

Public Document Pack

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Chief Officer (Governance)
Prif Swyddog (Llywodraethu)



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To: Cllr Richard Jones (Chair)

Councillors: Tina Claydon, David Coggins Cogan, Bill Crease, Gladys Healey, Ian Hodge, Alasdair Ibbotson, Gina Maddison, Allan Marshall, Billy Mullin, Vicky Perfect and Jason Shallcross

4 October 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

NOTICE OF HYBRID MEETING
CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, 10TH OCTOBER, 2024 at 10.00 AM

Yours faithfully

Steven Goodrum
Democratic Services Manager

Please note: Attendance at this meeting is either in person in the Delyn Committee Room, Flintshire County Council, County Hall, Mold, Flintshire or on a virtual basis.

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 (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**

Purpose: To receive any Declarations and advise Members accordingly.

3 **MINUTES** (Pages 5 - 12)

Purpose: To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting on 12 September 2024.

4 **ACTION TRACKING** (Pages 13 - 18)

Report of Democratic Services Manager -

Purpose: To inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings.

5 **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 19 - 26)

Report of Democratic Services Manager -

Purpose: To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

6 **COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT** (Pages 27 - 34)

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

Purpose: To provide an overview of the Community Safety Partnership's activities and progress over the past 12 months.

7 **REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2024/25 (MONTH 5)** (Pages 35 - 62)

Report of Corporate Finance Manager - Cabinet Member for Finance and Social Value

Purpose: To provide the latest revenue budget monitoring position for 2024/25 for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account.

8 **AUDIT WALES REPORT - FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY** (Pages 63 - 84)

Report of Corporate Finance Manager, Chief Executive - Cabinet Member for Finance and Social Value

Purpose: To advise on the final report received from Audit Wales.

9 **STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24** (Pages 85 - 146)

Report of Corporate Manager – Capital Programme & Assets - Cabinet Member for Corporate Services

Purpose: To present the Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2023/24.

10 **NEW BRIGHTON – ADOPTION OF A WELSH NAME** (Pages 147 - 154)

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

Purpose: To recommend the adoption of a Welsh name for New Brighton- Pentre Cythrel.

11 **OFFICE RATIONALISATION PROGRAMME AND COUNTY HALL CAMPUS** (Pages 155 - 160)

Report of Corporate Manager – Capital Programme & Assets - Cabinet Member for Corporate Services

Purpose: To present a report outlining phases and indicative costs for the next focused piece of work.

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) 15 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

The report contains details relating to employment issues and the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information until such time as those issues have been resolved.

12 **CONFIDENTIAL APPENDICES TO AGENDA ITEM NUMBER 11: OFFICE RATIONALISATION PROGRAMME AND COUNTY HALL CAMPUS** (Pages 161 - 164)

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

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CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE **12 SEPTEMBER 2024**

Minutes of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held as a hybrid meeting on Thursday, 12 September 2024

PRESENT: **Councillor Richard Jones (Chair)**
Councillors: Tina Claydon, David Coggins Cogan, Bill Crease,
Gladys Healey, Ian Hodge, Alasdair Ibbotson,
Gina Maddison, Allan Marshall, Billy Mullin, Vicky Perfect
and Rob Davies (substitute for Jason Shallcross)

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor: Bernie Attridge, David Healey, Dennis
Hutchinson, Andrew Parkhurst and Sam Swash attended as
observers

APOLOGIES: Councillor Dave Hughes (Deputy Leader and Cabinet
Member for Streetscene & Transportation), Chief Executive
and Corporate Manager - Capital Programme and Assets

CONTRIBUTORS: Councillor Christine Jones (Deputy Leader and Cabinet
Member for Social Services and Well-being), Councillor Paul
Johnson (Cabinet Member for Finance and Social Value and
Procurement), Councillor Linda Thomas (Cabinet Member
for Corporate Services), Chief Officer (Governance),
Corporate Finance Manager and Corporate Manager -
People and Organisational Development

Strategic Executive Officer for minute nos. 33-35
Andrea Powell from Community Foundation in Wales for
minute no. 35
Senior Manager (Safeguarding and Commissioning) and
Continuing Health Care Co-ordinator for minute no. 36
Revenues & Procurement Manager for minute no. 38
Strategic Finance Managers for minute no. 39
Internal Audit, Performance & Risk Manager and Strategic
Performance Advisor for minute nos. 40-42
Customer Contact Service Manager for minute no. 43

IN ATTENDANCE: Democratic Services Manager and team

28. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

None.

29. MINUTES ([Link to recording](#))

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meetings held on [13 June 2024](#), [19 July 2024](#) and
[7 August 2024](#) be approved as a correct record.

30. ACTION TRACKING ([Link to recording](#))

The Democratic Services Manager presented a [report](#) on progress with actions from previous meetings.

The recommendation was supported.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee notes the progress which has been made.

31. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME ([Link to recording](#))

The Democratic Services Manager presented the Committee's [Forward Work Programme](#) for consideration and would schedule the items listed in paragraph 1.04 of the report.

As requested, an item on the Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations would be scheduled and a report on the recent fire at Synthite Ltd would be shared in October/November.

On that basis, the recommendations were supported.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the Forward Work Programme be approved, as amended; and

(b) That the Democratic Services Manager, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises.

32. VARIATION IN ORDER OF BUSINESS

A change in the order of business was agreed to bring forward agenda items 15 and 16 to allow the relevant officer to present.

33. SOCIAL VALUE PROGRESS UPDATE ([Link to recording](#))

The Strategic Executive Officer presented a [report](#) on social value performance data for the latter six months of the financial year 2023/24. She agreed to follow up queries on anticipated local spend through contract and increased costs to the Council generated from social value, both of which would be reflected in the action tracking report.

On that basis, the recommendation was supported.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee notes the positive performance achieved in generating social value for quarters three and four of the financial year 2023/24.

34. FLINTSHIRE AND WREXHAM PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD (PSB) ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24 ([Link to recording](#))

The Strategic Executive Officer presented the annual report of the Flintshire and Wrexham Public Services Board for 2023/24 as required by statutory guidance. The recommendation was supported.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee notes the provision of the Flintshire and Wrexham Public Services Board (PSB) Annual Report 2023/24.

35. FLINTSHIRE FUNDS IMPACT REPORT 2024 ([Link to recording](#))

The Strategic Executive Officer introduced the report outlining progress with the Flintshire Community Endowment Fund and Flintshire Welsh Church Act Fund, both of which were overseen by Community Foundation Wales.

On behalf of Community Foundation Wales, Andrea Powell summarised key points and would provide a separate response to clarify the difference between the total of grants awarded in 2023/24 shown in the covering report and that in the Fund Overview. The Strategic Executive Officer agreed to respond separately to a query on governance arrangements for the Flintshire Welsh Church Act Fund.

On that basis, the recommendations were supported.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee notes the contents of the Flintshire Impact Report April 2024 and supports the work of the Communication Foundation Wales; and
- (b) That the Committee notes the current Elected Member representative vacancy on the grant panel and supports the promotion of this opportunity to Members.

36. JOINT FUNDED CARE PACKAGES - UPDATE REPORT ([Link to recording](#))

The Senior Manager (Safeguarding and Commissioning) presented a report to update the Committee on current long-term debt with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) in respect of NHS Continuing Health Care packages in Flintshire. The Committee was introduced to Helen Brockley, the Continuing Health Care Co-ordinator, who provided information on the national framework and processes.

The recommendations were amended to reflect the debate.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee notes the update on the current position regarding outstanding Continuing Health Care invoices raised by the Council for payment by Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board;

- (b) That the Committee notes information regarding the Continuing NHS Healthcare - The National Framework for Implementation in Wales and its disputes and appeals process; and
- (c) That the Senior Manager and Co-ordinator meet with the Chair of the Committee to compile a letter to the Health Board and Ministry for Health on behalf of the Chair and Cabinet Member for Social Services.

37. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND BUDGET 2025/26 ([Link to recording](#))

The Corporate Finance Manager presented a [report](#) on the first stage of developing the budget for 2025/26 prior to consideration by Cabinet.

In response to comments about the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority levy, the Chief Officer (Governance) agreed to liaise with the treasurer on any potential variation.

A request for service budgets to show the percentage of those costs within the Council's overall budget (as had been done with schools delegated budgets) would be actioned by Finance officers for future reports.

The recommendation was amended to reflect additional motions which were supported.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the comments on the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget 2025/26 be reported back to Cabinet when it considers the report;
- (b) That the Council seeks to prioritise protection of the delivery of critical front-line services; and
- (c) That an invitation be extended to the Chief Fire Officer for a representative to attend a future meeting of this Committee.

38. COUNCIL TAX PREMIUM SCHEME FOR SECOND HOMES AND LONG-TERM EMPTY PROPERTIES ([Link to recording](#))

The Chief Officer (Governance) and Revenues & Procurement Manager presented a [report](#) on the outcome of public consultation on Council Tax premium rates on second homes and long-term empty properties.

Following debate, the recommendation was amended to reflect additional motions put forward and supported. A request was made for comparative information from other Authorities on the impact of introducing a progressive premium charging scheme for long term empty homes.

RESOLVED:

The Committee recommends:

- (a) That the Council Tax premium rate be increased from 75% to 100% on long-term empty properties and the existing premium rate of 100% retained on second homes;
- (b) Consideration of introducing a progressive approach to the premium rates on long-term empty properties from April 2025; and
- (c) Consideration of a further discretionary exception from the premium in circumstances where a buyer of a long-term empty property can be subject to premium from the period when they purchase the property but are making genuine efforts to bring the property back into use. This will ensure buyers would not be disadvantaged.

There was a brief adjournment at this stage of the meeting.

39. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2024/25 (MONTH 4) AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 (MONTH 4) ([Link to recording](#))

The Strategic Finance Managers presented reports on the 2024/25 month 4 position for the [Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account](#) and the [Capital Programme](#), prior to consideration by Cabinet.

During discussion, points were raised on unforeseen significant overspends at this early stage, the need to feedback outcomes from lobbying Welsh Government and use of the word 'efficiencies'.

In response to the projected year-end outturn on the Housing Revenue Account, a response would be sought from the Housing portfolio on whether some of the closing un-earmarked balance could be utilised in-year.

On that basis, the recommendations were supported.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That having considered the Revenue Budget Monitoring 2024/25 (month 4) report, the comments raised by the Committee be referred to Cabinet; and
- (b) That having considered the Capital Programme Monitoring 2024/25 (month 4) report, the Committee has no specific comments to raise with Cabinet.

40. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2023/24 TO INCORPORATE THE COUNCIL PLAN END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT 2023/24 ([Link to recording](#))

The Chief Officer (Governance) presented a report on [report](#) to consider the Annual Performance Report 2023-24, noting the Council Plan (2023-28) end of year performance for 2023-24. The Strategic Performance Advisor provided an update on data statistics since publication of the agenda.

The recommendation was supported, together with an additional motion.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee supports the 2023/24 Annual Performance Report, combined with the Council Plan End of Year 2023/24 Performance Report, noting the performance achieved; and
- (b) That future reports reflect the Council's performance with explanations where targets are not achieved and ensuring that the two documents can be cross-referenced easier to benefit the reader.

41. SETTING OF WELL-BEING OBJECTIVES ([Link to recording](#))

The Chief Officer (Governance) presented a [report](#) to review the Council's response to the four recommendations for improvement advised by Audit Wales, prior to submission to Cabinet.

The recommendation was amended to reflect the debate.

RESOLVED:

The having considered the response to the recommendations for improvement, the Committee raises the following points with Cabinet:

- That the Committee accepts Recommendations R1 and R4; and
- That the Monitoring Officer and two Cabinet Members review the questions asked by Audit Wales and notes the Committee's disappointment that the questions asked on Recommendations R2 and R3 did not link to budgets or resources.

42. CORPORATE SELF-ASSESSMENT 2023/24 ([Link to recording](#))

The Chief Officer (Governance) presented a [report](#) on the findings of the Corporate Self-Assessment 2023/24 including opportunities for improvement.

During discussion on stage two of the process, it was agreed that the full membership of the committees mentioned should be given the opportunity to take part in future challenge sessions.

On that basis, the recommendations were supported.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee:

- (a) Accepts the findings of the Corporate Self-assessment 2023/24;
- (b) Accepts the opportunities for improvement identified in the Corporate Self-Assessment 2023/24;

- (c) Suggests the inclusion of a Cabinet Member on the project board¹; and
- (d) Requests that the section on Consultation and Engagement be added into the report for this year and future years.

43. FLINTSHIRE CONNECTS ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24 ([Link to recording](#))

The Chief Officer (Governance) and Customer Contact Service Manager presented the [report](#) detailing performance of Flintshire Connects during 2023-24, prior to consideration by Cabinet.

Following discussion on the proposals, the recommendations were supported.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee notes Flintshire Connects annual performance for 2023-24; and
- (b) That in light of reducing footfall at Flintshire Connects Centres, the Committee supports:
 - i) a review of the service, commencing with public consultation on why usage is reducing, and what functions the service could/should provide; and
 - ii) the consultation which should also explore the potential impact on those with protected characteristics of possibly reducing opening hours to reflect the reduced usage by residents.

44. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

None.

(The meeting started at 10am and ended at 2.50pm)

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Chair

Meetings of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee are webcast and can be viewed by visiting the webcast library at <http://flintshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

¹ Following the meeting, it was clarified that the project board is no longer in place for this piece of work, however input by Members of Cabinet, Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Governance & Audit Committee is part of the reviewing process.

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CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

| | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Date of Meeting | Thursday, 10 October 2024 |
| Report Subject | Action Tracking |
| Report Author | Democratic Services Manager |
| Type of Report | Operational |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report shows the action points from previous meetings of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the progress made in completing them. Any outstanding actions will remain on the tracker and be reported back to the next meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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| 1 | That the committee notes the progress which has been made. |
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REPORT DETAILS

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| 1.00 | EXPLAINING THE ACTION TRACKING REPORT |
| 1.01 | <p>In previous meetings, requests for information, reports or actions have been made. These have been summarised as action points.</p> <p>Following a meeting of the committee in July 2018, it was recognised that there was a need to formalise such reporting back, as 'Matters Arising' is not an item which can feature on an agenda.</p> |
| 1.02 | <p>This paper summarises those points and where appropriate provides an update on the actions resulting from them.</p> <p>The Action Tracking details are attached in appendix A.</p> |

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| 2.00 | RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS |
| 2.01 | The creation of the Action Tracking report increases workflow but should provide greater understanding and efficiency. |
| 3.00 | IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT |
| 3.01 | Not applicable. |
| 4.00 | CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT |
| 4.01 | In some cases, action owners have been contacted to provide an update on their actions. |
| 5.00 | APPENDICES |
| 5.01 | Appendix A – CRO&SC Action Points |
| 6.00 | LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS |
| 6.01 | Minutes of previous meetings of the committee as identified in the report. |
| 7.00 | CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS |
| 7.01 | Contact Officer: Steven Goodrum, Democratic Services Manager Telephone: 01352 702320 E-mail: steven.goodrum@flintshire.gov.uk |
| 8.00 | GLOSSARY OF TERMS |
| 8.01 | None. |

ACTION TRACKING FOR THE CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

| Meeting Date | Agenda item | Action Required | Action Officer(s) | Action taken | Status |
|--------------|--|--|---------------------------|---|--------|
| 19.07.2024 | 4. Forward Work Programme | It was agreed to share analysis with the Committee on grant funding and expenditure incurred by the Council on the implementation of 20mph zones. | Strategic Finance Manager | Response being collated with the Service. | Open |
| | 5. Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget 2025/26 | It was agreed to provide responses to the Committee on: | | | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the rationale for funding transportation for pupils out of county to Chester Catholic High School as opposed to using local provision; | Strategic Finance Manager | Response being collated with the Service. | Open |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> potential benefits arising from the Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations 2000. | Strategic Finance Manager | Response being collated with the Service. | Open |
| | 6. Revenue Budget Monitoring 2023/24 (Outturn) and Capital Programme 2023/24 (Outturn) | It was agreed to provide responses to the Committee on: | | | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the cost of purchasing vehicles for the Fleet contract renewal; | Strategic Finance Manager | Response being collated with the Service. | Open |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> percentage of reserves against revenue held by other | Strategic Finance Manager | Response being collated with the Service. | Open |

| Meeting Date | Agenda item | Action Required | Action Officer(s) | Action taken | Status |
|--------------|--|--|-----------------------------|---|--------|
| | | local authorities for comparison purposes; | | | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> information on the shared service accommodation charge from Gwynedd Council under Planning, Environment & Economy; and | Strategic Finance Manager | Response being collated with the Service. | Open |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> details of the previously understated £0.042m Food Poverty costs in Housing & Communities. | Strategic Finance Manager | Response being collated with the Service. | Open |
| 12.09.2024 | 15. Social Value Progress Update | It was agreed to provide responses to the Committee on: | | | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What the anticipated local spend through the contract is. | Strategic Executive Officer | Response being collated with the Service. | Open |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether there are increased costs to the Council as a result of including social value in contracts. | Strategic Executive Officer | Response being collated with the Service. | Open |
| | 16. Flintshire and Wrexham Public Services Board (PSB) Annual Report 2023/2024 | The Committee requested a report to be brought to a future meeting detailing how the PSB operates, its benefits, and costs etc. | Democratic Services Manager | Included on the Forward Work Programme. | Closed |

| Meeting Date | Agenda item | Action Required | Action Officer(s) | Action taken | Status |
|--------------|--|--|---|---|--------|
| | 6. Flintshire Funds Impact Report 2024 | It was agreed to provide the Committee details of the governance arrangements for the Flintshire Welsh Church Act Fund. | Strategic Executive Officer | Response being collated with the Service. | Open |
| | 7. Joint Funded Care Packages - Update Report | That the Senior Manager and Co-ordinator meet with the Chair of the Committee to draft a letter to the local Health Board and Ministry for Health. | Senior Manager Safeguarding and Commissioning | Meeting held 03.10.2024 | Closed |
| | 8. Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget 2025/26 | That an invitation be extended to the Chief Fire Officer for a representative to attend a future meeting of this Committee | Democratic Services Manager | Included on the Forward Work Programme. | Closed |

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CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

| | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Date of Meeting | Thursday, 10 October 2024 |
| Report Subject | Forward Work Programme |
| Report Author | Democratic Services Manager |
| Type of Report | Operational |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview & Scrutiny presents a unique opportunity for Members to determine the Forward Work programme of the Committee of which they are Members.

