143,578 Flintshire SPF

Working Sense is a project that will be delivered by Centre of Sign-Sight-Sound to enhance the employability of people over 25 with a sensory loss or disability, by providing specialist support to enable the target group to enter/re-enter and remain in employment or move closer towards employment using a holistic one to one approach utilising Employment Advisors and Support Workers.

North Wales Active, Happy and Healthy

Community and Place

£521,805 Total SPF, £134,000 Flintshire SPF

Gogledd Cymru Actif North Wales will develop and build capacity, skills, resilience, and confidence in the communities that need the support most and have most to gain from this bespoke support. The aim is to build and enable social capital, encouraging local people to take part in opportunities to develop their community (civic participation) and give them the tools and power (and create local capacity) to drive and sustain the change and improvements in their local area (citizen power) that allow and enable them to active every day in a way that works for them.

North Wales Growth Vision Opportunities

Community and Place

£1,057,713 Total SPF, £211,543 Flintshire SPF

Ambition North Wales the project aims to maximise the benefits and opportunities to residents, businesses, and communities across North Wales through investments aligned to the Growth Vision including the North Wales Growth Deal. The project will empower local leaders by increasing the capability and capacity to deliver growth-led projects.

Horticulture Wales

Community and Place

£308,750 Total SPF, £135,451 Flintshire SPF, £37,848 match funding

Wrexham University Horticulture Wales (North East) builds on the successful all-Wales EU-funded Horticulture Wales project through the SPF Community and Place investment priority. It will continue to deliver increases in productivity, profitability, collaboration and resilience in the horticulture sector based in Denbighshire and Flintshire. By facilitating cluster member collaboration and blending latest growing technology and knowledge with traditional methods, the project will work with local SMEs, Community Interest Companies and schools across the two Local Authorities.

Caru Cymru

Community and Place

£502,974 Total SPF, £103,946 Flintshire SPF, £91,137 match funding

Keep Wales Tidy (KWT) will deliver a range of tried and tested activities to create and support a number of volunteer roles and opportunities, including litter champions/litter hub managers, it will establish new community groups to take local action and set up litter free zones for schools and businesses.

The Regional Innovation and Skills Network

Supporting Local Business

£447,438 Total SPF, £99,986 Flintshire SPF, £147,480 match funding

The North East Wales Innovation and Skills Network project builds on Wrexham University's (WU) existing Ladder of Innovation business engagement programme by enhancing participation in Knowledge Transfer activities. Through this proposal, up to five additional **Knowledge Transfer Vouchers** worth £500 each will be available to businesses in the counties of Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham as a contribution towards collaborative R&D activities, pilot studies, proof of concept activities, etc.

Skills Innovation Voucher Scheme

Supporting Local Business

£360,000 Total SPF, £76,000 Flintshire SPF

The Skills and Innovation Voucher (SIV) scheme delivered by Bangor University will support small or medium-sized business (SMEs) and graduate entrepreneurs in the counties of Gwynedd, Isle of Anglesey and Flintshire to access Bangor University expertise, facilities, skills and talent relevant to their research and development (R&D), innovation and skills needs. This project has been designed to help businesses take that first step with accessing University expertise, facilities and talent.

Multiply (North Wales Training)

Multiply

£599,260, £224,722 Flintshire SPF

North Wales Training will be working in partnership with Achieve More Training to deliver a 'Numeracy for Life' Programme for employed and unemployed residents of Wrexham and Flintshire designed to provide flexible courses, digital learning, and personal tutoring to support people to transform their lives by improving their daily numeracy skills. Numeracy for Life will be delivered via an online platform, e Assessor Pro which allows multiple choice, self-marking quizzes, self-reflection activities, and non-linear games providing learners with a rounded online learning experience.

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Appendix 2

Flintshire Shared Prosperity Fund - Projects applications submitted but not awarded Flintshire funding

November 2023

Project Sponsor	Project Title	Theme
Projects not selected at Stage One		
TGP Cymru (Tros Gynnal Plant)	Sgiliau	People and skills
Deeside Business Forum	Business and Employment Advice Hub.	People and skills
Resource Denbighshire CIC	Cyrraedd Reach	People and skills
RCS (Rhyl City Strategy)	Thrive	People and skills
Menter a Busnes	Cronfa Cynaladwyedd a Datgarboneiddio	Supporting local business
Menter a Busnes	Rhaglen Arweinyddiaeth Cymunedol	Supporting local business
RCS (Rhyl City Strategy)	iCAN Work	People and skills
Programus Limited (trading as bubltown)	North Wales' Digital Places: powered by bubltown's global award-winning business support & community success platform	Supporting local business
Check Communications Limited	THRIVE - Technical Help, Resources, Investment, Value and Education for Digital Transformation in North Wales	Supporting local business
Bangor University	North Wales Skills for leadership, digital futures and the Freeport Economy	People and skills
The Wallich	Steps to Progress	People and skills
Cwmpas	Specialist Support for Social Enterprises in North Wales	Supporting local business
Small Woods – Coed Lleol	Connecting People, Nature and Place	Community and place
Into Film	Screenworks Cymru	People and skills
Innovation Strategy	Innovation Net Zero	Supporting local business
North Wales Mersey Dee Business Council	Net Zero North Wales Network	Supporting local business
BIC Innovation	P4RP (Productivity for Resilience Programme	Supporting local business
The Wales Council For Voluntary Action	Social Business Investment Readiness Fund	Community and place
The Royal Mencap Society (Mencap)	Changing Places – Changing Lives/ Lleoedd Newid – Newid Bywydau	Community and place
NDNA Cymru	Childcare Works – delivering Early Years training and paid employment opportunities	People and skills
The Little Learning Company	North East Wales Heritage Skills Partnership	People and skills
Warm Wales	Warm Wales- Supporting Communities	Community and place
Ramblers Cymru	Ramblers Community Outreach (North Wales)	Community and place
Volunteer It Yourself CIC	Volunteer It Yourself (VIY for short)	Community and place
Mike Ford (Pen-y-Lan Pork)	Pen-y-Lan pork Growth Plan	Supporting local business
The Inclusion Curriculum Ltd	The Inclusion Curriculum	Supporting local business
Discount Concrete Garages Ltd	Patent Granted New Concrete Resin Finishes	People and skills
ACS Air Conditioning	ACS Fly Forward	Supporting local business

Enbarr Foundation CIC	Beacon Of HOPE - Building tomorrows world	People and skills
The Circular Economy Developments Ltd (TCE)	Deeside Waste-to-Fuel/Energy Plant	Supporting local business
Polish Integration Support Centre	Bridge of Hope	Multiply
HOLYWELL LEISURE CENTRE/CANOLFAN HAMDDEN TREFFYNNON	Health Suite	Community and place
Aura Leisure and Libraries Limited	Aura - Improving Access to Physical Activity Opportunities and Tackling Health Inequalities	Community and place
Cardiff Metropolitan University	Leading and Growing Businesses	Supporting local business
North Wales Tourism	Regional Marketing - North Wales	Supporting local business
Flintshire County Council	Community Support Model - Cost of Living Crisis	Community and place
Flintshire County Council, Early Intervention Service.	Early Intervention Community Team (EICT)	People and skills
Business in Focus	Focus Futures	Supporting local business
BIC Innovation	Support2Xport (International Trade Business Support Service)	Supporting local business
Business in Focus	Grant Management Service	Supporting local business
Beam Up Ltd	Beam	People and skills
APCYMRU LIMITED (MPCT)	Numeracy for Life	Multiply
The Little Learning Company Limited	Counting Up - Wrexham and Flintshire	Multiply
1st Mynydd Isa Scout Group	Scout HQ / Argoed Sports and Social Complex development plan	Community and place
Business in Focus	Focus Futures- Community engagement and early stage business support	Supporting local business
Rebel Business School	Business Bootcamp	Supporting local business
Menter a Busnes	Arloesedd Trwy Dysgu Gweithredol	Supporting local business
Adferiad Recovery	ENGAGE – North Wales Social Enterprise Development	Supporting local business
Jones Bros Civil Engineering Uk	Plant Operator Training Scheme	People and skills
Menter a Busnes	Adfywio'r Stryd Fawr	Supporting local business
North Wales Police and Community Trust (PACT)	Safer Communities Grants Fund	Community and place
Rewise Learning	Tune Into Your Potential North Wales	People and skills
Haywire Theatre	How To Feed A Town: A Community Co-Produced Play	Community and place
Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod	Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod Recovery and Growth Plan	Community and place
Maybe Solutions Limited	Maybe* - North Wales Business Support	Supporting local business
Jones Bros Civil Engineering Uk	External Plant Operator Training Scheme	People and skills
Projects selected at Stage One but insufficient regional interest to continue		
Litegreen Ltd and Pathway to Carbon Zero Ltd	SME Decarbonisation North Wales Partnership	Supporting local business
Engineering Education Scheme Wales	Transforming Young Minds	People and skills
Chwarae Teg	North Wales Women's Leadership Programme	People and skills

Social Farms and Gardens/ Ffermydd a Gerddi Cymdeithasol	Tyfu Pobl	Community and place
Menai Science Park Ltd T/A M- SParc	Igniting Innovation // Tanio Arloesedd	Supporting local business
Projects not selected at Stage Two		
Flintshire County Council	Y Maes - The Field	Community and place
North Wales Police and Community Trust (PACT)	Justice in a Day Programme	Community and place
Well-Fed (Services) Ltd	Well-Fed Kitchen Expansion	Community and place

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CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 21 st November 2022
Report Subject	Social Enterprise
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy
Report Author	Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Audit Wales have recently completed a review of support for the social enterprise sector by Welsh local authorities. They have issued several recommendations and created a self-assessment tool for local authorities to use. Flintshire County Council already has a well-established structure to support the sector and was recently awarded the Social Enterprise Place accreditation to reflect our achievements. However, the Audit Wales report provides the Council with the opportunity to reflect on its performance and to improve the service.

This report presents a proposed response to the Audit Wales report recommendations, a self-assessment exercise undertaken by the Council using the Audit Wales template and finally a revised Social Enterprise Action Plan which reflects any areas for improvement identified.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Members are asked to review and approve the draft response to the Audit Wales report ' <i>A missed opportunity</i> ' – <i>Social Enterprises</i> .
2	Members are asked to review and approve the draft Social Enterprise Action Plan which has been developed following the publication of the report above.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING SOCIAL ENTERPRISE IN FLINTSHIRE
	<u>Background</u>
1.01	Social enterprises are businesses that trade in goods and services like any other enterprise, but their profits are reinvested in social causes. They take a variety of legal forms depending upon their need. Social enterprises vary in scale from multi-national companies to small one-person enterprises.
1.02	<p>Three example social enterprises are summarised below to illustrate the range of services being delivered by the sector:</p> <p>Harmony Stables Community Interest Company</p> <p>This is a riding stables on the outskirts of Buckley that creates opportunities for members of the public to partake in equine rehabilitation; allowing members of the public who don't own a horse to learn about horse welfare, rehabilitation and training (ridden and on the ground).</p> <p>The company provides the opportunity for members of the public, specifically those with additional needs, to partake in equine assisted learning (ridden and non-ridden); benefit by increased confidence, learn new skills, and improve mental and physical health, through working with the horses in a supported environment.</p> <p>The company will provide the opportunity for members of the public to ride the horses on a paid-for basis, generating the revenue to cross subsidise the opportunity for members of the public with additional needs to take part in activities that otherwise they could not afford.</p> <p>Sport for Champions Community Interest Company</p> <p>This is a Flintshire based social enterprise operating nationally. The company promotes the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle to school children across the UK, sponsoring Team GB and well-known athletes to attend schools to promote sports.</p> <p>The enterprise raises funding for schools through sponsorship deals with private companies to secure the necessary revenue to pay professional athletes to attend the schools to promote sports. Focus is placed on current high profile sporting events to secure maximum buy in from pupils.</p> <p>The company secures sponsorship from private companies and takes the costs of delivering the events from the deals they secure. Of the money raised above operating costs, 60% goes to the schools as an unrestricted budget, the remaining 40% is used to pay the charges and expenses of the athletes visiting the schools.</p> <p>Shelby's Place Community Interest Company</p>

	<p>This is a social enterprise in the centre of Buckley which provides a safe space for young children specifically for, but not restricted to, those with additional needs, to play and learn.</p> <p>Based in the rooms behind a retail outlet, the company delivers craft workshops for young children and their parents, giving them the opportunity to benefit from therapeutic activity whilst learning new skills</p> <p>The company has developed a supervised sensory area. This is used to stimulate children with additional needs through the media of lighting, music and touch in order to develop their skills and interaction with others. This will also enables parents to focus on other siblings during these play periods.</p> <p>As well as charging fees to access the workshops and play areas, the company rents shelf space from a retail outlet for local artisans, the income from which cross subsidises the opportunity for children with additional needs to attend.</p>
1.03	<p>In 2013, the Council recognised the value of social enterprises in meeting the needs of local communities and in diversifying the economy but identified that there were relatively few in the County. The Council started to employ a specialist Social Enterprise Development Officer to provide one to one support to enterprises to help them to become establish, develop and grow. The Council has, since the creation of this post, supported the development of approximately 100 new social enterprises as well as providing support to grow and sustain existing social enterprises</p>
1.04	<p>The Council's free impartial social enterprise support is accessible regardless of whether the business is already established or a new start-up venture. The support provided includes, but is not restricted to, pre-start development, business, and financial planning; identification of appropriate legal structures and business registrations; preparing for investment and cash flow forecasting in addition to support with bid/tender writing; introduction to crowd funding; revenue modelling; marketing and governance and the development and delivery of bespoke training to meet business needs.</p>
1.05	<p>A number of social enterprises deliver services on behalf of the Council. For example, Double Click Design and Print Community Interest Company (CIC) deliver support to individual affected by mental health issues to help them develop the confidence and skills to secure meaningful employment. Dangerpoint in Talacre provide safety education through an agreement with the Council which provides the opportunity for schools to visit the centre and take a structured guided tour around the life-like scenarios. Social enterprises also contribute to Council service delivery in Social Services and waste recycling.</p>
1.06	<p>Flintshire Council has worked collaboratively with social enterprise leaders from across the county to develop a support network. The now well-established Flintshire Social Enterprise Partnership meets regularly to give members the opportunity to share experiences, celebrate successes, develop collaborations, network with like-minded organisations, and share models of best practice with other members. A key outcome from the</p>

	network has been the development of the Social Enterprise Stakeholder Group who work with collaboratively with the Local Authority on projects such as securing 'Social Enterprise Places' and the development of the 'Flintshire Social Impact Toolkit.'
1.07	In 2020, Social Enterprise UK officially recognised Flintshire as a registered 'Social Enterprise Place.' This registration acknowledges the range, quality, and level of social enterprise activity within the county and serves to raise the profile of Flintshire and the sector at a national level.
1.08	Working in partnership with the Social Enterprise Stakeholder Group, an innovative "Flintshire Social Impact Toolkit" was designed, developed, and piloted with the sector. The on-line toolkit identifies the social value of work being carried out and the financial impact that Flintshire based social enterprises are generating as a result of their daily activities. This toolkit demonstrates the financial value of the social impact generated by social enterprises within Flintshire. During the 18 months pilot project, using seven social enterprises, the toolkit identified almost £3m of social benefit within Flintshire. By 2024/25 we intend to increase the number of toolkit users to 30. To date in the financial year 2023/2024 the Impact Toolkit has identified £738k of social value achieved in Flintshire.
	<u>Audit Wales report and response</u>
1.09	In December 2022 Audit Wales published their report "A missed opportunity – Social Enterprises". The report followed their review of the support provided to the sector by local authorities in Wales. The report is available at https://www.audit.wales/publication/missed-opportunity-social-enterprises .
1.10	The report highlights some of the good practice that the Council has in place to support the sector, but also highlights areas for improvement for local authorities across Wales.
1.11	<p>The proposed formal response to Audit Wales on each of its recommendations is set out below.</p> <p>R1</p> <p>To get the best from their work with and funding of Social Enterprises, local authorities need to ensure they have the right arrangements and systems in place. We recommend that local authority officers use the checklist [Appendix 1] to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • self-evaluate current Social Enterprise engagement, management, performance and practice; • identify opportunities to improve joint working; and • jointly draft and implement an action plan with timeframes and responsibilities clearly set out to • address the gaps and weaknesses identified through the self-evaluation. <p>Proposed response</p>

	<p>Flintshire County Council, in response to the Audit Wales report, has completed a self-evaluation process on its work with social enterprises in consultation with the sector. This used the template provided by Audit Wales (Appendix 1). The Council, in response to the findings of the self-assessment, has worked with the sector to update the social enterprise action plan (Appendix 2). This will be submitted to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee for discussion and presented to Cabinet for approval.</p> <p>R2</p> <p>To drive improvement we recommend that the local authority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formally approve the completed Action Plan; • regularly report, monitor and evaluate performance at relevant scrutiny committees; and • revise actions and targets in light of the authority’s evaluation and assessment of its performance. <p>Proposed response</p> <p>The Social Enterprise Action Plan will be presented to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee for discussion and will be formally approved by Cabinet. Progress on supporting social enterprises is already reported to Cabinet and Scrutiny as part of the Council Plan monitoring. However, as set out in the Action Plan, opportunities to raise the awareness and understanding of social enterprises amongst elected members will be created through specific events and more detailed reporting.</p> <p>R3</p> <p>To ensure the local authority delivers its S.16 responsibilities¹ to promote Social Enterprises we recommend that it reports on current activity and future priorities following the evaluation of its Action Plan including the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services.</p> <p>Proposed response</p> <p>Progress towards delivering the action plan, including how the Council has fulfilled its Section 16 responsibilities, will be formally reported to Cabinet and Scrutiny on an annual basis.</p>
1.12	<p>Section 16 of the Social Services and Well-Being Act (Wales) this legislation was passed on 6th April 2016. The Act is based on the principles of giving voice and control to service users and carers, prevention and early intervention and to achieve well-being outcomes through co-production. It therefore gives service users more say and control over the support they receive to achieve well-being. The purpose of the Act is to require local authorities to promote the development and</p>

	availability of care and support services, including services for carers, and preventative services that are provided by social enterprises, co-operatives, user led organisations and third sector organisations. It aims to promote preventative services within the community and reduce the escalation of critical need and reduce or delay the need for longer term care and support. It is also designed to give service users more control over their interactions with professionals as well as give them choice and invite advocates to support them to express their views, wishes and feelings.
1.13	Following approval of the formal response to Audit Wales by Cabinet, this report will be presented to the Audit Committee for ratification.
1.14	The Council, in response to the Audit Wales recommendations, has undertaken a self-assessment exercise (Appendix 1) for its support for social enterprises and has, in consultation with the sector, produced an updated Social Enterprise Action Plan 2023-2025 (Appendix 2) which is presented for discussion and approval.
1.15	The Action Plan sets out four aims: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim 1: Social enterprises will be better able to support each other • Aim 2: Social enterprises will be better able to evidence their impact • Aim 3: Social enterprises will have a higher profile • Aim 4: Social enterprises will deliver more services on behalf of the public sector
1.16	The Action Plan includes a range of actions to deliver against these aims. Progress will be reviewed with the Flintshire Economic Recovery Group and Social Enterprise Stakeholder Group and reported to Cabinet and Scrutiny as part of the regular Council Plan reporting process.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	No resource implications arise directly from this report. The actions contained in the Action Plan make use of available Council resources.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT								
3.01	Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Long-term</td> <td>Supporting social enterprises helps to create community-led sustainable capacity to address local needs without ongoing grant support.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prevention</td> <td>No major impact</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Integration</td> <td>No major impact</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Collaboration</td> <td>The Council is working closely with the sector to co-design the available support and shares expertise with other local authorities across the region.</td> </tr> </table>	Long-term	Supporting social enterprises helps to create community-led sustainable capacity to address local needs without ongoing grant support.	Prevention	No major impact	Integration	No major impact	Collaboration	The Council is working closely with the sector to co-design the available support and shares expertise with other local authorities across the region.
Long-term	Supporting social enterprises helps to create community-led sustainable capacity to address local needs without ongoing grant support.								
Prevention	No major impact								
Integration	No major impact								
Collaboration	The Council is working closely with the sector to co-design the available support and shares expertise with other local authorities across the region.								

Involvement	The Council is working closely with the sector to co-design the available support.
Well-being Goals Impact	
Prosperous Wales	Social enterprises make a significant contribution to addressing all of the Well-Being goals through a sustainable and community-led business model.
Resilient Wales	
Healthier Wales	
More equal Wales	
Cohesive Wales	
Vibrant Wales	
Globally responsible Wales	
Risk management	
Risk	Mitigation
Public sector resources limit the availability of support to the sector	The Action Plan has been developed, as far as possible, within the constraints of current resources.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	The production of the revised Social Enterprise Action Plan included consultation with representatives from the sector.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Social Enterprise Self-Assessment Appendix 2 – Draft Social Enterprise Action Plan

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Audit Wales report ‘A missed opportunity’ – Social Enterprises’ https://www.audit.wales/publication/missed-opportunity-social-enterprises

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

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	<p>Audit Wales - 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>Community Interest Company (CIC) - a limited company, with special additional features, created for the use of people who want to conduct a business or other activity for community benefit, and not purely for private advantage. (UK Government)</p> <p>Social Enterprise UK (SEUK): UK's membership body for social enterprises. SEUK lead the world's largest network of businesses with a social purpose who together are helping to create a fairer economy and a more sustainable future for everyone.</p> <p>Social Value - Social value is a board term used to describe the social, economic, environmental and cultural impact of our collective decision making and business operations</p> <p>The National TOMs – Themes, Outcomes and Measures – is a framework for delivering excellence in measuring and reporting social value</p>

Self-Assessment – A Missed Opportunity - Social Enterprise

Checklist for LA for effectively engaging and working with Social Enterprises

1 Strategic Arrangements

Vision	What we are doing / Comments	What can we do better	Flintshire Social Enterprise Action Plan (where appropriate)
We have an agreed vision on how we will work with Social Enterprises.	We have an action plan developed in collaboration with the social enterprise sector in Flintshire		Page 1 What we do well
The vision has been shared with, and is understood by, all relevant staff in the local authority.	Vision shared by Business Development and Communities 4 Work Departments	Raise the profile among LA staff and Elected Members	Action Plan 3.2 Develop relationships between social enterprises and relevant FCC Officers and other potential partners by delivering awareness raising sessions
The vision has been shared with, endorsed by and is understood by elected members.	Planned presentation to Chief Officers Team and subsequently Cabinet Monthly good news stories to elected member for Enterprise, Economy and Environment	Promote Social Enterprise to Elected Members	Action Plan 3.2 Develop relationships between social enterprises and relevant FCC Officers and other potential partners by delivering awareness raising sessions
The vision has been developed in discussion with the local County Voluntary Council.	Monthly contact with FLVC to ensure Collaboration and avoid duplication or services	Social Enterprise Action Plan shared with FLVC	

The vision has been disseminated to Social Enterprises we work with.	Social Enterprise Sector involved in the development of the existing Action Plan		
<p>The vision clearly sets out how we intend to deliver our Section 16 responsibilities for promoting Social Enterprises including:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Our work to promote social value through the Regional Partnership Board; and</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Use of the Regional Integrated Fund to promote and develop Social Enterprises.</p>	<p>We do not identify how we intend to deliver Section 16 responsibilities</p> <p>Social Value captured by the Flintshire Social Impact toolkit which has been developed in partnership with the social enterprise sector</p> <p>Currently no delivery around Regional Integrated Fund</p>	<p>Need to engage with social enterprise sector to identify opportunities to meet the requirements of Section 16</p> <p>Raise Social enterprises Knowledge of the Regional Integrated Fund</p>	<p>Action plan 4.5</p> <p>Relevant FCC staff develop and deliver awareness raising presentations around section 16</p> <p>Appropriate staff from Social Services presentation at Social Enterprise Network meetings</p>

Corporate Approach			
Vision	What we are doing / Comments	What can we do better	Action Plan
We have a corporate led approach for working with Social Enterprises that covers all departments and services.	<p>Council Plan commitment with progress reported quarterly to Cabinet, Scrutiny and Chief Officer Team</p> <p>SE Officer has presented at COT also different Portfolios across FCC</p>	<p>Raise further awareness within FCC specifically, Procurement and Social Services to identify Sponsoring Officers</p> <p>Nominate Sponsoring Officer within relevant portfolios within FCC to</p>	<p>Action Plan 3.2</p> <p>Raise awareness of Sponsoring Officer successes to recruit addition SOs within other portfolios</p>

	We have sponsoring officers linked to SLAs within Education to raise awareness of the SE services available and identify further opportunities for the SE to engage with	liaise with social enterprises to promote their activities to both colleagues and potential service users	
The corporate approach translates our vision into practical actions.	Council Plan reflects corporate priorities for social enterprise sector which in turn has been incorporated into the action plan in collaboration with the SE sector		Review of action plan on an annual basis to ensure corporate approach remains relevant to the SE sector
We have designated a corporate lead for Social Enterprises who is responsible for overseeing and coordinating our work with the sector	We have an appointed Chief Officer and Elected member responsible for overseeing SE activity and a dedicated Social Enterprise Officer to work directly with the sector		

Understanding the local Social Enterprise sector			
Vision	What we are doing / Comments	What can we do better	Action Plan
<p>We have mapped out the Social Enterprise sector in our local authority area and know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of organisations working locally; The services they provide; 	<p>Mapping of Social Enterprise sector carried out by Cwmpass biannually.</p> <p>FCC Social Enterprise Officer has a well-developed relationship with the Social Enterprise sector businesses in Flintshire</p>	<p>Map sector and develop online interactive directory of Social Enterprises in Flintshire</p> <p>The Directory of social enterprises can be used to develop collaborate working arrangements</p>	<p>Action Plan 4.2</p> <p>Develop a mapping of the social enterprise sector in Flintshire by developing an interactive social enterprise directory on FCC Website. Benefits will be; detailed information about Flintshire based</p>

