

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET RECORD OF DECISION

DATE OF MEETING: **18 JUNE 2024** **AGENDA ITEM NO. 4**

REPORT OF: **Chief Officer (Housing and Communities)**

SUBJECT: **HOUSING STRATEGY ACTION PLAN**
PERFORMANCE UPDATE

RECOMMENDATIONS OF REPORT:

(1) To note the progress on delivery of the Housing Strategy Action Plan 2019 - 2024.

(2) To note the changes outlined in the report to the following:

- The alignment of standards and intervention rate for acquisitions under the Social Housing Grant (SHG) with those under the Transitional Accommodation Capital Programme (TACP).
- The updated timeframe for renewal of the current Housing Strategy.

DECISION: As detailed in the recommendations.

REASON FOR DECISION: As in the report.

CONSULTATIONS
REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT:

Monthly FCC Development Team meetings.
Quarterly meetings with Welsh Government and RSL colleagues.
Quarterly and ad hoc meetings with individual RSLs.
Consultation takes place with Members and site visits arranged when appropriate.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

Revenue: The Housing Strategy Action Plan is a strategic document, there are no implications for the approved revenue budget for either the current financial year or for future financial years.

Capital: The Housing Strategy Action Plan is a strategic document, there are no implications for the approved Capital programme relating to the Strategy or Action Plan other than already approved borrowing by NEW Homes and through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) borrowing capacity.

Human resources: The Housing Strategy team is operating with limited resources. There were some actions within the Action Plan in 2023 that referred to the potential for new posts to be recruited to assist in delivering additional services.

A systems analyst and project officer post for property acquisitions has been identified and options are being explored as to how best to recruit to these positions. Challenges relating to the recruitment and retention of staff remain.

Agency Staff

Two Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme Delivery Managers commenced in February and March 2023 and are now embedded into the Team. A Senior Maintenance Surveyor placement continues.

Apprentices

Two apprentices were recruited in September 2023. The graduate trainee is currently working in the development team but will also work across the Housing Asset team. Both apprentices have settled in well.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

None.

DISPENSATIONS

None.

DATE PUBLISHED:

19th June 2024

SIGNED



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Democratic Services Manager

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET RECORD OF DECISION

DATE OF MEETING: **18 JUNE 2024** **AGENDA ITEM NO. 5**

REPORT OF: **Chief Officer (Housing and Communities)**

SUBJECT: **'TOGETHER WE CAN' COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND SELF-RELIANCE**

RECOMMENDATIONS OF REPORT:

(1) Cabinet to consider the findings and recommendations of the Audit Wales “‘Together we can’ Community resilience and self-reliance” report.

(2) Cabinet to note the recommended response in relation to Audit Wales recommendations and support this being reported to appropriate Committees in June 2024.

DECISION: As detailed in the recommendations.

REASON FOR DECISION: As in the report.

CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT:

This report will be presented to:

- Community and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 12th June 2024,
- Cabinet on 18th June 2024, and
- Governance and Audit Committee on 24th June 2024.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

Whilst in principle the recommendations made in the ‘Together we can’ report are desirable, implementation of the recommendations would require cross organisational work, with no dedicated resource or capacity within existing teams to oversee and co-ordinate. Although, it is acknowledged that community resilience sits under the Housing and Communities Portfolio in Flintshire.

Whilst there may be long-term benefits to

all in supporting greater community resilience and self-reliance, it will not be easy to achieve and will require Council resource to drive and implement.

The report recognises the difficulties facing local authorities, some of which are struggling to maintain statutory services, and that switching resources from stretched services is not easy. However, Audit Wales argue that without investment on the ground to grow capacity and resilience, communities cannot respond.

The Audit Wales report promotes local authorities building community resilience and self-reliance to reduce demand on local authorities and help address the budgetary challenges. Yet there appears to be no cost benefit analysis to suggest that the examples provided in the report are supporting these outcomes. Indeed, the report recognises that for initiatives to be successful there is a need for ongoing local authority involvement.

Local experience suggests that the examples provided by Audit Wales in the report are unlikely to pay back the time and investment required to implement, let alone provide ongoing savings. So, whilst building community resilience to support well-being and social capital may be desirable, local experience would suggest framing it as a tool to reduce demand and save costs for local authorities is perhaps misleading.

Therefore, the recommendations made by Audit Wales have been considered. Whilst these are acknowledged and accepted in principle (that is the right arrangements and processes in place may help strengthen community resilience and self-reliance) local experience is that some of the activities Audit Wales refer to do not achieve the outcomes Audit Wales suggest.