By reviewing and prioritising the Forward Work Programme Members are able to ensure it is Member-led and includes the right issues.

A copy of the Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1 for Members' consideration which has been updated following the last meeting.

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

RECOMMENDATIONS

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| 1 | That the Committee considers the draft Forward Work Programme and approve/amend as necessary. |
| 2 | That the Democratic Services Manager, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises. |

REPORT DETAILS

| 1.00 | EXPLAINING THE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME |
|------|---|
| 1.01 | <p>The Forward Work Programme (FWP) is intended to set out the Committee's schedule of work for the coming months.</p> <p>It is a 'working document' that remains under constant review to ensure that the Committee is carrying out the proper level of scrutiny and is focussing on the appropriate areas in accordance with its Terms of Reference which are currently being reviewed.</p> |
| 1.02 | <p>Items feed into a Committee's Forward Work Programme from several sources.</p> <p>Members can suggest topics for review by Overview & Scrutiny Committees, members of the public can suggest topics, items can be referred by the Cabinet for consultation purposes, or by County Council or Chief Officers.</p> <p>Other possible items are identified from the Cabinet Work Programme and the Improvement Plan.</p> |
| 1.03 | <p>The Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee will assume an oversight role of the 'Transformation Programme' that is currently being developed. It is anticipated that this will be introduced during the Autumn 2024.</p> <p>Ahead of that, the Committee's Terms of Reference will be reviewed by the Democratic Services Manager in conjunction with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee.</p> <p>This review, along with the 'Transformation Programme' will then inform the Forward Work Programme.</p> |
| 1.04 | <p>A number of items from previous Committee meetings are still to be scheduled, as listed below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint Procurement Service Annual Report 2022/23 To receive a performance update report on the Joint Procurement Service with Denbighshire County Council. • Council Tax Collections, Discretionary (s13a) Discounts/Write Offs That a report is brought back to committee following a Cabinet review and the production of a comprehensive policy on s13a discretionary discounts, taking into account the comments raised and consultation with Overview & Scrutiny. • Delivering public services in the 21st century: Shared Services That officers liaise with the Chairman in order to schedule presentations on various themes at future meetings. ***This will be included under the 'transformation' element which CROSC is assuming responsibility for, and be scheduled accordingly.*** |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Asset Transfers To provide an update on the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) process. • Acquisition of land for Flintshire cemeteries To provide details of how Flintshire County Council provided value for money in its land acquisition for cemeteries. • Review of Industrial Estates To review the Council’s business/commercial units, further to Paragraph 1.30 of agenda item 7 Capital Programme 2024/25 – 2026/27 from the County Council meeting of 6 December 2023. |
| 1.05 | <p>The following items from more recent meetings need to be scheduled.</p> <p>July</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A report was requested for the November/December 2024 meeting to provide details of expenditure and financial controls within the Assets portfolio. • An update on mitigation options for homelessness was also requested for the Autumn. <p>September</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A report was requested detailing how the PSB operates, its benefits, and costs etc. • An invitation be extended to the Chief Fire Officer for a representative to attend a future meeting of this Committee <p>Once dates have been confirmed for these items, they will be included on the Committee’s FWP.</p> |
| 1.06 | <p>As well as the ‘targeted’ work items, there are standard, regular reports that follow a ‘pattern’.</p> <p>These are included in Appendix 1 under ‘Regular Items’ and will be scheduled on the FWP accordingly.</p> |
| 1.07 | <p>Members are also encouraged to consider and propose items for inclusion on the FWP, noting the guidance at paragraph 1.08.</p> |
| 1.08 | <p>In identifying topics for future consideration, it is useful for a ‘test of significance’ to be applied. This can be achieved by asking a range of questions as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will the review contribute to the Council’s priorities and/or objectives? 2. Is it an area of major change or risk? 3. Are there issues of concern in performance? 4. Is there new Government guidance of legislation? 5. Is it prompted by the work carried out by Regulators/Internal Audit? 6. Is the issue of public or Member concern? |

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

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| 3.00 | IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT |
| 3.01 | None as a result of this report. |

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| 4.00 | CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT |
| 4.01 | Publication of this report constitutes consultation. |

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|-------------|---|
| 5.00 | APPENDICES |
| 5.01 | Appendix 1 – Draft Forward Work Programme |

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| 6.00 | LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS |
| 6.01 | None. |

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| 7.00 | CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS |
| 7.01 | <p>Contact Officer: Steven Goodrum, Democratic Services Manager Telephone: 01352 702320 E-mail: steven.goodrum@flintshire.gov.uk</p> |

| | |
|-------------|---|
| 8.00 | GLOSSARY OF TERMS |
| 8.01 | Improvement Plan: the document which sets out the annual priorities of the Council. It is a requirement of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 to set Improvement Objectives and publish an Improvement Plan. |

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Current FWP (October 2024)

| Date of meeting | Subject | Purpose of Report / Presentation | Responsible / Contact Officer |
|--------------------------------|---|---|--|
| 14 th November 2024 | Revenue Budget Monitoring 2024/25 (Month 6) and Capital Programme Monitoring 2024/25 (Month 6) | To provide the latest revenue budget monitoring position for 2024/25 for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account. | Corporate Finance Manager |
| | Employment and Workforce Mid-year Update | To provide strategic updates in addition to the quarterly workforce statistics and their analysis | Corporate Manager, People and Organisational Development |
| | | | |
| Page 2 of 6 | | | |
| 12 th December 2024 | Revenue Budget Monitoring 2024/25 (Month 7) | To provide the latest revenue budget monitoring position for 2024/25 for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account. | Corporate Finance Manager |
| | Joint Funded Care Packages - Update Report | To provide an update on the latest position regarding outstanding Continuing Health Care invoices raised by the Council for payment by Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board. | Chief Officer (Social Services) |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| 16 th January 2025 | Revenue Budget Monitoring 2024/25 (Month 8) | To provide the latest revenue budget monitoring position for 2024/25 for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account. | Corporate Finance Manager |

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

| Date of meeting | Subject | Purpose of Report / Presentation | Responsible / Contact Officer |
|--|--|---|--|
| <i>tbc</i> | MTFS & Budget Setting 25-26 | <i>To look at budget in the round (in light of local government settlement) and to which all members are invited.</i> | <i>Chief Executive / Corporate Finance Manager</i> |
| | | | |
| 13th February 2025 <i>tbc</i> Page 24 | Revenue Budget Monitoring 2024/25 (Month 9) and Capital Programme Monitoring 2024/25 (Month 9) | To provide Members with the Revenue Budget Monitoring 2024/25 (Month 9) Report and the Capital Programme 2024/25 (Month 9) Report and Significant Variances. | Corporate Finance Manager |
| | Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) Annual Letter 2023-24 and Complaints against Flintshire County Council during the first half of 2024-25. | <i>To share the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales Annual Letter 2023-24 and Complaints made against Flintshire County Council Services in the first half of 2024-25 (April-September 2024).</i> | <i>Chief Officer (Governance)</i> |
| | | | |
| 13th March 2025 | Revenue budget monitoring 2024/25 (month 10) | To provide the latest revenue budget monitoring position for 2024/25 for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account. | Corporate Finance Manager |
| | Joint Funded Care Packages - Update Report | To provide an update on the latest position regarding outstanding Continuing Health Care invoices raised by the Council for payment by Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board. | Chief Officer (Social Services) |

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Regular Items

| Month | Subject | Purpose of Report / Presentation | Responsible / Contact Officer |
|--------------------|---|---|--|
| Quarterly / Annual | Performance Reporting | To consider performance outturns for improvement targets against directorate indicators. | Chief Executive |
| Monthly | Revenue Budget Monitoring | To provide the latest revenue budget monitoring position for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account. | Corporate Finance Manager |
| Twice-Yearly | Employment and Workforce Update | This report covers strategic updates in addition to the quarterly workforce statistics and their analysis. | Corporate Manager, People and Organisational Development |
| Annually | Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) Annual Letter and Complaints against Flintshire County Council | To share the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales Annual Letter and Complaints made against Flintshire County Council Services | Chief Officer (Governance) |

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CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Date of Meeting | 10th October 2024 |
| Report Subject | Community Safety Partnership Annual Report |
| Cabinet Member | Cabinet Member for Planning, Public Health and Public Protection |
| Report Author | Chief Officer Planning, Environment and Economy |
| Type of Report | Strategic |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To provide Members with an overview of the Community Safety Partnership's activities and progress over the past 12 months.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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|---|---|
| 1 | To note and support the contents of the report. |
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REPORT DETAILS

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 1.00 | EXPLAINING THE BACKGROUND OF THE FLINTSHIRE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP |
| 1.01 | The Flintshire Community Safety Partnership is required periodically to formally report its activities to the Council's Scrutiny function. This ensures that the Partnership meets its obligations under sections 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006. |
| 1.02 | Flintshire County Council has a statutory duty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, and the subsequent amendments by the Police and Justice Act 2006, to work in partnership with the police, health service, probation, and Fire Service as a Community Safety Partnership (CSP). |

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| 1.03 | There has been a partnership in existence in Flintshire since 1999. The Partnership is supported by a small team of local authority and police officers who work on shared priorities, alongside the Neighbourhood Wardens. |
| 1.04 | Over the past decade there have been significant changes in the way the local CSP is governed. The Partnership now sits under the auspices of the Public Service Board and discharges its duties through the People are Safe Board. The work of the board is underpinned through the implementation of a local delivery plan. |
| 1.05 | The work programme of the People Are Safe Board also reflects the recommendations contained within the regional Strategic Assessment (produced by North Wales Police) and considers the Police and Crime Plan and the work of the Substance Misuse Area Planning Board. Working at a regional level has become increasingly important to ensure a consistent approach. Flintshire is represented on the Safer North Wales Partnership by the Chief Officer for Housing and Communities. |
| 2.0 | OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS |
| 2.1 | <p>A number of operational groups report into the People are Safe Board, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerable Adult Risk Management Tasking Group • Integrated Offender Management Group • Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference • Serious Organised Crime Group <p>These groups have met throughout the past 12 months. They provide an opportunity for partners to share areas of common concern based on intelligence, such as police data. It should also be noted that partners also work together on various operations throughout the year. A good example of this occurred in recent months with Operation CeCe which focused on illicit tobacco, and has involved Trading Standards, North Wales Police and HMRC.</p> |
| 2.2 | Grant funding is also channelled through the CSP, albeit the levels of funding have reduced over the past decade. The most significant grant contributions come through the Substance Misuse Grant and the Violence Against Women Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Grant, which are received from the Welsh Government. |
| 2.3 | <p>The grant received on behalf of substance misuse services in North Wales is received by Wrexham County Borough Council, and the allocation to Flintshire services is drawn down quarterly in arrears (based on actual spend). Below is a list of those services that were funded in 2023/24:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution towards Substance Misuse Treatment and Support Service • Flintshire Sorted (catering for young people) • Accommodation Support (contribution to FCC Housing and Communities) |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substance Misuse Development Officers (two officers who are hosted by FCC and have a regional remit) • Residential Rehabilitation (Tier 4 services) |
| 2.4 | <p>The grant funding received for VAWDASV services is received by the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office on behalf of the region. The funding is then allocated on a county level accordingly. With respect to Flintshire, in 2023/24 it provided funding for the following interventions and services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional VAWDASV Team (hosted by FCC and have a regional remit) • Regional Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) provision • Regional Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) provision • Specialist Children's workers in some local providers, including Clwyd Alyn Women's Aid and the Domestic Abuse Safety Unit for Flintshire • Behaviour change intervention for perpetrators of domestic violence. • Community Advocate for BAME victims of VAWDASV • Schools' intervention focussed on consent, toxic masculinity, and misogyny. |
| 2.5 | <p>Since April 2024 the Community Safety Partnership has also received from the Home Office, funding (which is claimed through the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office) to address serious violent crime.</p> <p>The four projects commissioned for Flintshire consist of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train the trainer which aim to open dialogues with boys and young men about masculinity • Programme for high schools to increase young people's knowledge, understanding and attitudes around consent. • Multi-agency partnership to develop an intervention programme for children and young people up to the age of 25 that is aimed at equipping professionals to effectively support children and young people at risk of serious violence. • Interventions through Aura to encourage young people to engage with sporting activities and youth clubs to strengthen bonds with existing friends, fostering a sense of belonging and community. |
| 3.0 | PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES FOR 2024/25 |
| 3.01 | <p>Outlined below are the priorities for 2024/25, along with a summary of the objectives to support their implementation:</p> <p><u>Priority Areas</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working in partnership to address Violence Against Women and Girls, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence • Prevent and deter anti-social behaviour and crime in our neighbourhoods. • Developing partnerships to tackle serious and organised crime. • Protecting our communities |

Objectives

Working in partnership to address Violence Against Women and Girls, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence:

- 1) Increase awareness and challenge attitudes of violence against women, domestic abuse, and sexual violence across the North Wales population.
- 2) Increased awareness in children and young people of the importance of safe, equal, and healthy relationships and that abusive behaviour is always wrong.
- 3) Increased focus on holding perpetrators to account and provide opportunities to change their behaviour based around victim safety.
- 4) Make early intervention and prevention a priority.
- 5) Relevant professionals are trained to provide effective, timely and appropriate responses to victims and survivors.
- 6) Provide victims with equal access to appropriately resourced, high quality, needs led, strength based, gender responsive services across North Wales.

Prevent and deter anti-social behaviour and crime in our neighbourhoods:

- 1) Promote the North Wales Police 'We Don't Buy Crime' message in our communities.
- 2) Increase in positive outcomes as a result of interventions from VARM referrals.
- 3) Street Doctors project to increase awareness of dangers of carrying knives amongst young people.
- 4) Use of Closure Notices and Closure Orders to reduce anti-social behaviour linked to specific premises.

Developing partnerships to tackle serious and organised crime:

- 1) Continue to support the newly formed Operational Stakeholder Group to feed into the Eastern Division Serious Organised Crime Meeting.
- 2) Contribute to the development of plans and threat and harm reduction strategies that are aligned to the four P principles (Prevent, Prepare, Pursue and Protect).

Protecting Our Communities:

- 1) Raise awareness of current scams and doorstep crime using social media and talks to community groups.
- 2) Working in partnership to deliver Operation Cece to tackle the supply of illicit tobacco in our communities. Operation Cece is a national operation funded by HMRC to disrupt the supply of illicit tobacco.
- 3) Working in partnership to tackle the supply of illegal vapes and vapes to under aged people.
- 4) Use the partnerships brought together in the Integrated Offender Management meetings to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in the community by identifying and managing persistent offenders.