<p>The communities the services are provided in; The people the service is provided for; How the services are funded; The operating hours/days for services; The eligibility criteria for the service (if any); How the service fits with our Section 16 responsibilities for promoting Social Enterprises in delivering social care services; and Who to contact for more information.</p>		<p>Provide an opportunity to promote their goods and services, develop supply chain activity. And provide examples of best practice among Social Enterprises</p> <p>Raise awareness of Section 16 through relevant Officers presentations</p>	<p>social enterprises including; organisations activity, legal structure, company size, area of benefit etc.</p>
<p>We have a record of all our Social Enterprise funding.</p>	<p>In general FCC does not provide grant funding for new business start-ups or existing businesses including the social enterprise sector. We do however support SE businesses to secure external/third party funding</p>		
<p>We collate financial information and report at least annually on the totality of our Social Enterprise funding covering:</p>	<p>We do not have the resource in place to collate this information and the necessary information Each Service Area Manager would be aware of all SLA's Contracts and</p>	<p>We could collate this information however this would have a significant resource implication</p>	

<p>which organisations we fund; the contract value; the length of the contract; which department/service has contracted; the measures of success established for the work; and what the intended benefits of the work are.</p>	<p>Funding allocated to social enterprises and monitor these as any other SLA, Contract of funded programme of activity</p>		
<p>We effectively raise awareness on the benefits presented by Social Enterprises to ensure all staff identify opportunities to collaborate with them by: hosting a social enterprise day within the local authority; putting on workshops for councillors and senior managers; and developing activities to celebrate and promote social enterprise.</p>	<p>Awareness raising of the support available is achieved through social media, regular mails shots, referrals from word of mouth and referrals from partners orgs and FCC departments.</p> <p>Flintshire Local Voluntary Council runs a social prescribing service which is integrated into the Single Point of Access within social services. This receives funding from the Regional Integration Fund to support this.</p> <p>As part of this service there is a third sector co-ordinator who will match people, who have not met the criteria for statutory social care support, with other beneficial services in the community. A significant proportion of these</p>	<p>We can bring the lead staff to Social Enterprise Network Meetings to promote the social enterprises.</p> <p>Work in partnership with the social enterprise sector to develop and deliver social enterprise awareness raising days to both local authority colleagues and Elected Members</p>	<p>Action Plan 3.2 Develop increased understanding of the opportunity that social enterprise presents as service delivery partners through development and delivery of awareness raising events</p>

	services will be provided by social enterprises.		
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Collaboration and partnership arrangements			
Vision	What we are doing / Comments	What can we do better	Action Plan
We have identified and agreed how the work of Social Enterprises will be managed and scrutinised at a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> corporate level – in the work of strategic partnerships and corporate scrutiny committees; department level – in specific partnership arrangements to support wider policy agendas within defined areas; and service level – on local partnerships and specific service-led initiatives. 	Social Enterprise Activity reported annually against the Council Plan Targets. Social Enterprise activity also reported to Chief Officer Team, Scrutiny and Council within FCC Monthly reports to Chief Officer / Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy	Provide social enterprise information to the Economic Recovery Group in order to ensure social enterprise is considered as an option to issues moving forward	Action Plan 3.3
We effectively raise awareness of the work of social enterprises and involve local people and communities in developing new Social Enterprises.	Awareness raising of the support available is achieved through social media, regular mails shots, referrals from word of mouth and referrals from partners orgs and FCC departments. The SE officer engages with communities and potential new business start-ups	Raise awareness of Social Prescribing and Single Point of Access (SpOA) through presentations to Social Enterprises	Action Plan 4.2 Develop a mapping of the social enterprise sector in Flintshire including areas of work by developing an interactive social enterprise directory on FCC Website.
We have a clear and effective relationship with our County	Work closely with Local Voluntary Council to ensure dovetail of		

Voluntary Council as a key strategic and delivery partner	services, provided and share best practice as well as cross referral of clients		
We have a nominated lead senior official to promote and lead work through the regional Social Value Forum.	We have a designated member of staff who promotes our work through the Regional Social Value Forum. The FCC SE Lead Officer and SE sector have jointly developed a social impact toolkit for Flintshire. A cost effective and easy to use co-designed online platform which identified £2.8m of Social Benefit in the pilot programme involving seven Flintshire based Social Enterprises	Increase numbers of Flintshire social enterprises reporting on the Flintshire Social Impact Toolkit	Action Plan 2.1 Report Social Enterprise achievements and promote social enterprise activity within FCC via nominated FCC Officer and Elected member

Strategy			
Vision	What we are doing / Comments	What can we do better	Action Plan
Our approach to Social Enterprises is integrated with our key strategies and plan – eg Wellbeing Plan, corporate priorities and other community and regional strategies.	Social Enterprise development features in the 'Council Plan' and corporate priorities.	Our new Integrated Assessment Tool provides an ideal opportunity to encourage managers to consider the support that social enterprises can provide	Action Plan 3.2 Develop relationships between social enterprises and relevant FCC Officers and other potential partners by delivering awareness raising sessions
We have set SMART objectives and actions on how we will support and			Action plan includes targets and measures wherever practicable.

promote the growth of Social Enterprises.	Established targets for numbers of new social enterprises and enterprises supported		
We are clear on the benefits and risks of Social Enterprises for citizens, local communities, and the local authority	Significant interaction between FCC and the Social Enterprise sector	Encourage staff to learn more about benefits of SE services	Action Plan 3.2

Delivering the Strategy			
Vision	What we are doing / Comments	What can we do better	Action Plan
We have enough staff and resources to promote and grow Social Enterprises.	Full time fully qualified Business Support is available for social enterprises	Make full use of procurement opportunities to develop social enterprise supply chain Support services to structure procurement to increase accessibility to social enterprises Promote the work of social enterprises But... capacity and resources will limit actions.	Actions across plan but with limited capacity
We have staff in the right services and with the required seniority to deliver our vision for Social Enterprises.	Chief officer and Elected member responsibility for overseeing Social Enterprise Support Full time Social Enterprise Lead Officer with responsibility for development of the SE sector	Raise the profile of Social Enterprise among commissioners / officers / elected members across FCC	Action Plan 3.2

<p>We have a can-do culture mindset within the council to make the best use of Social Enterprises</p>	<p>As a local authority Flintshire County Council, across service portfolios, value the contribution of social enterprise to the local economy and communities they serve.</p>	<p>Raise the profile of Social Enterprise among commissioners / officers / elected members</p>	<p>Action Plan 3.2 Develop relationships between social enterprises and relevant FCC Officers and other potential partners such as Jobcentre+ with social enterprises by developing meet the social enterprise events</p>
<p>We give staff the opportunity to take well-managed risks and explore innovative practices</p>	<p>Development of the innovative Social Enterprise Social Impact Toolkit in partnership with the SE sector.</p> <p>Develop innovative supply chain opportunities in partnership with Private Sector contractors to ensure community benefits are met.</p> <p>Have developed mitigated risk programme of Alternative Delivery Model (ADM) and Community Asset Transfer Programmes (CAT)</p>		

2. Commissioning and Procurement			
Designing Services			
Vision	What we are doing / Comments	What can we do better	Action Plan
We draw on the expertise and knowledge of Social Enterprises in designing new services.	<p>Individual service areas design their services and not procurement. As part of pre-market engagement service areas are permitted to engage with the market (including Social Enterprises) to draw on their expertise and knowledge.</p> <p>Commissioners routinely engage with service providers and service users to inform the designing of services which included a proportion of social enterprises that currently deliver contracted services across Flintshire.</p>	More pre-market engagement with suppliers including Social Enterprises	Procurement: Improved pre-market engagement with local SME's (including social enterprises) is highlighted within the new Procurement Strategy.
Our commissioners make good use of the Market Stability Report process to inform commissioning and market shaping activity for the social care sector	Along with the regional Market Stability Report, Flintshire County Council has developed a local version of this to inform activity locally. This, along with the Population Needs Assessment, informs decision making on market shaping and commissioning strategies.		

<p>In designing services, we clearly set out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What demand the service will meet; how we have decided on the type of service that we require; and how we will engage with current and potential providers to develop the service 	<p>Procurement: Commissioning Form which service areas must complete and submit to the Collaborative Procurement Service for all procurements over £25k requires the service area to set out demand the service will meet. It is for the service area to keep records of how they have decided on the type of service they require and what pre-market engagement with current and potential suppliers they will undertake to develop the service.</p> <p>Social Services: Commissioners routinely engage with service providers and service users to inform the designing of services.</p>	<p>Procurement: Service areas could be requested to provide more information on the Commissioning Form outlining how they have decided on the type of service they require and what pre-market engagement with current and potential suppliers they will undertake to develop the service.</p> <p>Procurement: Review commissioning form and see if this is appropriate, resource capacity allowing.</p>	
<p>We ensure that our tender process is accessible for all potential collaborators</p>	<p>Social services are particularly mindful in commissioning activities to include strong weighting for Social Value, and make the process more accessible for social enterprises, such as the use of Lots and encouraging of consortia bids. We have several contracts that are provided by not for personal profit organisations such as advocacy services, counselling services,</p>	<p>When the Procurement Reform Bill come into force at the beginning of 2024, we will have some ability to be more flexible in our tendering process but will still await the fine details of the Bill in order to determine what is and isn't permissible within the new Procurement Regulations.</p>	<p>Review new procurement regs when they are finalised.</p>

	learning disability day services and mental health support services.	Procurement: Review commissioning form and see if this is appropriate, resource capacity allowing.	
We can demonstrate we have the capacity and skills to undertake the strategic commissioning process.	We have the skills in the form of highly experienced and MCIPS qualified Procurement Professionals within the Collaborative Procurement Service. Officer capacity is a major issue with a small team covering 2 Local Authorities	Increase capacity within the Collaborative Procurement Service	
We actively look for ways to invite collaboration	All tenders welcome including collaborative/consortium bids. Service areas routinely explore opportunities to engage with other partners from public, private and social enterprise sector organisations to collaborate on a regional and sub regional level.		

Effective Award Systems			
Vision	What we are doing / Comments	What can we do better	Action Plan
We have created a single centralised and corporate funding system for the management and award of all contract funding to Social Enterprises.	We have a central e-procurement system where all bids for any tenders above £25k must be submitted by suppliers (including Social Enterprises) and where also where a record of all contracts over £25k should be recorded – this is our central record of contracts	The resources are not available to facilitate a single contract management system solely for social enterprises.	

	<p>awarded to all suppliers including Social Enterprises and where all contract management is recorded</p>		
<p>We have effective systems to award contract funding to organisations that sets out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a clear contract funding timetable that is available to all potential bidders so that they can prepare for opportunities; the process that will be used to decide (for example, seeking quotations or using a tender or proposal process); the value and risk associated with the various contract funding routes; clear and published criteria that are understood by all organisations seeking contract funding, including community benefit and social value clauses; the cost and resources to oversee and administer the process; and the length of time that contract funding will be provided. 	<p>Tender documents for all tenders are issued including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timetable for procurement process as well as timetable for contract mobilisation, initial term of contract and any options to extend. • Our standards T&C's which include payment profile • Evaluation Methodology setting out the award criteria. • Information relating to Community Benefits/Social Value • Information Relating to the services being procured and how the contract will be managed including KPI's. 		

Efficient Award Systems

Vision	What we are doing / Comments	What can we do better	Action Plan
<p>We have efficient corporate systems to award contract funding based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> concise and clear application processes; use of online and electronic systems to distribute and collate information and bids; short end-to-end decision-making arrangements; the minimum number of stages and processes required to decide; and decisions being delegated to the lowest level. 	<p>e-tendering/procurement system in place and all relevant info relating to tender process set out in tender docs</p>		
<p>Our contract terms and conditions are proportionate to the level of funding being made and are specific to the work that is being funded.</p>	<p>We have standard Services T&C's which are the same for all services.</p>		
<p>We review our contract funding processes to ensure we are not excluding Social Enterprises from securing work.</p>	<p>Procurement: We are bound by Contract Procedure Rules and Public Contract Regulations – all potential suppliers must receive equal treatment and these Rules and Regulations are followed to ensure this is the case.</p>	<p>New Procurement Regulations come into effect early 2024 which we can review to see if there is any way to remove any barriers SE's feel they currently face.</p>	<p>Review new regs when available.</p>

Training and Information Training			
Vision	What we are doing / Comments	What can we do better	Action Plan
<p>We provide training to support Social Enterprises covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how to apply for funding – the do's and don'ts; complying with our commissioning and procurement systems; data collection processes; performance management and scrutiny arrangements; payment cycles and performance targets; and contract termination/continuation requirements 	<p>Extensive range of training sessions available to social enterprises</p> <p>Bespoke training developed based on new needs of social enterprises in addition to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Planning • Preparing for Investment • Cash Flow Forecasting • Bid Writing • Introduction to Crowd Funding • Revenue Modelling • Marketing • Governance 	<p>Local Authority staff to deliver procurement training to social enterprises.</p>	<p>Action Plan 2.2 Deliver training workshops for the sector specific to their needs</p>

3. Managing Performance			
Information Collection			
Vision	What we are doing / Comments	What can we do better	Action Plan
We have specified the information required to monitor and evaluate the performance of the Social Enterprises we fund.	All details or how any contract with any supplier (include SE's) will be monitored and KPI's relating to the contract are all set out in the Contract T&C's which are signed by all parties.		
The information only measures relevant activity.	Departments holding SLAs with Social Enterprises collate and measures relevant activity		
The systems to collect information are streamlined and efficient, and Social Enterprises only submit information once and electronically on agreed timescales	Departments holding SLAs with Social Enterprises request information which is captured electronically		

Performance Review			
Vision	What we are doing / Comments	What can we do better	Action Plan
<p>We regularly report on our Social Enterprise contract funding to scrutiny committee(s) against a balanced set of performance information that covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the service standards we set for the Social Enterprise we fund to perform against; improvements in people's wellbeing and social outcomes; and relevant service-based performance data; and conclusions of external audit/inspection reviews. 	<p>SLA holders are charged with providing full reports including performance-based statistics, impact data, and feedback from service users on contracts with social enterprises.</p>	<p>Co-ordinated reports on the achievement of Social Enterprise contracts</p>	<p>Produce an annual report on the performance of social enterprise SLAs and contracts.</p>
<p>Our scrutiny and evaluation processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are proportionate for the value of the contract funding we provide; and provide us with assurance that our funding is achieving the expected outcomes. 	<p>SLA holders submit comprehensive reports which account for the measures within the agreement including monitoring and reviewing performance.</p>	<p>Co-ordinated reports on the achievement of Social Enterprise contracts</p>	<p>Produce an annual report on the performance of social enterprise SLAs and contracts.</p>
<p>Annually we report publicly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on the work of Social Enterprises; 	<p>Currently the council does not produce an annual report specifically for Social Enterprises</p>	<p>Co-ordinated reports on the achievement of Social Enterprise contracts</p>	<p>Produce an annual report on the performance of social enterprise SLAs and contracts.</p>

<p>on the current performance of Social Enterprises we fund; how we will promote further opportunities for the sector in the future</p>	<p>however the Social Enterprise Lead officer reports monthly via project reporting and annually through corporate reporting channels and also to Welsh Government as part of the funding monitoring process</p>		
<p>How well we are performing in delivering our S.16 responsibilities for Social Enterprises.</p>	<p>Social services have consistently look to support community development, social enterprises, and not for personal profit organisations both in the delivery of social care and early intervention and prevention.</p> <p>In the independent sector we have a provider that has recently been supported to become not for profit. This is Clocktower Community Services Ltd who provide significant day and work opportunity services for citizens in Flintshire.</p> <p>Several large contracts are currently held with 3rd sector organisations, such as day opportunities for people with learning disabilities, which is provided by Home Farm Trust.</p> <p>Social Services; As above, a mental health support service has moved from being council run to becoming a social enterprise, and we continue to support and work collaboratively</p>	<p>Improve understanding of section 16 responsibilities by social enterprises</p>	<p>Action Plan 4.5</p>

	<p>with them. The council directly commissions with Double Click to train and support people with mental health conditions into employment.</p> <p>Social Services continually promotes social enterprises to citizens through the Third Sector Co-ordinator role in the Single Point of Access as described above.</p> <p>Social Services: As above, the way commissioning activities are undertaken encourages social enterprises to bid for contracts.</p>		
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Risk management			
Vision	What we are doing / Comments	What can we do better	Action Plan
We regularly review risks associated with our Social Enterprise contract funding	Departments holding SLAs with Social Enterprises will undertakes risk mitigation as part of the contract monitoring process		
We agree risk management plans if risks are not being managed and mitigated.	The risk management process highlights risks which are not being managed and the need for mitigation processes to be put in place		

<p>We have a rolling programme of internal audit systems testing and compliance reviews to ensure the robustness, efficiency and effectiveness of our contract funding of Social Enterprise services.</p>	<p>Where SLAs are in place, FCC sponsoring officers monitor the SLA holders performance and quality assure the accuracy of their report prior to being uploaded onto the system for funding</p>		
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Flintshire County Council Social Enterprise Action Plan 2023-2025

Background

Flintshire County Council is a unitary authority located in North-East Wales with a population of approximately 150,000. The authority employs approximately 5,000 people and delivers or facilitates the delivery of a broad and complex range of services, especially to the most vulnerable in society. Flintshire County Council delivers its services directly through its own workforce and through private and third sector organisations. The authority spends over £160 million each year procuring goods and services from over 4,500 suppliers, service providers and contractors.

Flintshire County Council has long been firmly committed to the need for a strong, vibrant local social enterprise economy and recognises within the Council Plan the contribution social enterprises make within the community.

In 2013 Flintshire County Council, in response to the lack of accessible, practical support for social enterprises, created a new post to support the development of a sustainable social enterprise sector within the County. This resource, a fully qualified Business Advisor, provides free at the point of delivery business support, advice, and guidance to residents of Flintshire wanting to explore the development of social enterprise.

Over the past 10 years the Council has supported the development of approximately 100 new social enterprises as well as provided business support to grow and sustain existing social enterprises.

Following the release of the Welsh Audit Office report, “Social Enterprise - A Wasted Opportunity”, the Council undertook a self-assessment process to review its approach to supporting social enterprises and refreshed its action plan to include, wherever possible, the areas for improvement identified through the self-assessment process. The Council consulted with the members of the Flintshire Social Enterprise Stakeholder Group, consisting of social enterprise leaders from across the county, to develop the plan.

What We Do Well

Supporting enterprises

The business support, advice and guidance provided to the sector by Flintshire County Council has resulted the raising of the profile of social enterprise in Flintshire as well as the registration of of14 new social enterprises within the county every year. (Covid 19 lockdown years aside). The resulting social enterprise sector growth in Flintshire is demonstrated by social enterprises accounting for 5.1% of social businesses within Wales where Flintshire accounts for 3% of businesses in Wales. (“Mapping the Social Business Sector in Wales / Census 2022”. Social Business Wales)

Flintshire’s, free impartial social enterprise support is accessible regardless of whether the business is already established or a new start-up venture. The support provided includes, but is not restricted to, pre-start development, business, and financial planning; identification of appropriate legal structures and business registrations; preparing for investment and cash flow forecasting in addition to support with bid/tender writing; introduction to crowd funding; revenue modelling; marketing and governance and the development and delivery of bespoke training to meet the needs of social enterprises in Flintshire.

Within Flintshire we delivered a successful Community Asset Transfer (CAT) programme. The programme enabled 15 buildings owned by the Council, which were faced with closure, to be transferred to community ownership through the social enterprise model. Through the CAT, 30 community organisations are being supported to develop a business case for the activities to be delivered from within the buildings, providing amenities and services for the residents of Flintshire. All of these buildings have been transferred to community ownership on a ‘peppercorn rent’ allowing them the greatest opportunity of sustaining their activities and delivering necessary services identified by members of the communities in which they are based.

All Local Authorities have faced major budget pressures and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. In Flintshire we see alternative delivery models as a flexible way to control costs, build sustainable income growth for social enterprises, thus protecting and even improving local services by involving local people in new and engaging ways. Flintshire County Council’s successful ADM programme safeguarded the future of libraries and leisure centres by converting them to employee-owned cooperative organisation, whereas the FCC catering and cleaning departments were converted into community led community Interest Company. Flintshire County Councils reprographics and printing

services were also converted into a Community Interest Company and now combines the provision of professional design and print services to any business whilst supporting mental health in the community. To achieve this, they create employment, work experience, training, and volunteering opportunities within a supportive and inclusive environment for those who face significant barriers to employment.

A number of social enterprises deliver services on behalf of FCC. For example, Double Click Design and Print Community Interest Company (CIC) deliver support to individual affected by mental health issues to help them develop the confidence and skills to secure meaningful employment. Dangerpoint in Talacre provide safety education through a Service Level Agreement (SLA) which provides the opportunity for schools to visit the centre and take a structured guided tour around the life-like scenarios. The centre has been designed to link in with the current curriculum, PSE curriculum, Healthy Schools Programme and fits in with the Estyn Common Inspection Framework.

Flintshire Council has worked collaboratively with social enterprise leaders from across the county to develop a support network. The now well-established Flintshire Social Enterprise Partnership meets regularly to give members the opportunity to share experiences, celebrate successes, develop collaborations, network with like-minded organisations, and share models of best practice with other members. A key outcome from the network has been the development of the Social Enterprise Stakeholder Group who work with collaboratively with the Local Authority on projects such as securing 'Social Enterprise Places' and the development of the 'Flintshire Social Impact Toolkit.'

All social enterprises who hold a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Flintshire Council have an appointed Sponsoring Officer. This enhanced level of communication benefits both parties through regular SLA progress monitoring which is turn maximises the success of prescribed aims and outcomes within the SLA as well as create further opportunities for the social enterprises.

Recognition

In 2020 Social Enterprise UK officially recognised Flintshire as a registered 'Social Enterprise Place.' This registration acknowledges the range, quality, and level of social enterprise activity within the county and serves to raise the profile of Flintshire and the sector at a national level.

Working in partnership with the Flintshire Social Enterprise Network Stakeholder Group, an innovative "Flintshire Social Impact Toolkit" was designed, developed, and piloted by Flintshire County Council and the sector. The on-line toolkit identifies the social value of work being carried out and the financial impact that Flintshire based social enterprises are

generating as a result of their daily activities. This toolkit demonstrates the financial value of the social impact generated by social enterprises within Flintshire. During the 18 months pilot project, using 7 social enterprises, the toolkit identified almost £3m of social benefit within Flintshire. By 2024/25 we intend to increase the number of toolkit users to 30. Now fully audited by Flintshire County Council, participating businesses can accurately quantify their value of social benefit when applying for contracts, investment, finance, and sector awards. To date the financial year 2023/2024 the Impact Toolkit has identified £595,015 of social value achieved in Flintshire.

As part of Flintshire County Council's commitment to social enterprise, we introduced 'Social Enterprise of the Year' and 'Most Socially Responsible Business' categories to our annual Flintshire Business Awards. Sponsored and judged by independent organisations, these awards recognised the contribution social enterprises and socially responsible businesses made to Flintshire's economy and community.

As Flintshire is one of the few Local Authorities which has invested in a dedicated support for social enterprises, the Social Enterprise officer has provided, on an informal basis, support, advice, and guidance to other organisations across the region, including Wrexham Borough Council, Isle of Anglesey County Council and University of Chester. This support has included mentoring, providing models of best practice, and promoting social enterprise to degree students.