In addition, the Council cannot achieve the output of the recommendations. Completion of a self-assessment and subsequent action plan is not achievable in the current climate given the financial constraints on the Council and the lack of available capacity/resource to undertake such a cross organisational piece of work, especially if it is unlikely to yield the outcomes suggested.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

None.

DISPENSATIONS

None.

DATE PUBLISHED:

19th June 2024

SIGNED

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Democratic Services Manager

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET RECORD OF DECISION

DATE OF MEETING: **18 JUNE 2024** **AGENDA ITEM NO. 6**

REPORT OF: **Chief Executive**

SUBJECT: **AUDIT WALES REPORT (USE OF PERFORMANCE INFORMATION: SERVICE USER PERSPECTIVE AND OUTCOMES)**

RECOMMENDATIONS OF REPORT: Cabinet endorses the Council's planned action in response to the recommendations for improvement.

DECISION: As detailed in the recommendation.

REASON FOR DECISION: As in the report.

CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT: Audit Wales engaged with Cabinet Members, Senior Leaders and Officers as part of their audit.

Governance and Audit Committee, Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet will receive this report.

In response to the Recommendation 1, a key focus will be to develop a Consultation and Engagement Strategy to strengthen how we consult and use this information.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: There are no specific resource implications to Recommendations 1 and 2, however, it has been identified that for Recommendation 3, arrangements to check the quality and accuracy of data beyond existing arrangements would require additional capacity and resources that the present financial environment would not allow.


DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None.

DISPENSATIONS None.

DATE PUBLISHED:


19th June 2024

SIGNED



Democratic Services Manager

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET RECORD OF DECISION

DATE OF MEETING: **18 JUNE 2024** **AGENDA ITEM NO. 8**

REPORT OF: **Corporate Manager – Capital Programme & Assets**

SUBJECT: **AUDIT WALES: EQUALITY IMPACT**
ASSESSMENTS: MORE THAN A TICK BOX
EXERCISE

RECOMMENDATIONS OF REPORT: To update Cabinet on progress to meet the recommendations of Audit Wales “Equality Impact Assessments: more than a tick box exercise?”

DECISION: As detailed in the recommendation.

REASON FOR DECISION: As in the report.

CONSULTATIONS
REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT: A copy of this report will be presented to the Council’s Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Governance and Audit Scrutiny Committee in June 2024.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: Completing impact assessments effectively requires additional time from officers, which means there are resource implications for employees responsible for impact assessments.

Further costs associated with implementing impact assessments will be identified in the evaluation report being completed by the University of Manchester.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None.

DISPENSATIONS None.

DATE PUBLISHED: 19th June 2024

SIGNED



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Democratic Services Manager

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET RECORD OF DECISION

DATE OF MEETING: 18 JUNE 2024 AGENDA ITEM NO. 9

REPORT OF: Chief Officer (Social Services)

SUBJECT: SOCIAL SERVICES CARE INSPECTORATE WALES,
PERFORMANCE EVALUATION INSPECTION
NOVEMBER 2023 – ACTION PLAN UPDATE

RECOMMENDATIONS OF REPORT: That Cabinet note the outcome of the report and support the resulting Action Plan.

DECISION: As detailed in the recommendation.

REASON FOR DECISION: As in the report.

CONSULTATIONS
REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT: Consultation with service users, staff and partners was carried out as part of the inspection as detailed above.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: **Revenue:** There are currently no implications for the approved revenue budget for this service for either the current financial year or for future financial years. Some actions identified for investigation may have implications for revenue going forward, however, these will be investigated and reported on individually should this be the case.

Capital: There are no implications for the approved capital programme for either the current financial year or for future financial years. Some actions identified for investigation, may have implications for capital going forward, however, these will be investigated and reported on individually should this be the case.

Human Resources: Actions with proposed implications to human resources are limited to process changes. Actions should not require additional resources or result in additional workload

for current workforce.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

Councillor Chris Bithell.

DISPENSATIONS

None.

DATE PUBLISHED:

19th June 2024

SIGNED



Democratic Services Manager

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET RECORD OF DECISION

DATE OF MEETING: **18 JUNE 2024** **AGENDA ITEM NO. 10**

REPORT OF: **Chief Officer (Social Services)**

SUBJECT: **AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES**

RECOMMENDATIONS OF REPORT: (1) That Cabinet note the progress made to develop age friendly communities in Flintshire including the successful application for membership of the World Health Organisation Global Network.

(2) That Cabinet commit to the continued support and collaboration of all portfolio service teams to help develop Flintshire as a great place to live for the ageing population.

DECISION: As detailed in the recommendations.

REASON FOR DECISION: As in the report.