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| | <p>5) Flintshire County Council Neighbourhood Wardens will continue to provide target hardening and home safe measures, along with crime prevention advice to both victims of crime and the vulnerable in the county.</p> <p>In support of each of the above priorities, cognisance will be taken of the need to adopt a partnership approach in addressing the part played by the misuse of illicit, proscribed drugs and alcohol. Substances misuse will often exacerbate offending behaviour or be a significant causal factor.</p> |
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| 4.00 | RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS |
| 4.01 | The time of officers across Flintshire County Council to attend multi-agency meetings and share intelligence, where appropriate. |
| 4.02 | Any grant funding received requires evidence of expenditure. Welsh Government and the Home Office will only provide funding for interventions and/or services that have been undertaken. |

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| 5.00 | IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT | |
| 5.01 | <p>Impact assessment is not required as this is a report on progress and is for information only.</p> <p>Risks are listed under each priority area of the People are Safe Plan.</p> | |
| 5.02 | Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact, as outlined in the Flintshire Well-Being Plan | |
| | Long-term | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a clear long term vision to make the communities of Flintshire safer by working in partnership • There is a clear focus on vulnerability and tackling organised crime |
| | Prevention | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The early identification of victims by a wide range of agencies, the focus on victim support and pursuing those who cause harm will help make Flintshire a safer place to live and a hostile environment for criminals to operate. • Monthly multi-agency meetings to support this agenda. |
| | Integration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The objectives of this group fit in well with the Well-Being Plan with a wide range of partners actively involved. |

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| | | |
| | Collaboration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working together as a partnership and with our communities is at the centre of this plan The sharing of intelligence and a joined-up response to incidents is critical to our success |
| | Involvement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actions in this plan will lead to a greater understanding of community needs Encouraging partners become the eyes and ears of local communities to enable us all to make people feel safe - both at home and elsewhere |
| Well-being Goals Impact | | |
| | Prosperous Wales | Positive: The aspiration of making the county a safer place to live, work and visit. |
| | Resilient Wales | Neutral |
| | Healthier Wales | Positive: Reduction in substance misuse, reduction in crime, reduction in incidents of domestic abuse, increased likelihood of physical activity outside of the home, improved mental health by tackling fear of crime |
| | More equal Wales | Positive: Promotion of community cohesion. |
| | Cohesive Wales | Positive: Promotion of community cohesion. |
| | Vibrant Wales | Neutral |
| | Globally responsible Wales | Neutral |
| 6.00 | CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT | |
| 6.01 | None because of this report. | |

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| 7.00 | RISK MANAGEMENT |
| 7.01 | The most significant risk relates to grant funding as there is often no certainty beyond the short or medium term. |

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| 8.00 | APPENDICES |
| 8.01 | None |

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| 9.00 | LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS |
| 9.01 | <p>Contact Officer: Sian Jones, Community and Business Protection Manager Telephone: 01352 702132 E-mail: sian-jones@flintshire.gov.uk</p> |

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| 10.00 | GLOSSARY OF TERMS |
| 10.01 | <p><u>MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference)</u></p> <p>A MARAC, or multi-agency risk assessment conference, is a meeting where information is shared on the highest risk domestic abuse cases between representatives of local police, probation, health, child protection, housing practitioners, Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) and other specialists from the statutory and voluntary sectors.</p> <p>After sharing all relevant information about a victim, representatives discuss options for increasing safety for the victim and turn these options into a co-ordinated action plan. The primary focus of the MARAC is to safeguard the adult victim.</p> |
| 10.02 | <p><u>National Training Framework</u></p> <p>The National Training Framework for violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence outlines the Welsh Government's requirements for training on these subjects across the public service and specialist third sector.</p> <p>The Framework is made up of six levels. Officers employed by the 'responsible authorities' (as defined by statute) will be required to undertake training in relation to domestic abuse and sexual violence.</p> |
| 10.03 | <p><u>Public Services Board (PSB)</u></p> <p>The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 established statutory PSBs, which replaces the voluntary Local Service Boards in each local authority area. The role of the board is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assess the state of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in its area • set objectives that are designed to maximise the PSBs contribution to the well-being goals. <p>Each PSB must prepare and publish a plan setting out its objectives and the steps it will take to meet them. This is called a Local Well-being Plan. It must state:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • why the PSB feels their objectives will contribute within their local area to achieving the well-being goals |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how it has had regard to the assessment of Local Well-being in setting its objectives and steps to take. |
| 10.04 | <p><u>Safer Communities Board (now known as the Safer North Wales Partnership)</u></p> <p>The aim of the Safer North Wales Partnership is to provide strategic direction for the exercise of the Community Safety functions across the region. The Board promotes consistency of policy objectives, and the shared use of expertise and resources across the region.</p> <p>The objectives of the SCB include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing bureaucracy and formality through streamlining strategic and operational functions. • Identifying shared and/or common priorities • Acting as a lobbying group to influence the Welsh Government, Home Office and Local Policing Body. • Establishing a common and consistent framework for strategic, tactical and operational delivery at regional, sub-regional and local levels. • Facilitating and encouraging regional working in the interests of public value. <p>Providing a more efficient and consistent service in contributing to reducing crime and disorder and improving the criminal justice services in North Wales.</p> |
| 10.05 | <p><u>County Lines</u></p> <p>A law enforcement term used for the tactic Organised Crime Gangs have been using to operate their illegal business across the UK.</p> |
| 10.06 | <p><u>Onyx Team</u></p> <p>A specialist team tackling Child Sexual Exploitation.</p> |



CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

| | |
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| Date of Meeting | Thursday 10th October, 2024 |
| Report Subject | Revenue Budget Monitoring 2024/25 (Month 5) |
| Cabinet Member | Cabinet Member for Finance and Social Value |
| Report Author | Corporate Finance Manager |
| Type of Report | Operational |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with the Revenue Budget Monitoring 2024/25 (Month 5).

RECOMMENDATIONS

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| 1 | That the committee considers and comments on the Revenue Budget Monitoring 2024/25 (Month 5) report. Any specific matters for attention will be noted and reported back to the Cabinet when it considers the report. |
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REPORT DETAILS

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| 1.00 | EXPLAINING THE REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING POSITION 2024/25 (MONTH 5) |
| 1.01 | The Revenue Budget Monitoring 2024/25 (Month 5) report will be presented to Cabinet on Tuesday 15 th October, 2024. A copy of the report is attached as Appendix A to this report. |

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| 2.00 | RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS |
| 2.01 | As set out in Appendix A; Revenue Budget Monitoring 2024/25 (Month 5). |

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| 3.00 | IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT |
| 3.01 | As set out in Appendix A; Revenue Budget Monitoring 2024/25 (Month 5). |

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| 4.00 | CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT |
| 4.01 | None required. |

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| 5.00 | APPENDICES |
| 5.01 | Appendix A; Revenue Budget Monitoring 2024/25 (Month 5). |

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| 6.00 | LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS |
| 6.01 | None required. |

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| 7.00 | CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS |
| 7.01 | Contact Officer: Dave Ledsham, Finance Manager Telephone: 01352 704503 E-mail: dave.ledsham@flintshire.gov.uk |

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| 8.00 | GLOSSARY OF TERMS |
| 8.01 | <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>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>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> |

CABINET

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Date of Meeting | Tuesday 15th October, 2024 |
| Report Subject | Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2024/25 (Month 5) |
| Cabinet Member | Cabinet Member for Finance and Social Value |
| 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 2024/25 financial year for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account and presents the position, based on actual income and expenditure as at Month 5.

The projected year end position is as follows:

Council Fund

- An operating deficit of £5.962m (this reduces to £2.962m with the utilisation of the budget risk reserve of £3m agreed when setting the budget) which is an adverse movement of £0.208m from the deficit figure reported at Month 4.
- A projected contingency reserve balance as at 31 March 2025 of £0.337m (after taking account of previously approved allocations including those approved as part of the 2024/25 Budget and a contribution of £0.167m from Earmarked Reserves).

This significant projected overspend (and impact on our available reserves) continues to be of major concern and needs to be addressed urgently in an attempt to bring expenditure back in line with the approved budget. Based on current projections the council only has a very small amount of contingency reserve which it uses to deal with any significant in-year unforeseen events. It should also be noted that there are also still a number of risks identified in the report that could further worsen the Council's financial position.

Therefore, as required by Financial Procedure Rules - Action Plans are being compiled by Social Services, Streetscene and Transportation and Housing and Communities which will detail the reasons for the potential overspends and the

measures being put in place to improve the position by the end of the financial year.

Our ability to mitigate pressures and risks during the financial year will again predominantly centre on review and challenge of non-essential spend and maximising income streams and grant funding. The moratorium on non-contractually committed spend and vacancy management process put in place during 2023/24 continues throughout 2024/25 and is being applied with rigour. Appendix 2 details the split of the moratorium savings to date.

In addition to the above an initial review of our Earmarked Reserves has been undertaken to identify any un-committed areas that can be released to improve our overall position (para 1.22 Refers). Further work is ongoing and the outcome will be reported in the month 6 report.

Housing Revenue Account

- Net in-year revenue expenditure is forecast to be £0.111m lower than budget.
- A projected closing balance as at 31 March, 2025 of £4.563m

RECOMMENDATIONS

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| 1.00 | To note 1) the report and the estimated financial impact on the 2024/25 budget and 2) the measures being put in place to improve the financial position by the end of the financial year. |
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REPORT DETAILS

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 1.00 | EXPLAINING THE REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2024/25 |
| 1.01 | <p>This monthly report provides the latest detailed overview of the budget monitoring position for the 2024/25 financial year for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account and presents the position, based on actual income and expenditure as at Month 5.</p> <p>The projected year end position is as follows:</p> <p>Council Fund</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An operating deficit of £5.962m this reduces to £2.962m with the utilisation of the budget risk reserve of £3m agreed when setting the budget) which is an adverse movement of £0.208m from the deficit figure reported at Month 4. • A projected contingency reserve balance as at 31 March 2025 of £0.337m (after taking account of previously approved allocations including those approved as part of the 2024/25 Budget and a contribution of £0.167m from Earmarked Reserves). |

| | <p>Housing Revenue Account</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Net in-year revenue expenditure is forecast to be £0.111m lower than budget. • A projected closing balance as at 31 March, 2025 of £4.563m | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|--------|--------|-------|--------------------------|--------|--------|-------|---------------------------------|--------|--------|-------|---------|---------|---------|---------|------------------------------|--------|--------|-------|------------------------|-------|-------|-------|--------------------|-------|-------|---------|------------|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|---------|-----------------------|--------|--------|-------|-----------------|-------|-------|---------|-----------------------------|--------|--------|---------|--|--|--|--|--------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|------------------------------------|--|--|----------------|----------------------------------|--|--|--------------|
| 1.02 | <p>Table 1. Projected Position by Portfolio</p> <p>The table below shows the projected position by portfolio:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Portfolio/Service Area</th> <th>Approved Budget £m</th> <th>Projected Outturn £m</th> <th>In-Year Over / (Under) spend £m</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Social Services</td> <td>92.047</td> <td>94.749</td> <td>2.702</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Out of County Placements</td> <td>19.299</td> <td>20.671</td> <td>1.372</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Education & Youth (Non Schools)</td> <td>10.148</td> <td>10.285</td> <td>0.137</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Schools</td> <td>117.302</td> <td>117.120</td> <td>(0.182)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Streetscene & Transportation</td> <td>42.695</td> <td>44.719</td> <td>2.024</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Planning Env & Economy</td> <td>7.682</td> <td>7.722</td> <td>0.040</td> </tr> <tr> <td>People & Resources</td> <td>4.290</td> <td>4.190</td> <td>(0.100)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Governance</td> <td>12.066</td> <td>11.747</td> <td>(0.319)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Assets</td> <td>11.403</td> <td>11.402</td> <td>(0.001)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Housing & Communities</td> <td>18.161</td> <td>20.723</td> <td>2.562</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chief Executive</td> <td>1.641</td> <td>1.625</td> <td>(0.016)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Central & Corporate Finance</td> <td>31.372</td> <td>29.115</td> <td>(2.257)</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>368.106</td> <td>374.068</td> <td>5.962</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">Utilisation of Budget Risk Reserve</td> <td>(3.000)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total – Revised Overspend</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>2.962</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Portfolio/Service Area | Approved Budget £m | Projected Outturn £m | In-Year Over / (Under) spend £m | Social Services | 92.047 | 94.749 | 2.702 | Out of County Placements | 19.299 | 20.671 | 1.372 | Education & Youth (Non Schools) | 10.148 | 10.285 | 0.137 | Schools | 117.302 | 117.120 | (0.182) | Streetscene & Transportation | 42.695 | 44.719 | 2.024 | Planning Env & Economy | 7.682 | 7.722 | 0.040 | People & Resources | 4.290 | 4.190 | (0.100) | Governance | 12.066 | 11.747 | (0.319) | Assets | 11.403 | 11.402 | (0.001) | Housing & Communities | 18.161 | 20.723 | 2.562 | Chief Executive | 1.641 | 1.625 | (0.016) | Central & Corporate Finance | 31.372 | 29.115 | (2.257) | | | | | Total | 368.106 | 374.068 | 5.962 | Utilisation of Budget Risk Reserve | | | (3.000) | Total – Revised Overspend | | | 2.962 |
| Portfolio/Service Area | Approved Budget £m | Projected Outturn £m | In-Year Over / (Under) spend £m | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Social Services | 92.047 | 94.749 | 2.702 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Out of County Placements | 19.299 | 20.671 | 1.372 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Education & Youth (Non Schools) | 10.148 | 10.285 | 0.137 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Schools | 117.302 | 117.120 | (0.182) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Streetscene & Transportation | 42.695 | 44.719 | 2.024 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Planning Env & Economy | 7.682 | 7.722 | 0.040 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| People & Resources | 4.290 | 4.190 | (0.100) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Governance | 12.066 | 11.747 | (0.319) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Assets | 11.403 | 11.402 | (0.001) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Housing & Communities | 18.161 | 20.723 | 2.562 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Chief Executive | 1.641 | 1.625 | (0.016) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Central & Corporate Finance | 31.372 | 29.115 | (2.257) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| Total | 368.106 | 374.068 | 5.962 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Utilisation of Budget Risk Reserve | | | (3.000) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total – Revised Overspend | | | 2.962 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.03 | <p>Appendix 1 shows all monthly movements of £0.025m since Month 4 with relevant narratives. In addition, the reasons for the projected variances are summarised within Appendix 2 and shows the detail of all variances over £0.050m and a summary of minor variances for each portfolio.</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | <p>Significant Movements at Month 5</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.04 | <p>Social Services £0.552m</p> <p><u>Older Peoples Service</u></p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Localities – £0.395m. Demands on older peoples care services are leading to increased costs. This includes pressures from ensuring safe hospital discharges, this pressure will likely increase during winter. The residential care service cost has increased by £0.196m and the domiciliary service increased by £0.190m. Minor variances account for the balance. <p><u>Adults of Working Age</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources and Regulated Services (£0.350m). Costs increased through changes in needs and resulting care package alterations by £0.681m. A change to the policy to reduce the level of balances which are held in Direct Payment accounts has reduced the projected spend by (£1.031m). Children to Adult Transition Services (£0.086m) Reduction to projected care package costs. Residential Placements £0.070m Increased care package costs. <p><u>Children’s Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential Placements £0.216m Costs have increased due to a regrade to care staff posts and increased staffing to meet care needs. Professional Support £0.296m. Successful recruitment has led to additional projected costs of £0.160m for staff. Some additional agency staff were required and the cost impact of these is estimated at £0.115m. There is also an increase to Direct Payments of £0.043m, but a reduction to the Leaving Care budget of £0.029m. <p>There is a net £0.011m in minor movements across the portfolio.</p> |
| 1.05 | <p>Out of County Placements £0.277m</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children’s Services £0.372m - Additional residential/ Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) placements added to placement caseload. Education & Youth (£0.095m) - Projected expenditure adjusted to ensure invoices paid prior to the financial year end are correctly accounted for in 2025/26. Current placement caseload remains. |
| 1.06 | <p>Planning, Environment and the Economy (£0.127m)</p> <p>A review of commitments around vacancy savings due to delays in the recruitment process resulting in a positive movement within the Portfolio.</p> |
| 1.07 | <p>Housing and Communities – (£0.177m)</p> <p>Housing Solutions - A positive movement of (£0.177m) as a result of a reduction in the number of temporary accommodation placements in August.</p> |

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| 1.08 | <p>Central and Corporate Finance (£0.101m)</p> <p>The projection on the Central Loans and Investment Account (CLIA) for the 2024/25 indicates a further underspend of (£0.120m) as the trend from previous years continues with reduced short-term borrowing costs and income from investments in line with current bank interest rates. This however has been mitigated in part due to increasing Bank Charges following the revised contract prices from Worldpay.</p> |
| 1.09 | <p>Cumulative minor variances across the Council of (£0.211m) account for the remainder of the total monthly movement.</p> |
| 1.10 | <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> |
| 1.11 | <p>Council Tax Income</p> <p>Council Tax collections, at the end of August, were 47.24%, compared to 47.41% in the previous financial year. Recovery processes continue to be deployed to collect unpaid council tax, and where possible, to enter into realistic payment agreements with residents. The Revenues service also provide advice and support to those who struggle to maintain payments.</p> |
| 1.12 | <p>Pay Awards (Teacher and Non-Teacher)</p> <p><u>Teachers Pay</u></p> <p>The 2024/25 budget provides additional funding for a 5% pay award from September 2024. The Independent Wales Pay Review Body (IWPRB) had recommended a 4.3% increase, but Welsh Government increased this to 5.5% due to the “no detriment” principle, which means that teacher pay rises in Wales keep pace with those in England. In September 2024, the First Minister accepted the recommendations of the Independent Pay Review bodies for 2024-25.</p> <p>It is anticipated that additional funding will be received from Welsh Government to meet the in-year shortfall but this is yet to be confirmed.</p> <p>Confirmation is still awaited on funding for additional Teacher Pay employer pension costs and negotiations are ongoing between UK Government and Welsh Government – no provision was included in the budget. There is a risk that the costs may not be met in full.</p> <p><u>NJC (Green Book)</u></p> |