Flintshire Social Enterprise Action Plan 2023 - 2025

Aims of the action plan are:

- Aim 1: Social enterprises will be better able to support each other
- Aim 2: Social enterprises will be better able to evidence their impact
- Aim 3: Social enterprises will have a higher profile
- Aim 4: Social enterprises will deliver more services on behalf of the public sector

	Actions	Lead	Timescale	Measured	Action source
1. Social enterprises will be better able to support each other					
1.1	Create a Terms of Reference for the network group and develop increased membership	FCC SE Officer & Social Ent Network	Annual Review	Numbers of social enterprises within the Network	Stakeholder Group
1.2	Develop a strong media focus to raise the profile of the sector and to promote social enterprise as a business model that significantly contributes to the local economy: e.g. Promote social enterprise events, regular press releases and the development of appropriate social media platforms (Twitter, Facebook business page, Instagram.)	FCC SE Officer & Social Ent Network	2023 and ongoing	Development of Business Facebook Page Number of press releases Number of events delivered	Stakeholder Group Response to WAO Report Updated from previous SE Plan
1.3	Maintain mentoring and business support to strengthen the social enterprise sector and to help existing social enterprises to grow and sustain their organisations.	FCC Officer & Social Enterprises	Continual	Annual Reporting - Number of mentoring relationships and support sessions delivered	Stakeholder Group Updated from previous SE Plan
1.4	Develop opportunities for social enterprises to	FCC	On an as	Number of	Stakeholder

	provide mentoring for other social enterprises to share best practice and promote business growth.	Officer	and when Basis	mentoring relationships developed	Group
2. Social enterprises will be better able to evidence their impact					
2.1	<p>Continue to develop Social Impact Reporting toolkit in order to increase the number of 'activities' measured as well as secure a more accurate snapshot of the social impact value of social enterprise in Flintshire</p> <p>Increase the number of social enterprises accessing the social Enterprise Impact Toolkit</p> <p>Increase the number of activities measured by the toolkit</p>	FCC Officer & Social Ent Stakeholder Group	To be reviewed annually	<p>Value of social benefit captured</p> <p>Number of SEs using the toolkit</p> <p>Number of activities reported within the toolkit</p>	Stakeholder Group
2.2	<p>Deliver training workshops for the sector specific to their needs. Develop and advertise a suite of training sessions including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Planning • Preparing for Investment • Cash Flow Forecasting • Bid Writing • Introduction to Crowd Funding • Revenue Modelling • Marketing • Governance <p>This training is tailored to the specific needs of social enterprises, developing new business skills within the social entrepreneurs leading to increased business confidence and enhanced</p>	FCC Social Enterprise Officer	To be reviewed annually	<p>Number of entrepreneurs accessing training sessions</p> <p>Improved business confidence of social enterprises</p> <p>Continued social enterprise growth</p>	<p>Stakeholder Group</p> <p>Update from previous Action Plan</p>

	sustainability				
2.3	<p>Identify opportunities to work with private sector contractors to achieve the community benefits elements of their contracts by providing support to the social enterprise sector in Flintshire.</p> <p>Work with Flintshire colleagues to increase the number of social enterprises attending 'Meet the Buyer' events to encourage working with the private sector as part of their supply chain.</p>	<p>SE Officer FCC/ Community Benefits Officer FCC Private Sector contractors</p>	To be reviewed annually	Level of support and number of interventions received by social enterprises from Private Sector contractors	<p>Stakeholder Group</p> <p>Update from previous Action Plan</p>
3. Social enterprises will have a higher profile					
3.1	<p>Explore opportunities for social enterprises to present at Strategic Boards e.g. Regional Boards, Welsh Government Groups etc in order to raise both the profile and awareness of social enterprise as potential service delivery partners</p>	<p>Flintshire Social Enterprise Partnership</p>	To be reviewed annually	Number of Regional/strategic boards attended	<p>Stakeholder Group</p> <p>Update from previous Action Plan</p>
3.2	<p>Develop increased understanding of the opportunity that social enterprise presents as service delivery partners through development and delivery of awareness raising events delivered by social enterprises for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Authority Officers • Elected Members • Jobcentre + • Other potential partner organisations 	<p>SE Officer FCC / Flintshire Social Enterprise Network</p>	To be reviewed annually	<p>Number of events delivered</p> <p>Number of Officers attending</p> <p>Number of Elected Members attending</p>	<p>Stakeholder Group</p> <p>Response to WAO Report</p>

4. Social enterprises will deliver more services on behalf of the public sector					
4.1	Review procurement strategy to enable social enterprises to compete for contracts with the Local Authority. In line with new guidelines as they are developed and released	Flintshire County Council	2023 onwards	Number of contracts tendered for by Social Enterprises	Stakeholder Group Response to WAO Report
4.2	Mapping of the social enterprise sector in Flintshire including areas of work by developing an interactive social enterprise directory on FCC Website in order to enable social enterprises to advertise their goods/services. explore partnership working and collaborative working opportunities	Social Enterprise Officer	2023 and ongoing		Stakeholder Group
4.3	Support Social Enterprises to increase procurement opportunities by developing awareness raising events for collaborations between social enterprises to be formed ahead of a contracting opportunities.	Flintshire County Council	To be reviewed annually	Number of events delivered/attended by SEs Number of contracts tendered for by Social Enterprises Number and value of contracts secured by Social Enterprises	Stakeholder Group Response to WAO Report
4.4	Nominate 'Sponsoring Officers' from relevant departments to signpost colleagues and or service users to social enterprises with the	Flintshire County Council	To be reviewed annually	Number of 'Sponsoring Officers'	Stakeholder Group

	<p>potential to become service providers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make social enterprises aware of upcoming contracting opportunities • Raise awareness of social enterprise service providers and their offer among colleagues to increase their potential to secure contracts with the LA • Promote social enterprise activity to current clients/beneficiaries in order to increase uptake of the social enterprise offer 			nominated Number of contracts secured by social enterprises	Response to WAO Report
4.5	<p>Flintshire County Council to deliver awareness Sessions around subjects including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dynamic Purchasing System • Social Prescribing • Section Social Welfare Act 2016 • Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act (SPPP) • Changes to procurement guidelines • Health and Social Care Regional Integration Fund 	Flintshire County Council	To be reviewed annually	Number of awareness sessions delivered Number of social enterprises attending awareness sessions	Stakeholder Group Response to WAO Report
4.6	<p>Publish, and share the FCC Social Services Report on 'Improvement Journey in providing services to people in its area' allowing Social Enterprises to contribute to the outcomes</p>	Flintshire County Council	2023 and annually	Production of the report Number of social enterprises contributing to the outcomes	Stakeholder Group Response to WAO Report

Delivering the Action Plan

Day to day responsibility for co-ordinating the delivery of the Action Plan will rest with the Council Business Development team. Progress will be reported on a regular basis to:

- FCC Cabinet and Scrutiny through the Council Plan reporting process
- Flintshire Economic Recovery Group
- Flintshire Social Enterprise Stakeholder Group

The Action Plan will be reviewed at least annually and updated as required based on performance, responding to external drivers and feedback from stakeholders.



CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 21 st November 2023
Report Subject	Council Carbon Footprint Update 2022/23
Cabinet Member	Collective Responsibility
Report Author	Chief Officer (Planning, Environment & Economy)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The council calculates its carbon footprint annually to measure the quantity of greenhouse gas emissions it is responsible for to monitor and direct decarbonisation efforts towards Net Zero Carbon by 2030. In September 2023, the calculation for the period 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023 was completed and submitted to Welsh Government.

The Carbon Emission Update 2022/23 presents the results of the 2022/23 calculation while comparing them against figures from the Council's baseline year of 2018/19, in this case showing a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in 2022/23. The report also provides explanation as to why emissions have changed, as well as noting any improvements or difficulties relating to the data and methodology. The end of the report concludes with a brief recommendation to investigate the use of digital technologies such as Microsoft Power BI to improve data quality for greater emissions management and reduce the time staff spend collecting the data, and also key considerations for the Climate Change Strategy review in 2024/25, in particular baseline emissions and targets for Supply Chain and targets for Mobility & Transport

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	To note the contents of the report, and progress made in the past year to improve data collection for the Council's carbon footprint.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE REPORT																																																																						
1.01	<p>Background</p> <p>The Carbon Footprint Update 2022/23 presents the results of the council's 2022/23 emissions calculation, compares them against the figures from the Council's baseline year of 2018/19 and provides explanations for any changes seen as well as commenting on the work itself.</p>																																																																						
1.02	<p>Purpose</p> <p>The council calculates its carbon footprint annually to measure the quantity of greenhouse gas emissions it is responsible for to monitor and direct decarbonisation efforts towards Net Zero Carbon by 2030. In September 2023, the calculation for the period 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023 was completed and submitted to Welsh Government.</p>																																																																						
1.03	<p>Total carbon emissions for the period 2022/23 were 32,328 tCO₂e, a 30.4% decrease in emissions compared to the 2018/19 baseline.</p> <div> <p>Greenhouse gas emissions for Flintshire County Council by emission source</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Heating for buildings</th> <th>Electricity in buildings</th> <th>Electricity in streetlighting</th> <th>Water supply and treatment</th> <th>Business travel-car</th> <th>Business travel-rail</th> <th>Supply chain</th> <th>Fleet</th> <th>Employee commuting</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>18-19</td> <td>~30,000</td> <td>~5,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>19-20</td> <td>~28,000</td> <td>~5,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>20-21</td> <td>~25,000</td> <td>~5,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>21-22</td> <td>~30,000</td> <td>~5,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>22-23</td> <td>~20,000</td> <td>~5,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>22-23 Spend w. 2011 EF</td> <td>~30,000</td> <td>~5,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div> <p>These reductions are mostly due to a decrease in emissions from Procurement; 34.5% lower than the 2018/19 baseline. Additionally, Buildings, and Mobility and Transport, saw reductions of 27.2% and 17.9% respectively.</p>	Year	Heating for buildings	Electricity in buildings	Electricity in streetlighting	Water supply and treatment	Business travel-car	Business travel-rail	Supply chain	Fleet	Employee commuting	18-19	~30,000	~5,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	19-20	~28,000	~5,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	20-21	~25,000	~5,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	21-22	~30,000	~5,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	22-23	~20,000	~5,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	22-23 Spend w. 2011 EF	~30,000	~5,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000	~1,000
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1.04	<p>There remain significant limitations with some of the methodology used, most significantly relating to emissions from Procurement which remains based on the value of spend.</p> <p>However, Welsh Government have updated the emission factors for each of the spend categories. The previous emission factors were calculated by the Centre for Sustainable Accounting last updated in 2011. The new emission factors were calculated by University of Leeds and are better reflective of the current economy. This has demonstrated an average 32%</p>																																																																						

	<p>reduction across the spend categories resulting in the reduced carbon emissions from procurement.</p> <p>This gives the impression that we have actively reduced our emissions from supply chain beyond our 2024/25 target, however, the column labelled '22-23 Spend w.2011 EF' in the Section 1.03 graph demonstrates this is not the case by applying the 2011 supply chain emission factors to 2022/23 spend data. Supply chain emissions in 2022/23 with the new emission factors are 18,894 tCO₂e, however, if emission factors from 2011 had remained then supply chain emissions would have been 30,838 tCO₂e. This would have resulted in a total 2022/23 carbon footprint of 44,183 tCO₂e, which is still a reduction on the 2018/19 baseline by 4.8% due to reductions achieved elsewhere, but much less than the 30.4% seen.</p> <p>Utilising spend value as a means to calculate emissions is still an inaccurate measurement of the real emissions from our supply chain, and therefore we must not take this as a reason to discontinue focussing on reducing actual emissions from our supply chain; on the contrary, the targets within each key theme will be reviewed and considered within the strategy's full review in 2024/25 to ensure we are aiming for ambitious but achievable targets towards net zero carbon.</p> <p>We will move away from the calculation methodology of emissions associated with spend value by working with our suppliers to better understand the emissions associated with the individual contracts we procure. This work will now be accelerated following the recruitment of a Joint Procurement Business Partner for Decarbonisation in Sept 2023 – part funded by Flintshire Council and part funded by Denbighshire Council.</p>
1.05	<p>There have been improvements in methodology for other emission sources thanks to the availability of more reliable data.</p> <p>In terms of Business mileage, 67% of miles claimed now state the car size. This data capture allows us to use a more specific emission factor for each car size and fuel type (as for example a large diesel engine will generate more emissions than a small petrol engine). Prior to capturing this data we had to use an emission factor for an 'average car' which is an average of all car size types and therefore could have been either over or underestimating our emissions from business travel. This more accurate data is expected to improve further as more staff have access to online recording.</p> <p>Water data has also improved for the 2022/23 period where we are now able to utilise a higher tier methodology with a lower standard of deviation based on actual water consumption figures. Prior to this period, we were calculating our water use based on invoice amounts and then converting this into m³ usage based on that year's standard volume charge (£/m³). For 2022/23, actual meter reads were used for 76% of total water consumption.</p> <p>In October 2023 we will be launching an employee travel survey that will help us to gain a better understanding of how and how often our employees are travelling into their places of work. This will help us to</p>

	<p>better determine the carbon emissions from employee commuting and home working.</p> <p>These emission data sets were highlighted in the 2021/22 report as areas for improvement, so it is encouraging to see the progress made to ensure we have a clearer understanding and accuracy over our carbon emissions.</p>
1.06	<p>Other headline figures are also provided in the update;</p> <p>2022/23 Emissions v 2018/19 Baseline Year and Targets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building emissions have reduced 27.2% since 2018/19, aiming for a 35% reduction by 2024/25. - Mobility and Transport emissions have reduced 17.9% since 2018/19, aiming for a 50% reduction by 2024/25. - Procurement emissions have reduced 34.5% since 2018/19, aiming for a 30% reduction by 2024/25. <p>2022/23 Emissions v 2021/22 Emissions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building emissions: Reduced 8.4% (with a 9% YOY target) - Mobility and Transport emissions: Increased 0.2% (with a 9% YOY target) - Procurement emissions: Reduced 41.5% (with an 8% YOY target) <p>Land-use Emissions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Our land is estimated to have removed 1,513 tCO₂e - This figure continues using our baseline methodology and noting any substantial land changes for the year. - Welsh Government are developing an improved methodology to better account for our land assets so that we can ensure this data is accurate and better reflect the assets that we have within Flintshire both as an emitter and captor of carbon. <p>Renewable Energy Generation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Total generation from renewables increased by 18% from the 2021/22 period with 3,522,138 kWh generated. - This improvement is due to investments in Solar generation, with both roof-mounted and ground-mounted increasing generation by 10% and 150% respectively. This reflects the generation from the new solar farms at Flint former landfill and Crumps Yard, Connahs Quay. - Renewable generation from Wind and Landfill Gas reduced in this period by 9% and 43% respectively, mostly due to lower wind speeds and maintenance regimes.
1.07	<p>Data collection for certain emission sources still requires improvement for future calculations, whether to improve methodology used to increase accuracy, provide greater detail or reduce the burden on staff. Work is already underway to improve data for business travel, employee commuting and homeworking, as well as a new officer to address emissions from procurement.</p>

	<p>Additionally, the use of Microsoft Power BI will be investigated to discover how data requests and manual collection can be minimised to reduce demand on staff resource.</p> <p>With the review of the council's Climate Change Strategy due in 2024/25, a number of items in need of particular consideration have been identified and are detailed below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of the Baseline and interim emissions target for Supply Chain as knowledge to decarbonise improves and methodology is updated - Update of the total 2018/19 baseline emissions figure following updates to supply chain baseline - Review of the interim emissions target for Mobility & Transport following greater understanding of barriers at Alltami Depot to decarbonise fleet and improvements to staff commute methodology
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	Staff time and collaboration with other council departments (e.g., IT) to identify digital tools to streamline the collection of raw data (e.g., electricity use in buildings).
2.02	Some costs may be involved if a suitable digital tool is identified, but it is currently not clear whether that would be the case or how much.
2.03	Recruitment of a Joint Procurement Business Partner between Flintshire County Council and Denbighshire County Council in September 2023.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	Not Required/ None.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	<p>There are risks when calculating carbon emissions that the quality or lack of raw data or the way in which it is processed and reported may reduce reliability through error or availability. To address this risk, the Climate Change team review the work in detail and is supported by neighbouring local authorities through peer review.</p> <p>Regarding the Carbon Emissions Update 2022/23 report, risks are considered low but issues such as poor use of terminology or presentation of data creating confusion or misunderstandings. To address this, language is carefully considered and a glossary at the end of the report is provided. Data is presented in simple tables and detailed further where it is felt useful for the reader.</p>

4.02

Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact

Long-term	Positive: Climate Change Committee will be informed of the council's progress towards Net Zero Carbon by 2030 as well as successes and barriers involve. In doing so, Climate Change Committee will be informed enough to advise and support on potential solutions to barriers identified.
Prevention	Positive: The update will inform of emissions that have been prevented in the reporting year and how future emissions can be prevented by addressing issues identified.
Integration	Positive: The Carbon Emission Update 2022/23 forms part of the carbon emission calculation, decarbonisation and reporting process, which in turn integrates with the following priorities under the Council Plan; Green Council, Ambitious Council and Supportive Council. It integrates with the public service board objectives in the Environment priority of the Wellbeing Plan as well as the Smart Access to Energy project in the North Wales Growth Deal. It also integrates with the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and Welsh Government's decarbonisation of the public sector agenda.
Collaboration	Positive: The update recommends investigating how digital technology can support the data collection process, thus requiring the support of other council departments such as IT. Additionally, other local authorities may already have solutions to this matter, thus presenting opportunities to learn and progress.
Involvement	Positive: The update highlights the need to improve data quality such as staff commute miles. In this

		example it will require staff to provide information relating to how they travel to work and presents further opportunities to collect additional insights to support decarbonisation.
4.03	Well-being Goals Impact	
	Prosperous Wales	Positive: Decarbonising the council brings benefits of reduced energy costs, increased generation from renewables and greater control of activities through improved monitoring.
	Resilient Wales	Positive: Resilience can be increased through reduced energy demand and reliance on fossil fuels. Through the monitoring of emissions and data quality, we can improve decarbonisation strategies and target areas which are less resilient than others.
	Healthier Wales	Positive: Realising progress towards Net Zero Carbon 2030 goals promotes positivity towards climate change helping to address related issues such as climate anxiety and stress. Addressing emissions from the local area (e.g., transport) will also benefit people's physical health.
	More equal Wales	Neutral: No impact identified.
	Cohesive Wales	Neutral: No impact identified.
	Vibrant Wales	Neutral: No impact identified
	Globally responsible Wales	Positive: The update reports on how the council is reducing its contribution to global warming through reduced emissions and makes recommendations on how to progress further.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Carbon Footprint Update 22-23.

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>Baseline Year: The emissions that occurred in the period of 1st April 2018 – 31st March 2019 are what targets are based on and all future carbon emission calculations compared to.</p> <p>Capital Funding: Capital funding is usually utilised to acquire or improve a long-term asset such as equipment or buildings.</p> <p>Carbon emissions: Used interchangeably with greenhouse gas emissions; meaning emissions of carbon dioxide, methane etc from human and natural activities and sources. Wider greenhouse gas emissions are collectively calculated into a ‘carbon dioxide equivalent’ displayed as CO₂e.</p> <p>Carbon Footprint: A measurement of the council’s carbon emissions during a defined period of time, given as tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e).</p> <p>Carbon sequestration: the process involved in carbon capture and the long term storage of atmospheric carbon dioxide.</p> <p>Decarbonisation – Reduction of carbon emissions that result from an activity, material or product.</p> <p>Greenhouse Gas/ Carbon emissions: Emissions of carbon dioxide, methane etc from human and natural activities and sources. Wider greenhouse gas emissions are collectively calculated into a ‘carbon dioxide equivalent’ displayed as CO₂e.</p> <p>Methodology: How the collected raw data used for carbon emission calculations is managed and rated in terms of its reliability. This is governed by Welsh Government.</p> <p>Microsoft Powe BI: A collection of software services, apps, and connectors that work together to turn unrelated sources of data into coherent insights.</p> <p>Net Zero Carbon – Reduce carbon emissions and balance any that remain with carbon dioxide removal activities.</p>

Raw Data: The most basic of data units used for carbon emission calculations. Examples include units of energy (kWh of electricity), vehicle type and mileage, tonnes of a particular waste, etc.

Revenue Funding: is utilised for items that will be used within a year. Examples include salaries, heating, lighting, services and small items of equipment. Routine repairs are revenue expenditures and can include significant repairs that do not extend the life of the asset or do not improve the asset.

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Carbon Emission update 2022/23

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1 Executive Summary

Flintshire County Council's target is to become net zero carbon by 2030.

In order to gauge progress towards this target, carbon emissions are tracked and reported on an annual basis. By understanding what the sources of carbon emissions are, the Council can formulate strategic priorities to mitigate climate change.

The progress detailed within the report allows us to pinpoint areas where data collection methods need to be improved, focus investment and decision making on areas that are not performing as expected, and review projected forecasts to take us to our 2030 goal.

The methodology used to determine the Council's carbon footprint is based on Welsh Government guidance 'Welsh Public Sector Net Zero Reporting Guide Version 3, 2023'.

Some of the methodology used within this process has already changed year on year since the baseline calculation was made in 2018/19. Introduction of new measures into the calculation can confuse and undermine the progress that the Council is making in its carbon reduction activities. Due to this, this progress report follows the sources of carbon emission as detailed in our in-scope baseline footprint calculations.

The total carbon emissions for 2022/23 before removing carbon offsets from our land was 32,328tCO₂e. This is a 30.5% decrease on carbon emissions reported in 2021/22, and 30.4% decrease based on our 2018/19 baseline. These reductions are mostly due to a decrease in emissions from Procurement, 41.5% from the 2021/22 period and 34.5% based on our 2018/19 baseline. The methodology adopted for emissions from procurement remains based on value of spend, therefore an increase in Council spend will reflect an increase in carbon emissions. However, for the 2022/23 period, updated emission factors for each spend category (originally set in 2011 and now using 2019 data) were provided by Welsh Government resulting in an average emission factor decrease of 32% for the goods and services the council purchased.

Carbon emissions from Buildings reduced by 8.4% compared with 2021/22 figures, however, carbon emissions from Mobility and Transport increased by 0.2% due to greater staff commute and business travel. For buildings, this is close to annual reduction targets as detailed in the climate change strategy. Overall, there have been reductions of 27.2% and 17.9% for Buildings and Mobility and Transport respectively based on our 2018/19 baseline.

There remains a need to improve data collection methodologies for some emissions sources so to improve accuracy and detail. With relation to Procurement emissions, progress has been made with the employment of a new Joint Procurement Business Partner – Decarbonisation who is funded by both Flintshire and Denbighshire County Councils and will work to move away from the inaccurate spend-based methodology, allowing the council to have greater influence and control on emission reductions from this source.

Considerations have also been noted to review the baseline emissions and interim targets for Supply Chain following methodology updates, and the interim targets for Mobility and Transport following identification of barriers delaying progress against these targets. These will be addressed within the full Climate Change Strategy review in 2024/25, as described within the strategy.

2 Our Baseline

Everything we do has an effect on the environment we live in; from burning fossil fuels for heating to collecting kerbside waste and recycling. Flintshire County Council reports its carbon footprint to Welsh Government as tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e) within its organisational and operational boundaries. This plan relates to the Council's internal operations which are:

- Buildings owned and operated by the Council including offices, depots, schools, community centres, care homes, public conveniences and street lighting. This includes heating, electricity and water use within these facilities.
- Fleet vehicles owned by the Council,
- Business travel for work,
- Employee commuting,
- Procurement of goods and services.

The scope excludes:

- Domestic properties,
- Buildings owned by us that are leased out and operated by third parties,

In order to establish where we are and where we need to be, we first need to look at our baseline figures. In 2018/19 we were able to capture the data set out below. Figure 1 below shows a breakdown of GHG emissions by emission source for 2018/19.¹

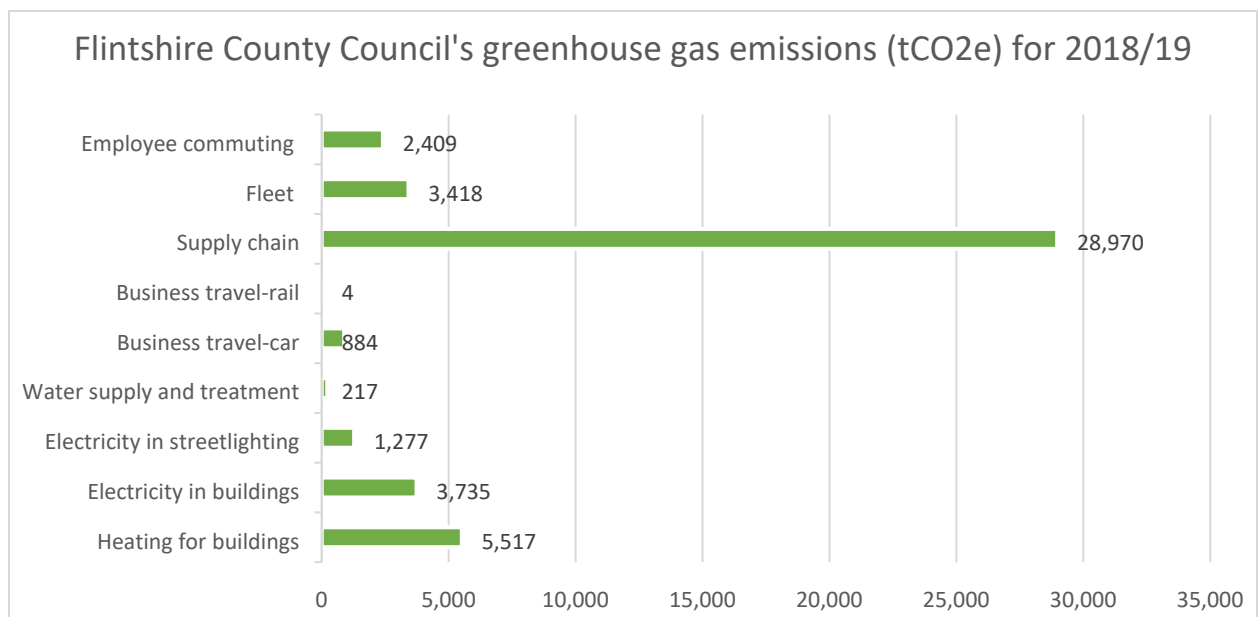


Figure 1: Flintshire County Council's GHG emissions for 2018/19 baseline

¹ It should be noted that the data has been collected using the best available methods at that time, and therefore the expectancy is that data accuracy will improve with emerging methodologies.

As these figures suggest, the biggest contributors to the Council's carbon footprint in 2018/19 were:

- Supply chain; procurement of goods and services: 62%
- Heating for buildings: 12%
- Electricity in buildings: 8%
- Fleet: 7%
- Employee commuting: 5%²

The Council produced 1,664 tonnes of waste in 2018/19 from its operations, however all waste collected by the Council, including operational waste, was either recycled or sent to energy from waste plants for incineration when it cannot be recycled. All green waste is composted. Therefore the only carbon emissions related to waste are included in the 'Fleet' data through waste collection vehicles.

Supply chain; procurement of goods and services equates to 62% of our baseline carbon emissions total. The Council understands that there are actions that can be taken to reduce these emissions through decision making processes and supplier engagement, of which the new Procurement Business Partner – Decarbonisation will work towards. However, this figure will only see significant reductions if the appropriate investment, policy and infrastructure is provided and developed by the Government.

From this data we understand that our baseline carbon emissions for 2018/19 were 46,434 tCO₂e.

In 2018/19, the Council reported an estimated 1,500 tCO₂e absorbed from its land assets. However, this figure has been estimated based on two specific land types – grassland and woodland/forest – with a common value factor used to determine the absorption of carbon. As yet, no formal baseline figures have been calculated for our land assets to determine more accurate absorption figures and therefore this action is a priority in realizing the true benefits of our land to both carbon sequestration and wider habitat richness.

The 2018/19 carbon absorption total can be removed from our emissions total as a 'carbon offset'. Therefore to meet our net zero carbon goal, the total carbon emitted by the Council, minus the total carbon absorbed from Council owned and operated land, must equal zero by 2030.

In 2018/19 the balance of carbon emissions was 44,934 tCO₂e.