**CONSULTATIONS
REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT:** The Social Services Transformation, Integration and Ageing Well Team undertake continuous engagement with older people to identify priorities and actions for inclusion in the Age-friendly Flintshire Plan.

The team works closely with internal and external partners on related programmes that influence the age-friendliness of communities. This includes contributions to the Place Making planning process to shape the future of town centres in Flintshire; working with Flintshire Local Voluntary Council (FLVC) to develop more Connected Communities to reduce the risk of loneliness and social isolation; developing Dementia Friendly services and amenities in partnership with North-East Wales Carers

Information Service (NEWCIS).

The team co-ordinated a response to the Local Authority recommendations highlighted in the Older People's Commissioner for Wales's 'Access Denied' report on Digital exclusion published February 2024. This response was supported by policy and governance officers and highlights the impact that advances in technology and digital information have on people who are digitally excluded or have limited digital skills. The report and Council response are attached in appendices for information.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

Revenue: There are no direct revenue implications highlighted by this report. A Welsh Government grant wholly funds the post of Ageing Well Engagement Officer and activities to support community engagement. Welsh Government has confirmed ongoing funding into 2024/25 to support local authorities to appoint an age-friendly lead and undertake projects and activities that help to develop and maintain age friendly communities as part of the Global Network membership commitment.

Capital: There are no capital resource implications.

Human Resources: An Ageing Well Engagement Officer post has been recruited for a fixed term period. This post will be reviewed if Welsh Government funding is reduced or ceased beyond 2024/25. Support from all Council portfolio teams is essential to develop age friendly communities and maintain successful membership of the network. This includes the provision of information regarding age-friendly good practices on the World Health Organisation's website. This will not require additional resources as the scope and objectives align closely to the Council's

current policies and commitments to older residents. Social Services will lead the project and seek information and support from other teams as required.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

None.

DISPENSATIONS

None.

DATE PUBLISHED:

19th June 2024

SIGNED



Democratic Services Manager

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET RECORD OF DECISION

DATE OF MEETING: **18 JUNE 2024** **AGENDA ITEM NO. 11**

REPORT OF: **Chief Officer (Social Services)**

SUBJECT: **DEFERRED CHARGES AUDIT REPORT**

RECOMMENDATIONS OF REPORT:

- (1) To provide Members with information on the actions undertaken since the completion of the Internal Audit report.
- (2) To provide Members with assurance that the remaining actions are being undertaken within the timescales laid out in the audit report and that progress is being monitored effectively.

DECISION: As detailed in the recommendations.

REASON FOR DECISION: As in the report.

**CONSULTATIONS
REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT:** None at this time.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: Resources necessary to implement improvements have been identified from existing experienced staff in the service and are currently working on the action plan and improvements.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None.

DISPENSATIONS None.

DATE PUBLISHED: 19th June 2024

SIGNED

Democratic Services Manager



FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET RECORD OF DECISION

DATE OF MEETING: **18 JUNE 2024** **AGENDA ITEM NO. 12**

REPORT OF: **Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy)**

SUBJECT: **CRACKS IN THE FOUNDATIONS BUILDING**
SAFETY IN WALES - AUDIT WALES REPORT

RECOMMENDATIONS OF REPORT: That Cabinet notes the outcome of the Audit Wales report and supports the actions to be taken to address the four recommendations made for Local Authorities.

DECISION: As detailed in the recommendation.

REASON FOR DECISION: As in the report.

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

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: **Revenue:** there are no immediate implications for the approved revenue budget for this service for the current financial year. However, the ongoing review of fees and charges for building control services will improve the budget position for future financial years as it seeks to recover the costs of the service whilst also seeking to remain competitive within the market.

Capital: there are no implications for the approved capital programme for either the current financial year or for future financial years.

Human Resources: there are no

immediate implications for additional capacity or for any change to current workforce structures or roles. However, as work around R7 progresses and local authorities explore better use of resources by exploring the potential for collaboration and regionalisation then workforce structures and roles may need to be adapted/reviewed.

Technology: additional development work is required to fulfil the full potential of the Building Control service back office system (AGILE). At present, full agile working for inspectors when on site is limited as a result of technology and this is an area identified for further development work with our business support officers and our external systems partner.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

None.

DISPENSATIONS

None.

DATE PUBLISHED:

19th June 2024

SIGNED



Democratic Services Manager

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET RECORD OF DECISION

DATE OF MEETING: **18 JUNE 2024** **AGENDA ITEM NO. 13**
REPORT OF: **Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy)**
SUBJECT: **DESTINATION MANAGEMENT**

RECOMMENDATIONS OF REPORT: That Cabinet consider and endorse the draft Destination Management Plan.