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| | <p>The latest pay offer for NJC (Green Book) employees for the current year (2024/25) is currently in negotiation. The offer made with effect from 1 April 2024 is an increase of £1,290 (pro rata for part-time employees) to be paid as a consolidated, permanent addition on all NJC pay points 2 to 43 inclusive. Together with, an increase of 2.5% on all pay points above the maximum of the pay spine but graded below deputy chief officer.</p> <p>If agreed at this level, there would be an in-year benefit to the budget of over £0.800m. However, if not agreed at this level, any final award in excess of the budgeted amount will need to be met from reserves in the current financial year and would also have the impact of increasing the budget requirement for 2025/26.</p> <p><u>Pay Modelling</u></p> <p>No figures are currently included for any impact of the pay modelling review which is intended to help address the problems being encountered by the Council in the recruitment and retention of staff.</p> |
| 1.13 | <p>Out of County Placements</p> <p>As in previous years there is potential for significant numbers of new placements. The service areas within this pooled budget 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> |
| 1.14 | <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 (WG) 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 previously been confirmed.</p> <p>The statutory recycling targets were also not achieved in 2022/23 and 2023/24, which means that further infraction fines of £0.356m and £0.184m respectively could be levied. Therefore, the financial risk across all 3 financial years currently totals £1.203m.</p> <p>WG officials are collating their advice for the minister on the 2021/22 Infraction Charges. We are hopeful we will know the outcome of this in the coming weeks. However, they are yet to start considering the 2022/23 or 2023/24 Infraction Charges so further updates will be provided as further details become available.</p> |
| 1.15 | <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.</p> |

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| | <p>The growth in demand commenced in the second half of 2022/23 and has accelerated markedly since the start of 2023.</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 2024/25 allocation is currently £0.423m. 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 £0.659m.</p> |
| 1.16 | <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> |
| 1.17 | <p>Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Impact</p> <p>Cabinet considered the latest projection for the MTFS in September which showed a revised budget requirement of £38.420m.</p> <p>Options for solutions to meet the budget requirement are currently being considered and further updates will be provided in Overview and Scrutiny Committees later in October and 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> |
| 1.18 | <p>Benefits</p> <p>Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) – Based on current demand, costs are currently projected to be £0.723m over budget, although this will be monitored closely throughout the year due to the potential for growth. There is continued high demand across the whole of the Benefits service which is expected to remain the case for the foreseeable future.</p> <p>Other pressures within the service such as meeting income targets for recovery of overpayments and related bad debt provision increases are also expected to remain. The £0.723m can be fully mitigated by use of the Reserve previously set aside.</p> |
| 1.19 | <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 staff who work for part of the year (i.e., term time). An approved carry forward from 2022/23 for £0.254m has provided some funding towards these costs. There are currently 319 live employment</p> |

| | tribunal claims in respect of this. The next preliminary hearing is scheduled for 18th October 2024. It is hopeful that we will get to a position where we could seek to settle on ‘without prejudice basis’. | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|-----------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------|-----------|-----------|---|-----------|
| 1.20 | <p>Achievement of Planned In-Year Efficiencies</p> <p>The 2024/25 budget contains £14.921m of specific efficiencies which are tracked and monitored throughout the year. The Council aims to achieve a 95% rate in 2024/25 as reflected in the MTFS KPI’s and fully achieved all efficiencies in the previous financial year.</p> <p>It is projected that 96% of efficiencies will be achieved in 2024/25 and further details can be seen in Appendix 3.</p> | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.21 | <p>Unearmarked Reserves</p> <p>The final level of Council Fund Contingency Reserve brought forward into 2024/25 was £2.972m as detailed in the 2023/24 outturn report (subject to audit) elsewhere on this agenda.</p> <p>The Base Level Reserves have been increased to £8.985m by using the remaining balance of £3.216m of the COVID-19 Hardship Fund Reserve from 2023/24.</p> <p>At Month 5 the Contingency Reserve balance was improved with the receipt of a £0.200m reimbursement from Aura Leisure and Libraries for previous income loss funding provided to them by the Council, due to the fact that they have now received alternative funding for this income loss.</p> <p>Taking the current projected final outturn and Earmarked Reserves review into account, the contingency reserve available is £0.337m.</p> <p>As required by Financial Procedure Rules all Portfolios will be expected to identify solutions in-year to mitigate the risks and potential overspends identified in the report.</p> | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.22 | <p>Earmarked Reserves</p> <p>An review of earmarked reserves has been undertaken at Month 5 and an amount of £0.167m has initially been identified for release to the Contingency Reserve. Further work is ongoing, including a detailed review of service balances and the outcome will be included in the month 6 report.</p> <p>The table below provides a summary of earmarked reserves as at 1 April 2024 and an estimate of projected balances as at the end of the current financial year.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Reserve Type</th> <th>Balance as at 01/04/24</th> <th>Balance as at Month 5</th> <th>Release to General Reserve</th> <th>Estimated Balance as at 31/03/25</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Service Balances</td> <td>3,326,381</td> <td>3,116,381</td> <td>0</td> <td>1,118,229</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Reserve Type | Balance as at 01/04/24 | Balance as at Month 5 | Release to General Reserve | Estimated Balance as at 31/03/25 | Service Balances | 3,326,381 | 3,116,381 | 0 | 1,118,229 |
| Reserve Type | Balance as at 01/04/24 | Balance as at Month 5 | Release to General Reserve | Estimated Balance as at 31/03/25 | | | | | | | |
| Service Balances | 3,326,381 | 3,116,381 | 0 | 1,118,229 | | | | | | | |

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Workforce Costs | 843,190 | 580,218 | 0 | 455,046 |
| Investment in Organisational Change | 972,142 | 972,142 | 0 | 571,086 |
| County Elections | 374,693 | 374,693 | 0 | 0 |
| Warm Homes Admin Fee | 294,835 | 294,835 | 0 | 192,156 |
| Design Fees | 238,684 | 238,684 | 0 | 238,684 |
| Severe Weather | 250,000 | 250,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Car Parking | 88,059 | 88,059 | 0 | 0 |
| Insurance Reserves | 2,382,509 | 2,382,509 | 0 | 2,575,000 |
| School HWB ICT Replacement | 789,670 | 789,670 | 0 | 1,052,893 |
| Flintshire Trainees | 321,614 | 321,614 | 0 | 41,548 |
| Rent Income Shortfall | 131,118 | 131,118 | 0 | 131,118 |
| Plas Derwen Wave 4 | 5,339 | 5,339 | 0 | 7,119 |
| Customer Service Strategy | 7,468 | 7,468 | 0 | 0 |
| Supervision Fees | 48,798 | 48,798 | 0 | 48,798 |
| IT COVID Enquiry | 142,301 | 142,301 | 0 | 140,000 |
| IT Infrastructure HWB | 139,442 | 139,442 | 0 | 0 |
| Schools Intervention Reserve | 51,251 | 45,008 | 0 | 212,490 |
| Organisational Change/ADM | 600,560 | 810,560 | 0 | 360,000 |
| NWEAB | 690,685 | 690,685 | 0 | 0 |
| Solar Farms | 180,192 | 180,192 | 0 | 180,192 |
| Employment Claims | 109,846 | 109,846 | 0 | 0 |
| Community Benefit Fund - NWRWTP | 913,925 | 913,925 | 0 | 863,925 |
| Total Balances | 9,576,321 | 9,517,106 | 0 | 7,070,055 |
| Schools Balances | 3,336,011 | 3,336,011 | 0 | -2,052,149 |
| Grants & Contributions | 6,768,522 | 3,951,636 | 166,714 | 1,751,480 |
| TOTAL | 23,007,236 | 19,921,134 | 166,714 | 7,887,615 |

Based on latest information school balances are projected to move into an overall net deficit position. However, this will be subject to change and dependent on a number of factors in the remainder of the year.

1.23

Summary and Conclusion

This significant projected overspend (and impact on our available reserves) continues to be of major concern and needs to be addressed urgently in an attempt to bring expenditure back in line with the approved budget. Based on current projections the Council only has a very small contingency reserve of £0.337m available to deal with any significant in-year unforeseen events. It should also be noted that there are also still a number of risks identified in the report that could further worsen the Council's financial position.

Therefore, as required by Financial Procedure Rules - Action Plans are being compiled by Social Services, Streetscene and Transportation and Housing and Communities which will detail the reasons for the potential overspends and the measures being put in place to improve the position by the end of the financial year.

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| | Our ability to mitigate pressures and risks during the financial year will again predominantly centre on review and challenge of non-essential spend and maximising income streams and grant funding. The moratorium on non-contractually committed spend and vacancy management process put in place during 2023/24 will continue throughout 2024/25 and needs to be applied with rigour. |
| 1.24 | Housing Revenue Account (HRA) The 2023/24 Outturn Report to Cabinet on 23rd July 2024 showed an un-earmarked closing balance at the end of 2023/24 of £3.512m and a closing balance of earmarked reserves of £2.471m. |
| 1.25 | The 2024/25 budget for the HRA is £42.166m which includes a movement of (£0.193m) from reserves. |
| 1.26 | The projected outturn for the HRA shows an in-year revenue expenditure (£0.111m) lower than budget with a closing un-earmarked balance as at 31 st March, 2025 of £4.563m, which at 10.94% of total expenditure satisfies the prudent approach of ensuring a minimum level of 3% - see Appendix 5. |
| 1.27 | The budget contribution towards capital expenditure (CERA) is £14.467m. |

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| 2.00 | RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS |
| 2.01 | As set out within the report. |

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

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| 4.00 | CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT |
| 4.01 | None specific. |

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| 5.00 | APPENDICES |
| 5.01 | Appendix 1: Council Fund – Movement in Variances from Month 4 Appendix 2: Council Fund – Budget Variances Appendix 3: Council Fund – Programme of Efficiencies |

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| | Appendix 4: Council Fund – Movement on Un-earmarked Reserves Appendix 5: Housing Revenue Account Variances |
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| 6.00 | LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS |
| 6.01 | Various budget records. |

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| 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 |
| 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</p> |

for the repayment of debt, including interest, and may include direct financing of capital expenditure.

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

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

Council Fund Variances

MONTH 5 - SUMMARY
2024/25

| Service | Movement between Periods (£m) | Narrative for Movement between Periods greater than £0.025m |
|---|-------------------------------|--|
| Social Services | | |
| Older People | | |
| Localities | 0.395 | Demands on older peoples care services are leading to increased costs. This includes pressures from ensuring safe hospital discharges, this pressure will likely increase during winter. The residential care service cost has increased by £0.196m and the domiciliary service increased by £0.190m. Minor variances account for the balance. |
| Minor Variances | 0.009 | |
| Adults of Working Age | | |
| Resources & Regulated Services | -0.350 | Costs increased through changes in needs and resulting care package alterations by £0.681m. A change to the policy to reduce the level of balances which are held in Direct Payment accounts has reduced the projected spend by £1.031m. |
| Children to Adult Transition Services | -0.086 | Reduction to projected care package costs. |
| Residential Placements | 0.070 | Increased care package costs. |
| Minor Variances | -0.018 | |
| Children's Services | | |
| Residential Placements | 0.216 | Costs have increased due to a regrading of care staff posts and increased staffing to meet the necessary care needs. |
| Professional Support | 0.296 | Successful recruitment has led to additional projected costs of £0.160m for staff. Some additional agency staff were required and the cost impact of these is estimated at £0.115m. There is also an increase to Direct Payments of £0.043m, but a reduction to the Leaving Care budget of £0.029m. There is £0.007m in minor variances. |
| Minor Variances | 0.014 | |
| Safeguarding & Commissioning | | |
| Minor Variances | 0.004 | |
| Total Social Services (excl Out of County) | 0.552 | |
| Out of County Placements | | |
| Children's Services | 0.372 | Numerous residential/UASC placements added to placement caseload |
| Education & Youth | -0.095 | Projected expenditure adjusted to ensure invoices paid prior to the financial year end are correctly accounted for in 2025/26. Current placement caseload remains. |
| Total Out of County Placements | 0.277 | |
| Education & Youth (Non-Schools) | | |
| Inclusion & Progression | -0.048 | Movement due to offsetting a further £0.050m from the LAEG ALN Provision Grant (Local Authority Education Grant - Additional Learning Needs) against the Creative In Excellence costs for pupils who have been permanently excluded or not attending mainstream school due to medical reasons. |
| Minor Variances | -0.048 | |
| Total Education & Youth (Non-Schools) | -0.096 | |
| Schools | 0.001 | |
| Streetscene & Transportation | | |
| Service Delivery | 0.141 | The achievable income from Non-Household Waste has further reduced following Member recommendations and a change to the original proposal. |
| Highways Network | 0.027 | Impact of Street lighting Energy Costs Increasing. |
| Transportation | -0.127 | Maximising 20mph scheme grant funding income by recharging Officer Time and Staff Costs. |
| Regulatory Services | -0.052 | Mix of Vacancy savings and Staff costs Recharges. |
| Total Streetscene & Transportation | -0.012 | |
| Planning, Environment & Economy | | |
| Business | -0.028 | Delays in the recruitment process means that projected expenditure has reduced |
| Management & Strategy | -0.091 | Review of commitments for Staff Costs and vacancy savings part year |
| Minor Variances | -0.008 | |
| Total Planning & Environment | -0.127 | |
| People & Resources | | |
| HR & OD | 0.008 | |
| Corporate Finance | -0.058 | Vacancy savings following staff movements across the Service |
| Total People & Resources | -0.050 | |
| Governance | | |
| Legal Services | -0.042 | Reduction in the estimated cost of Locum Services projected to March, 2025. |
| ICT | 0.040 | Revised commitments for software and licensing costs projected to March, 2025 |
| Minor Variances | -0.023 | |
| Total Governance | -0.024 | |
| Assets | | |
| Minor Variances | -0.042 | |
| Total Assets | -0.042 | |
| Housing and Communities | | |
| Housing Solutions | -0.177 | A positive movement as a result of a reduction in the number of temporary accommodation placements in August |
| Total Housing and Communities | -0.177 | |
| Chief Executive's | 0.007 | |
| Central & Corporate Finance | -0.101 | At Month 5 a further £0.120m favourable movement in the Central Loans & Investment Account (CLIA) has been identified following a further review. This is mitigated in part due to increasing bank charges following the revised Contract with Worldpay. |
| Grand Total | 0.208 | |

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Budget Monitoring Report 2024/25 - Month 5

| Service | Approved Budget (£m) | Projected Outturn (£m) | Annual Variance (£m) | Last Month Variance (£m) | Moratorium related Savings (£m) | Cause of Major Variances greater than £0.050m | Action Required |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|---|---|
| Social Services | | | | | | | |
| Older People | | | | | | | |
| Localities | 24.534 | 25.591 | 1.057 | 0.662 | | Residential care costs for older people are projecting an overspend of £0.603m due to demands for this service. This amount is net of client income from property recharges and reimbursements for deputyships and assets held in trust. Homecare is £0.391m overspent. Localities workforce and professional support budgets are overspent by £0.038m and day care is overspending by £0.015m. There is a real risk that cost will escalate as pressure to minimise stays in hospitals continues. This risk will increase as we enter the winter period. | To mitigate expected escalating costs and number policies are being reviewed and amended to maximise financial benefit and reduce costs |
| Resources & Regulated Services | 10.010 | 9.900 | -0.110 | -0.118 | | In-house residential care is projecting an overspend by £0.328m due to employee and running costs. Homecare is predicted to underspend by £0.435m, although demand is high it cannot be met due to recruitment challenges. The Extra Care budget is expected to overspend by £0.108m due to employee costs and day care will underspend by £0.111m. | |
| Minor Variances | 1.511 | 1.513 | 0.002 | 0.002 | | | |
| Adults of Working Age | | | | | | | |
| Resources & Regulated Services | 36.195 | 36.300 | 0.105 | 0.454 | | The PDSI (physical disability and sensory impaired) budget is reporting a £0.106m underspend due to costs of care packages. The in-house supported living service is £0.348m overspent due to care hours and agency costs. The care package costs for independently provided care for learning disability services is £0.042m underspent. The learning disability day and work provision service is £0.096m underspent. | Any requests for increases to care packages are reviewed by a panel. Current care packages are being reviewed to ensure the right level of care is provided |
| Children to Adult Transition Services | 0.848 | 1.021 | 0.173 | 0.259 | | This is the costs of care packages for young adults transferring from Childrens Services to Adult Social Care services. Care packages are usually new within the financial year and initial estimates are made for the costs. When the care packages are agreed there can be variances against the initial estimate. This year some confirmed care packages have already been confirmed as higher than the initial estimate. | |
| Professional and Administrative Support | 0.458 | 0.369 | -0.089 | -0.082 | -0.089 | This underspend is due to staff vacancies. | |
| Transition & Disability Services Team | 0.984 | 0.932 | -0.052 | -0.053 | | Additional funding has been recieved | |
| Supporting People | -0.386 | -0.487 | -0.101 | -0.101 | -0.100 | Additional Supporting People funding is expected this year | |
| Residential Placements | 2.729 | 2.801 | 0.072 | 0.001 | | This is due to care placements and packages for people with mental ill health | |
| Minor Variances | 3.299 | 3.257 | -0.042 | -0.031 | | | |
| Children's Services | | | | | | | |
| Integrated Working | 0.200 | 0.252 | 0.053 | 0.058 | | There are increased costs this year, mostly for advocacy costs | |
| Family Support | 0.412 | 0.462 | 0.050 | 0.043 | | This is a demand led service which is currently high | |
| Legal & Third Party | 0.283 | 0.755 | 0.471 | 0.461 | | Legal costs are overspent by £0.209m 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 £0.163m and Direct Payments are overspent by £0.099m. | |
| Residential Placements | 1.856 | 1.699 | -0.157 | -0.374 | | The Childrens Services in-house residential care provision continues to expand and is in receipt of a Welsh Government grant which is offsetting costs. | |