² Note this data has a high level of inaccuracy due to the calculation methodology used

3 Carbon Emissions for 2022/23

The Council now has carbon emission data for five financial years as shown in Figure 2 below. The total carbon emissions for 2019/20 saw a 1% reduction on the 2018/19 baseline. The total carbon emissions for 2020/21 saw a 17% reduction on the 2018/19 baseline. The total carbon emissions for 2021/22 saw a 1% increase on the 2018/19 baseline. The total carbon emissions for 2022/23 are 32,328 tCO₂e giving a 30.4% decrease on the 2018/19 baseline with emissions reductions achieved across all sources.

The methodology adopted for calculating our carbon emissions is mandated by Welsh Government. The methodology for calculating carbon emissions from supply chain remains based on the value of spend, meaning if the Council spends more money one year than a previous year (including high inflation), then the consequential emissions may be higher.

However, for the 2022/23 period, updated emission factors for each spend category (originally set in 2011 and now using 2019 data) were provided by Welsh Government resulting in an average emission factor decrease of 32% for the goods and services the council purchased. This is expected to be due to decarbonisation across other sectors and improved accuracy in emission factors.

The result of this demonstrates a reduction in carbon emissions from supply chain beyond our 2024/25 target - however, this is not due to any positive actions the Council has made to decarbonise supply chain, and therefore does not preclude us from prioritising action in this area.

The column titled '22-23 Spend w. 2011 EF' in Figure 2 demonstrates how the council's 2022/23 carbon footprint would look if the 2011 supply chain emission factors had been utilised. Supply chain emissions in 2022/23 using the new emission factors are 18,894 tCO₂e. However, if supply chain emission factors from 2011 had remained, then emissions would have been 30,838 tCO₂e. This would have resulted in a total 2022/23 carbon footprint of 44,183 tCO₂e, which is still a reduction on the 2018/19 baseline by 4.8% due to reductions achieved elsewhere, but much less than the 30.4% seen.

Following 5 years of carbon data, we now have a clearer understanding of our emission sources and the impact we can have in reducing these. The targets within each key theme will be reviewed and considered within the strategy's full review in 2024/25 to ensure we are aiming for ambitious but achievable targets towards net zero carbon.

Over the coming years we will move away from the calculation methodology of emissions associated with spend value by working with our suppliers to better understand the emissions associated with the individual contracts we procure. This work will now be accelerated following the recruitment of a Joint Procurement Business Partner for Decarbonisation in Sept 2023 – part funded by Flintshire Council and part funded by Denbighshire Council.

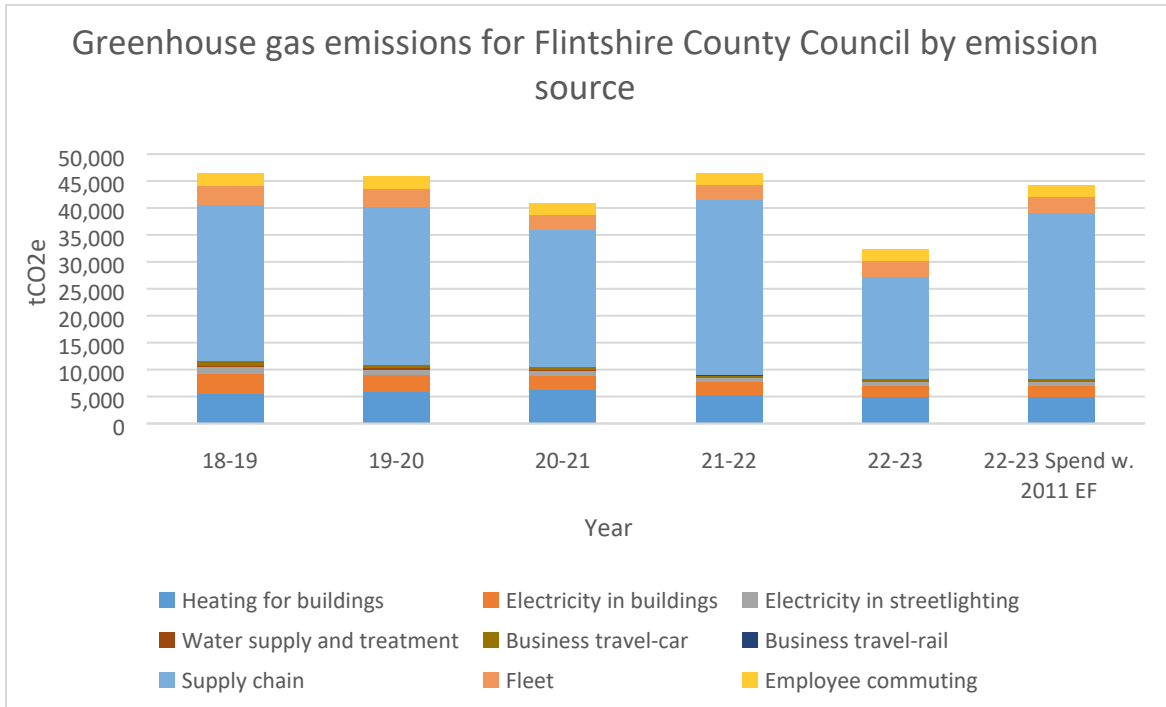


Figure 2: Flintshire County Council GHG emissions over past 5 financial years by emission source, including 2022/23 supply chain comparison using previous years' supply chain emission factors.

Aside from supply chain, compared to 2018/19 baseline emissions, we saw a 9.9% reduction in heating from buildings, 44.4% reduction in electricity in buildings, 49.3% reduction in electricity from street lighting, 46% reduction in business travel and 17% reduction from fleet. This is reflective of the projects carried out in the 2022/23 reporting year by further reducing emissions from buildings through greater efficiency measures such as LED lighting, building management systems and generation of solar electricity. Additionally, the need to ventilate buildings for Covid-19 was also removed helping to retain heat.

The methodology used to determine emissions from business mileage has improved with 67% of miles claimed now stating car size and is expected to improve further as more staff have access to online recording. Methodology for employee commuting continues to have a high level of deviation due to gaps in data records. An employee survey to determine distance, travel methods and frequency to the workplace is due in October 2023 allowing for improved, council-relevant estimates.

The methodology to determine emissions from water has also been improved for the 2022/23 period, where meter read data has been used for 76% of the water used. The remaining data remains calculated using invoice cost values and is considered lower accuracy. Being able to capture all water usage from meter reads would improve the accuracy of emissions from water usage across our buildings.

Figure 3 below shows our actual emissions and the milestones we hope to reach between now and 2030. We are currently aiming for a 60% emission reduction in Buildings, 80% emission reduction in Mobility & Transport and 60% reduction in Procurement by 2030.

Theme	Baseline tCO ₂ e	Actual Emissions tCO ₂ e (reduction %)	Targeted Reduction	
	2018/19	2022/23	2024/25	2029/30
Buildings	10,747	7,827.6 (27.2%)	35%	60%
Mobility & Transport	6,716	5,517 (17.9%)	50%	80%
Procurement	28,970	18984 (34.5%)	30%	60%

Figure 3: Flintshire County Council Carbon Emission Milestones to 2030

To achieve these milestones, we set annual targets in each theme as detailed below in Figure 4. The target percentage reduction is compared to the previous year (2021/22). The reduction target for Buildings was almost achieved, however Mobility & Transport saw a slight increase in emissions from the previous year. The reduction target for Procurement was achieved many times over compared with 2021/22 and is mostly explained by the revision of emission factors.

Theme	2021/22 tCO ₂ e	2022/23 reduction target (%)	2022/23 tCO ₂ e	2022/23 actual reduction (%)
Buildings	8,543	9%	7,827	8.4% reduction
Mobility & Transport	5,504	9%	5,517	0.2% increase
Procurement	32,446	8%	18984	41.5% reduction

Figure 4: Flintshire County Council Carbon Emission Targets for 2022/23

4 Land Use emissions

Land use emissions are determined using the Welsh Government’s methodology, emission factors for each land type, and our internal knowledge of land types under our ownership and control. Depending on usage, land can have positive or negative net carbon emissions. Settlements and croplands are net emitters while forests and grassland absorb and store carbon. Wetlands and peatlands also have the potential to absorb and store carbon depending on their condition, however the Welsh Government methodology does not currently include emission factors for these land types.

The emission breakdown from our land types in 2022/23 can be seen in Figure 5 and remains unchanged from 2021/22.

<i>Land Type</i>	Area (Ha)	Emission Factor	Total kgCO₂e
Forest	151.68	-5.42	822,135
Grassland	479.91	-1.44	691,402
Settlements	1.23	2.1	2,589
Wetlands	78.91	/	/

Figure 5: Breakdown of Flintshire County Council Land Types and Carbon impact 2022/23

Figure 6 shows the 2022/23 emissions and removals of kgCO₂e based on the above methodology. By increasing the quantity of forest land and grassland we can increase the amount of carbon that we absorb and store.

Welsh Government are developing an improved methodology to better account for our land assets so that we can ensure this data is accurate and better reflect the assets that we have within Flintshire.

<i>Land-based emissions</i>	Units of kgCO₂e	
	Emissions	Removals
Total land-based emissions	2,589	1,513,538

Figure 6: Summary of Flintshire County Council land-based emissions/removals 2022/23

5 Renewable Energy generation

The Council continues to invest in renewable energy generation both within its building assets and large scale solar farms. Investing in renewable energy that is consumed onsite allows a reduction in energy used from the grid. This saving is demonstrated in the emissions from electricity use. Investing in renewable energy that is exported into the grid assists in the local and national decarbonisation of energy provision moving us away from reliance on energy generated by burning of fossil fuels.

Figure 7 below shows the energy generated from renewables in 2022/23 compared to 2021/22, generation comparison against 2021/22, and exported. The commissioning of both Flint solar farm and Crumps Yard in Connahs Quay has elevated our energy generation from ground mounted solar PV. Weather variations, down-time of both wind turbines and biogas generators, and the natural decline of methane production from former landfill sites explains the decrease in both wind and biogas energy generation.

<i>Renewables</i>	Units of kWh			
	Categories	Total Generated	Generation Change from 2021/22 (%)	Total Exported
	Solar PV (roof mounted)	700,097	10% increase	175,025
	Solar PV (ground mounted)	1,801,633	150% increase	1,801,633
	Wind	9,918	9% decrease	2,480
	Biogas CHP (landfill gas turbines)	915,184	43% decrease	915,184
	Renewables	3,522,138	18% increase	2,894,322

Figure 7: Flintshire County Council Renewable Energy Generation 2022/23

The Welsh Government required all public sector buildings be supplied with renewable electricity by 2020, or as soon as contractually able. In 2022/23, the council purchased all electricity from renewable sources through the use of REGOs (Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin certificates). However, this is not reflected within our electricity emissions as per Welsh Government reporting methodology.

<i>Green Energy Tariff</i>	Units of kWh
Purchased Renewable Electricity	10,648,030

Figure 8: Flintshire County Council Renewable Electricity Purchased 2022/23

6 Next steps and recommendations

It is the role of the Climate Change Committee to oversee and review the progress made against the Council's ambition to become net zero carbon by 2030. The Committee will continue to develop the Climate Change strategy and action plan and oversee implementation of its delivery.

Data collection for certain emission sources still requires improvement for future calculations, whether to improve methodology used to increase accuracy, provide greater detail or reduce the burden on staff. Work is already underway to improve data for business travel, employee commuting and homeworking, as well as a new officer to address emissions from procurement.

The use of Microsoft Power BI will also be investigated to discover how data requests and manual collection can be minimised to reduce demand on staff resource.

With the review of the council's Climate Change Strategy due in 2024/25, a number of items in need of particular consideration have been identified and are listed below.

- Review of the Baseline and interim emissions target for Supply Chain as knowledge to decarbonise improves and methodology is updated.
- Update of the full 2018/19 baseline emissions figure following updates to supply chain baseline.
- Review of the interim emissions target for Mobility & Transport following greater understanding of barriers at Alltami Depot to decarbonise fleet, and improvements to staff commute methodology.

Appendix 1 - Glossary

Biodiversity: The variety of plant and animal life that make up our natural world or a particular habitat.

Building Management System (BMS): Computer controlled system that can be used to monitor and manage building functions such as heating.

Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (CO₂e): the equivalent amount of carbon dioxide that would produce the same amount of global warming over a 100 year timescale.

Carbon Store: the amount of carbon stored in the natural environment such as soil, woodland, peatland etc. These may also be described as carbon sinks.

Council assets: buildings and land owned by Flintshire County Council.

Decarbonisation: reducing the carbon intensity and greenhouse gas emissions of an activity or service or wider organization.

Emission Factor: The quantity of greenhouse gas emissions per unit of an activity (e.g. kWh, Mile, £)

Landfill Biogas: The gases created by the action of microorganisms within a landfill as they decompose organic waste, including for example, food waste and paper waste.

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.

Offsetting: A reduction in GHG emissions (e.g. wind turbines replacing coal) or an increase in carbon storage/GHG removal enhancement (tree planting, peatland restoration) outside of the GHG emissions boundary of an organisation that is used to compensate GHG emissions occurring within the organisation's boundary

REGO: Renewable Energy Generation of Origin certificates demonstrate electricity has been generated from renewable sources.

Sequestration: Removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and then storing it, usually through environmental processes such as photosynthesis, absorption by soil, oceans etc.



CABINET

Date of Meeting	21 st November 2023
Report Subject	Homelessness Budget Pressure – Options Paper
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration
Report Author	Chief Officer (Housing and Communities)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Within the Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2023/24 (Month 4) reported to Cabinet in September 2023 it was recommended that, as required by the Council's Finance Procedure Rules, a separate report is prepared by Housing and Communities to expand on the reasons for the significant overspend on the homelessness budget and the mitigations being put in place.

Within the Housing Solutions service there are specific budgets for homeless accommodation settings for 'interim housing'. In addition to this budgeted provision for these locations, including the Homeless Hub, there is a further specific budget for emergency accommodation. This budget is used when there is no remaining capacity in other budgeted temporary accommodation. The emergency accommodation used is mostly hotel rooms, within and beyond the boundaries of Flintshire, together with some use of other forms of holiday lets, such as caravans and apartments.

Options have been developed for consideration to manage the overspend on the homelessness budget. These are outlined in appendix 1.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Cabinet to note the latest financial position in relation to homelessness.
2	Cabinet to support the options outlined in appendix 1 to increase supply and mitigate further overspends on the homelessness budget.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	HOMELESSNESS BUDGET PRESSURE															
1.01	<p>Within the Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2023/24 (Month 4) reported to Cabinet in September 2023 it was recommended that, as required by the Council's Finance Procedure Rules, a separate report is prepared by Housing and Communities to expand on the reasons for the significant overspend on the homelessness budget and the mitigations being put in place.</p>															
1.02	<p>Within the Housing Solutions service there are specific budgets for homeless accommodation settings for 'interim housing'. In addition to this budgeted provision for these locations, including the Homeless Hub, there is a further specific budget for emergency accommodation.</p> <p>This budget is used when there is no remaining capacity in other budgeted temporary accommodation. The emergency accommodation used is mostly hotel rooms, within and beyond the boundaries of Flintshire, together with some use of other forms of holiday lets, such as caravans and apartments.</p>															
1.03	<p>The annual budget for emergency accommodation is £1,212,500 and the spend as at 30/10/2023 is £2,634,009 including prepaid accommodation to the end of March 2024 (the total relating to prepaid accommodation to the end of March 2024 is £699,950). Block booking and pre-paying for accommodation ensures the Council can secure accommodation capacity and achieve the best possible prices.</p> <p>Use of hotel rooms is not ideal or suitable for individuals and families. They are not only high cost but also present challenges seasonally due to peak times for demand within the year. This can result in increased costs, or in some circumstances temporary relocation, for those who are in hotel accommodation.</p>															
1.04	<p>The projected total spend for the year is based on the spend to date with adjustments for prepaid accommodation and outstanding commitments (unpaid invoices, corporate card transactions etc.). Further allowance is then made for the expected spend for the remainder of the year using the spend to date as the initial base point, but also taking account of the full year impacts of growth in numbers in the year to date and further expected growth in numbers in the remainder of the year.</p>															
1.05	<p>Growth in numbers in emergency accommodation</p> <p>Since October 2022 there has been significant and sustained growth in the numbers of people needing to be accommodated in emergency accommodation due to homelessness. The table below shows the data relating to emergency housing placements from March 2023 to September 2023 as it is relevant to the current financial year:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>2023 Month</th> <th>Hotels</th> <th>Holiday Lets</th> <th>Total</th> <th>Increase / Decrease</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>March</td> <td>98</td> <td>5</td> <td>103</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>April</td> <td>121</td> <td>5</td> <td>126</td> <td>23</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	2023 Month	Hotels	Holiday Lets	Total	Increase / Decrease	March	98	5	103	-	April	121	5	126	23
2023 Month	Hotels	Holiday Lets	Total	Increase / Decrease												
March	98	5	103	-												
April	121	5	126	23												

	May	131	5	136	10
	June	126	4	130	-6
	July	142	4	146	16
	August	138	5	143	-3
	September	132	9	141	-2
	<p>Please note that these numbers only reflect a snapshot at a point in time (end of each calendar month) for the purpose of informing returns which are made to Welsh Government. The numbers will fluctuate daily.</p> <p>Some people are moved into permanent accommodation when suitable properties become available. Others may have their accommodation ended due to their behaviours and associated risks. New people will become homeless and require assistance of emergency housing where prevention activities have been unsuccessful, or no opportunity to prevent homelessness has been available.</p>				
1.06	<p>As has been referenced in previous homelessness reports the challenging market conditions, instability in the private rented sector, tensions at home, increases in complexity of need and changes to homelessness legislation are all key drivers for ongoing and sustained demand for homeless services and emergency accommodation.</p> <p>The lack of appropriate social housing to meet the needs of those who experience homelessness, along with affordability and availability issues within the private rented sector, continue to present significant barriers to assisting people to exit homelessness in a timely manner.</p>				
2.00	WORK TO ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS PRESSURES				
2.01	<p>There is a need to increase levels of successful move on to ensure delivery in line commitments around Rapid Rehousing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rare – prevent more homelessness. • Brief – move people on from temporary housing quickly. • Unrepeated – support people once exiting homelessness. <p>Options have been developed for consideration to mitigate the overspend on the homelessness budget (see appendix 1). Each of the options proposed could offer some mitigations, however, are not necessarily quick wins.</p>				
2.02	<p>The options outlined in appendix 1 are designed to increase the supply of alternatives to emergency accommodation and consequently improve the rate at which people can be moved on from such accommodation, or even prevent some from having to use it in the first place.</p> <p>It should be acknowledged that a growth in demand from new presentations is still expected and these options/solutions are only part of the bigger picture and related challenges.</p>				
2.03	Ongoing work:				

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has successfully bid to the Transitional Accommodation Capital Programme (TACP) and has been awarded funding of £1.6m for 2023 / 24. This will allow the acquisition and / or refurbishment of 28 additional units (8 acquisitions plus 2 internal transfers from General Fund to HRA and 18 long term voids brought back into use). • There is an ongoing programme of property acquisitions to increase supply of housing. Four acquisitions have been completed and a further eight are pending. • There is ongoing work to explore the potential for HRA borrowing as a solution to some budget pressures such as homelessness. • The Council will continue to lobby Welsh Government via the WLGA in conjunction with other Welsh LA's who are experiencing these pressures to seek additional financial support.
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3.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
3.01	<p>Detailed below are the resource implications associated with the proposed efforts to ease pressures on homelessness services:</p> <p>Revenue: Statutory Homeless Services are funded through Council Fund. Additional duties placed on Councils and the current demands on services and homeless accommodation results in additional expenditure and budget pressures. Whilst some grant is available for 2023-2024 for emergency housing and other discretionary funding for crisis interventions, this is not sufficient to cover the full scale of the financial risk. Support services are funded through Housing Support Grant. There are significant recruitment and retention challenges within the Housing Support sector and grant levels have not increased in the last 2 years and are unlikely to increase further. Additional services focused on supporting people, delivering improved outcomes, will require revenue funding to deliver, and may require business cases to be developed, within a spend to save, cost benefit approach.</p> <p>Capital: Creating more housing will require significant capital investment and has been flagged early within the Councils Capital Programme and Housing Revenue Account Business Plan. The Flintshire Housing Prospectus has been approved by Council and shared with our Housing Partners and Social Housing Grant (SHG) supports ambitious plans to increase housing supply at scale and pace and additional funding from Welsh Government has been available to support this challenge.</p> <p>Human Resources: Staff are under significant pressure with high levels of homelessness and unsuitable housing options such as hotels making support work more challenging. Additional support staff and staff for the management of temporary accommodation will be required and whilst some funding is available through Housing Support Grant, this funding has been standstill budget and unlikely to increase. Cost for support staff and service is however going up. Additional staff will also be required to deliver on ambitious plans to develop more housing to meet homelessness and broader housing needs.</p>

4.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	<p>Within appendix 1 option specific risks and mitigations have been outlined. The following broader risks have been considered along with mitigations offering additional control measures:</p> <p>Risk: Do nothing and allow the current pressures to continue and homeless accommodation costs increase at significant scale in future years.</p> <p>Mitigations: Actively consider and progress a number of the options outlined in this paper further and support officers to drive forward the approved options.</p> <p>Risk: Having high numbers of Flintshire households accommodated in neighbouring Local Authority areas will risk relationships and create tensions with neighbouring Councils and creates operational pressures for service delivery.</p> <p>Mitigation: Adopt the options outlined above to ease pressures on homeless accommodation and bring more homeless households back into Flintshire through increased supply of housing for the homeless cohort.</p> <p>Risk: Insufficient turnover and move on from homeless accommodation creates blockages within the system due to insufficient levels of affordable housing, creating significant financial pressures through the use of costly hotel accommodation.</p> <p>Mitigations: Increase the supply and access to housing for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness through the adoption of a number of the options outlined in this report.</p> <p>Risk: Support a number of the above options but fail to successfully deliver the intended outcomes due to a lack of staffing or financial resources required to enable the options to be effective.</p> <p>Mitigations: Ensure all supported options are fully costed and resourced with additional staff and dedicated budgets (Housing Support, Temporary Accommodation and Development Team activities) through Council Fund, Housing Revenue Account and available grants such as Discretionary Homeless Grant, Housing Support Grant, Transitional Accommodation Capital Programme and the Social housing Grant.</p> <p>Risk: Grant funding is reduced or costs stand still, whilst market forces drive up expenditure for accommodation, services and staff.</p> <p>Mitigations: Continue to lobby Welsh Government in partnership with others across the sector, to increase funding for the development of accommodation, housing support and homelessness service.</p>

3.02	Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact	
	Long-term	Positive – Increase in targeted support and alternative delivery methods to ensure services are inclusive for all
	Prevention	Prevention - Preventing homelessness through ensuring there is adequate support and accommodation to cater for a range of people’s needs
	Integration	Positive – Increased integration between services and partner organisations
	Collaboration	Positive – Increased collaboration between services, partner organisations and service users
	Involvement	Positive – Service user involvement to help shape effective services so that support is timely, and person centred
3.03	Well-being Goals Impact	
	Prosperous Wales	Positive – With additional funding more jobs will be created to deliver housing related support on a greater scale within Flintshire. Opportunities to support the labour market through training and development opportunities are being considered in conjunction with colleagues from Communities for Work.
	Resilient Wales	Positive – Creating services that are prevention focused and build resilience to avoid households becoming homeless
	Healthier Wales	Positive – Reduction in rough sleeping, overcoming health inequalities associated with homelessness and poor housing conditions and investment to increase targeted support for people with housing issues and mental ill-health
	More equal Wales	Positive – Services are delivered in a way that are inclusive for all. Consideration has been given to local and regional gaps in provision for often marginalised communities such as the homeless, those with mental health or substances issues and the LGBTQ+ community.
	Cohesive Wales	No Impact

	Vibrant Wales	No impact
	Globally responsible Wales	No impact

5.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
5.01	Consultation with Elected Members through Cabinet and Communities and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
5.02	Consultation with Housing Partners will be undertaken if options relating to changes to the Allocations Policy are progressed. The Common Allocations Policy is a shared policy and their support and engagement in adopting any temporary changes of practice will be required, if we are to apply the changes to all social housing in Flintshire, and not just Council homes.
5.03	The approach to consultation with residents in relation to the Sheltered Housing Review will be agreed by the Task and Finish Group. Consideration will need to be given to whether consultation with Mini Group communities is required if changes to these properties are to be progressed.

6.00	APPENDICES
6.01	Appendix 1 – outline of options

7.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
7.01	Consultation on White Paper - Ending Homelessness in Wales

8.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
8.01	Contact Officer: Martin Cooil – Housing & Prevention Service Manager Telephone: 07880 423234 E-mail: martin.cooil@flintshire.gov.uk

9.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
9.01	Housing (Wales) Act 2014 - the legislation the underpins the homelessness system within Wales including peoples' statutory rights and Local Authorities duties and responsibilities. Rapid Rehousing - Rapid rehousing is an approach for people whose first and most important need is to access housing; with a lack of it often the main reason why they are homeless. Rapid rehousing helps people settle

quickly back with family or friends, into private rented, social housing or other affordable and safe long-term housing options.

Housing Support Grant (HSG) - The HSG programme brings the historic funding streams for Supporting People, Homelessness Prevention and Rent Smart Wales grants into one single funding stream.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) - The Council is required to keep a HRA to record all income and expenditure relating to the provision of local authority housing. All rental income, including arrears, must be held with a ring fenced HRA account. This means that income can only be used for council housing purposes and not general expenditure. This also allows rental income to be invested locally to help improve and maintain council owned homes and build new council homes.

Option 1 – fast tracking review of sheltered housing

Context

There is a significant lack of one bed general needs social housing in Flintshire, specifically within the Council's stock, yet this is the highest demand property type when considering the profile of homelessness. Approximately 80% of the homeless cohort are single people or couples under the age of 55 requiring one bed homes.