DECISION: As detailed in the recommendation.

REASON FOR DECISION: As in the report.

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

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

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None.

DISPENSATIONS None.

DATE PUBLISHED: 19th June 2024

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Democratic Services Manager



FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET RECORD OF DECISION

DATE OF MEETING: **18 JUNE 2024** **AGENDA ITEM NO. 14**

REPORT OF: **Chief Officer (Housing and Communities)**

SUBJECT: **COMMUNAL HEATING CHARGES 2023/25**

RECOMMENDATIONS OF REPORT: Cabinet approves the changes to the current heating charges at Council properties with communal heating schemes, as outlined in the report. All changes to take effect from 31st July 2024.

DECISION: As detailed in the recommendation.

REASON FOR DECISION: As in the report.

**CONSULTATIONS
REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT:** No formal consultation required.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: As detailed in the report.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None.

DISPENSATIONS None.

DATE PUBLISHED: 19th June 2024

SIGNED

Democratic Services Manager



FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET RECORD OF DECISION

DATE OF MEETING: **18 JUNE 2024** **AGENDA ITEM NO. 15**

REPORT OF: **Chief Officer (Housing and Communities)**

SUBJECT: **PURCHASE OF 'BUY BACKS' USING THE WELSH
GOVERNMENT (WG) TRANSITIONAL
ACCOMMODATION CAPITAL PROGRAMME (TACP)**

RECOMMENDATIONS OF REPORT: To approve the internal transfer of the properties from the Council fund to the HRA for a transfer cost of £0.150m.

DECISION: As detailed in the recommendation.

REASON FOR DECISION: As in the report.

**CONSULTATIONS
REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT:** No formal consultations have taken place.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: The Standard Viability Model (SVM) demonstrates that the scheme as outlined above is within the agreed parameters set by FCC for development schemes. Funds exist within the Council's SHARP budget and within the TACP allocation for FCC.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None.

DISPENSATIONS None.

DATE PUBLISHED: 19th June 2024

SIGNED

Democratic Services Manager



FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET RECORD OF DECISION

DATE OF MEETING: **18 JUNE 2024** **AGENDA ITEM NO. 17**

REPORT OF: **Corporate Finance Manager**

SUBJECT: **INSURANCE SERVICES CONTRACT EXTENSION**

RECOMMENDATIONS OF REPORT: That Cabinet approve the extension to the current Long Term Agreements with Zurich Municipal and Risk Management Partners by a further two years to 31st March 2027.

DECISION: As detailed in the recommendation.

REASON FOR DECISION: As in the report.

**CONSULTATIONS
REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT:** Consultation has been undertaken with both Procurement and external legal advisors.

Consultation has also been carried out with the respective insurance providers, ZM and RMP.

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

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None.

DISPENSATIONS None.

DATE PUBLISHED: 19th June 2024

SIGNED

Democratic Services Manager



FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET RECORD OF DECISION

DATE OF MEETING: **18 JUNE 2024** **AGENDA ITEM NO. 18**

REPORT OF: **Chief Officer (Social Services)**

SUBJECT: **RECOMMISSIONING OF LEARNING DISABILITY
DAY AND WORK OPPORTUNITIES SERVICES**

- RECOMMENDATIONS OF REPORT:**
- (1) This report seeks approval to extend the current contract to the present service provider for the learning disabilities day and work services currently delivered by Hft as detailed and referred in this report. It is proposed that the extension is for a further five-year and two month period commencing from February 1st 2025 with the option of a further two year extension, therefore the end date would be March 31st 2032. The anticipated spend for the proposed contract award necessitates that a decision for long-term direct awards require a Cabinet decision according to the thresholds for the authority to approve substantial variations as set out in the local authority Contract Procedure Rules.
 - (2) This report seeks approval for the direct award of a contract to the present service provider for the learning disabilities day and work services currently delivered by Clocktower CIC as detailed and referred in this report. It is proposed that the Direct Award is for a five-year period commencing from April 1st 2025 with the option of a further two year extension, therefore the end date would be March 31st 2032. The anticipated spend for the proposed contract

award necessitates that a decision for a long-term direct award requires a Cabinet decision or delegated decision according to the thresholds for the authority to approve exceptions as set out in the Contract Procedure Rules.

DECISION: As detailed in the recommendations.

REASON FOR DECISION: As in the report.

**CONSULTATIONS
REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT:** As detailed in the report.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: As detailed in the report.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None.

DISPENSATIONS None.

DATE PUBLISHED: 19th June 2024

SIGNED

Democratic Services Manager