Budget Monitoring Report 2024/25 - Month 5

| Service | Approved Budget (£m) | Projected Outturn (£m) | Annual Variance (£m) | Last Month Variance (£m) | Moratorium related Savings (£m) | Cause of Major Variances greater than £0.050m | Action Required |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|---|---|
| Professional Support | 6.228 | 7.483 | 1.255 | 0.960 | | To support adequate levels of child protection the established structure needs to be at a sufficient level to meet mandatory safeguarding standards. Vacancies are to be minimised where possible and temporary posts are sometimes required to be able to continue meeting the challenges and demands of Childrens Services. Two managed agency teams were contracted to support the service, one of these teams has ceased and the other is planned to finish later this year. The associated costs are £0.934m. This is being partially mitigated from underspends mostly from vacancies of £0.264m. The Leaving Care budget which supports young people who are Looked After Children, is overspending by £0.400m due to increased care leavers which includes unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC). The costs of some external contracts are £0.074m overpent due to inflationary pressures. Costs of Direct Payments to provide suport to children with disabilities are £0.111m overspent due to demand. | Alternative accomodation for UASC is being explored and cheaper rates have been negotiated with a current accomodation provider |
| Minor Variances | 3.665 | 3.655 | -0.010 | -0.013 | | | |
| Safeguarding & Commissioning | | | | | | | |
| Charging Policy income | -3.505 | -3.595 | -0.090 | -0.090 | | This is income from service users who are charged a contribution to their care. | |
| Minor Variances | 2.726 | 2.842 | 0.116 | 0.112 | | | |
| Total Social Services (excl Out of County) | 92.047 | 94.749 | 2.702 | 2.150 | -0.189 | | |
| Out of County Placements | | | | | | | |
| Children's Services | 13.795 | 15.065 | 1.270 | 0.898 | | Detailed projections show a significant overspend within the Out of County pooled budget as a result of the following:- an increase in the number of new placements agreed in-year and fees incurred to external providers. The overspend includes no further contingency and is projected based on current caseload only. | |
| Education & Youth | 5.504 | 5.605 | 0.101 | 0.196 | | Detailed projections show a significant overspend within the Out of County pooled budget as a result of the following:- an increase in the number of new placements agreed in-year and fees incurred to external providers. The overspend includes no further contingency and is projected based on current caseload only. | |
| Total Out of County Placements | 19.299 | 20.671 | 1.372 | 1.094 | 0.000 | | |
| Education & Youth (Non-Schools) | | | | | | | |
| Inclusion & Progression | 5.650 | 5.910 | 0.260 | 0.313 | | Previous in year pressure of £0.247m against Creative In Excellence costs, has now been reduced by £0.100m by maximising the Additional Learning Needs grant. The balance of the pressure relates to Canolfan Enfys of £0.117m. This is due to an increase in staff due to increased pupil numbers. There has also been a reliance on agency staff due to long term sickness. | |
| Integrated Youth Provision | 0.918 | 0.864 | -0.053 | -0.035 | -0.050 | Recruitment delays, enabling grant utilisation against trainee costs. Income generation increases on room hire. | |
| School Planning & Provision | 0.625 | 0.565 | -0.060 | -0.040 | -0.060 | Reduction in expenditure from transition budget due to delayed Capital Projects and reduction in the number of mobile classrooms | |
| Minor Variances | 2.956 | 2.946 | -0.010 | -0.005 | -0.010 | | |
| Total Education & Youth (Non-Schools) | 10.148 | 10.285 | 0.137 | 0.233 | -0.120 | | |
| Schools | 117.302 | 117.120 | -0.182 | -0.183 | | The variance primarily relates to the following:- Free School Meals (FSM) budget - (£0.114m) underspend, due to meal take up and levels of eligible FSM children. The Unallocated budget containing Added Years and Copyright Licenses indicates a (£0.124m) underspend. The above underspends are offset by a number of insignificant adverse variances within Primary and Secondary non-delegated, totalling £0.055m. | |
| Streetscene & Transportation | | | | | | | |

Budget Monitoring Report 2024/25 - Month 5

| Service | Approved Budget (£m) | Projected Outturn (£m) | Annual Variance (£m) | Last Month Variance (£m) | Moratorium related Savings (£m) | Cause of Major Variances greater than £0.050m | Action Required |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|
| Service Delivery | 8.567 | 9.567 | 1.000 | 0.859 | | Significant variance of £0.400m in highways maintenance costs, £0.200m Alltami depot running costs increased. Method Statements have been submitted for both budget pressures above. Budget efficiency pressure of £0.400m in total related to HRCs (charging and trade waste) implementation date later than initially planned. Income from Workplace Recycling Regulations legislative changes is lower than anticipated. | |
| Highways Network | 11.674 | 12.141 | 0.467 | 0.440 | | Winter Maintenance costs of £0.300m are forecast to escalate for the provision of equipment, labour and salt usage, which have seen significant year-on-year inflation, plus fleet hire costs have increased compared to the previous contract arrangement. A report is to be presented to Cabinet to consider the delivery of efficiencies relating to decision making on marginal weather forecasts. Street-lighting energy cost increases of £0.100m. | We continue to investigate options to reduce Winter Maintenance procurement costs and ensure appropriate income/funding in preparation for the start of the 2024/25 winter season. |
| Transportation | 11.023 | 11.183 | 0.161 | 0.287 | -0.120 | School Transport significant variances due to transport contractor costs increasing driven by inflation and cost of living (fuel, energy, insurance, wages). Additional routes for increased demand for SEN/ALN transport is also having an impact. Social Services Transport costs increased due to recent procurement and additional adult social services requests for transport. Bereavement Services reporting an income pressure of £0.057m, compared to increased income targets. Public transport subsidies also increased following re-procurement. Variance reduced at Month 5 due to Maximising 20mph scheme grant funding income by recharging Officer Time and Staff Costs. | |
| Regulatory Services | 11.432 | 11.828 | 0.396 | 0.448 | -0.052 | The overspend variance is mainly due to increasing volumes of residual waste being collected along with gate fee indexation inflation, increased tipping and gate fees for some recyclable waste, together with the reduction in income levels for both recyclable materials and electricity generation from gas and solar at the former landfill sites. Variance reduced at Month 5 due to vacancy savings and Staff cost Recharges. | |
| Other Minor Variances | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | | | |
| Total Streetscene & Transportation | 42.695 | 44.719 | 2.024 | 2.035 | -0.172 | | |
| Planning, Environment & Economy | | | | | | | |
| Business | 2.327 | 2.156 | -0.171 | -0.144 | -0.171 | Part year vacancy savings, the recruitment process has commenced | |
| Development | -0.200 | 0.009 | 0.209 | 0.207 | | Fee income estimated shortfall in Building Control, Land Charges and Planning | |
| Access | 1.591 | 1.718 | 0.127 | 0.126 | | Commitment for the cost Ash Die Back tree works £0.120m projected to March, 2025 | |
| Regeneration | 0.711 | 0.650 | -0.061 | -0.053 | | Part year savings from Grant Maximisation in reallocating staff costs to numerous Grant schemes | |
| Management & Strategy | 1.897 | 1.801 | -0.096 | -0.005 | -0.096 | Part year vacancy savings which with delays in the recruitment process have manifested reduced expenditure | |
| Minor Variances | 1.355 | 1.388 | 0.033 | 0.036 | | | |
| Total Planning & Environment | 7.682 | 7.722 | 0.040 | 0.168 | -0.267 | | |
| People & Resources | | | | | | | |
| HR & OD | 2.211 | 2.265 | 0.054 | 0.046 | | Historic Business Efficiency for DBS Checks unrealised | |
| Corporate Finance | 2.080 | 1.925 | -0.154 | -0.096 | -0.104 | Part year vacancy savings | |
| Total People & Resources | 4.290 | 4.190 | -0.100 | -0.050 | -0.104 | | |
| Governance | | | | | | | |
| Customer Services | 0.985 | 0.869 | -0.116 | -0.113 | | Part year vacancy savings and fee income over recovery in Registrars | |
| Revenues | 0.371 | 0.212 | -0.159 | -0.138 | | Potential Surplus on the Council Tax Collection Fund | |
| Minor Variances | 10.710 | 10.666 | -0.045 | -0.044 | -0.040 | | |
| Total Governance | 12.066 | 11.747 | -0.319 | -0.295 | -0.040 | | |
| Assets | | | | | | | |

Budget Monitoring Report 2024/25 - Month 5

| Service | Approved Budget (£m) | Projected Outturn (£m) | Annual Variance (£m) | Last Month Variance (£m) | Moratorium related Savings (£m) | Cause of Major Variances greater than £0.050m | Action Required |
|--|-------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|---|-----------------|
| Minor Variances | 11.403 | 11.402 | -0.001 | 0.041 | | | |
| Total Assets | 11.403 | 11.402 | -0.001 | 0.041 | 0.000 | | |
| Housing and Communities | | | | | | | |
| Housing Solutions | 4.309 | 6.872 | 2.563 | 2.741 | | Anticipated £2.563m overspend for the service. Temporary accommodation costs anticipated to be £3.538m overspent, offset with an increase in the HB Income collected (£0.635m) and NOLO Grant of (£0.423m). £0.075m overspend on the Homeless Hub | |
| Minor Variances | 13.852 | 13.851 | -0.002 | -0.002 | | | |
| Total Housing and Communities | 18.161 | 20.723 | 2.562 | 2.739 | 0.000 | | |
| Chief Executive's | 1.641 | 1.625 | -0.016 | -0.023 | -0.016 | | |
| Central & Corporate Finance | 31.372 | 29.115 | -2.257 | -2.156 | | The initial projection on the Central Loans and Investment Account (CLIA) for the 2024/25 indicates an underspend of (£0.250m) as the trend from previous years continues with reduced short term borrowing costs and income from investments in line with current bank interest rates. This is mitigated by potential shortfalls in Corporate windfall income targets based on actual receipts to date. As a result of the refinancing of Enfinium Group Ltd into Enfinium Parc Adfer Ltd, there is a gainshare benefit to all partner authorities within the North Wales Residual Waste Partnership. Flintshire's estimated gainshare from this undertaking is £2.108m, net of fees. A commitment has been included to fund the on-going clean-up from the impact of fly tipping at land adjacent to the Riverside Site, Queensferry at a current cost of £0.091m that includes the machine hire, transport and manpower related to the necessary works. At Month 5 following a review on the CLIA a further £0.120m favourable variance has been identified. | |
| Grand Total | 368.106 | 374.068 | 5.962 | 5.754 | -0.908 | | |

2024/25 Efficiencies Outturn Tracker - Month 5

| Efficiency Description | Accountable Officer | Efficiency Target | Projected Efficiency | (Under)/Over Achievement | Efficiency Open/Closed (O/C) | Confidence in Achievement of Efficiency - Based on (see below) R = High Assumption A = Medium Assumption G = Figures Confirmed | Reason for variation | Mitigating Action if Amber or Red |
|--|--|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|---|----------------------|--|
| | | 2024/25 £m | 2024/25 £m | 2024/25 £m | | | | |
| Portfolio | | | | | | R | | |
| Corporate | | | | | | A | | |
| Actuarial Review | Portfolio budget reductions | Gary Ferguson | 4.000 | 4.000 | 0.000 | C | G | |
| Central Loans and Investment Account | Increased income/reduced borrowing | Chris Taylor | 1.000 | 1.000 | 0.000 | C | G | |
| Additional Income from Fastrack Project | Portfolios | Debbie Griffiths | 0.018 | 0.018 | 0.000 | O | G | |
| Total Corporate Services | | | 5.018 | 5.018 | 0.000 | | | |
| Assets | | | | | | | | |
| Strategic Funding | | Damian Hughes | 0.028 | 0.028 | 0.000 | O | G | |
| Rent Review - Commercial Assets | | Damian Hughes | 0.021 | 0.021 | 0.000 | O | G | |
| Valuation & Estates | Restructure | Damian Hughes | 0.010 | 0.010 | 0.000 | O | G | |
| Assets - ADMs | | | 0.059 | 0.059 | 0.000 | | | |
| ADM Budget | Reduction in ADM Budget | Rachael Corbelli | 0.065 | 0.065 | 0.000 | O | G | |
| Review of External Partners | | Rachael Corbelli | 0.087 | 0.087 | 0.000 | O | G | |
| Total Assets - ADMs | | | 0.152 | 0.152 | 0.000 | | | |
| Chief Executives | | | | | | | | |
| Executive Office | Reduction in Promotions Budget | Joanne Pierce | 0.010 | 0.010 | 0.000 | C | G | Budget Removed |
| IT - Mobile Phone contract | Chief Executive's element | Joanne Pierce | 0.001 | 0.001 | 0.000 | C | G | Budget Removed |
| Total Chief Executives | | | 0.011 | 0.011 | 0.000 | | | |
| People & Resources | | | | | | | | |
| Corporate Finance | Reduction in Staffing | Gary Ferguson | 0.104 | 0.104 | 0.000 | C | G | Budget Removed |
| Feasibility Study budget | Reduction in Budget | Gary Ferguson | 0.050 | 0.050 | 0.000 | C | G | Budget Removed |
| HR & OD | Reduction in TU facilities budget | Sharon Carney | 0.030 | 0.030 | 0.000 | C | G | Budget Removed |
| Flintshire Trainees | Recruitment Freeze 2024/25 | Sharon Carney | 0.138 | 0.138 | 0.000 | C | G | Budget Removed |
| Total People & Resources | | | 0.322 | 0.322 | 0.000 | | | |
| Governance | | | | | | | | |
| RSA Tags | Governance element | Gareth Owen | 0.003 | 0.003 | 0.000 | C | G | Budget Removed |
| Fees & Charges Review 2023 - Registration Services | Increased income from 2023 Review | Gareth Owen | 0.002 | 0.002 | 0.000 | C | G | Fee Income expected to meet target |
| Discretionary Rate Relief | | Gareth Owen | 0.004 | 0.004 | 0.000 | C | G | Budget Removed |
| Internal Audit | Removal of Vacant Posts | Gareth Owen | 0.104 | 0.104 | 0.000 | C | G | Budget Removed |
| IT - Equipment reduction in requirements | | Gareth Owen | 0.018 | 0.018 | 0.000 | C | G | Budget Removed |
| IT - Mobile Phone contract | Governance element | Gareth Owen | 0.015 | 0.015 | 0.000 | C | G | Budget Removed |
| Contact Centre | Reduction in budget | Gareth Owen | 0.010 | 0.010 | 0.000 | C | G | Budget Removed |
| Single Person Discount Review 24/25 | | Gareth Owen | 0.250 | 0.250 | 0.000 | C | G | Achieved |
| Procurement | Reduction in contribution | Gareth Owen | 0.009 | 0.009 | 0.000 | C | G | Budget Removed |
| HRA Recharging | Management Costs Apportionment | Gareth Owen | 0.027 | 0.027 | 0.000 | C | G | Recharge at increased rate agreed with HRA |
| Granicus | GovDelivery | Gareth Owen | 0.025 | 0.025 | 0.000 | C | G | Budget Removed |
| Registration Services | | Gareth Owen | 0.040 | 0.040 | 0.000 | C | G | Fee Income expected to meet target |
| Graphic Design | | Gareth Owen | 0.039 | 0.039 | 0.000 | C | G | Removal of posts Sept 2024 |
| Total Governance | | | 0.546 | 0.546 | 0.000 | | | |
| Planning, Environment & Economy | | | | | | | | |
| Fees & Charges Review 2023 | Increased income from 2023 Review | Andrew Farrow | 0.050 | 0.050 | 0.000 | O | A | Dependant on actual fee income levels received in year |
| Fees & Charges Review 2024 | Increased income from 2024 Review | Andrew Farrow | 0.017 | 0.017 | 0.000 | O | A | Dependant on actual fee income levels received in year |
| IT - Mobile Phone contract | PE&E element | Andrew Farrow | 0.008 | 0.008 | 0.000 | C | G | Budget Removed |
| Planning Fee Income | Fee Income Target Increase | Andrew Farrow | 0.295 | 0.295 | 0.000 | O | A | Dependant on actual fee income levels received in year |
| Ambition North Wales Contribution | Budget Saving | Andrew Farrow | 0.035 | 0.035 | 0.000 | C | G | Budget Removed |
| Wales Rally GB | Budget Saving | Andrew Farrow | 0.030 | 0.030 | 0.000 | C | G | Budget Removed |
| Total Planning, Environment & Economy | | | 0.435 | 0.435 | 0.000 | | | |
| Streetscene & Transportation | | | | | | | | |
| Cash in Transit - reduced costs | Part of transition to Card and App payments at car parks | Katie Wilby | 0.012 | 0.012 | 0.000 | O | G | Efficiency originated by Revenues but operated by S&T |
| Fees & Charges Review 2023 - Green Waste | Increased income from 2023 Review | Katie Wilby | 0.099 | 0.099 | 0.000 | O | G | |
| Fees & Charges Review 2023 - Car Parking | Increased income from 2023 Review | Katie Wilby | 0.063 | 0.063 | 0.000 | O | G | |
| Fees & Charges Review 2023 - Bersavement Services | Increased income from 2023 Review | Katie Wilby | 0.033 | 0.033 | 0.000 | O | G | |
| Fees & Charges Review 2024 - Bersavement Services | Increased income from 2024 Review | Katie Wilby | 0.012 | 0.012 | 0.000 | O | G | |
| IT - Mobile Phone contract | S&T element | Katie Wilby | 0.011 | 0.011 | 0.000 | C | G | |
| Part time opening of HWRC's | | Katie Wilby | 0.250 | 0.225 | (0.025) | O | A | HWRC sites open over part of the week rather than the full 7 days e.g. Friday to Monday. Savings would come from labour. Security of sites could become an issue when they are closed, which could incur additional costs. Fly tipping could increase as a result of the part-time closure (as happened during the pandemic) and there may be an impact on residual waste tonnages as residents seek to divert the waste to other collection methods. Started on 6th May hence £25k shortfall of Efficiency pressure. |
| Review/reduce service standards | Grass cutting etc. | Katie Wilby | 0.025 | 0.025 | 0.000 | O | G | Range of grass cutting and grounds maintenance operations in place, which vary from external contracted services on highway verges, roundabouts and central reservations, weed spraying, tenant gardens and school grounds to our own in-house service delivery for amenity areas and public open spaces, such as car parks, cemeteries, leisure centres, libraries, Council offices and housing estates, town centres, sheltered housing, bus stops and play areas and playing fields, nature conservation areas. This proposal would see all grass cutting operations externalised through a contract. |