The Council's accommodation for people over the age of 55 (sheltered housing) accounts for around 29% of the total stock. Sheltered housing also accounts for a large number of void properties which become available each year for relet.

As of 30th October 2023, there were a total of 223 empty properties awaiting refurbishment, 96 of which were sheltered.

The Council designates some of its stock as 'mini group' properties and these are usually allocated to people over the age of 50. There are 550 mini group homes accounting for c.7.5% of all Council properties.

Of the 223 void properties there were 17 mini group awaiting refurbishment. Therefore, age restricted properties (over 50) accounts for over 50% of the current voids.

In comparison there were only seven vacant one-bed general needs homes awaiting refurbishment, with the remaining 103 general needs homes for use by families.

Void By Type	Void Properties	Void as %
1 bed General Needs	7	3.1%
2 bed General Needs	34	15.2%
3 bed General Needs	63	28.3%
4 bed+ General Needs	6	2.7%
1 bed Mini Group	12	5.4%
2 bed Mini Group	5	2.2%

1 bed Sheltered	50	22.4%
2 bed Sheltered	46	20.6%
ALL	223	100%

Addressing the disconnect between the Council’s supply of vacant homes and overall stock profile, to align it with the needs of the homeless cohort would increase supply and reduce demand on costly hotel and bed and breakfast placements. This would also better meet the housing needs of Flintshire residents, not just those who experience homelessness, as waiting times for one bed general needs homes is significantly longer than for those who require mini group or sheltered housing.

Option 1a - Progress with the sheltered housing review to develop recommendations for current schemes.

Following discussions at Communities and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee in February 2023 it was agreed that a task and finish group would be established to agree the methodology and consultation approach for the sheltered housing review. The terms of reference for this group have been agreed and the intention is to report back to Overview and Scrutiny in December 2023 on the outcomes from the group and progress the review of all schemes from January 2024.

Option 1a – risks and mitigations

The Sheltered Housing Review working group will manage all aspects of risks and mitigations with regards to this workstream and further reports will be shared with Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee in due course.

Option 1b - Reduce or remove the age thresholds for mini-group properties which is currently 50 years plus.

During the financial year 2022-2023 42 mini group properties were successfully relet by the Council with 37 mini group relets the previous year (2021-2022). As of 30th October 2023, there were 17 mini group properties vacant awaiting refurbishment and relet.

If allocation of 50% of these properties was to people who are homeless, and in homeless accommodation, there is an estimated reduction in expenditure on emergency housing of £587,000 based on an average figure of forty available homes each year.

Option 1b - Risks and mitigations

There is a commitment to creating sustainable communities. Specific concerns over ‘mixed age’ communities and the impact that younger people living within areas predominantly occupied by older people are valid, however can be mitigated. The following can be considered as mitigations.

- Reducing age ranges for mini group over a planned period may be one way to address this concern.

Average cost of one individual in homeless accommodation for one year x twenty relets:

- Average cost for hotel room per week = £564.50
- Annual cost for hotel room for year = £29,354.00

Twenty people allocated in mini group properties could reduce homeless accommodation costs by £587,080 if accessed via the 50% Homeless Direct Policy.

Whilst there are many variables to consider when estimating savings, including availability of mini group homes, time to complete void works, length of stay in homeless accommodation, suitability of offer and specific property types and locations, this provides an indication of the potential impact of opening up mini group properties in terms of cost benefit for the Council Fund.

- Age range could be reduced to an agreed age (for example, 40 years) to mitigate concerns of younger people living within mini group sites.
- Sensitive lettings principles can be applied within the above age range profiles to ensure positive and complimentary behaviours for each community.
- Local lettings policies can be implemented to enable further scrutiny of an applicant's circumstances to reduce risks associated with substance misuse, offending behaviours, risk of community tension.
- Additional support can be put in place for people moving into mini group homes to support housing sustainment and support integration to a new community.

Option 2 - increase in homeless accommodation	
<p>Context</p> <p>The Homeless Hub is an example of a bespoke 24/7 supported housing community for people experiencing homelessness. Whilst the standard of accommodation (porta-kabin style) is not the aspiration in the long term, this model does provide excellent support for people and a safe place to stay.</p> <p>The accommodation provides housing for up to 26 single people and is located on Council land. Modular accommodation modules are leased long term, and compared with other housing options is relatively low cost. Support services provided by The Wallich are funded via the Housing Support Grant (HSG) and cost c.£480,000 per year.</p>	
<p>Option 2a - Replicate Glanrafon Homeless Hub in another location with use of modular accommodation modules</p> <p>Availability of land for temporary provision of modular accommodation modules will be a consideration but the Council may have sites available for such purposes. Higher standards of modular builds are available at an increased cost, however some forms of modular builds can be dismantled and relocated for use on other sites longer term.</p> <p>Consideration of 24/7 support services would be critical to delivering this model and HSG is fully committed for future years. Retendering of services is likely to place more pressure on the £7.8million of available funding for existing provision as operating costs for existing and new providers are increasing.</p>	<p>Option 2a – risks and mitigations</p> <p>Careful consideration should be given to increasing capacity for modular accommodation modules. This may be considered low quality in terms of what accommodation people who experience homelessness should be offered. This is mitigated to some extent by the quality of support offered.</p> <p>Use of modular accommodation modules may ease immediate financial pressures, however, it is not a long-term solution.</p> <p>Access to sites and planning conditions of a temporary nature is a risk. It should be noted the existing Homeless Hub only has planning permission until July 2026 and any additional sites will also have a limited consent period, however this will allow time to deliver more appropriate long term housing solutions for those who experience homelessness.</p>

Option 2b - Replicate Glanrafon Homeless Hub through purchase of a large building or development of purpose built accommodation

The identification and acquisition of a larger existing building, for example, hotel or vacant pub, with plans to refurbish and repurpose for use as homeless accommodation could be considered. This would include the provision of 24/7 support on site or daytime support and security in the evening. As above, funding for support provision would need to be identified, given the limited HSG available, however a business case could be made against the current expenditure on hotel accommodation.

Social Housing Grant (SHG) or others capital grants may be available to purchase and repurpose accommodation. Grant conditions may be prohibitive regarding space standards and HRA or Council Fund capital funding may be required. Welsh Government are aware of the challenges around homelessness and are increasingly flexible and willing to work with Councils on bespoke housing solutions for homeless accommodation but do have a clear commitment to “quality housing”.

Option 2b - Risks and mitigations

Identifying suitable sites and ensuring the provision is accepted within the wider community is a risk. Engagement with the community and sensitive site location would mitigate this risk alongside robust management of the accommodation and support services.

If developing this option at scale, it will be important to ensure 24/7 support is available to reduce risks for vulnerable residents and ensure that the provision does not cause disruption within the community it is located.

Balancing the cost benefit of a large site in terms of capital funding and revenue costs for support services, or several smaller sites across the County will be a consideration for budgets. One centralised location may offer greater cost benefit for the Council in terms of capital and revenue expenditure, but a dispersed approach with a few smaller scale services may be more acceptable within communities.

Option 3 - changes to allocation policy

Context

The current Single Access Route to Housing (SARTH) Common Allocations Policy is applied for the assessment of all applicants for social housing and is adopted by the Council and all Housing Association partners. In most cases homelessness is a Band 2 qualifier along with most other housing needs. The exceptions are those who are homeless as a result of fleeing violence or abuse, or following leaving the forces which are both Band 1, and those who are intentionally homeless who are awarded Band 4.

Those residents within supported housing commissioned through HSG also receive Band 1 status when they are ready for move on. This is an existing element of easing pressures on homeless accommodation. As more homeless households are presenting with complex needs, many will benefit from access to supported housing. The Band 1 status for 'move on from supported housing' ensures the support housing portfolio does not become 'bed blocked'. This would result in households with complex needs remaining in unsuitable homeless accommodation where their support needs cannot be best addressed.

The Council and Housing Association partners agreed during Covid to a significant policy variation that allowed for 50% of all social housing to be offered to local Homeless Teams to allocate to those households in temporary accommodation. In Flintshire this also extends to those who are imminently homeless, in the hope an early offer would avoid the need for accessing homeless accommodation.

Whilst this approach has been beneficial and increased access to social housing for those who experience homelessness, the take up on the 50% quota has never been maximised and last year Flintshire only achieved a 23% take up of all social housing via this approach. As already referenced, this is predominantly due to the limited availability of one bed general needs housing and the significant disconnect between social housing supply and the homeless cohort demand profile. 75% of households accommodated by the Council due to homelessness, require a one bed general needs home, but less than 5% of the Council's stock is one bed general needs.

It should be noted significant changes to homeless legislation (Housing (Wales) Act 2014) and the Social Housing Allocations Code of Guidance within Wales are anticipated. The recent publication of the White Paper on 'Ending homelessness in Wales', is out for consultation and will provide firm direction and a legal framework for homelessness and the future allocation of social housing.

Flexibility within the current legal frameworks to amend the local Common Allocations Policy is something we should continue to explore and utilise.

<p>Option 3a - Increase SARTH Homeless Direct Lets quota from 50% to 100%. Moving to a 100% Homeless Direct Lets would offer some benefit to easing pressures on homeless accommodation but does present challenges as outlined in the risk and mitigations section.</p> <p>The issue of the stock profile does mean such an approach would have a greater impact on some homeless households more than others. Whilst there would be benefit to all homeless households with increased move on, the limited availability of one bed general needs housing and over supply of housing for the over 50's cohort, remains a significant barrier if only considered in isolation to other changes to stock profile.</p> <p>Older people and families who experience homelessness would see the most noticeable benefit if the Council and Housing Association partners agreed to move to a 100% Homeless Direct Let approach.</p>	<p>Option 3a – risks and mitigations Whilst the needs of the homeless cohort are the focus of this paper, the Council also has duties to other housing applicants who have housing needs other than homelessness. Increasing access to social housing for the homeless cohort, will have an impact on other applicants on the register who will not be housed as frequently or as quickly.</p> <p>Delays in accessing social housing is one of the most common complaints and enquiries from residents, local Members and Members of Parliament and the Senedd. It is a risk that these complaints may increase because of people waiting longer for social housing.</p> <p>Other forms of housing need reflected on the housing register, such as people living in overcrowded housing, poor property conditions, serious medical issues compounded by current housing situation, are all housing issues that have cost implications on the public purse. Whilst much of this expenditure may be through health care pressures, there is also a potential impact on Council Fund through Social Care services who are already under significant operational and financial pressures. It is acknowledged such costs are difficult to quantify.</p>
<p>Option 3b - Place a temporary hold on non-urgent moves for social housing applicants via the Common Housing Register. Urgent moves should be considered as Band 1 applications as per the Common Allocations Policy. In addition, all SARTH partners have discretion to apply urgent management moves if they see fit,</p>	<p>Option 3b - Risks and mitigations As outlined above there are risks of increased enquiries and complaints due to extending waiting times for social housing applicants who have needs other than homelessness. There are also potential cost pressures across other public services</p>

<p>for purposes of 'best use of stock' or to address pressing housing issues that would not be best addressed via the Common Allocations Policy. Therefore Band 2/3/4 applications could be considered 'non urgent moves'.</p> <p>As per the option 3a above, the impact for one bed general needs households would be positive but disproportionately limited, compared to other homeless household types and the supply of one bed general needs housing for those under 50 is limited.</p>	<p>because of these delays. This is difficult to quantify. This risk can be mitigated through constant review of the approach, to ensure there are no unintended consequences on certain groups and set time frames for applying this restriction.</p>
<p>Option 3c - Allocate two-bedroom Council housing to people who are homeless, have a one bedroom need and do not qualify for sheltered accommodation.</p> <p>The Common Allocations Policy applies the principles of 'right sizing' to ensure properties are fully occupied. This is a long established 'best use of stock' approach, that also mitigates the potential impact of the spare room subsidy linked to Housing Benefit entitlements (the 'bedroom tax').</p> <p>Whilst some homeless households may be able to afford larger properties, the vast majority are benefit dependent and would immediately receive a 14% benefit shortfall for their rental costs if under occupying housing and could fall into rent arrears. Those who can afford the extra bedroom can be considered for a larger property under the current Common Allocation Policy, but priority is given to those households who would fully occupy a property.</p> <p>As outlined in the table in option 1 there were 34 two bed general needs homes on the void list (30th October 2023). Of these vacant properties, 16 were two bed flats. Flats are less desirable for families and often have fewer applicants and higher refusal rates.</p>	<p>Option 3c - Risk and Mitigations</p> <p>Long term it may be cost prohibitive to absorb rent shortfalls, and this risk is heightened should Welsh Government grant be reduced. To mitigate this, the Council can project budgets to reflect the potential ongoing costs whilst also targeting this approach to those who are closest to the labour market, or closest to age range where the spare room subsidy is applied for those in receipt of benefits. The Council could also target back to work initiatives at those residents benefitting from two bed homes so they become financially independent over time.</p>

Appendix 1 - Options

<p>Offering two bed homes to households with a one bed need, even if limited to just two bed flats, would increase supply of social housing for the homeless cohort. Consideration would need to be given to how to mitigate the financial hardship for the residents, and the potential for increased rent arrears within the HRA.</p>	
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Option 4 - alternative use of FCC stock

Context
 There are currently twenty-two FCC properties being used as homeless accommodation. Twelve of these are new properties brought into Council ownership following successful funding bids for Welsh Government Phase 2 Covid Grant Funding. The other 10 properties are existing Council homes.

These properties are managed by the Council’s Homeless Team as temporary accommodation and occupied by homeless households under license agreement or Standard ‘Homeless’ Contacts of Occupation. They are dispersed across the County.

Under Housing Benefit rules these properties can be under occupied without the impact of the spare room subsidy and rent is guaranteed for the HRA as the service pay for the accommodation 6 months in advance even during void periods.

Turnover is higher than usual; however, this is a far more appropriate housing offer than hotels or large-scale shared housing such as Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) (3 people or more sharing).

Option 4a - Take more Council housing from HRA to use as temporary accommodation and create house shares for single people.

The use of Council housing as temporary accommodation provides flexible use of stock in a way traditional secure contracts cannot. Properties could be fully occupied by households, under occupied with minimal financial risk or used as house shares for two people in two bed or three bed homes.

Having two-bed house shares avoids triggering planning requirements for HMOs, but three-bed house shares, subject to bedroom sizes is viable with the appropriate consents. The Homeless Service already has two and three bed private sector properties on the Lease Scheme it successfully uses as small scale two- and three-person house shares.

Option 4a – risks and mitigations

Using Council homes that would otherwise be allocated via the Common Housing Register will result in some households with housing needs other than homelessness, waiting longer for rehousing. This risk is outlined above. It should be noted that demand for three-bed homes is not as significant as two-bed homes, and therefore targeting three-bed homes offers some mitigation to complaints and reduces the impact of extended waiting times for families.

The current amount claimed in existing temporary accommodation of this type is £82.00 per week under Housing Benefit regulations. Consideration must also be given to other associated costs for establishing a shared house, for example, carpets, furnishings, white goods. Charges for utilities need to be factored into Council budgets but an element of these costs can be recharged out to occupants through service charges.

Routine repairs, compliance works and capital investment remains a cost for Housing Assets but tenant damage and breach of tenancy costs sit within the Homeless Service.

An example costing is provided below for a three-bed house with two people sharing operating this model of shared housing for temporary accommodation.

ROUTINE INCOME

Rental Income - £164pw

Service Charge - £40pw

ROUTINE OUTGOINGS

Rent payable - £125pw

Gas, electric and water charges - £50pw

START UP COSTS

Carpets - £1,000

Furnishings including blinds, curtains - £1,600

White goods and other miscellaneous Items - £1,400

REPAIRS AND REPLACEMENTS

Subject to turnover of rooms and occupant conduct - £2000pcy

VOID COSTS AND BAD DEBT PROVISION

Subject to turnover and occupant conduct - £2,500pcy

Based on the approximate costings the annual cost of a two-person house share for the Homeless Service would be less than £3,000 (Routine Income – Routine Outgoings – Repairs and Replacements – Void Costs and Bad Debt Provisions). This is exclusive of any additional staff required to manage additional properties through the Temporary Accommodation Team.

Start-up costs to enable the house share model would be c.£4,000.

As a cost comparison, two single people in hotel accommodation with an average weekly cost of £564.50 per person (annual cost £58,708) the potential cost saving are £55,708 for each two-bed house share created. As such, utilising 10 x three-bed Council properties as two-bed house shares could potentially offset emergency housing expenditure of c. £550,000 per year. Even factoring in an additional staff member for the Temporary Accommodation Team at £50,000 per year the saving could be up to £500,000.

Option 5 – review offer to private landlords

Context

Research commissioned by the Housing and Communities portfolio suggests that private sector availability is down approximately 60% in the last 5 years. Landlords are leaving the market and demand for housing is greater than ever. The impact of this is increasing rental charges and greater competition for the reduced number of available homes.

This issue is further compounded with competing housing pressures relating to the resettlement schemes managed by the Council and Home Office commissioned contractors seeking to secure private rented homes across the county for asylum dispersal. Whilst some property owners are leaving the rental market, others are looking at guaranteed income streams through long term leasing offered through the above schemes.

The Council already has a small portfolio of leased accommodation which is used as housing for homeless households but would need to improve its standard offer to reflect the above market challenges and budget for this accordingly.

Target rents for the Homeless Lease Scheme are at 90% Local Housing Allowance (LHA) and rents are guaranteed and paid six months in advance for property owners. Minimal compliance and routine maintenance works are a benefit for the property owner and tenant damage, voids loss and void works are covered by the Council through the lease agreement.

The Homeless Service uses spend to save budgets, Discretionary Homeless Grant and Discretionary Housing Payments via Housing Benefit, for landlord incentives such as rent rescue packages, rent in advance, deposits, rent top ups and other housing related costs helping people to exit or avoid homelessness by securing and sustaining homes in the private rental market.

Additional in-year funding from Welsh Government has recently been announced (108% uplift from £195,103.00 to £406,465.00 for 2023-2024) and is available for most of these activities. This will enable the Council to enhance existing offers for landlords to rehouse homeless households. It is unclear if this enhanced award will be sustained in future years.

Option 5a - Improve the lease scheme offer to attract more landlords

Whilst paying more for leased accommodation will result in an increased expenditure for the leased portfolio (lease costs of 120% LHA compared to target of 90% is a significant uplift but makes the

Option 5a – risks and mitigations

With additional properties to manage, the Temporary Accommodation Team will require more capacity to deliver quality services. This could be factored into budgets based on the cost benefit of moving away from a reliance on high-cost

<p>scheme more attractive to landlords), this expenditure in comparison to hotel costs is far more cost effective, even when factoring in additional costs associated with lease obligations for the Council and additional staffing costs for managing the accommodation.</p>	<p>hotel accommodation. Failure to manage properties robustly could lead to legal challenge from landlords, health and safety risks for occupants and disruption within the community if issues of anti-social behaviour are not resolved.</p> <p>Costs for enhance lease offers will need to be reflected in budgets but can offer greater value for money on limited Council Fund as we move away from hotel accommodation.</p>
<p>Option 5b - Target long-term empty properties for Council Lease Scheme</p> <p>Houses unfit for occupation and long-term empty properties is a challenge within Flintshire. Some landlords do not have the financial means or the capacity and skills to manage refurbishment of long-term empty properties. The development of a model as part of the Leasing Scheme whereby upfront investment costs to bring long term empty homes back into use are committed by the Council and refurbishment project managed by the Council could be considered. These costs could then be converted into a peppercorn rent fee (very low/nominal amount) over an agreed lease term, until the refurbishment and project management costs are repaid. An example of this approach is outlined below.</p> <p>3 bed house refurbishment work - £40,000 10% Project Management Charge - £4,000 Total Cost - £44,000</p> <p>Property Rental value - £8,000pcy</p> <p>Repayment Period – 4.5 years Lease Period 4.5 years</p>	<p>Option 5b – risk and mitigations</p> <p>This approach is high cost up front expenditure, but over the life cycle of the lease period, all investment is recouped through the peppercorn rent and reduced budget obligations for the term of the lease.</p> <p>Legal and Financial Regulation advice is being sought on this model to understand the implications and overcome any potential challenges, if it were to be considered a ‘loan scheme’.</p> <p>As outlined above, increasing the number of self-contained homes on the Lease Scheme will require additional staffing capacity to ensure a quality service is delivered, but this can be factored into the cost benefit of moving away from hotel accommodation.</p>

<p>Lease Cost - £1.00pcy Total Lease Value £4.50</p> <p>Following repayment of the refurbishment costs, the Council and property owners would re-negotiate the terms of the lease and apply the usual Lease Scheme offer and conditions.</p>	
<p>Option 5c - Offer enhanced landlord incentives Offering landlords greater financial incentives to rehouse homeless households, or those at risk of homelessness, and maximising the grant available from Welsh Government is a response to a challenging housing market. This could reduce lengths of stays in homeless accommodation as well as potentially avoiding the need for people to have to access homeless accommodation in the first place.</p>	
<p>Option 5d - Exploring the use of a Rent Guarantee Scheme Many landlords now ask for guarantors as part of the resident selection process for private rentals. Although this is a long-term commitment there is potential to adopt a Rent Guarantee Scheme. A Rent Guarantee Scheme has already been developed as part of the Ukraine Resettlement Scheme in Flintshire and this could form the basis for a similar approach. Again, the enhanced Discretionary Homeless Fund from Welsh Government could support this, and financial modelling would be required to consider this as a long-term commitment, with or without Welsh Government grant.</p>	<p>Option 5d – Risks and mitigations Whilst savings may be achieved through this model, the longer term financial commitments placed on the Council would be significant but can be considered a spend to save principle. The total cost could be reduced by anticipating bad debt provision within the approach and is favourable when compared to expenditure on hotel accommodation. Assessment for eligible and ‘low risk’ households, along with additional support to help residents manage their finances and prioritise rent payments would mitigate the likelihood of claims against the Council.</p>

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CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 21 st November 2023
Report Subject	Corporate Debt Policy – Housing Rent Collection
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources
Report Author	Chief Officer – Governance
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A recent report to the Community and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee provided the latest operational update on the collection of housing rent, along with proposals to improve the collections by taking earlier court action.

This report sets out proposals for Cabinet approval, to amend the Corporate Debt Recovery Policy and to strengthen the debt recovery process for housing rent.

The key changes are automatically taking court action against contract holders who owe the equivalent of 12 weeks unpaid rent and/or £1,500 and who are not addressing their weekly rent payments and arrears.

Other minor changes to the Corporate Debt Recovery Policy relate to write off authorisations and will replicate recent changes to the Financial Procedure Rules whereby the Corporate Finance Manager now has autonomy to write off single debts up to £10,000 (instead of £5,000). Debts between £10,000 and £25,000 will continue to be written off in consultation with the Cabinet Member and debts above £25,000 are referred to Cabinet prior to write off.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Approve the proposed changes to the Corporate Debt Recovery Policy to strengthen the collection of Housing Rent by taking court action, as a default position, in cases where contract holders are not making payment, and are 12 weeks in arrears and/or who owe £1,500 or more.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE CHANGES TO THE CORPORATE DEBT RECOVERY POLICY – HOUSING RENTS
1.01	The Council is required to collect all income that is due and ensure that debts owed to the Council are kept to a minimum.
1.02	Collection of rent has seen improvements during 2023-24 and total rent arrears are currently, on average, around £100k lower than at the same point in the previous year.
1.03	As a result of this work there have been many positive outcomes both for the contract holders and the Council with many contract holders paying their arrears and now having the support needed to maintain ongoing rent payments.
1.04	The need to work within the spirit of WG policy intentions of “no evictions into homelessness” as well as maximising collections of rent to comply with the Councils Corporate Debt Recovery Policy can be a challenge and there is a balance to be struck between the two often conflicting policy intentions.
1.05	<p>Although court action is taken as a last resort, there is a growing need to adopt a more commercial approach to the collection of rent arrears.</p> <p>Appendix 1 to this report therefore sets out proposed changes to parts of the Corporate Debt Recovery Policy (as set out in pages 20-21) in relation to collection of housing rent.</p> <p>Having an agreed and transparent policy of how the Council manages and collect debts, is an important document to deliver a consistent approach and to ensure best practice is being followed.</p> <p>The revised policy as set out, builds upon a policy that was first adopted by cabinet in 2012. It provides services with a clear set of latest standards that must be maintained, and which follow the latest regulations when officers recover income that is due to the Council.</p> <p>Underpinning this policy are processes critical to the Housing Revenue Account, as every pound of income that is not collected or takes extra effort to collect, ultimately leads to additional financial pressures on the Housing Revenue Account.</p>
1.06	The focus on early intervention and preventative action and support will continue, but to prevent rent arrears levels escalating, it is proposed that legal action is now triggered, by default, for contract holders who are not meeting their payments and are 12 weeks or more in arrears or owe an amount of £1,500.
1.07	Court proceedings are a necessary tool to secure payment from contract holders who do not engage with the Council and fail to make payment. In

	most cases, the judicial process usually results in most contract holders making payment or receiving an order from the court to pay rather than being evicted.
1.08	Other minor changes to the Corporate Debt Recovery Policy replicate recent changes to the Councils Financial Procedure Rules, whereby the Corporate Finance Manager now has autonomy to write off single debts up to £10,000 (instead of £5,000). Debts between £10,000 and £25,000 will continue to be written off in consultation with the Cabinet Member and debts above £25,000 are referred to Cabinet prior to write off.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	The deployment of the Mobyssoft 'Rent Sense' software, funded by the HRA, continues to be necessary to control rent arrears and to ensure resources are targeted effectively.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	To ensure financial risks to the HRA are minimised as far as possible, rent arrears continue to be tracked on a weekly basis and cases are identified as quickly as possible to ensure targeted intervention is provided to those contract holders at highest risk of non-payment. Taking a commercial and pro-active approach to the collection of all debts owed to the Council ensures that income is maximised and bad debt is minimised.
3.02	Setting out the trigger points at which court action is taken and formalising the process into the Corporate Debt Recovery Policy will prevent arrear levels escalating and allow officers to take legal action in a timely manner.
3.03	The policy will continue to ensure that recovery action is taken against those contract holders that deliberately set out to withhold or delay payment without genuine reason. At the same time, the policy will continue to promote early intervention which encourages customers, taxpayers and contract holders who fall into arrears to get in touch with the Council at an early stage.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	Prior to the adoption of the changes at Cabinet, Scrutiny has been asked to endorse the proposed changes to the Corporate Debt Recovery Policy in relation to the trigger points for legal action for housing rent.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 to this report sets out the revised Corporate Debt Recovery policy framework relating to the collection and recovery of housing rent – (as appearing in pages 20 to 21).