| Efficiency Description | | Accountable Officer | Efficiency Target | Projected Efficiency | (Under)/Over Achievement | Efficiency Open/Closed (O/C) | Confidence in Achievement of Efficiency - Based on (see below) High Assumption A = Medium Assumption G = Figures Confirmed | Reason for variation | Mitigating Action if Amber or Red |
|---|---|---------------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|---|---|--|
| | | | 2024/25 £m | 2024/25 £m | 2024/25 £m | | R A | | |
| Portfolio | | | | | | | | | |
| Review/reduce service standards | Cemetery maintenance | Katie Wilby | 0.025 | 0.025 | 0.000 | O | G | Discretionary service - savings would come from reduction in labour, plant and materials. Likely to generate complaints from members of the public. Previously considered transferring responsibility to Town/Community Councils, but no appetite or capacity to take this on. | |
| Introduce Night Working | | Katie Wilby | 0.025 | 0.025 | 0.000 | O | G | Streetscene introduced an evening shift in 2012. A small number of people work through the night (365 days a year) dealing with emergencies and small amounts of planned works. The proposal will see this level of work increase with operations such as gully emptying, town centre sweeping etc. carried out during the evening and overnight period. The saving will be generated by a reduction in plant and equipment. Impact on communities due to evening and night working. Workforce/Trade Union support will be required. There was a lack of appetite to continue when previously introduced and unable to recruit or maintain staff on a night time shift, due to the unsocial hours | |
| Reduce cleansing standards and enforce zero balance for littering | | Katie Wilby | 0.030 | 0.030 | 0.000 | O | G | Potential consequential impact on littering and fly tipping, which would require additional resources for enforcement. | |
| In-house services e.g. weed spraying, traffic management | | Katie Wilby | 0.035 | 0.035 | 0.000 | O | G | Cost-benefit assessment to be undertaken to assess whether in-house provision would be more cost efficient than a contracted service | |
| Full cost recovery for supporting community events | | Katie Wilby | 0.010 | 0.010 | 0.000 | O | G | Introduce a charge for providing support for community events for road closures, such as fairs, festivals, street parties etc. Currently, costs are approx. £25k per annum. The charge would help to mitigate the cost. | |
| Reduce non essential services on Bank Holidays (x5) | | Katie Wilby | 0.077 | 0.077 | 0.000 | O | G | Stand 85% of Grounds, Highways, Streetlighting, Cleansing on 5 Bank Holidays per year. Currently, operations for these services continue on public holidays. Savings would come from the reduction in overtime. | |
| Charging for DIY Waste streams at HWRC's | | Katie Wilby | 0.300 | 0.075 | (0.225) | O | A | A number of local authorities charge for DIY waste streams, such as soil, rubble, plasterboard and waste wood, as these waste streams are costly to treat and dispose, which is no longer sustainable or affordable. Charging would ensure cost recovery of these non-household waste streams. | August Implementation Date - Further delayed |
| Remove vacancies for Schools Crossing Patrols | | Katie Wilby | 0.084 | 0.084 | 0.000 | O | G | The portfolio currently has vacancies for crossing patrol officers within the road safety team, which could be given up. | |
| Remove Officer vacancies across the Portfolio | | Katie Wilby | 0.294 | 0.294 | 0.000 | O | G | 2 x Transport Strategy Officers; 1 x Road Safety Officer; 1 x Business Manager; 1 x Support Services Officer; 1 x Enforcement Officer; 1 x Waste Disposal Manager. | |
| Charge for Trade Waste at one HRC site | | Katie Wilby | 0.200 | 0.050 | (0.150) | O | A | A number of local authorities currently provide a facility for commercial traders and businesses to dispose of their waste through a chargeable service. There is the potential to designate one of the Council's HRC sites for trade waste only for the receipt of other chargeable recyclable materials (wood, soil, rubble, green waste etc) from businesses. | August Implementation Date - Further delayed |
| Increase fees for Bulky Waste | | Katie Wilby | 0.010 | 0.010 | 0.000 | O | G | Currently charge for bulky waste collections. The fee could be increased in line with inflation (by £5 per collection). | |
| Reduce SmartClient for Technical Support | | Katie Wilby | 0.025 | 0.025 | 0.000 | O | G | ground surveys. Reduce budget available. | |
| Winter Maintenance Review of Weather Stations for 2024/25 | | Katie Wilby | 0.025 | 0.025 | 0.000 | O | G | Review is already underway for the use of route-based forecasting or domain-based forecasting instead of the current approach | |
| Total Streetscene & Transportation | | | 1.644 | 1.244 | (0.400) | | | | |
| Social Services | | | | | | | | | |
| Fees & Charges Review 2023 | Increased income from 2023 Review | Craig Macleod | 0.063 | 0.063 | 0.000 | O | G | | |
| Fees & Charges Review 2024 | Increased income from 2024 Review | Craig Macleod | 0.021 | 0.021 | 0.000 | O | G | | |
| RSA Tags | Social Services element | Craig Macleod | 0.002 | 0.002 | 0.000 | O | G | | |
| IT - Mobile Phone contract | Social Services element | Craig Macleod | 0.046 | 0.011 | (0.035) | O | A | | |
| | Reduction to contract with Newydd | Craig Macleod | 0.100 | 0.050 | (0.050) | O | A | The efficiency is a high proportion of the total cost of mobile units in 2023/24 and unlikely it will be achieved in full. Negotiations are ongoing with Newydd and the reduction has not yet been agreed. As we are several months into the financial year the full amount will not be achieved in 2024/25. | |
| Newydd Cleaning Contracts | | | | | | | | | |
| Reduce Regional Contribution | Reduction to in-year contribution to Regional Team | Craig Macleod | 0.025 | 0.025 | 0.000 | O | G | | |
| Extra BCUHB contribution to Marleyfield | Additional income from BCUHB for hospital discharge beds | Craig Macleod | 0.040 | 0.040 | 0.000 | O | G | | |
| Service Review | Reduction in posts | | 0.075 | 0.035 | (0.040) | O | A | This is dependent on natural wastage of posts which can then be deleted. This will occur within the financial year and so the efficiency will not likely be achieved in full this financial year. | |
| Vacancy Management | In-year vacancy savings | Craig Macleod | 0.100 | 0.100 | 0.000 | O | G | | |
| Increase to Income budget | Older People Commissioning | Craig Macleod | 0.050 | 0.050 | 0.000 | O | G | | |
| Disability Day Service | Reduced budget | Craig Macleod | 0.040 | 0.040 | 0.000 | O | G | | |
| Appointeeship service charging | Increased income | Craig Macleod | 0.050 | 0.025 | (0.025) | O | A | There will be a requirement for a consultation with stakeholders meaning the efficiency will be unable to be implemented at the start of the financial year and will likely be towards the midway point. | |
| Additional Contributions for residential care from BCUHB | Additional income from BCUHB for hospital discharge beds | Craig Macleod | 0.010 | 0.010 | 0.000 | O | G | | |
| Efficiencies to Planned Contracts with Third Sector | Reduced expenditure | Craig Macleod | 0.020 | 0.020 | 0.000 | O | G | | |
| Grant Maximisation | | Craig Macleod | 0.100 | 0.100 | 0.000 | O | G | | |
| Reduced NEWCES contribution | Reduced expenditure | Craig Macleod | 0.010 | 0.010 | 0.000 | O | G | | |
| Grant funding for Adult Social Services | 2024/25 only | Craig Macleod | 0.100 | 0.100 | 0.000 | O | G | | |
| Disability services | Charging for college placements pending financial assessments | Craig Macleod | 0.020 | 0.020 | 0.000 | O | G | | |
| Total Social Services | | | 0.872 | 0.722 | (0.150) | | | | |
| Housing & Communities | | | | | | | | | |
| RSA Tags | Housing & Communities element | Vicky Clark | 0.001 | 0.001 | 0.000 | O | G | | |

| Efficiency Description | Accountable Officer | Efficiency Target | Projected Efficiency | (Under)/Over Achievement | Efficiency Open/Closed (O/C) | Confidence in Achievement of Efficiency - Based on (see below) R = High Assumption A = Medium Assumption G = Figures Confirmed | Reason for variation | Mitigating Action if Amber or Red |
|---|---|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|---|----------------------|---|
| Portfolio | | 2024/25 | 2024/25 | 2024/25 | | R | | |
| | | £m | £m | £m | | A | | |
| IT - Mobile Phone contract | Housing & Communities element | Vicky Clark | 0.009 | 0.009 | 0.000 | C | G | Use of the Reserve in 2024/25 instead of base budget pressure |
| CTRS Reduction | Budget Reduction | Vicky Clark | 0.254 | 0.254 | 0.000 | O | G | |
| Total Housing & Communities | | | 0.264 | 0.264 | 0.000 | | | |
| Education & Youth | | | | | | | | |
| Fees & Charges Review 2023 - Integrated Youth Service | Increased income from 2023 Review | Claire Homard | 0.001 | 0.001 | 0.000 | O | G | |
| Fees & Charges Review 2024 - Integrated Youth Service | Increased income from 2024 Review | Claire Homard | 0.001 | 0.001 | 0.000 | O | G | |
| RSA Tags | Education & Youth element | Claire Homard | 0.007 | 0.007 | 0.000 | O | G | |
| IT - Mobile Phone contract | Education & Youth element | Claire Homard | 0.005 | 0.005 | 0.000 | C | G | |
| GWE - Reduction in Contribution | Education & Youth element | Claire Homard | 0.099 | 0.099 | 0.000 | O | G | |
| Early Entitlement | Reduced numbers accessing Early Entitlement | Claire Homard | 0.075 | 0.075 | 0.000 | O | G | |
| Adult Community Learning | Income generation | Claire Homard | 0.010 | 0.010 | 0.000 | O | G | |
| Youth Services | Buildings Asset transfer of some buildings | Claire Homard | 0.032 | 0.032 | 0.000 | O | G | |
| Business Support Review | | Claire Homard | 0.032 | 0.032 | 0.000 | O | G | |
| School Planning & Provision | Mobile Classrooms | Claire Homard | 0.010 | 0.010 | 0.000 | O | G | |
| School Planning & Provision | Transition Funding | Claire Homard | 0.010 | 0.010 | 0.000 | O | G | |
| Inclusion & Progression | Contribution towards PEP Caseworker | Claire Homard | 0.020 | 0.020 | 0.000 | O | G | |
| Total Education & Youth | | | 0.302 | 0.302 | 0.000 | | | |
| Schools | | | | | | | | |
| Utility Costs | | Claire Homard | 0.600 | 0.600 | 0.000 | O | G | |
| School Demography | | Claire Homard | 0.675 | 0.675 | 0.000 | O | G | |
| 3% Reduction in Delegated Funding | | Claire Homard | 3.273 | 3.273 | 0.000 | O | G | |
| Remove Schools Deficit Subsidy for 1 year | | Claire Homard | 0.750 | 0.750 | 0.000 | C | G | |
| Total Schools | | | 5.298 | 5.298 | 0.000 | | | |
| Total 2024/25 Budget Efficiencies | | | 14.921 | 14.372 | (0.550) | | | |

| | % | £ |
|---|------------|----------------|
| Total 2024/25 Budget Efficiencies | 100 | 14.921 |
| Total Projected 2024/25 Budget Efficiencies Underachieved | -4 | (0.550) |
| Total Projected 2024/25 Budget Efficiencies Achieved | 96 | 14.372 |
| Total 2024/25 Budget Efficiencies (Less Previously agreed Decisions) | 100 | 0.000 |
| Total Projected 2024/25 Budget Efficiencies Underachieved | 0 | 0.000 |
| Total Projected 2024/25 Budget Efficiencies Achieved | 0 | 0.000 |

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Movements on Council Fund Unearmarked Reserves

| | £m | £m |
|--|---------|--------------|
| Total Reserves as at 1 April 2024 | 15.271 | |
| Less - Base Level | (8.985) | |
| Total Reserves above base level available for delegation to Cabinet | | 6.286 |
| Less - Children's Services Legal Costs | | (0.142) |
| Less - Approved "Budget Risk" Reserve 2024/25 | | (3.000) |
| Less - Approved Time Limited Pressures 2024/25 | | (0.172) |
| Add - Transfer to Reserve Budget 2024/25 | | 0.437 |
| Add - Reimbursement from Aura Leisure and Libraries | | 0.200 |
| Less - Cambrian Aquatics approved funding | | (0.200) |
| Less - Provision of Free School Meals payment to eligible children during the summer school holidays | | (0.277) |
| Less - estimated impact of the pay award | | 0.000 |
| Add- Review of Earmarked Reserves at Month 5 | | 0.167 |
| Less - Month 5 projected outturn | | (2.962) |
| Total Contingency Reserve available for use | | 0.337 |

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Budget Monitoring Report
Housing Revenue Account Variances

MONTH 5 - SUMMARY

| Service | Revised Budget (£m) | Projected Outturn (£m) | Variance (£m) | Last Month Variance (£m) | Cause of Major Variance | Action Required |
|---|---------------------|------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|--|-----------------|
| Housing Revenue Account | | | | | | |
| Income | (42.166) | (42.010) | 0.155 | 0.207 | There is a net pressure relating to void properties of £0.170m. 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 (£0.002m) on garage rents. Other minor variances of (£0.013m). | |
| Capital Financing - Loan Charges | 6.845 | 6.845 | 0.000 | (0.000) | | |
| Estate Management | 3.206 | 3.064 | (0.141) | (0.208) | Projected vacancy savings of approximately (£0.168m) which is being offset by agency costs of £0.135m. Additional allocation of Housing Support Grant (£0.120m). Other minor variances of (£0.012m). | |
| Landlord Service Costs | 1.798 | 1.832 | 0.035 | 0.035 | Projected vacancy savings of approximately (£0.142m) which is being offset by agency costs of £0.110m. Material increased costs of £0.052. Other minor variances of £0.015m. | |
| Repairs & Maintenance | 12.741 | 12.736 | (0.006) | 0.022 | Minor variances | |
| Management & Support Services | 2.787 | 2.632 | (0.155) | (0.155) | Projected vacancy savings of approximately (£0.068m). Reduction in Support Recharge -(£.068m). Other minor variances of (£0.019) | |
| Capital Expenditure From Revenue (CERA) | 14.467 | 14.467 | 0.000 | (0.000) | | |
| HRA Projects | 0.130 | 0.130 | 0.000 | (0.000) | | |
| Contribution To / (From) Reserves | 0.193 | 0.193 | 0.000 | (0.000) | | |
| Total Housing Revenue Account | 0.000 | (0.111) | (0.111) | (0.098) | | |

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CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Date of Meeting | Thursday, 10 th October 2024 |
| Report Subject | Audit Wales Report – Financial Sustainability |
| Cabinet Member | Cabinet Member for Finance and Social Value |
| Report Author | Corporate Finance Manager and Chief Executive |
| Type of Report | Strategic |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the report is to provide an overview of the findings of a local report by Audit Wales entitled 'Financial Sustainability Review – Flintshire County Council.

The Audit Wales Report – Financial Sustainability was presented to Cabinet on 25th September. A copy of the Cabinet report is attached as Appendix A and the Audit Wales report is attached as Appendix B.

A representative from Audit Wales will be in attendance to present the findings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 | That the Committee considers and comments on the Audit Wales report. |
|---|--|

REPORT DETAILS

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 1.00 | EXPLAINING THE AUDIT WALES REPORT – FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY |
| 1.01 | The Audit Wales Report – Financial Sustainability was presented to Cabinet on 25 th September. A copy of the Cabinet report is attached as Appendix A and the Audit Wales report is attached as Appendix B. |

| | |
|------|--|
| 1.02 | A representative from Audit Wales will be in attendance to present the findings. |
|------|--|

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|-------------|------------------------------|
| 2.00 | RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS |
|-------------|------------------------------|

| | |
|------|-----------------------------------|
| 2.01 | As set out in the Cabinet Report. |
|------|-----------------------------------|

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| 3.00 | IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT |
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|------|-----------------------------------|
| 3.01 | As set out in the Cabinet report. |
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| 4.00 | CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT |
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| 4.01 | The report will also be presented to Governance and Audit Committee in November. |
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| 5.00 | APPENDICES |
|-------------|-------------------|

| | |
|------|--|
| 5.01 | Appendix A – Cabinet Report. Appendix B – Audit Wales Report. |
|------|--|

| | |
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| 6.00 | LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS |
|-------------|--|

| | |
|------|------|
| 6.01 | None |
|------|------|

| | |
|-------------|--------------------------------|
| 7.00 | CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS |
|-------------|--------------------------------|

| | |
|------|---|
| 7.01 | Contact Officer: Gary Ferguson, Corporate Finance Manager Telephone: 01352 702271 E-mail: gary.ferguson@flintshire.gov.uk |
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| 8.00 | GLOSSARY OF TERMS |
|-------------|--------------------------|

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|------|----------------------------|
| 8.01 | As per the Cabinet report. |
|------|----------------------------|



CABINET

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Date of Meeting | Wednesday 25 th September 2024 |
| Report Subject | Audit Wales Report – Financial Sustainability |
| Cabinet Member | Cabinet Member for Finance and Social Value |
| Report Author | Corporate Finance Manager and Chief Executive |
| Type of Report | Strategic |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the report is to provide an overview of the findings of a local report by Audit Wales entitled ‘Financial Sustainability Review – Flintshire County Council.

Audit Wales have undertaken a review of all 22 Welsh Local Authorities with the following two main objectives:

- 1) To provide assurance that councils have proper arrangements to support their financial sustainability and
- 2) To explain councils’ financial position and the key budget pressures and risks to their sustainability.

A national report will be produced later in the year once all reviews are complete.

The local report for Flintshire County Council is attached in Appendix 1 together with the key questions covered as part of the review.

The organisational response to the recommendation is included as Appendix 2 to the report and there is a separate report on this agenda which details the Council’s latest financial position and its approach to budget setting for the 2025/26 financial year.

A representative from Audit Wales will be in attendance to present their findings in more detail.

RECOMMENDATIONS

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 | That Cabinet consider the report on Financial Sustainability from Audit Wales and agree the organisational response. |
|---|--|

REPORT DETAILS

| | |
|-------------|---|
| 1.00 | EXPLAINING THE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY REPORT |
| 1.01 | The purpose of the report is to provide an overview of the findings of a local report by Audit Wales entitled 'Financial Sustainability Review – Flintshire County Council.' |
| 1.02 | <p>Audit Wales have undertaken a review of all 22 Welsh Local Authorities with the following two main objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To provide assurance that councils have proper arrangements to support their financial sustainability and 2) To explain councils' financial position and the key budget pressures and risks to their sustainability. |
| 1.03 | A national report will be produced later in the year once all reviews are complete. The local report for Flintshire County Council is attached in Appendix 1 together with the key questions covered as part of the review. |
| 1.04 | <p>Overall, the Audit Wales report found that <i>the Council's arrangements do not provide assurance that it can identify strategic transformation in the short and medium-term of the scale required by its financial position. This, combined with its low level of reserves and spiralling costs in some service areas, puts the Council's financial sustainability at serious risk.</i></p> <p>Audit Wales will be in attendance at the meeting to present their findings in more detail.</p> |
| 1.05 | <p>The report includes one recommendation as detailed below:</p> <p>There are weaknesses in how the Council identifies savings. To change this, the Council should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) work with officers and members to develop arrangements for identifying savings of a scale that can impact on its identified budget gap from a range of sources; and 2) develop and implement arrangements to identify and evaluate the impact of these savings on services and service users. <p>The organisational response to the recommendation is included as Appendix 2 to the report and there is a separate report on this agenda which details the Council's latest financial position and its approach to budget setting for the 2025/26 financial year.</p> |

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| 2.00 | RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS |
| 2.01 | There are no direct financial implications arising from the report. The scope, objectives and findings of the report from the Audit Wales financial sustainability review of Flintshire County Council are contained within the Audit Wales report together with the context. The recommendation of the report will be addressed within existing budget and resources. |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|--|-----------|---|------------|----------|-------------|----------------|---------------|---|-------------|--|------------------|--|-----------------|---|
| 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>Negative – the absence of longer-term funding settlements from Welsh Government means that sustainable support for service delivery is challenging for the longer term. Sustainable funding from Welsh Government that provides additional funding for Indexation, Service demands and new legislation will provide a positive and sustainable position for the Council in the longer term.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prevention</td> <td>As above</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Integration</td> <td>Neutral Impact</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Collaboration</td> <td>Services continue to explore opportunities for collaboration with other services and external partners to support positive impacts.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Involvement</td> <td>Communication with Members, residents, and other stakeholders throughout the budget process.</td> </tr> </table> <p>Well-Being Goals Impact</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Prosperous Wales</td> <td>Longer term funding settlements from Welsh Government that provide additional funding for indexation, service demands, and new legislation will aid sustainability and support a strong economy that encourage business investment in the region. The opposite will be true if settlements are inadequate.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Resilient Wales</td> <td>Continuation of services to support communities and social cohesion will have</td> </tr> </table> | Long-term | Negative – the absence of longer-term funding settlements from Welsh Government means that sustainable support for service delivery is challenging for the longer term. Sustainable funding from Welsh Government that provides additional funding for Indexation, Service demands and new legislation will provide a positive and sustainable position for the Council in the longer term. | Prevention | As above | Integration | Neutral Impact | Collaboration | Services continue to explore opportunities for collaboration with other services and external partners to support positive impacts. | Involvement | Communication with Members, residents, and other stakeholders throughout the budget process. | Prosperous Wales | Longer term funding settlements from Welsh Government that provide additional funding for indexation, service demands, and new legislation will aid sustainability and support a strong economy that encourage business investment in the region. The opposite will be true if settlements are inadequate. | Resilient Wales | Continuation of services to support communities and social cohesion will have |
| Long-term | Negative – the absence of longer-term funding settlements from Welsh Government means that sustainable support for service delivery is challenging for the longer term. Sustainable funding from Welsh Government that provides additional funding for Indexation, Service demands and new legislation will provide a positive and sustainable position for the Council in the longer term. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Prevention | As above | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Integration | Neutral Impact | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Collaboration | Services continue to explore opportunities for collaboration with other services and external partners to support positive impacts. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Involvement | Communication with Members, residents, and other stakeholders throughout the budget process. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Prosperous Wales | Longer term funding settlements from Welsh Government that provide additional funding for indexation, service demands, and new legislation will aid sustainability and support a strong economy that encourage business investment in the region. The opposite will be true if settlements are inadequate. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Resilient Wales | Continuation of services to support communities and social cohesion will have | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | |
|--|----------------------------|--|
| | | a positive impact. The opposite will be true if settlements are inadequate. |
| | Healthier Wales | An appropriate level of funding will ensure that communities are supported and will have a positive impact. The opposite will be true if settlements are inadequate. |
| | More equal Wales | A positive impact with greater parity of funding from Welsh Government for all Welsh Local Authorities. The opposite will be true if settlements are inadequate. |
| | Cohesive Wales | Appropriate level of funding will support services working alongside partners. The opposite will be true if settlements are inadequate. |
| | Vibrant Wales | As Healthier and Cohesive Wales above |
| | Globally responsible Wales | Neutral impact. |

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| 4.00 | CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT |
| 4.01 | The report will be shared with Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Governance and Audit Committee. |

| | |
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| 5.00 | APPENDICES |
| 5.01 | Appendix 1 – Audit Wales report on Financial Sustainability Review – Flintshire County Council Appendix 2 – Organisational response to the recommendation |

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 6.00 | LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS |
| 6.01 | None |

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 7.00 | CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS |
| 7.01 | Contact Officer: Gary Ferguson Corporate Finance Manager Telephone: 01352 702271 E-mail: gary.ferguson@flintshire.gov.uk |

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| 8.00 | GLOSSARY OF TERMS |
|------|---|
| 8.01 | <p>Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS): a written strategy which gives a forecast of the financial resources which will be available to a Council for a given period and sets out plans for how best to deploy those resources to meet its priorities, duties and obligations.</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>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> |

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Management response form



Report title: Financial Sustainability

Completion date: [\[date\]](#)

Document reference: [\[insert reference here\]](#)

| Ref | Recommendation | Management response | Completion date | Responsible officers (title) |
|---------|----------------|---|---|------------------------------|
| Page 71 | | Please set out here relevant commentary on the planned actions in response to the recommendations | Please set out by when the planned actions will be complete | |

| | | | | |
|-----------|--|---|---|--|
| <p>R1</p> | <p>There are weaknesses in how the Council identifies savings. To change this, the Council should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 work with officers and Members to develop arrangements for identifying savings of a scale that can impact on its identified budget gap from a range of sources; and 1.2 develop and implement arrangements to identify and evaluate the impact of these savings on services and service users. | <p>Agreed</p> <p>As set out in the MTFS update report the Council acknowledges that it has a serious and major budget challenge due to significantly reduced national funding and the scale of historic cost reductions already taken over the last decade.</p> <p>A Transformation Programme is being developed with governance and resourcing arrangements now agreed. The programme will be prioritised and the early emphasis will be on maximising cost reduction opportunities in areas such as digital, use of assets and service transformation. The Programme will be undertaken and developed through engagement with both officers and members.</p> <p>The impacts and consequences of cost reduction proposals will be subject to formal impact assessments and appropriate consultation with service users</p> | <p>Phased programme of activity within the Transformation Programme in conjunction with budget setting for 2025/26 and beyond.</p> <p>Delivery of a legal and balanced budget by March 2025</p> | <p>Neal Cockerton (Chief Executive)</p> <p>Gary Ferguson (Corporate Finance Manager)</p> |
|-----------|--|---|---|--|

Financial Sustainability Review – Flintshire County Council

Audit year: 2023-24

Date issued: August 2024

Document reference: 4439A2024

This document has been prepared as part of work performed in accordance with statutory functions.

In the event of receiving a request for information to which this document may be relevant, attention is drawn to the Code of Practice issued under section 45 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The section 45 code sets out the practice in the handling of requests that is expected of public authorities, including consultation with relevant third parties. In relation to this document, the Auditor General for Wales and Audit Wales are relevant third parties. Any enquiries regarding disclosure or re-use of this document should be sent to Audit Wales at infoofficer@audit.wales.

We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay. Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg. This document is also available in Welsh.

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Summary report

Why we did this audit

Our audit duties

- 1 The Council has to put in place arrangements to get value for money for the resources it uses, and the Auditor General has to be satisfied that it has done this.
- 2 We undertook this audit to help discharge the Auditor General's duties under section 17 of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004. It may also inform a study for improving value for money under section 41 of the 2004 Act, and/or an examination undertaken by the Auditor General under section 15 of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015.

Our objectives for this audit

- 3 To provide assurance that councils have proper arrangements to support their financial sustainability.
- 4 To explain councils' financial position and the key budget pressures and risks to their financial sustainability.

Why financial sustainability is important

- 5 A combination of factors including the rising cost of delivering services and increased demand for some services is placing significant pressure on local government finances.
- 6 Despite these pressures, councils are still required to set a balanced budget whilst delivering a number of statutory services. Councils also provide a range of non-statutory services that communities rely on.
- 7 In this context, it is important that councils develop a strategic approach to their financial sustainability over the longer term to help them to secure value for money in the use of their resources.

What we looked at and what does good look like¹

- 8 We reviewed the Council's strategic approach to support its financial sustainability, its understanding of its current financial position, and its arrangements for reporting and oversight of its financial sustainability. This audit was limited to a consideration

¹ Defined as 'what should be' according to laws or regulations, 'what is expected' according to best practice, or 'what could be', given better conditions.

of the arrangements that the Council has put in place to support its financial sustainability. It was not a review of the Council's wider financial management, or of the individual financial decisions that the Council has made or intends to make.

- 9 We recognise that some factors which will impact on councils' financial sustainability will be beyond the scope of this audit, as this audit focused on the arrangements that councils are putting in place. However, where we identified common issues through our fieldwork that go beyond the arrangements that councils have put in place, we will report on these in our planned national summary report.
- 10 We also recognise the unprecedented financial challenges that councils have faced for many years and are likely to continue to face for at least the medium term. This includes the public sector funding pressures that followed the financial crisis in 2008 and the impact of the pandemic both at the time and its continued aftereffects. More recently councils have also faced significant real-terms reductions in spending power as a consequence of the fastest increase in inflation for decades. Alongside all of these events there have also been significant increases in the demand for some services, including for example the impact of an ageing population and the resulting increased demand for some services. These factors are largely outside the control of any individual council.
- 11 Against this longer-term background of financial challenges councils have needed to respond to more recent challenges at pace and we understand that inevitably in many, if not all councils, some of the specific details of how financial pressures will be tackled over the medium-term are still to be determined. This report sets out our view on the council's financial arrangements, and where appropriate where we think these could be strengthened to help improve the council's financial sustainability over the medium-term. Our report should be viewed in the context of these wider and longer-term financial pressures.
- 12 The audit sought to answer the overall question – **Does the Council have proper arrangements to support its financial sustainability?** To do this we looked to answer the following questions:
- Does the Council have a clear strategy for its long-term financial sustainability?
 - Is the Council's financial strategy supported by a clear understanding of its financial position?
 - Do the Council's reporting arrangements support regular oversight of its financial sustainability?
- 13 The audit criteria that we used to assess the Council's arrangements against each of our questions is set out in **Appendix 1**. This has been informed by our cumulative knowledge, as well as drawing on some publications produced by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).



Our audit methods and when we undertook the audit

- 14 Our findings are based on document reviews and interviews with a sample of councillors and senior officers. The evidence we have used to inform our findings is limited to these sources. We undertook this work during May 2024.
- 15 We are undertaking this work at each of the 22 principal councils in Wales and, as well as reporting locally to each council, we also intend to produce a national report.



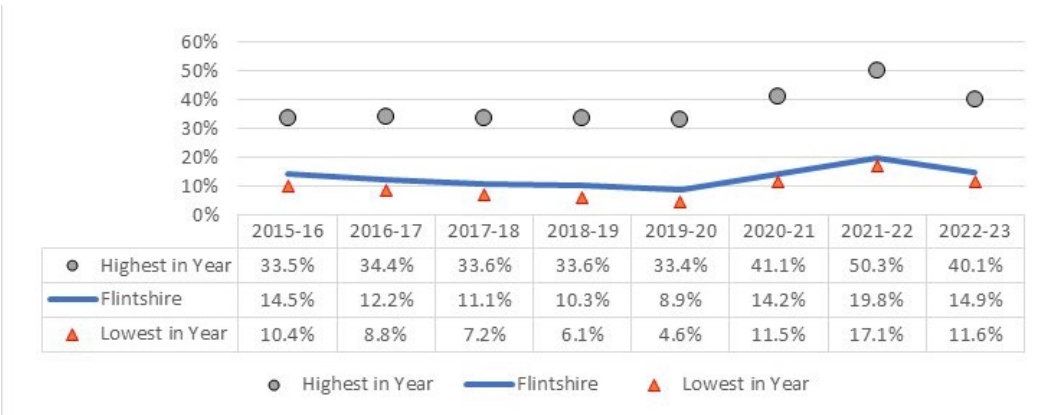
What we found

- 16 Overall, we found that **the Council's arrangements do not provide assurance that it can identify strategic transformation in the short and medium-term of the scale required by its financial position. This, combined with its low level of reserves and spiralling costs in some service areas, puts the Council's financial sustainability at serious risk.** We set out below why we reached this conclusion.
- 17 Although the Council has engaged members well, it has taken a short-term approach to detailed financial planning that has led to weaknesses in identifying and assessing savings, which it has not looked to address. A clear, robust, and agreed financial strategy is important to identify how the Council will respond to anticipated future funding pressures, and particularly how the Council will meet its projected funding gap in the short, medium, and long term.
- 18 During its budget-setting process for 2024-25, the Council ran a series of presentations and workshops with Members to provide updates and allow them to contribute to the process. The engagement process with Members for the 2025-26 budget has already begun. This is earlier than for the previous year and will allow the Council more time to manage the process.
- 19 The Council has worked well with other bodies to identify and compare its assumptions, forecasts, and to identify budget and service pressures. This has been used in its financial planning. However, this is short-term in nature, with no joined-up review of its medium-term budget gaps or pressures.
- 20 The Council was only able to present a balanced budget for 2024-25 after two rounds of substantial savings. The second round, which was unplanned, required £10 million in December 2023, of a total of £32 million planned in-year. The Council is aware that it is not feasible to identify savings in such a manner going forward.
- 21 Additionally, there is no evidence that the Council assessed the potential impact of these savings on services and service users, partly because of the unplanned nature of the savings and the timescales required to achieve them. This could lead

to unforeseen impacts on demand and the Council’s financial resources in the medium and long-term.

22 The importance of planning in the longer-term is framed by the Council’s reserves position. Whilst the Council has not regularly relied on the unplanned use of reserves to balance outturns, a risk of failing to meet the scale of the budget gap may place additional pressure on reserves. This risk would increase with planned usage of earmarked and contingency reserves to balance budgets. In our analysis of 2022-23 accounts, the Council held the third lowest reserves as a proportion of the net cost of services. The low levels of reserves (**Exhibit 1**) means the Council can only rely on these sources of funding in a very limited manner in the future. Reserve levels have continued to decline during 2023-24. This risks it not being able to set balanced budgets or mitigate against unplanned spend in-year.