	Other minor changes to the Corporate Debt Recovery Policy (pages 25-27) replicate recent changes to the Councils Financial Procedure Rules, whereby the Corporate Finance Manager now has autonomy to write off single debts up to £10,000 (instead of £5,000).
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6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Debt Recovery Policy

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: David Barnes, Revenues and Procurement Manager Telephone: 01352 703652 E-mail: david.barnes@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
	Housing Revenue Account: The Council is required to keep a HRA to record all income and expenditure relating to the provision of local authority housing. All rental income, including arrears, must be held with a ring fenced HRA account. This means that income can only be used for council housing purposes and not general expenditure. This also allows rental income to be invested locally to help improve and maintain council owned homes and build new council homes.



Corporate Debt Recovery Framework

VERSION CONTROL

Version	Version Date	Author	Description
1	October 2012	David Barnes	Introduction of policy framework
2	May 2019	David Barnes	<p>Revised policy framework (to take effect from April 2019) associated with changes to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bailiff Regulations and Fees 2. Removal of committal as a sanction for the non-payment of Council Tax. 3. Revised internal working practices for the collection of sundry debt involving the development of a more robust escalation process for disputed invoices. 4. Minimum monetary threshold when taking Bankruptcy action 5. Revised working practices for the recovery of unpaid housing rent
3	October 2023	David Barnes	<p>Revised policy framework (to take effect from November 2023) associated with changes to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revised working practices for the recovery of unpaid housing rent and to specify number of rent weeks in arrears before legal action is taken as a default position. 2. Write off authorisation levels.

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Write Off Policy (Appendix 7)	25-27

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This document details the Councils policies on the billing, collection and recovery of monies due to the Council.
- 1.2 It is essential that all monies due are collected effectively by the Council and that debts owed are kept to a minimum. This is because the Council has both a legal duty and a responsibility to its citizens to ensure that income due is paid promptly.
- 1.3 The Policy framework also recognises that collection of debt should be fair to everyone, especially those on limited incomes who struggle to pay or those who have not paid because of an oversight. It is also recognised that some people deliberately avoid their payment obligations by delaying their payments or choosing not to make payment and proportionate measures will be deployed to develop a culture of payment while encouraging those in need of help to get in touch with the Council at an early stage.
- 1.4 Where a person or organisation makes contact to discuss payment difficulties their circumstances will be considered fairly and objectively with a view to agreeing a reasonable payment arrangement, minimising recovery action and avoiding potential additional costs. Where people or organisations fail to make contact or maintain their payment obligations, recovery action will continue in the wider public interest.
- 1.5 This Policy framework also sets out the general principles to be applied in relation to management of debt across all services provided by the Council. The Council collects income from many streams; some of this activity is governed by legislation and statutory rules while others by sound principles of financial management and good practice.
- 1.6 Underpinning this policy are effective income management processes critical to the delivery of overall Council objectives, as every pound of income that is not collected or takes extra effort to collect, ultimately leads to additional financial pressures on the Councils budget.

2.0 Scope of the Policy Framework

2.1 This policy framework applies to the collection of :

- Council Tax and Business Rates (Appendix 1)
- Housing Benefit overpayment and Council Tax Reduction (Appendix 2)
- Sundry Debt (Appendix 3)
- Housing Rents (Appendices 4 and 5)

2.2 There are specific rules and regulations which govern the recovery and collection of these debt types – these are set out in the respective appendices.

3.0 Guiding Principles of the Policy Framework

3.1 The Council will ensure:

- Any recovery action taken will be proportionate

Proportionality allows for a balance to be struck between the potential loss of income due to the Council and the costs of compliance.

- The approach taken will be consistent

Consistency means taking a similar approach in similar circumstances to achieve similar objectives. The Council aims to achieve this in the advice given, the use of its powers and the recovery procedures used. At the same time, the Council recognises the need to treat everyone as individuals and therefore will aim to take account of many variables such as the social circumstances of the individual, the payment history and their ability to pay.

- The actions taken will be transparent

Transparency is important in maintaining public confidence in the Council. It means that helping people to understand what is expected of them, to meet their payment obligations and what they should expect from the Council. It also means explaining clearly the reasons for taking any recovery action and the next steps that the Council may take if payment is not made.

3.2 The Council will also work with the voluntary sector and advice agencies, where we collectively:

- Acknowledge that there is a distinction between can't and won't pay

The policy framework will ensure fairness in that every debtor has an obligation to repay their debt owed so that future services do not suffer. Those who pay promptly should not subsidise those who are not prepared to pay what they owe.

- Recognise that advice and early intervention is a key element from the perspective of all partners.

The policy framework will ensure that the Council and its partner organisations will treat all debtors fairly and, where possible they will promote free debt advice services. Where appropriate, payment agreements will be put in place to assist debtors in adverse financial circumstances. The decision to agree a repayment timetable will be influenced by the willingness of the debtor to take advantage of the debt advice at an early stage.

- Acknowledge that financial capability and vulnerability are sometimes underlying issues around non payment.

The policy framework will seek to promote financial inclusion and early intervention by recognising that debtors may have underlying problems with money management or may not be receiving all the financial assistance to which they are entitled.

4.0 Policy Framework Aims and Objectives

4.1 The key aims are to :

- Ensure the Council provides bills promptly and remind people quickly if they do not pay.
- Offer efficient and flexible payment methods
- Encourage people to make early contact to avoid the build up of debt
- Inform people of their entitlement to benefits, discounts and exemptions to ensure maximum take-up and that net bills/liabilities are issued
- Inform people of the general availability of income related benefits such as Universal Credit, Pension Credits, Housing and Council Tax Reduction
- Take positive action to prevent arrears from occurring in the first place, maximising income and entitlement at an early stage
- Take recovery action against deliberate non-payers or those who delay payment without genuine reason while always working to identify and assist those who genuinely can't pay or are finding it difficult to pay
- Where people have fallen or are likely to fall into arrears, a commitment to work with them and their representatives to set reasonable and realistic payment levels that they can maintain, ensuring that payment arrangements reflect the ability to pay as well as the level of debt owed
- Work in a co-ordinated approach with multiple debts owed to the Council. Priority will be given to debts where non payment could lead directly to the loss of a person's home in the case of non-payment of housing rent. Other debts owed to the Council may, depending on the circumstances, be treated to as a lower priority until payment of the priority debt owed to the Council is made
- Work in partnership with recognised advice agencies to advise people who need help and guidance to repay debts where they can get independent advice from to assist with wider financial problems

APPENDIX 1 - Council Tax and Business Rates Recovery Policy

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This document explains the Revenues Service approach to administering the billing, collection and recovery of Council Tax as laid down by the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and Local Government Finance Act 1988 and all other supporting legislation. The document details information about the billing and recovery processes. The intention is to explain the processes clearly to show the transparent nature of the work, rather than give a detailed analysis of the legislation involved.

2.0 The Billing Process

- 2.1 The Council recognises that providing a correct bill in an efficient way maximises the likelihood of helping customers pay on time, and it strives to issue accurate bills to customers as promptly as possible, and to offer helpful advice face-to-face, in writing, by e-mail, over the phone and through advice on the website.
- 2.2 All available discounts, exemptions, valuation band changes, and Council Tax reduction will be granted in appropriate cases at the earliest possible time to ensure the amount owed is correct. Customers will be given the maximum number of instalments that are available so that payment can be spread over the longest period within the year.
- 2.3 Discounts, exemptions and reliefs will be reviewed periodically engaging external contractors and utilising third party data where appropriate and lawful, however it remains a customer responsibility to inform the Council within 21 days of any changes in their circumstances that may affect their entitlement to any reduction in their charges.
- 2.4 Clear information regarding reductions, reliefs, including benefit, is widely available through leaflets that are provided with annual bills and through the website. Officers are trained to advise customers about the range of benefits, discounts and exemptions available and how to make claims.
- 2.5 Where there is a joint occupation or ownership, for example joint tenants or owners, or partnerships like husband and wife, both are expected to pay the charge. All bills and other correspondence will be addressed to all the liable persons for the charge. The law says that each person will be liable both for their own share of the charge and for the whole charge (called "jointly and severally liable"), so if necessary action for recovery of the debt will be taken against any or all of the liable persons.
- 2.6 If a taxpayer disputes the basis of why or what they have been charged in relation to Council Tax, the Council will advise them of their appeal rights by initially writing to the Council or alternatively by seeking redress at the Valuation Tribunal for Wales.
- 2.7 Council Tax and Business Rates is charged for financial years beginning on 1st April and ending on 31st March the following year. Taxpayers who receive an annual bill during March will normally receive ten monthly instalments payable

between April and January inclusive, but the Council also welcome taxpayers to pay over 12 months. As the financial year progresses, less months are available, so the number of instalments reduces. Between 1st May and 31st December the number of instalments allowed for the year's charge is the number of whole months less one. New bills created from January will usually be given one instalment payable within 14 days from the date of the bill.

3.0 The Recovery Process

- 3.1 The Council only has to prove recovery documents are issued in time and in line with regulations; it is not necessary to prove customers have received them.
- 3.2 As Council Tax and Business Rates are statutory charges it is very important that taxpayers give it a high priority when looking at their finances. If monthly instalments are paid late, or not at all, the Council will take action to recover the overdue amounts by sending documents that explain the consequences of delaying or not making payment. Taxpayers are actively encouraged to contact the Council without delay if they experience difficulties in paying their bill.
- 3.3 The Council has a planned annual recovery and enforcement timetable that sets out the dates for the issue of all recovery documents like reminders, final notices and summonses. It also details magistrates' court hearing dates and targets for transmitting accounts for further recovery action through the use of Enforcement Agents. The enforcement taken will be:

Reminders and Final Notice Stage:

- 3.4 Apart from any accounts issued near the end of a financial year, all bills include a monthly instalment scheme. It is a taxpayer's responsibility to make sure that instalments are paid on time. If taxpayers do not pay, or if they make occasional or irregular payments that are not received on or by the due date, they will be considered overdue. If this happens, recovery action will be taken, initially in the form of a **1st Reminder Notice**.
- 3.5 Legislation allows for reminders to be sent immediately after an instalment is due but the Council will usually allow taxpayers 12 days after a payment has become overdue before issuing a 1st reminder.
- 3.6 If an overdue instalment is subject to a 1st Reminder Notice, a taxpayer is required to make payment in full of the overdue instalment within 7 days. If payment is made as required, future instalments can then be paid as shown on the bill.
- 3.7 If the overdue instalment is paid, but a future instalment is not paid on time a **2nd Reminder Notice** will be issued. If payment is made as required, future instalments can then be paid as shown on the bill. The second reminder states clearly that no further reminder notices will be sent if future instalments are not paid on time.
- 3.8 If payment is not made within 7 days following the issue of a 1st or 2nd reminder notice, after a further seven days a **Final Notice** will be sent for the full amount outstanding for the year.

- 3.9 Additionally, a Final Notice will also be issued if part or all of an instalment is overdue for a third time. This requires the full annual charge that is outstanding, rather than just the overdue instalment, to be paid in full within seven days. If payment is not made as required a **summons** will be sent for the full amount outstanding for the year together with associated costs of £50 for the issue of the summons.
- 3.10 Dependent on how promptly taxpayers pay, no more than two reminders and one final notice will be issued in a financial year before a summons is issued. Where the right to pay by instalments is lost due to consistent late payment, or no payment, this will only be forfeited for the current financial year; the right to pay by instalments will be reinstated when subsequent years' charges become due
- 3.11 Reminder and Final Notices confirm the full range of payment methods available and include information to encourage taxpayers to get in touch with the Council to discuss payment difficulties. The Council will, where appropriate, re-instate a taxpayer's instalment scheme where the taxpayer has agreed to bring the account up to date and switch to payment by direct debit for payment of future payments.
- 3.12 The Council will normally only offer to re-instate instalments once in any financial year following the issue of a final reminder. The Council recognises the offer to re-instate instalment may help a taxpayers meet financial obligations, but at the same time, the taxpayers previous payment history will be considered to ensure habitual late payers are not continually given the opportunity to delay payment.

Summons Stage:

- 3.13 In the event of late or non-payment as explained above, the Council will issue a **Summons** at the Magistrates' Court, giving at least fourteen days notice of the hearing date. The summons will confirm the charge outstanding together with court costs that are added to the amount payable in recognition of the extra work needed to secure payment. The additional costs charged for a summons are currently £50.
- 3.14 The summons will confirm the date and time of the Magistrates Court hearing at which the Council's officer will need to satisfy the Magistrate that the customer is the liable person, does owe the amount outstanding, and that the Council has sent the correct documents to the customers' current or last known address.
- 3.15 Taxpayers who pay the full amount confirmed on the summons, including the additional £50 costs before the hearing date do not have to attend court, however any payment arrangement made following the issue of a summons which extends payment beyond the liability order court hearing date will be made on the basis that the application for a liability order will continue and will include the initial £50 court costs and additional costs of £20 for the issue of a Liability Order (i.e. a total of £70 costs).
- 3.16 Attendance at the Magistrates Court is not compulsory, and usually the majority of customers summonsed do not attend. A taxpayer can dispute the charge or speak to the Court. The Court will give an audience to anyone who wishes to

appear, however, unless the taxpayer has a valid defence then the Court is obliged to grant a Liability Order.

Liability Order stage

- 3.17 Following the issue of a Liability Order, the Council will write to the taxpayer in an effort to secure full payment or to make a suitable payment agreement. The notification will also provide details of potential consequences of enforcement action (and additional enforcement (Bailiff) costs) if the taxpayer does not make payment or fails to make a payment agreement. For Council Tax matters, the Council will also request to a taxpayer complete a 'statutory request for information', with details of their employment details, and if appropriate, information about any benefit that is received. Taxpayers are required to complete and return the statutory request within 14 days.
- 3.18 The Council will enter into a payment agreement with a taxpayer using the first principle that the outstanding balance must be paid in full prior to the end of the financial year, although in cases where there is no ongoing liability, payment agreements may be extended beyond the end of the financial year, depending on the circumstances of the case.
- 3.19 Following the issue of a Liability and in the event of the taxpayer not returning the 'statutory request for information' or failing to make a payment agreement, the recovery action to be taken will be dependent on the circumstances of each individual case and with due regard to the most effective way for the Council to collect :

Attachment of Earnings – Attachments require an employer of the taxpayer (for Council Tax only) to deduct a set percentage of the earnings and send them directly to the Council to pay the outstanding Liability Order. The amount of money deducted depends on how much is earned and whether the person is paid weekly or monthly. The deductions are governed by Council Tax regulations.

Attachment from Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance, Universal Credit and Employment Support Allowance – Attachments require the Department of Work and Pensions to make deductions from the taxpayers benefit. The level of deduction is fixed by the Government but does increase annually.

Attachment of Members Allowances – The Council may make an attachment of the allowances of an elected member.

Taking Control of Goods & Use of Enforcement Agents – Enforcement Agents contracted by the Council may be used where no attachment is possible or suitable. The Enforcement Agents will be required to comply with the Taking Control of Goods Regulations 2014 at all times.

Initially, if a debt has been passed to an enforcement agent a fixed fee of £75 for each liability order will be incurred. This is known as the compliance stage and taxpayers are encouraged to make early contact with the Enforcement Team

within 10 days in order to pay the amounts due in full or set up a realistic repayment plan.

If taxpayers fail to engage or set up a repayment plan at the compliance stage, the liability order(s) will be passed to the Enforcement Agent for a visit to be undertaken. If the Enforcement Agent is required to visit there is a fixed fee of £235 plus 7.5% for any balance due above £1,500.

The enforcement agent will normally ask taxpayers for payment in full, however the enforcement agent will normally also enter into a Controlled Goods Agreement which also provides taxpayers with an opportunity to pay.

If possessions are subject to a Controlled Goods Agreement these goods cannot be disposed or sold without the enforcement agents consent.

If taxpayers refuse to sign a Controlled Goods Agreement the enforcement agent can take goods to the value of the debt whilst at the property. There are additional costs of £110 plus 7.5% for any balance due above £1,500 if goods have to be removed and sold.

If the enforcement agent decides the value of the goods is insufficient to pay the amount outstanding and there is no prospective of making payment agreement, or the taxpayer cannot be traced the enforcement agent will normally return the Liability Order to the Council which ends the enforcement agent action.

- 3.20 If enforcement agent action proves unsuccessful, the Council will then consider whether to take further recovery action, dependent on the specific personal and financial circumstances of each individual case and with due regard to the most effective way for the Council to collect :

Charging Order – For taxpayers owing £1,000 or more, the Council may apply to the County Court for an Order that places a charge on the taxpayer's property and the court, in certain circumstances, empowering the sale of the property if the taxpayer does not pay. The obtaining of a charging order does not prompt automatic payment of the amount outstanding; providing there is sufficient equity in the property value following the repayment of any outstanding mortgage or other existing registered charges, it secures payment of the debt when the property is sold. Before such action is taken, the Council will always send a final letter inviting the taxpayer to a pre-arranged meeting in an effort to make a payment agreement.

Bankruptcy – For taxpayers owing £5,000 or more, the Council may also consider taking bankruptcy action. Before such action is taken, the Council will always send a final letter inviting the taxpayer to a pre-arranged meeting in an effort to make a payment agreement. Bankruptcy will be considered, only as a last resort, in line with the policy in Appendix 6.

4.0 Write Offs

- 4.1 The Council recognises that where a debt is deemed to be irrecoverable, especially after all recovery options have been considered and/or taken, prompt write off of such debts is appropriate and good practice in certain circumstances and in line with the policy in Appendix 7.

APPENDIX 2 - Housing Benefit Overpayment and Council Tax Reduction Policy

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Overpayments of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction are established through a change in benefit entitlement. They are described as an amount of benefit that has been awarded but to which there is no entitlement under the regulations.
- 1.2 Accurate and prompt identification of overpayments is important to ensure that the incorrect payment of benefit is discontinued and to maximise the chances of successful recovery.
- 1.3 The Council recognises that to ensure there is minimal loss to public funds firm but fair action must be undertaken in the administration of Housing Benefit overpayments and Council Tax Reduction.
- 1.4 The policy will reflect best practice in the procedure for dealing with the administration and recovery of Housing Benefit overpayments and Council Tax Reduction.
- 1.5 The policy will be applied in all cases where an overpayment of benefit has occurred, that is, any amount of Housing Benefit or Council Tax Reduction which has been paid but to which there was no entitlement whether on initial decision or on a subsequent revised or superseded decision.
- 1.6 In undertaking this policy framework, the Council will :
 - Take steps to minimise and prevent overpayments from occurring
 - Identify the overpayment promptly
 - Stop the overpayment from continuing
 - Classify the overpayment correctly
 - Determine if the overpayment is recoverable and if recoverable
 - determine from whom to recover
 - determine the most appropriate method of recovery
 - Notify the claimant and other affected persons of the decision
- 1.7 In most cases overpayments can arise as a consequence of:
 - Late disclosure of a change in circumstances
 - Errors made by the claimant when completing an application form or review form
 - Claimant error
 - Official errors made by the Council or the Department for Work and Pensions
 - Deliberate fraud

- 1.8 Official error overpayments are only recoverable if the claimant or the person from whom recovery of the overpayment is sought could reasonably have known that an overpayment was occurring at the time the overpayment occurred.

2.0 Prevention of Overpayments

- 2.1 Overpayments are often difficult and time consuming to administer. They can cause difficulties for claimants and their families as they try to manage on limited incomes. They are to be avoided where possible. This will be achieved by:

- Telling claimants how to avoid overpayments, with letters, in leaflets and during verbal communications
- Encouraging claimants to maintain contact with us
- Processing information quickly and accurately to minimise overpayments
- Offsetting any new or underlying entitlement

3.0 Identifying Overpayments

- 3.1 The Council will aim to act on any information received in relation to a claimants change in circumstances within seven days of having received sufficient information to identify that an overpayment has or will be occurring.

- 3.2 This action will in the first instance include the suspension of further ongoing payments of incorrect benefit.

- 3.3 The Council will endeavour to identify any change in circumstances that would result in an overpayment still outstanding after seven days by:

- Undertaking a check of the Department for Work and Pensions records held on the Customer Information System (CIS) to identify whether entitlement to Income Support, Jobseekers Allowance (Income Based) has ceased and if this information is not readily available on CIS by the sending of a benefits enquiry information letter
- Undertaking a check of the Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) records held on the Verify Earnings and Pensions (VEP) system to confirm current earnings and/or pensions and if this information is not readily available on VEP by the sending of a benefits enquiry information letter.
- Referring potential fraudulent overpayments to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Fraud team
- Ensuring that any post relating to the change in circumstances is prioritised and acted upon

4.0 Classification of Overpayments

- 4.1 The correct classification of overpayments is essential as, depending on the type of overpayment, the authority will receive a percentage of the overpayment back from the government by way of subsidy. A summary of the types of overpayments and percentage of subsidy allowed is shown at the end of this policy.

- 4.2 All overpayments must be correctly classified by an Officer of the Council who has had training to a sufficient standard to allow them to make decisions, which ensure the correct application of the law in the decision making process.

5.0 Calculation of Overpayments

- 5.1 Where an overpayment has occurred the Council must invite claimants to provide sufficient information for any underlying entitlement to benefit for the overpayment period to be assessed.
- 5.2 The full amount of the overpayment should be recovered unless the health or financial circumstances of the person from whom recovery is being sought suggest a lesser amount would be appropriate.
- 5.3 In all cases the overpayment should be recovered as quickly as possible.

6.0 Notification Letters

- 6.1 All notification letters must be dated and issued to all affected persons within fourteen days of the Council having made the decision.
- 6.2 The notification must include the reasons for the decision, the right to request a further statement and the time limit for doing so and the claimants appeal rights and the time limit for doing so.
- 6.3 Copies of the notification letter must be able to be reproduced in the event of an appeal, complaint or proceedings taken against the Council.

7.0 Decisions on Recoverability

- 7.1 In all cases where an overpayment has arisen the Council should consider whether an official error has caused or contributed towards the overpayment.
- 7.2 Where the Council has identified an overpayment, which was caused or contributed to by an official error, it should decide whether recovery of the overpayment is appropriate under the guidance issued by the Department for Work and Pensions.
- 7.3 Before recovery action begins consideration will be given as to whom is the most appropriate person to recover the overpayment from. This may in certain cases mean that further information is required from the affected parties.
- 7.4 Recovery should then be made from the most appropriate persons who may be:
 - The claimant
 - The person to whom the payment of benefit was made
 - The person who misrepresented or failed to disclose the material fact
 - The partner of the claimant if the partner was living with the claimant at the time of the overpayment and at the time the decision to recover was made
- 7.5 In all cases where the overpayment was the result of proven fraud the overpayment should, in the first instance, be sought to be recovered from the person who misrepresented or failed to disclose a material fact

8.0 Methods of Recovery

- 8.1 Overpayments of recoverable Council Tax Reduction will result in an adjustment being made to the claimants council tax account for the appropriate year. An amended bill will be issued and any unpaid monies will be subject to recovery action under the council tax regulations.
- 8.2 The most appropriate method of recovery for Housing Benefit Overpayments should be considered in all cases, including:
- On-going deductions from further payments of Housing Benefit
 - Deductions from other Department for Works and Pensions benefits
 - Direct Earnings Attachments (DEA) Benefit sundry debtor invoices
 - Debits to the rent account where it is in credit
 - Recovery from landlord in appropriate cases
 - Referral to the Councils contracted debt collection agency (after all the above avenues of recovery are exhausted)
 - Applying to the County Court for a County Court Judgement (after all avenues of recovery are considered or exhausted).
- 8.3 A period of at least one calendar month should have elapsed before recovery action begins. This will allow for the claimant to re-apply for benefit, which may identify an underlying entitlement or for the claimant to register any appeal.
- 8.4 In cases where recovery from on-going benefit is sought the standard maximum rate of deduction as laid down by regulation should be applied unless the health or financial circumstances of the claimant suggest a more appropriate rate should be used. In all cases however a minimum amount of fifty pence per week Housing Benefit must remain in payment.

9.0 Write Offs

- 9.1 The Council recognises that where a debt is deemed to be irrecoverable, especially after all recovery options have been considered and/or, prompt write off of such debts is appropriate and good practice in certain circumstances and in line with the policy in Appendix 7

APPENDIX 3 - Sundry Debt Policy Framework

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council charges and collects income from a diverse range of activities, customers and range of public bodies and private businesses. Sundry debt does not include Council Tax, Business Rates, Housing Rent or Housing Benefit Overpayments.
- 1.2 The value of invoices raised can range significantly from a few pounds to several hundred thousand of pounds and therefore, taken together, the value of all of these sundry debts is considerable.
- 1.3 It is essential that the Council recovers all collectable debt owed to it and the purpose of this policy aims to:
 - Maximise the collection of the Councils income
 - Ensure that, where possible, payment up front is received ensuring whenever possible that collection of the fee or charge involved takes place prior to the service being provided so that credit is only given when essential to do so
 - Ensure clear terms and conditions of payment appear within documentation
 - Ensure invoicing and recovery procedures are carried out on an accurate and timely basis, encouraging debtors to pay promptly and making collection and recovery activity more efficient by prioritising collection of larger debts
 - Minimise the time taken to raise invoices to within 10 days of the provision of service(s)
 - Minimise the time taken to collect charges or to effect recovery
 - Minimise the time taken to resolve invoice disputes
 - End the ongoing delivery of a non statutory service to a customer in non payment cases, but only where it is possible to do so.
 - Minimise the level of debt owed to the Council and its provision for bad debts
 - Minimise the incidence of debt that cannot be collected
 - Raise corporate awareness and responsibility of the importance of prompt debt recovery across all services
- 1.4 The charge must, depending on legislation, always cover the cost of providing goods or service and the costs of collection, unless the Council has taken a policy decision to subsidise the service.
- 1.5 The charge must be invoiced in an efficient and cost effective way, ensuring that the frequency of invoices are minimised for services that are delivery on a regular and planned basis.
- 1.6 The debt will remain the responsibility of the Service in which it was raised, and recovery action will be taken by the Corporate Debt Team. It is the responsibility of the services to assist the Corporate Debt Team in collecting debts, ensuring that information and assistance is provides to ensure debts are collected quickly.

2.0 Corporate Responsibilities

2.1 All officers involved in the issuing and recovery of sundry debt invoices must ensure that:

- The Corporate Debt Recovery Policy is adhered to (specifically Appendix 3 – Sundry Debts)
- The aims of the policy are adhered to
- The parts of this policy that apply to their Service areas are correctly followed
- Specific attention is paid to prohibit the practise of not resolving invoice disputes within a reasonable period
- Budget Managers are fully aware of their responsibilities
- Relevant systems and procedures are in place
- Officers involved in the debt collection process are appropriately trained and are aware of their corporate responsibility

2.2 The Corporate Finance Manager, Revenues Manager with Internal Audit support will provide assurance that this Policy is adhered to and is effective.

3.0 Raising an Invoice

3.1 A commercial approach should be adopted where fees and charges are obtained in advance or at the time of service provision. Where goods or services provided need to be paid for after this, then the Council offers credit facilities wherever it is considered prudent to do so.

3.2 Prompt invoicing is essential to efficient debt collection; the longer the period, the less likely is prompt settlement. Invoices must therefore be raised within 10 days of the service being delivered or due.

3.3 By raising an invoice, the originating service agrees approval to take appropriate recovery action through the Corporate Debt Recovery Team, including court action when necessary, is granted at the time the debt is raised.

3.4 Invoices must not be raised for amounts of less than £40, excluding VAT, unless the invoice relates to collection of peppercorn rents, licenses or leases in connection with occupation of Council land and property. This is in line with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.

3.5 For payment of amounts of £40 or less services are required to request payment up front where it is reasonable and practical to do so.

3.6 The service responsible for raising the invoice must ensure that the evidence of the service provided is fully validated and that the invoice is accurate and contains sufficient detail for both billing and recovery purposes. Services must ensure that all invoice information is fully completed, including:

- Customer's full name(s)

- Customer"s full address(es),including postcode(s)
 - Customer"s contact telephone number(s)
 - Customer"s e-mail address
 - Name of contact officer in cases of query over the service provided
 - Date of supply of service
 - Purchase order number (where applicable)
 - Full description of the service/goods supplied
 - For each type of supply – the unit price or rate, quantity or extent of goods and services
 - Amount due
 - VAT amount and rate of VAT charged
 - Total due
 - For each type of supply – the unit price or rate, quantity or extent of goods and services, VAT amount and rate of VAT charged
- 3.7 The content (narrative) on the invoice should be concise but of sufficient clarity to ensure that the customer fully understands the bill.
- 3.8 All invoices must be raised to a correctly named legal entity. In the event of non-payment, legal action cannot be taken against a non-legal entity. Legal entities are:
- **Individuals** - This is usually someone living at a residential address. When a request is received for a service, the person"s full name (title, forename(s) and surname) must be obtained and stated. Initials are not sufficient. If the request is on behalf of more than one person then the full name of each person must be obtained and stated. The full correct postal address, including postcode, must be stated.
 - **Sole Traders** - Where an individual is trading in his or her own name the full name of the individual as well as the business name must be obtained e.g. Mr John Smith, trading as Fast Removals. Evidence of the name of the business could be in the form of a request for services on a business letterhead. The individual"s full postal address must also be requested.
 - **Partnerships**- "LLP" must be added where applicable, otherwise the full names of one, two or more partners must be stated, followed by "trading as"(as above). If LLP is applicable the full correct business address, including postcode, must be stated, otherwise the full correct postal address(es), including postcode of the partner(s) should be stated.
 - **Limited companies** - the name must include "Ltd" or "Plc". Invoices can be addressed to either the current registered office or to a place of business of the company. Evidence of their Limited Company Status and registered office must be obtained by requiring confirmation of the service request on their official letterhead
 - **Charities limited by guarantee** - Companies which are charitable and also limited by guarantee can be exempted from using the term "Ltd" so, for example: "Oxfam" is a correct name. Evidence of their charitable status must be obtained by requiring confirmation of the service request on their official letterhead.
 - **Clubs run by a committee** - the full name(s) and address(es) of the treasurer and / or the secretary, or the trustees must be stated.

- **Trustees** – the full name(s) and address(es) of the trustee(s) and the full name of the trust must be stated.
- **Executors or Personal Representatives** – must be addressed e.g. “Mr Peter Smith!, Executor of James Brown Deceased or “Personal representatives of James Brown Deceased”. The full postal address(es) of the executors/personal representatives must be stated.

3.9 An invoice should not be raised where:

- A purchase order or written agreement has not been received
- It cannot be proven that the goods and/or services have been supplied
- If the debt is already bad or doubtful

4.0 Payment Terms

- 4.1 The Council will collect monies owing to it fully and promptly in line with the 30 day standard terms as outlined on the invoice. The standard terms apply to all sundry debtor accounts raised by the Council and should not be deviated from unless with the prior approval of the Corporate Finance Manager.
- 4.2 All requests from customers to enter into payment agreements must be referred to the Corporate Debt team regardless of the amount owed. The Corporate Debt team will set up and monitor all payment agreements.
- 4.3 Payment terms beyond the 30 day period will only be granted where a customer is not able to settle the debt in full in one payment.
- 4.4 The Corporate Debt team will withdraw payment terms if a debtor fails to maintain a payment agreement.

5.0 Accounting Arrangements

- 5.1 Services will receive the credit when an invoice is first raised.
- 5.2 Where debts cannot be recovered and the debt is written off, the original debt will be debited from directorate bad debt provision by way of a write off. All write offs will be considered in accordance with the Financial Procedure Rules and in accordance with the policy guidance in Appendix 7 to this policy.
- 5.3 All relevant information relating to an invoice (otherwise known as a proof of debt) should be kept until at least six years after it is first issued. If at the end of that six year period the bill still remains unpaid but payments are being made, the supporting documentation should be retained until final settlement or write off of the debt.
- 5.4 Appropriate accounting arrangements will be put in place to ensure that the Council reclaims VAT from HMRC on a bad debt if:
- Goods/Services have been supplied and VAT has been accounted for and paid to HMRC (as output tax), but no payment (or only a part payment has been received, and
 - The amount has, or is, about to be written off in the accounts, and
 - Six months have elapsed from the later of the supply date and the time when payment was due, and
 - The reclaim of VAT is made within three years and six months of the date the payment was due and payable or the date of supply.

- 5.5 Refunds for overpayments must be submitted by the Accounts Receivable Control Team to process and reconcile the refund request to control account and journals relating to the ledger code. Refunds will only be processed where there are no other debts outstanding and due from that customer.
- 5.6 All credit values of £1 or under will be transferred to the Councils Central Fund after the expiry of one financial year plus the current financial year. The same process will also followed for any credit balances where Corporate Debt/Accounts Receivable Control Team is unable to trace the debtor.

6.0 Dispute Resolutions

- 6.1 Where a customer disputes an invoice with the service, the service must notify the Corporate Debt team immediately to prevent the recovery process continuing. Equally, where a customer contacts the debt team rather than the service to dispute the invoice, the matter will be referred to the service responsible for raising the invoice and recovery will be held. Full notes and reasons for the dispute must be added to the customers account.
- 6.2 To ensure the efficiency of debt collection and good customer service, all disputes must be resolved by the service responsible for raising the invoice within 20 working days of the dispute being raised. The Corporate Debt team must be notified of the outcome of the dispute.
- 6.3 A dispute is not resolved unless it meets one of the following conditions:
- Customer is correct and gets a full credit
 - Customer is partly correct, gets a partial credit and accepts revisions
 - Customer is not correct and accepts the charge
 - Customer is not correct but does not accept the decision of the service and the service is prepared to support the commencement or continuation of recovery proceedings.
- 6.4 Where disputes are not resolved within 20 working days of the dispute being raised, outstanding disputes will be escalated to senior service manager within the service area initiating the invoice.
- 6.5 Following a case referral to a senior service manager, if the service does not resolve the dispute or provide a viable reasons within a further 5 working days as to why the dispute cannot be resolved the disputed debt will be escalated to the relevant chief officer for review and resolution.
- 6.6 For **all** unresolved disputes exceeding 35 working days, the Corporate Debt team will raise a credit note to remove the debt from the system and reverse the income from the service. The service responsible for raising the invoice will be notified when this happens. It will then be the responsibility of the service for the re-raising of the invoice once the dispute is resolved, if appropriate.

7.0 Accounts subject to Recovery

- 7.1 Following the issue of invoices, unless there are payment agreement in place, reminders will be sent for all invoices unpaid or partly unpaid after 7 days past the invoice due date, i.e. day 37 after the invoice is raised.
- 7.2 If an invoice is still unpaid after a further 14 days of the invoice reminder being raised (i.e. day 51 after the invoice is raised), a further letter will be sent that explains to the customer the potential action of a referral to a debt collection agency or legal action through the County Council that may be considered by the Council.
- 7.3 If, after a further 14 days, after the issue of the letter referred to in 7.2, an invoice is still unpaid (i.e. day 65 after the invoice in raised) the Corporate Debt team will attempt to make telephone contact with the customer in an effort to resolve the matter. Where appropriate, payment agreements will be offered. If telephone contact cannot be made or contact is made but the customer does not wish to engage with the Council to resolve the matter, the Corporate Debt team will consider the most appropriate recovery route. Each case will be treated on its own merits, but the following guidance will normally be adhered to:
 - 7.4 Single or multiple debts up to £500 may be referred to the Councils contracted debt collection agents to collect the amount overdue if all previous attempts to secure payment have been unsuccessful. No additional fees will be added to the original debt.
 - 7.5 Single or multiple debts over £500 will be considered for action through the County Court if the originating service can provide the necessary supporting information to aid a successful prosecution.
 - 7.6 Consideration will be given not to take further recovery but only in cases where it is reasonable, economic and in the interests of Council Tax payers to do so. In any case being considered for write off, the write off guidance in appendix 7 will be followed.
 - 7.7 In appropriate cases where County Court action is considered appropriate, any failure of services to provide supporting information to aid a successful prosecution will result in the Corporate Debt team raising a credit note to cancel the charge and the loss of income will be met by the service who raised the original invoice.
 - 7.8 For debts of £5,000 or more, the Council may also consider taking bankruptcy action through the courts if sufficient assets exist to meet the outstanding amount owing to the Council. Before such action is taken, the Council will always send a final letter inviting the customer to a pre-arranged meeting in an effort to make a payment agreement. Bankruptcy will be considered in line with the policy in Appendix 6.
 - 7.9 In some instances, despite a County Court Judgement being obtained and enforcement action being taken, such action may, in some cases, fail to produce a payment towards some or all of the debt due. In these circumstances, further

action is limited and in these cases the invoice will be considered for write off in accordance with the write off guidance in appendix 7.

8.0 Credit Notes

8.1 There is a clear distinction between raising a credit note and writing off a debt.

8.2 A credit note to cancel or reduce a charge must only be issued to

- Correct a factual inaccuracy or administrative error in the raising of the original invoice
- Cancel an invoice where a dispute has not been resolved within 28 days
- Adjust the amount of debt due
- Cancel an invoice where the service is unable to provide sufficient documentary evidence to support the recovery of an outstanding invoice.

8.3 All credit notes must be supported by evidence that validates the reason for reducing or cancelling the invoice.

8.4 When raising credit notes, services must ensure that all information is fully completed, in the same way as invoices are raised, including:

- It must reflect an agreed reduction in value and be issued within one month of the agreement.
- Description of supply
- Rate and amount of VAT charged
- Total charge
- In addition the invoice number and date of the original VAT invoice should be shown on the credit note.

9.0 Corporate Reporting and Monitoring

9.1 All Chief Officers will be issued with a monthly report to show debt levels outstanding within their portfolios. The reporting systems will show the breakdown of aged debt levels including a comprehensive breakdown of the invoices raised these within their services which remain outstanding.

9.2 In the interests of transparency and accountability, a half yearly report will also be presented to the chief officer's team showing debt levels across the organisation together with a full breakdown of aged debt levels within each portfolio.

10.0 Write Offs

10.1 The Council recognises that where a debt is deemed to be irrecoverable, especially after all recovery options have been considered and/or taken, prompt write off of such debts, including reclaiming of VAT from HMRC (where applicable) is appropriate and good practice in certain circumstances and in line with the policy in Appendix 7.

APPENDIX 5 – Housing Rent Recovery

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Collection of Housing Rent is administered in line with ‘The Renting Homes Wales Act 2016’.
- 1.2 It is essential that Housing Rents are collected effectively by the Council and that debts owed are kept to a minimum. This is because the Council has both a legal duty and a responsibility to maintain a Housing Revenue Account and ensure that all rent income due is paid promptly.
- 1.3 As a responsible social landlord, the Council will support access to, and entitlement of, Housing Benefit, Universal Credit to ensure that contract holders are claiming relevant benefits. The Council will signpost to welfare and housing support where contract holders do not engage and there are potential household vulnerabilities.
- 1.4 When a contract holder fails to pay or maintain regular payments, and 12 weeks of rent arrears, or an amount of £1,500 is owing, then recovery action will be started automatically through legal action to take possession of the property.

2.0 Rent Recovery Process

- 2.1 The Council will aim to maintain contact with contract holders throughout the rent recovery process, by telephone, email, letter, and home visits where appropriate, to engage and discuss payment of rent. In most cases rent will be brought up to date or payment arrangements agreed to support contract holders, with the aim of ensuring rent is paid in full by the end of each financial year.
- 2.2 The Council will apply to the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) at the earliest opportunity for rent to be paid direct to the Council (otherwise known as ‘managed payments’) in cases where contract holders are in receipt of Universal Credit and who fall into arrears with their rent payments. This will also include payment of arrears if applicable.
- 2.3 Where contract holders fail to pay or maintain regular payments, and 12 weeks of rent arrears, or an amount of £1,500 is owing, then legal action will automatically commence through possession proceedings.
- 2.4 If contract holders fail to pay, the Council will initiate legal action starting with the service of a Notice of Seeking Possession (RHW23). The notice will be issued to the contract holder giving 30 days to respond to bring rent payments up to date.
- 2.5 Following the service of a Notice of Seeking Possession, if contract holders fail to engage and pay the required weekly rent liability together with a reasonable contribution towards the arrears, cases will progress to court.

- 2.6 Court cases will be heard at the County Court and in most cases, the County Court Judge will make an Order for Possession but suspend the Order if the contract holder pays the weekly ongoing rent plus a specified amount towards the arrears.
- 2.7 If the Courts decide to not make an Order for Possession but decide instead to adjourn the case for a fixed period (e.g., 3, 6 or 12 months) to monitor rent payments, the Council will re-apply to the courts if the arrears increase within the fixed period of adjournment and especially if the arrears are the equivalent of 12 weeks.
- 2.8 If contract holders fail to comply with the terms of the Suspended Possession Order, the Council will continue to provide advice and support about the importance of payment of rent and should contract holders fail to engage or pay the amount due in accordance with the Court Order, the Council will then apply for a Warrant of Eviction.
- 2.9 Contract holders or their representatives have right to apply to have an eviction suspended if a 'Notice of Application' form is completed and sent to the court.
- 2.10 The Council recognises that where a debt is deemed to be irrecoverable, especially after all recovery options have been considered and/or, prompt write off of such debts is appropriate and good practice in certain circumstances and in line with the policy in Appendix 7

APPENDIX 6 - Bankruptcy Policy

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council is committed to using the most effective recovery methods available and this policy will ensure that the Council's very occasional use of bankruptcy is consistent and complies with all relevant legislation and best practice.
- 1.2 Council Tax and Business Rate regulations allow for debts over £5,000 to be considered for bankruptcy providing that Liability Orders have been obtained. For Sundry debts and Housing Benefit overpayments, bankruptcy proceedings may be taken against debtors who owe more than £5,000 where a County Court Judgement has been granted in respect of the debt.
- 1.3 The Council also recognises that serious nature of bankruptcy which may result in an insolvent person's property being vested in a trustee – someone who realises and distributes payment among the creditors in final settlement of their claims. The serious nature of this action cannot be underestimated as the consequences could result in a person losing their home and possessions and be liable to pay a charge and statutory fees/costs associated with bankruptcy amounting to several thousand pounds.
- 1.4 Given that the Council is not a preferential creditor for the purposes of bankruptcy there is no guarantee of a dividend being paid. The Council will only consider using bankruptcy as a last resort and final option and will take a cautious and diligent approach in deciding if bankruptcy is reasonable action to take.
- 1.5 Bankruptcy action takes place in the debtors local County Court with bankruptcy jurisdiction unless the debtor resides in London, in which case the action takes place in the High Court or the Central London High Court.
- 1.6 The Revenues Team will manage the administration of bankruptcy cases and proceedings in respect of Council Tax, Business Rates, Sundry Debt and Housing Benefit overpayments, with the assistance from Legal Officers in appropriate cases.

2.0 When bankruptcy Action may be taken.

- 2.1 The Corporate Debt Team may consider using bankruptcy proceedings in the following circumstances:
 - Where the debt exceeds £5,000 and the debtor appears to have sufficient assets or equity to ensure the debt is recoverable by the Official Receiver of the Insolvency Service or the Trustee in Bankruptcy.
 - Where the debtor is not prepared to make a payment agreement to clear the debt within a reasonable and acceptable timescale.
 - Where other methods of recovery are considered inappropriate or have failed and bankruptcy action, as a last resort, appears to be a fair and proportionate course of action.

3.0 Recording Information and Decisions

- 3.1 When the Council consider bankruptcy proceedings, a log of events will be maintained on the customers account throughout the process to ensure that bankruptcy remains the most appropriate course of action.
- 3.2 **Decision Making (stage 1)** - Prior to commencing bankruptcy proceedings enquiries will be made of the Revenues and Benefit records to:
- Establish a debt history and whether any previous debts have been collected within a reasonable period by other means.
 - Ensure that all known benefits, discounts and exemptions have been granted based on the information held
 - Establish whether, based on any information held, the debtor may be vulnerable or unable to deal with their day to day financial affairs or have had previous debts written off.
- 3.3 Contact will also be made with relevant portfolio to ascertain if the debtor is known to them and therefore may be vulnerable. If the debtor is currently receiving any care service further enquiries will be made with the key worker to establish if the debtor may be vulnerable by way of, for example, age, mental illness, serious learning difficulties or where it is known that the debtor is unable to deal with their own affairs. Should it be apparent the debtor has such difficulties then consideration will be given to whether the help of other agencies should be sought, and to the appropriateness of pursuing an alternative course of action, including the potential to write off in line with the policy in appendix 5.
- 3.4 **Decision Making (stage 2)** – If records held and enquiries with relevant Directorates do not indicate that the debtor may be vulnerable then enquiries will be made with a credit reference agency and the Land Registry to establish information about the debtor's financial standing and ownership of property and assets.
- 3.5 **Decision Making (stage 3)** – In order to assist with the decision-making process as to the appropriateness of bankruptcy a visit will be made to the debtor's home address (and/or business address if known) to discuss the matter and to establish whether a payment agreement can be established.
- 3.6 In the event that the visit establishes that the debtor may be vulnerable then details of the perceived vulnerability will be recorded. Further enquiries will then be made with the relevant support services within the Council together with possible referral to other advice agencies and to determine an alternative method of recovery.
- 3.7 If a payment agreement cannot be made, or contact with the debtor cannot be made, the Council will serve a final letter will be sent to the debtor that explains the intended action, confirms the charges due, and offers a final opportunity to arrange payment within 14 days. The letter will also advise the debtor to seek independent advice from one of the advice agencies. A copy of the Insolvency Service's publication – 'A guide to Bankruptcy' will also be sent to the debtor.

3.8 **Decision Making (stage 4)** – If payment is not made and no satisfactory arrangement agreed, the matter will be discussed with the Head of Finance and if appropriate with the service department to approve the next course of action associated with bankruptcy proceedings.

4.0 Statutory Demand

4.1 Where a decision is taken to commence bankruptcy proceedings a formal 'statutory demand' for payment will be issued by the Council to the debtor and the service of the statutory demand upon the debtor is the first formal stage in bankruptcy proceedings.

4.2 Guidance on service requirements are set out in the Insolvency Proceedings Court Practice Direction. A letter will also be issued with the statutory demand setting out the intentions of the Council and what the debtor needs to do to comply with it.

4.3 The debtor will still have the opportunity to contact the Council, even at this stage and, depending on information supplied, it may still be possible to a short-term repayment arrangement. The debtor also has the right to apply to the County Court to have the Statutory Demand set aside.

5.0 Bankruptcy Petition

5.1 The Council may present a Creditors Bankruptcy Petition to the County Court within four months of service of the Statutory Demand Notice if the debtor has not complied with it, or if alternative payment arrangements cannot be agreed following the service of the Statutory Demand.

5.2 Prior to presentation of the Petition, further enquiries will be made all relevant Directorates to establish whether the debtor has become known to them during the recent process in which case the action will be reconsidered.

5.3 The Council is required to serve the Petition upon the debtor and guidance for service requirements are set out in the Insolvency Proceedings Court Practice Direction.

5.4 At this stage, the debtor is required to pay the debt in full before the hearing of the Petition at Court otherwise the Court will be asked to make a Bankruptcy Order. The Council will always support a short adjournment of the court proceedings if the debtor provides the court with evidence that they will be able to pay in full within a very short period.

5.5 If, between the Petition being presented to the Court and the hearing of the Petition, it becomes known that the debtor does not have the capacity to deal with the matter, then full consideration will be given to seeking an adjournment of the proceedings to enable both the debtor and the Council to obtain further advice.

6.0 Making of a Bankruptcy Order

6.1 If the Court awards a Bankruptcy Order, the Official Receiver of the Insolvency Service is immediately appointed Trustee in Bankruptcy.

APPENDIX 7 - Write Off Policy

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council recognises that where a debt is irrecoverable, prompt and regular write off of such debts is important so that the Council can budget for bad debts. An integral part of debt recovery is the effective management of bad debts to ensure that resources are applied efficiently to the collection of monies outstanding which can reasonably be expected to be collected.
- 1.2 The Council will seek to minimise the cost of write offs to the local taxpayers by taking all necessary and appropriate recovery action to recover what is due. All debts will be subject to the full collection, recovery and legal procedures and considerations as outlined in this Corporate Debt Recovery Policy Framework.
- 1.3 Write offs will be carried out in accordance with the Councils Financial Procedure Rules, and only in cases where:
- The demand or invoice has been raised correctly and is due and owing;
and
 - There is a justified reason why the debt should no longer be pursued.
- 1.4 The Corporate Finance Manager/Section 151 Officer will have the authority to write off debts of up to £10,000 (in aggregate) for each debtor. Write off of debts between £10,001 and £24,999 will be considered for write off by the Corporate Finance Manager/Section 151 and in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Management via delegated powers. All debts considered for write off in excess £25,000 will be referred to Cabinet for approval.
- 1.5 Debts will normally only be considered for write off where the account is 'closed' and there are no reoccurring debts. Only in exceptional circumstances will amounts on 'live' and ongoing accruing debts be considered for write off. All such cases must demonstrate that further recovery will not achieve collection of the debt.
- 1.6 The Council will record all write off decisions.

2.0 Reasons for Write Off

- 2.1 Is it not possible to list every possible scenario which could make a debt suitable for write off, however the following reasons capture the main reasons why debts become irrecoverable:

Absconded / No Trace	The debtor has left the address listed on the invoice/bill and all reasonable attempts, including using trace agents, to find the debtor have failed.
Deceased	The debtor has passed away and there is evidence of in-sufficient or no funds in the deceased persons estate to pay the amount outstanding

Debt 'out of time'	Debts over 6 years old and where a Liability Order has not been granted (Council Tax and Business Rates), or no contact has been made and no payments have been received (in accordance with the Limitation Act 1980 as amended).
Small Debts and debts Uneconomical to pursue	When all recovery processes have been tried or considered and where the cost of proceeding to recover would be cost prohibitive to the Council and to its taxpayers.
Debts subject to a Relief Order	Where debts owed to the Council are subject to and included in a Debt Relief Order and cannot be recovered.
Bankruptcy	The debtor is declared bankrupt and sums due before the date of bankruptcy cannot be recovered.
Companies in Liquidation/ Wound Up / Dissolved Struck Off	The Company is a Limited Company registered with Companies House and no longer exists and there is no means of recovering the debt.

3.0 Conditions for re-claiming VAT on Bad Debts

- 3.1 The Council will be entitled to a refund of VAT from HMRC on any bad debts (excluding Council Tax, Business Rates and Housing Benefit Overpayments) if the conditions prescribed below are met:
- Goods and services have been supplied and VAT has been accounted for and paid to HMRC but no payment (or only a part payment – see 3.4) has been received;
 - The debt has, or is, to be written off in the accounts and transferred to a bad debt account
 - The debt must not have been assigned
 - The debt has remained unpaid (or partly unpaid) for six months or more after the later of the date payment was due or the date of the supply of the goods or services
 - The re-claim of VAT is made within three years and six months of the later of the date payment was due or the date of the supply of the goods or services.
- 3.2 The Council is required, in accordance with HMRC guidance, to retain copies of all invoices and bad debt account details for a fixed period of six years
- 3.3 VAT on bad debts will be re-claimed on the monthly VAT return, ensuring that appropriate VAT codes are debited with the appropriate amounts to reduce the amount of the write off recorded against the appropriate bad debt provision for the relevant Directorate.

- 3.4 Where the Council is re-claiming VAT on debts where part payment is received, the entitlement to bad debt relief on VAT is based on the amount outstanding for the supplies made. For a single supply, where no payment is received, the amount of VAT accounted for can be reclaimed. If a part payment of the debt is received, a refund can only be claimed on the VAT relating to the amount still unpaid.
- 3.5 HMRC advise that payments should be allocated to the earliest supply made unless the customer specifies that a payment is for a particular supply and pays for that supply in full.
- 3.6 In bad debt cases where everything except the VAT element is paid, if the customer refuses to pay the VAT element of an invoice and this is the only element outstanding, relief is limited to the VAT element of the total debt outstanding. For example, if the charge was £100 (which was paid) and £20 VAT remains outstanding, the Council is entitled to re-claim VAT of £3.33 (i.e. 1/6 of £20).
- 3.7 Any bad debt relief claimed on sales must be at the same rate of VAT as used for those sales, that is, 20% from 4 January 2011, 17.5% from 1 January 2010 to 3 January 2011 and 15% from 1 December 2008 to 31 December 2009.
- 3.8 If VAT is re-claimed on a bad debt and a payment is later received from the customer, the VAT element included in the payment must be paid over to HMRC in the tax period in which the payment is received.
- 3.9 For any technical queries on VAT treatment of invoices please refer to the Council's Tax Advisor.

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CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 21 st November 2023
Report Subject	Alleviating food poverty over the school holidays
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement Cabinet Member for Education and Youth, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure
Report Author	Chief Executive Corporate Finance Manager (People and Resources)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the pandemic Welsh Government committed to provide additional funding to support free school meals during the holiday and half term period. The scheme was intended to address 'holiday hunger' and help families struggling during the cost-of-living crisis and the mechanism for delivering this initiative was either a direct payment to families of eligible children, vouchers or the provision of a lunch.

At the end of June Welsh Government confirmed that it was ending its support for free school meal provision for children during holidays and half terms.

At the Council meeting of the 26th September 2023 a notice of motion relating to Free School Meals was adopted, the key points of which are included below

- *Cabinet will give a commitment to work to find resources during the Christmas holidays for families on free school meals and will bring a report to Cabinet in November with proposals for how this can be achieved*
- *Cabinet will set up a working group to report back to Cabinet. The working group will be chaired by a back-bench Member of the Council but will contain Councillor Paul Johnson and Councillor Mared Eastwood with representatives from across the Chamber*

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Cabinet approves the payment of £25.00 per eligible pupil to address the period covering the Christmas holiday period, to be taken from the hardship fund (total estimated amount £129,825).
2	That Cabinet set up the member working group and that the group report back its findings before the 2024/25 budget is concluded. The principle aim of the working group will be to consider and recommend sustainable options for future school holidays.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING ALLEVIATING FOOD POVERTY OVER THE SCHOOL HOLIDAY
1.01	During the pandemic Welsh Government committed to provide additional funding to support free school meals during the holiday and half term period. The scheme was intended to address 'holiday hunger' and help families struggling during the cost-of-living crisis and the mechanism for delivering this initiative was either a direct payment to families of eligible children, vouchers or the provision of a lunch.
1.02	At the end of June Welsh Government confirmed that it was ending its support for free school meal provision for children during holidays and half terms.
1.03	<p>During the intervening period Flintshire County Council provided support through direct payments to families. When Welsh Government ceased funding Cabinet determined that it would not be in a position to support further payments and instead relied upon a number of other initiatives which for the summer holidays; are set out below:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Food and Fun programme (previously SHEP), a targeted programme delivered by schools who meet certain FSM eligibility criteria and runs for 4 weeks during the holidays. It involves the provision of breakfast, snack and lunch and also provides opportunities for families to join once a week for lunch. • The Aura Fit, Fed and Read programme provided a food offer which was widely promoted across the county. The programme was a resounding success. • Whilst our summer playschemes do not have a formal food offer as it is not permitted within the funding terms and conditions, there has been provision for some healthy snacks that the play leaders can distribute if children indicate they are hungry • Social media promotion of the above.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The FCC Cost of Living Online Hub has a prominent place on the council website as a source of places to find support during the Cost of Living Crisis.
1.04	<p>As background, at the Council meeting of the 26th September 2023 Councillor David Coggins Cogan submitted a notice of motion relating to free school meals. During the debate the Leader of the Council put forward the following resolution which was subsequently supported at Council.</p> <p><i>The ongoing Cost of Living crisis forces more and more families throughout Flintshire into food poverty. In June Welsh Government announced it was ending the holiday provision of free school meals, removing a safety net from those who needed it, the most vulnerable children trapped in poverty through no fault of their own.</i></p> <p><i>Several Councils across Wales urgently approved funding to continue free school meals during the summer break. Those Cabinets decided alleviating food poverty for children was a priority. The full burden of the halted free school meals policy fell on those least able to bear children living in poverty.</i></p> <p><i>This policy decision not to fund free school meals was not communicated to Members. This hampered Members' efforts in proactively informing their residents of this new pressure on family finances. Choosing not to inform Members about the discontinuation of holiday free school meals is regrettable and I apologise to the Chamber for that. I move</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Therefore this Council notes with disappointment Welsh Government's decision not to fund free school meals during the holidays and not to provide any part funding to eligible children.</i> • <i>This Council will work with Welsh Government in asking it to reinstate provision of resources for free school meals.</i> • <i>Cabinet will give a commitment to work to find resources during the Christmas holidays for families on free school meals and will bring a report to Cabinet in November with proposals for how this can be achieved.</i> • <i>Cabinet will set up a working group to report back to Cabinet. The working group will be chaired by a back-bench Member of the Council but will contain Councillor Paul Johnson and Councillor Mared Eastwood with representatives from across the Chamber.</i> • <i>The working group will look at the issue of free school meals and will report before the budget.</i> • <i>Cabinet notes with disappointment Welsh Government's decision not to fund free school meals during the holidays and not to provide any funding to eligible children.</i>

1.05	In terms of taking forward the above two work streams have been developed: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dealing with the encroaching Christmas school holiday period • The establishment of a member working group
1.06	In relation to solutions to address the Christmas school period it is proposed that a direct payment is made of £25.00 per child at an estimated cost, based on an estimated 5,193 eligible pupils covering the 10 day period. Funding will be provided from the amount remaining within the Councils hardship fund.
1.07	In relation to the working group, the terms of reference and proposed membership of that group is included in the terms of reference included at appendix A. In this context it the intention that the group also widen out their area of their work to focus on the wider poverty agenda, to encompass a wider family approach.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	As noted in the report at 1.06, the proposal will have an estimated cost, for this period of £129,825. The member working group may conclude that financial support should be provided for other holiday and half term periods, however, as these discussions have not yet commenced it would be premature to determine an outcome, however, should the working group determine to support future holiday periods then this will have financial implications for the Council and as yet no provision has been made in future budgets.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	Any future year's decisions will need to consider the funding implications of such decision of the Councils overall budget and risks this may present.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	The issue was raised at County Council and course of action determined following that meeting. The setting up a member working group to explore future provision and implications will feed back outcomes to Cabinet for consideration.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix A – Terms of Reference for the member working group.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: Chief Executive Telephone: 01352 702101 E-mail: chief.executive@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	NA

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TERMS OF REFERENCE

Alleviating Food Poverty over the school holidays Member Task and Finish Working Group

Background

Free school meal provision for children during holidays and half terms came to an end after the May half term. The scheme was introduced and 100% financed by Welsh Government during the Covid pandemic to address "holiday hunger" and help families struggling during the cost of living crisis.

Under the scheme parents and carers whose children were eligible for free school meals were offered a range of options from vouchers to food deliveries to money paid direct to them

At the Council meeting of the 26th September 2023 Cllr David Coggins Cogan submitted a notice of motion relating to free school meals (copy of NOM attached for information).

During the debate the resolution, as subsequently modified, was supported see below.

Purpose

Bearing in mind the above the intention is that a working group comprising Members and supported by officers will develop solutions to address food poverty during periods of school holidays.

Roles and Responsibilities

Chair

The intention is not to revisit policy decisions that have been made but to be forward looking in its outcome. The Chair shall be responsible for maintaining momentum, focus the meeting to gain consensus and make recommendations for consideration, ultimately to Council.

Members

The task and finish group will act as an advisory group undertaking work in alleviating food poverty among children and their families during school holidays.

In advance of meetings Members will be expected to read any materials presented in advance of the meeting, contribute opinions and relevant examples, or experience they may have for discussion at the group.

The Group will, when required, request support and advice from Officers or organisations in the third sector in order to inform thinking and direction and to provide a critical friend and sounding board for the solutions being explored and developed.

Aims and Objectives

- To reference and explore what activity and approaches other Councils in Wales take To confirm what activity is already undertaken within Flintshire (summer of fun, warm hubs etc),
- How what is being explored contributes to alleviating food poverty during school holidays
- To use models of best practice to draw together an acceptable solution for Flintshire.
- To explore whether there is opportunity to expand and at what financial cost to the Council;

- The wider role of the third sector and how capacity to deliver may be increased to deliver more;
- The group will look at how any scheme proposed can be sustainably funded over a five year period by and provide proposals as to where this funding would come from e.g.(Council, Grant Funding, private Sector)
- Exploration of the wider poverty agenda, connectivity to the Councils poverty narrative (Council Plan), current community resilience programmes and how this work may add wider value and impact more widely of food poverty;
- Explore whether this creates opportunities for the Councils own staff to volunteer and add value back the communities they work within;
- Act as critical friend, shaping the workflow, highlighting risks and mitigations and developing cost effective and affordable solutions

Governance

The working group will initially prepare any reports and submit these to Cabinet and Education and Youth Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Final reports will be submitted to Council.

Meeting Frequency

Will be held every month either in person or Teams at the group's discretion.

Administrative Support

Administrative support will be provided by (to be determined). A note of the meeting and actions will be circulated to the Group within seven days of each meeting.

Task and Finish Group membership

Chair	To be nominated (from the committee membership) not to be a Labour Member
Labour Group	Two Members Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure
Independent Group	Two Members
Liberal Democrats	One Member
Eagle Group	One Member
Conservatives	One Member

Members will be named individuals. If a Member is unable to attend an meeting they may ask for a substitute to attend by prior arrangement with the Chair.

EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS - DECISIONS TAKEN REPORTED TO CABINET – 21.11.23

Housing and Communities

- **Request Permission to Tender a New Housing Support Project**
Flintshire Housing Support Team are requesting permission to commission a new supported housing project for people aged 25+ with multiple support needs. These can include Mental Health, Substance Misuse, Offending, Moderate Learning Difficulties, adverse children experiences, trauma. The list is not exhaustive.

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

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**FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME ITEMS
COUNCIL, CABINET, AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE & SCRUTINY
1 November 2023 TO 30 April 2024**

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
November					
Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee	14/11/23	Overview and Scrutiny	Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking (E&E OSC) To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee and to inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources
Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee	14/11/23	Streetscene and Transportation	Flintshire County Council Operator License To provide a progress update on the loss of operator licence follow up report.	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and the Regional Transport Strategy

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee	14/11/23	Streetscene and Transportation	<p>Waste and recycling collection on unadopted roads</p> <p>To provide scrutiny with an in-depth overview of the recently commissioned review of waste and recycling services, specifically focused on properties located along un-adopted roads.</p>	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and the Regional Transport Strategy
Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee	14/11/23	Planning, Environment and Economy	<p>Local Energy Plan Development Update</p> <p>To provide an update on the progress of development of Flintshire's local area energy plan.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy
Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee	14/11/23	Planning, Environment and Economy	<p>Flintshire County Council's Carbon Footprint Report 2022-23</p> <p>To provide an update on the Council's latest carbon footprint data following submission to Welsh Government.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee	14/11/23	Planning, Environment and Economy	Shared Prosperity Fund To provide an update on the development of the programme and the selection of projects to receive a grant award from the Flintshire SPF funding allocation.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy
Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee	14/11/23	Planning, Environment and Economy	FCC Social Enterprise Update Report To provide an update of social enterprise activity, achievements and future priorities	Operational	Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy
Community & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee	15/11/23	Overview and Scrutiny	Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking (C&H OSC) To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Community & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee and to inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Community & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee	15/11/23	Housing and Communities	Void Management To provide a detailed update to the Committee on Void properties and the work undertaken to bring the properties back into use.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration
Community & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee	15/11/23	Housing and Communities	Housing Rent Income To provide the latest operational update on the collection of housing rent and to set out proposed changes to the Corporate Debt Recovery Policy to strengthen the rent enforcement process.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration
Community & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee	15/11/23	Housing and Communities	Homelessness Budget Pressure - Options Paper To present the proposed mitigating measures being explored with a view to reducing the budget pressure around emergency accommodation.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Community & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee	15/11/23	Housing and Communities	Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 30 Year Financial Business Plan To consider the proposed Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget for 2024/25 and the HRA Business Plan.	Strategic	Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement, Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	16/11/23	Overview and Scrutiny	Action Tracking To inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings.	Operational	
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	16/11/23	Overview and Scrutiny	Forward Work Programme To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee.	Operational	

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	16/11/23	Finance	Budget 2024/25 (Presentation) To summarise feedback from the Overview & Scrutiny Committees and to update on changes and risks to the additional budget requirement for the 2024/25 financial year.	Strategic	Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	16/11/23	People and Resources	Employment and Workforce Mid-year Update This report covers strategic updates in addition to the quarterly workforce statistics and their analysis.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	16/11/23	Finance	Revenue Budget Monitoring 2023/24 (Month 6) and Capital Programme Monitoring 2023/24 (Month 6) To provide the Revenue Budget Monitoring 2023/24 (Month 6) report and the Capital Programme 2023/24 (Month 6) report.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	16/11/23	Finance	Capital Programme 2024/25 - 2026/27 To present the Capital Programme 2024/25 - 2026/27 for review.	Strategic	Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	16/11/23	Finance	Capital Strategy including Prudential Indicators 2024/25 - 2026/27 To present the Capital Strategy 2024/25 - 2026/27 for review.	Strategic	Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement
Cabinet	21/11/23	Governance	Council Tax Base for 2024/25 To approve the Council Tax Base for the financial year 2024/25 as part of the process of the revenue budget setting and Council Tax setting process for the new year.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Cabinet	21/11/23	Chief Executive's	<p>Capital Strategy including Prudential Indicators 2024/25 – 2026/27 To present the Capital Strategy 2024/25 – 2026/27 for recommendation to Council</p>	Strategic	Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement
Cabinet	21/11/23	Chief Executive's	<p>Capital Programme 2024/25 – 2026/27 To present the Capital Programme 2024/25 – 2026/27 for recommendation to Council.</p>	Strategic	Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement
Cabinet	21/11/23	Chief Executive's	<p>Revenue Budget Monitoring 2023/24 (Month 6) This regular monthly report provides the latest revenue budget monitoring position for 2023/24 for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account. The position is based on actual income and expenditure as at Month 6, and projects forward to year-end.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Cabinet	21/11/23	Chief Executive's	Capital Programme Monitoring 2023/24 (Month 6) To present the Month 6 Capital Programme information for 2023/24	Operational	Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement
Cabinet	21/11/23	Education and Youth	Expansion of Specialist Educational Provision To secure agreement for expansion of specialist provision.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure
Cabinet	21/11/23	Streetscene and Transportation	Waste Strategy Consultation To seek approval for consultation for the authority's draft waste strategy.	Strategic	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and the Regional Transport Strategy
Cabinet	21/11/23	Housing and Communities	Homeless Pressures To present the proposed mitigating measures being explored with a view to reducing the budget pressure around emergency accommodation.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Cabinet	21/11/23	Housing and Communities	Corporate Debt Policy – Housing Rent Collection To approve changes to the Corporate Debt Recovery Policy to strengthen the collection of Housing Rent.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration
Cabinet	21/11/23	Planning, Environment and Economy	Shared Prosperity Fund To provide an update on the development of the programme and the selection of projects to receive a grant award from the Flintshire SPF funding allocation.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy
Cabinet	21/11/23	Planning, Environment and Economy	Flintshire County Council's Carbon Footprint Report 2022-23 To provide an update on the Council's latest carbon footprint data following submission to Welsh Government.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Cabinet	21/11/23	Planning, Environment and Economy	<p>Social Enterprise</p> <p>1) provide an update on the Council's work to support social enterprises; 2) to respond to the Audit Wales review of social enterprise support in Wales; and 3) to present the Council's self-assessment on social enterprise support and refreshed social enterprise action plan.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy
Governance and Audit Committee	22/11/23	Governance	<p>Public Services Ombudsman for Wales Annual Letter 2022-23 and complaints made against Flintshire County Council during the first half of 2023-24</p> <p>To share the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) Annual Letter 2022-23 for Flintshire County Council and an overview of the complaints received against Council services in the first half of 2023-24.</p>	Operational	

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Governance and Audit Committee	22/11/23	Governance	Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 Mid-year Progress Report To provide the Governance and Audit Committee with an update of the progress made against managing the issues identified within the 2022/23 Annual Governance Statement	All Report Types	
Governance and Audit Committee	22/11/23	Finance	Treasury Management Mid-year Review 2023/24 and Quarter 2 Update To present the draft Treasury Management Mid-year Review 1 April-30 September 2023 for comments and recommendation for approval to Cabinet.	Strategic	Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement
Governance and Audit Committee	22/11/23	Finance	Asset Disposals and Capital Receipts Generated 2022/23 To report on asset disposals and capital received generated during 2022/23.	Operational	

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Governance and Audit Committee	22/11/23	Governance	Audit Actions Outstanding To provide Members, as requested, with an update on the progress of audit actions outstanding within Housing & Communities and Streetscene & Transportation.	All Report Types	
Governance and Audit Committee	22/11/23	Governance	Governance & Audit Committee Annual Report To report on activities of the Committee during 2022/23.	All Report Types	
Governance and Audit Committee	22/11/23	Governance	Action Tracking To inform the Committee of the actions resulting from points raised at previous Governance and Audit Committee meetings.	All Report Types	
Governance and Audit Committee	22/11/23	Governance	Forward Work Programme To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Internal Audit Department.	All Report Types	

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Governance and Audit Committee	22/11/23	Governance	Investigation to Anonymous Allegations Received To provide Members with a summary of the investigation undertaken after anonymous phone calls were received by two Councillors.	All Report Types	
Education, Youth & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee Page 304	30/11/23	Overview and Scrutiny	Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking (EY&C OSC) To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Education, Youth & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee and to inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources
December					
Flintshire County Council	6/12/23	Governance	Committee Sizes and Political Balance To consider setting Committee sizes to an odd number of seats and recalculating Political Balance to reflect the new sizes.		

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	7/12/23	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking (S&HC OSC) To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee and to inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources
Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee Page 305	7/12/23	Social Services	<p>Council Plan 2023-24 Mid-Year Performance Reporting (S&HC OSC) To review the levels of progress in the achievement of activities and performance levels identified in the Council Plan.</p>	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Social Services and Wellbeing
Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	7/12/23	Social Services	<p>Social Care Commissioning To receive an update on Audit Wales Report into OP Care Home Commissioning in North Wales.</p> <p>Oversight by Member of the Dom Care Framework refresh for North Wales.</p>	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Social Services and Wellbeing

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee	12/12/23	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking (E&E OSC) To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee and to inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources
Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee	12/12/23	Planning, Environment and Economy	<p>Access Barrier Review update To agree the implementation of access improvements to the Wales Coast Path.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy
Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee	12/12/23	Streetscene and Transportation	<p>Outcome of Adoption of Local Toilet Strategy To update members on the outcome.</p>	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and the Regional Transport Strategy

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee	12/12/23	Streetscene and Transportation	<p>Council Plan 2023-24 Mid-Year Performance Reporting (EE OSC)</p> <p>To review the levels of progress in the achievement of activities and performance levels identified in the Council Plan.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Planning, Public Health and Public Protection, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and the Regional Transport Strategy, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy
Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee	12/12/23	Planning, Environment and Economy	<p>Bailey Hill Mold</p> <p>To provide an update on the development of the facilities at Bailey Hill in Mold.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy
Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee	12/12/23	Planning, Environment and Economy	<p>Contaminated Land Strategy</p> <p>That Members endorse the updated Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy</p>	Strategic	Cabinet Member for Planning, Public Health and Public Protection

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee Page 308	12/12/23	Planning, Environment and Economy	Violence Against Women Domestic Abuse Sexual Violence To provide Members with an outline of the services available with respect to Violence Against Women Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) on a local and regional level, and also provide an insight into current demands across the region. At the request of Members, to provide an overview of trends, services and support available with respect to VAWDASV.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Planning, Public Health and Public Protection
Community & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee	13/12/23	Overview and Scrutiny	Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking (C&H OSC) To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Community & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee and to inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Community & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee	13/12/23	Housing and Communities	<p>Council Plan 2023 -24 Mid-Year Performance Reporting (CHA OSC) To review the levels of progress in the achievement of activities and performance levels identified in the Council Plan.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	14/12/23	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Action Tracking To inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings.</p>	Operational	
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	14/12/23	Overview and Scrutiny	<p>Forward Work Programme To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee.</p>	Operational	
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	14/12/23	Social Services	<p>Joint Funded Care Packages - Update Report To share an update on the current situation on the long term debt with the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board since the last report was received.</p>	Operational	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Social Services and Wellbeing

COMMITTEE	MEETING DATE	CHIEF OFFICER PORTFOLIO	AGENDA ITEM & PURPOSE OF REPORT	REPORT TYPE (Strategic or Operational) (Cabinet only)	PORTFOLIO (Cabinet only)
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	14/12/23	Chief Executive's	Council Plan 2023-24 Mid-Year Performance Reporting (CROSC)) To review the levels of progress in the achievement of activities and performance levels identified in the Council Plan.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	14/12/23	Finance	Revenue Budget Monitoring 2023/24 (Month 7) To provide Members with the Revenue Budget Monitoring 2023/24 (Month 7) Report and Significant Variances.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement

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Cabinet	19/12/23	Governance	<p>Public Services Ombudsman for Wales Annual Letter 2022-23 and complaints made against Flintshire County Council during the first half of 2023-24</p> <p>To share the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) Annual Letter 2022-23 for Flintshire County Council and an overview of the complaints received against Council services in the first half of 2023-24.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources
Cabinet	19/12/23	Governance	<p>Business Rates - Write Offs</p> <p>For Cabinet to approve the write off of individual bad debts for Business Rates in excess of £25,000</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources
Cabinet	19/12/23	Planning, Environment and Economy	<p>Access Barrier Review update</p> <p>To agree the implementation of access improvements to the Wales Coast Path.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy

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Cabinet	19/12/23	Governance	<p>Public Services Ombudsman for Wales Annual Letter 2022-23 and complaints made against Flintshire County Council during the first half of 2023-24</p> <p>To share the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) Annual Letter 2022-23 for Flintshire County Council and an overview of the complaints received against Council services in the first half of 2023-24.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources
Cabinet	19/12/23	Governance	<p>Introducing a Corporate Facebook Page</p> <p>To agree the need for a Corporate Facebook page that will support digital communications, including good news stories and important information for our communities.</p>	Operational	Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources
Cabinet	19/12/23	Planning, Environment and Economy	<p>Contaminated Land Strategy</p> <p>That Cabinet approves the updated Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy.</p>	Strategic	Cabinet Member for Planning, Public Health and Public Protection

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Cabinet	19/12/23	Governance	Introducing a Corporate Facebook Page To agree the need for a Corporate Facebook page that will support digital communications, including good news stories and important information for our communities.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources
January					
Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee	9/01/24	Governance	Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking (Env) To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Environment	Operational	Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources
Community & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee	10/01/24	Housing and Communities	Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking (CH & E) To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Community	Operational	Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration

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Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	11/01/24	Governance	Action Tracking (CROSC) To inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings	Operational	Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	11/01/24	Governance	Forward Work Programme (CROSC) To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Corporate Resources O & S Committee	Operational	Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources
Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	11/01/24	Finance	Revenue Budget Monitoring 2023/24 (Month 8) To provide Members with the Revenue Budget Monitoring 2023/24 (Month 8) Report and Significant Variances.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement
Cabinet	16/01/24	Planning, Environment and Economy	Bailey Hill Mold To provide an update on the development of the facilities at Bailey Hill in Mold.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy

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Cabinet	16/01/24	Social Services	Age-friendly Flintshire To provide an update on the progress being made to develop age-friendly communities in Flintshire.	Operational	Cllr Christine Jones
Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	18/01/24	Governance	Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking (S & H) To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Social	Operational	Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources
Governance and Audit Committee	24/01/24	Governance	Audit Wales Assurance and Risk Assessment Review Report 2021-22 To summarise the findings to Governance and Audit Committee of the detailed assurance and risk assessment work undertaken.	All Report Types	

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Governance and Audit Committee	24/01/24	Planning, Environment and Economy	Audit Wales Report - Social Enterprise To provide an update on actions following receipt of the Audit Wales report on Social Enterprise.	Operational	Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement
February					
Education, Youth & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee	1/02/24	Governance	Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking (EY& C) To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Education Youth	Operational	Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources
FIELD_DMTITLE	FIELD_DUE_DATE	FIELD_DEPARTMEN T	FIELD_TITLE FIELD_SUMMARY	Operational	Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure

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