Exhibit 1: total usable reserves not protected by law² as a percentage of the net cost of services



Source: Audit Wales analysis of council accounts

23 The Council has a clear understanding of its financial position and pressures. A thorough understanding of current and future funding pressures, alongside other risks to financial sustainability is important to ensure that the Council’s financial strategy is well informed and appropriate to the scale of the financial challenge it faces.

24 The Council has projected budget pressures of £24.9 million in 2025-26 and £22.7 million in 2026-27. Key pressures include:

- homelessness: the service has been given an additional £2 million for 2024-25, but this is anticipated to be below the uplift required to meet the demand

² This definition is consistent with our financial sustainability data tool and will differ from the Council’s own definition of usable reserves.

predicted for the financial year. For context, the service's net expenditure in 2022-23 was £1.9 million and was projected to be £5.1 million in 2023-24.

- out of county placements: This service was projected to overspend by £1.6 million in 2023-24 and has been allocated an extra £1.5 million for 2024-25 on top of the allocation for 2023-24.
- the Council's social care budget for 2024-25 includes a 7.44% increase, which is £7.4 million. While many other services are facing cuts to their budget, the Council anticipates that this increase will only be able to match the estimated additional costs arising from increased demand, inflation and costs being passed on from the providers of commissioned services.

- 25 While there are other external pressures on the Council's budget beyond the Council's control, such as central pay awards that have been greater in recent years, there are pressures and opportunities that are within the Council's control that it is not exploring fully. These include developing a more strategic approach to identifying savings, taking decisions to alter service design and delivery on a scale that will impact its financial position, and identifying opportunities for collaboration or transformation.
- 26 The Council had developed plans to introduce a transformation program but these have yet to receive approval from Chief Officers or members. As a result, if agreed and implemented, they are unlikely to deliver savings in the short to medium term, increasing the pressure on traditional savings and reserves.
- 27 Despite a clear understanding of its financial position, the Council has not taken challenging decisions of the scale required. This, combined with Council's low level of reserves and savings approach, does not provide us with the assurance that the Council is in a position to produce balanced budgets going forward.
- 28 The Council has good arrangements for regular and detailed reporting to Members on its financial position, but these have been unable to impact its financial position. Clear, regular, and transparent reporting arrangements are important to enable effective oversight of the Council's financial position, the action it is taking to ensure its financial sustainability and the impact of this on its local communities.
- 29 Arrangements provide Members with the opportunity to scrutinise and challenge the Council's financial decisions and position. In monthly reporting to members, officers provide a very detailed review of spending and progress against planned savings. The detailed level of reporting leads to discussions about smaller matters and detracts from tackling the bigger issues facing the Council.
- 30 Officers also report on the impact of its financial position and decisions against the sustainable development principle, the national well-being goals, and the Council's corporate objectives.
- 31 However, despite these arrangements, the Council's financial position remains challenging. There is little evidence of the Governance and Audit Committee or the Corporate Resources Oversight and Scrutiny Committee providing any mitigation or decision-making to help the Council improve its financial sustainability.



Our recommendations for the Council

Exhibit 2: our recommendations for the Council

Recommendations

- R1 There are weaknesses in how the Council identifies savings. To change this, the Council should:
- 1.1 work with officers and Members to develop arrangements for identifying savings of a scale that can impact on its identified budget gap from a range of sources; and
 - 1.2 develop and implement arrangements to identify and evaluate the impact of these savings on services and service users.

Appendix 1

Audit questions and criteria

Exhibit 3: overall question: Does the Council have proper arrangements to support its financial sustainability?

| Level 2 questions | Criteria |
|---|--|
| Does the Council have a clear strategy for its long-term financial sustainability? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council has clearly set out its strategic approach to support its financial resilience over the short, medium, and long term.• The Council has a medium-term financial plan.• The Council's strategic approach is widely understood and supported by senior officers.• The Council has considered a wide range of options to improve its long-term financial sustainability, including comparison with other bodies.• The Council has identified all the savings it intends to make to meet its funding gap over the medium term, supported by well-evidenced plans based on reasonable assumptions.• The Council's strategy includes the strategic use of reserves to manage its savings programme over the medium term.• The Council has modelled the anticipated impact of its financial strategy over the medium term (eg potential service reductions and council tax levels on local communities). |
| Is the Council's financial strategy supported by a clear understanding of its financial position? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council has calculated its funding gap over the short to medium term based on reasonable assumptions.• The Council has benchmarked its assumptions with appropriate comparator bodies.• The Council has a good understanding of its key budget pressures in the medium and long term.• The Council has a track record of successfully addressing key budget pressures.• The Council has identified the key risks to its financial sustainability and has put in place mitigations. |

| Level 2 questions | Criteria |
|---|--|
| <p>Do the Council's reporting arrangements support regular oversight of its financial sustainability?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is clear who is responsible for monitoring the Council's financial position, including its sustainability over the medium to long term. • The Council regularly reports its financial position to members to enable oversight and scrutiny. • The Council has arrangements to transparently report the impact/anticipated impact of its financial strategy on the achievement of its corporate objectives and on local communities to members and other stakeholders. • The Council's savings plan includes what has been agreed, how much progress has been made in implementation, and links to both its budget and medium-term financial plan. • The Council regularly reports progress in delivering planned savings to members to enable oversight and scrutiny. |



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Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg.



CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Date of Meeting | Thursday, 10 th October 2024 |
| Report Subject | Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2023/24 |
| Cabinet Member | Cabinet Member for Corporate Services |
| Report Author | Corporate Manager – Capital Programme and Assets |
| Type of Report | Strategic |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council published its equality objectives and four-year Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) in April 2020, fulfilling the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duties (PSED), as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

The aim of equality objectives is to address the most significant issues and areas of inequality that face people with protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation).

The Equality Act 2010 places specific duties on public sector organisations in Wales. These include the requirement to publish an annual report by 31st March each year, which must outline progress on meeting the PSED and achieving the equality objectives. The attached annual report highlights the progress the Council has made in implementing its SEP and meeting its equality objectives during 2023/2024.

This is the final annual report for the SEP 2020-24. A new SEP for the period 2024-28 is now in place.

RECOMMENDATIONS

| | |
|----|---|
| 1. | To present the Strategic Equality Pan Annual Report for 2023/24 for consideration and endorsement. |
| 2. | To be assured that the Council has been making progress to meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty. |

REPORT DETAILS

| | |
|------|--|
| 1.00 | EXPLAINING THE STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24 |
| 1.01 | <p>The Council published its equality objectives and four-year Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) in April 2020, fulfilling the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duties (PSED), as set out in the Equality Act 2010 (“The Act”).</p> <p>The purpose of equality objectives is to address the most significant issues and areas of inequality that face people with protected characteristics. For example, disabled people, women, older people.</p> |
| 1.02 | <p>The Act requires that an annual report is produced which specifically outlines progress towards fulfilling each of the Council’s equality objectives and includes specified employment information, including information on training and pay (unless this has already been published). The report must be published by 31st March each year.</p> |
| 1.03 | <p>The Council’s Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report for 2023/24 is provided at Appendix 1.</p> <p>This is the final annual report for the SEP 2020-24 and highlights the Council’s progress in meeting its equality objectives during 2023/2024.</p> <p>This report does not include the full data required for employment and pay statutory reporting. These reports are published separately and are the responsibility of HR.</p> <p>This is the final report for the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24. A new Plan for the period 2024-28 is now in place.</p> |
| 1.04 | <p>Areas of achievement in meeting the equality duties during 2023/24 are summarised below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students from our secondary schools decided to work with the Youth Service to organise their own Pride event to raise awareness of issues facing Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) people and to celebrate being different. Approximately 250 students attended this event. • Several employees in Streetscene have volunteered to become Mental Health Champions, providing support to their colleagues and developing initiatives to promote awareness of mental health issues. The Champions meet quarterly where any emerging trends and concerns are discussed. Their work helps address the unequal mental health outcomes experienced by men, as reported by Mental Health UK. • Social Services formed a partnership with HfT and Deeside Business Forum to support individuals with mental health issues, neurodiversity and learning disabilities, to secure paid employment in their local community. |

| | |
|------|---|
| 1.05 | <p>Whilst the Council can demonstrate progress in achieving its equality objectives there are still areas for improvement, a summary of those areas is provided below.</p> <p>The collection and publication of equality data: Equality data provides a profile of Council customers and employees. This information is important in making sure services are accessible to everyone who needs them and monitoring progress in meeting the equality objectives. Collecting equality data has also been identified as an area of improvement in the Corporate Self-assessment and is a requirement of the PSED.</p> <p>Impact assessments: A new approach on Integrated Impact Assessments (IIA) has been developed with the University of Manchester which will need to be embedded across the organisation to improve the quality of IIAs and ensure they are undertaken consistently.</p> |
| 1.06 | <p>To address the above, two subgroups of the Corporate Equality Board have been established:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Data Group to develop and improve employee and customer data collection and analysis across the Council. • An IIA Quality Assurance Group to ensure the quality of Equality and socio-economic Impact Assessments (EIAs)/IIAs to support service improvement and ensure they meet statutory guidance and regulations. <p>The outcomes of the work of these Groups will be included in the annual reports for the new Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28.</p> |
| 1.07 | <p>Further Information</p> <p>The production and publication of the annual Workforce Information Report and the Equal Pay Audit reports contribute to the Council’s SEP Annual Report. This is because they form part of the reporting requirements of the PSED and will need to be published before, or simultaneously to, the SEP Annual Report 2023/24.</p> <p>The Workforce Information Report and Equal pay Audit are produced by HR and have yet to be published.</p> |
| 1.08 | <p>Next Steps</p> <p>Portfolio management teams were asked to review the SEP Annual Report 2023/24 and identify any further information which can be included, demonstrating progress to meeting the equality objectives. Additional information had been requested but at the time of writing had not yet been returned.</p> |

| | |
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| 2.01 | There are no resource implications associated with this report. |
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| 3.00 | IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT |
|-------------|--|

| 3.01 | <p>Integrated Impact Assessments (IIAs)</p> <p>An integrated impact assessment is not required as this is a report on progress in meeting the Council’s equality objectives, which aim to have a positive impact on people with protected characteristics. A full impact assessment was completed on the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24.</p> <p>Under the five ways of working principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, this report will have the following impact:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="319 698 1311 1093"> <thead> <tr> <th>Ways of Working</th> <th>Impact</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Long-term</td> <td>No change</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prevention</td> <td>Positive impact through promoting equal access to services and information</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Integration</td> <td>No change</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Collaboration</td> <td>No change</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Involvement</td> <td>No change</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Well-being Goals Impact</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="319 1205 1385 1814"> <thead> <tr> <th>Well-being Goal</th> <th>Impact</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Prosperous Wales</td> <td>No change</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Resilient Wales</td> <td>No change</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Healthier Wales</td> <td>Positive impact through reducing health inequalities</td> </tr> <tr> <td>More equal Wales</td> <td>Positive impact through increasing access to services and information for people with protected characteristics</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cohesive Wales</td> <td>Positive impact through addressing hate crime and fostering good relations between people from different protected groups</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vibrant Wales</td> <td>No change</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Globally responsible Wales</td> <td>No change</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Ways of Working | Impact | Long-term | No change | Prevention | Positive impact through promoting equal access to services and information | Integration | No change | Collaboration | No change | Involvement | No change | Well-being Goal | Impact | Prosperous Wales | No change | Resilient Wales | No change | Healthier Wales | Positive impact through reducing health inequalities | More equal Wales | Positive impact through increasing access to services and information for people with protected characteristics | Cohesive Wales | Positive impact through addressing hate crime and fostering good relations between people from different protected groups | Vibrant Wales | No change | Globally responsible Wales | No change |
|----------------------------|---|-----------------|--------|-----------|-----------|------------|--|-------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-----------------|--------|------------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|--|------------------|---|----------------|---|---------------|-----------|----------------------------|-----------|
| Ways of Working | Impact | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Long-term | No change | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Prevention | Positive impact through promoting equal access to services and information | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Integration | No change | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Collaboration | No change | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Involvement | No change | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Well-being Goal | Impact | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Prosperous Wales | No change | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Resilient Wales | No change | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Healthier Wales | Positive impact through reducing health inequalities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| More equal Wales | Positive impact through increasing access to services and information for people with protected characteristics | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Cohesive Wales | Positive impact through addressing hate crime and fostering good relations between people from different protected groups | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Vibrant Wales | No change | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Globally responsible Wales | No change | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | |
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| 4.00 | CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT |
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| | |
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| 4.01 | Relevant officers, including the Corporate Equalities Board, were consulted to produce the Annual Report. |
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| | |
|-------------|---|
| 5.00 | APPENDICES |
| 5.01 | Appendix 1: Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2023/24 |

| | |
|-------------|---|
| 6.00 | LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS |
| 6.01 | Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24 |

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 7.00 | CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS |
| 7.01 | Contact Officer: Fiona Mocko, Strategic Policy Advisor Telephone: Cymraeg 01267 224923 English 01352 702122 E-mail: fiona.mocko@flintshire.gov.uk |

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 8.00 | GLOSSARY OF TERMS These are provided corporately on the Infonet (link) and maintained by the Executive Office |
| | <p>Data collection: is the collection and analysis of information on the profile of customers and employees. For example, people’s age range, disability, gender reassignment, ethnic group, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation to identify actual or potential inequalities.</p> <p>Equal Pay Audit: an equal pay audit compares the pay of men and women and employees with other protected characteristics who are doing equal work. The aim is to identify any differences in pay, investigate the causes of any differences and take action to eliminate unequal pay that cannot be justified.</p> <p>Protected characteristics: these are the groups protected under the Equality Act 2010. The characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.</p> <p>PSED: Public Sector Equality Duty, which places a General Duty and Specific Duty on public bodies. The General Duty requires public bodies to show due regard to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and foster good relations. The Specific Duty in Wales requires public bodies to develop equality objectives and publish Strategic Equality Plans. It also includes the requirement to train employees, assess impact of decisions and undertake equality monitoring.</p> <p>Workforce Information Report: as part of the Public Sector Equality Duty the Council is required to collect and publish a range of information on the diversity profile of its workforce and key HR processes. This includes reports broken down by protected characteristic on recruitment and selection, those who leave the authority and employees who are subject to</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| | disciplinary and grievance procedures. The purpose is to analyse the data to identify areas where there may be potential or actual discrimination and to take action to address this. |
|--|---|

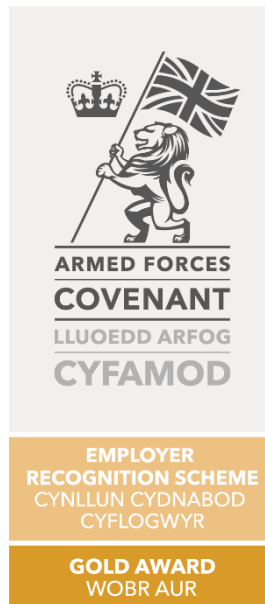
Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2023/24

*Mae'r ddogfen yma ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh*

We can provide this information in alternative formats or in your own language.

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Strategic Equality Plan

Annual Report 2023/2024

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| 1. Strategic Equality Plan Progress Monitoring Report | |
| 2. Profile of the workforce | |
| 3. Profile of services users- Adult Social Services | |
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Executive Summary

Welcome to the fourth and final annual report for Flintshire County Council's Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 which sets out the progress we made to achieve our seven equality objectives during 2023/24. The purpose of the Strategic Equality Plan is to reduce inequalities experienced by people with protected characteristics.

During 2023/24, we maintained our status as a Disability Confident Employer, a scheme designed to encourage employers to recruit and retain disabled people and those with health conditions.

Our commitment to equality is also reflected in our schools. We were delighted when students from our schools decided to work with the Youth Service to organise their own Pride event to raise awareness of issues facing Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) people and to celebrate being different.

We continued to work with the University of Manchester, piloting a new tool for impact assessments. Implementing a new approach to impact assessments will be a priority for 2024/25.

Going forward we will focus on implementing our new Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028, which incorporates actions from Welsh Government Anti-racist Wales Action Plan and the LGBTQ+ Action Plan. We will also work towards achieving the Trust Mark for Victim Support's Hate Crime Charter.

Neal Cockerton
Chief Executive

Councillor Linda Thomas
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services

Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2023/2024

1. Introduction

1.1 This annual report for the Council's [Strategic Equality Plan](#) (SEP) 2020-2024 covers the period April 2023 to March 2024. The report sets out progress to meet our [equality objectives](#) and provides a summary of achievements during this time.

1.2 The Equality Act 2010 introduces a public sector duty to

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation;
- b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

1.3 The protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010 are:

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Age | Disability |
| Gender Reassignment | Marriage and Civil Partnership |
| Pregnancy and Maternity | Race |
| Religion and Belief | Sex |
| Sexual Orientation | |

Our commitment to the Welsh language and treating English and Welsh languages on the basis of equality are set out in the [Welsh Language Compliance Notice](#). The action we have taken to meet our statutory responsibilities for Welsh language are covered in a separate [report](#).

The specific equality duties also require public bodies to: -

- publish objectives to address pay differences;
- publish a statement setting out the steps it has taken or intends to take to meet the objectives and how long it expects to take to meet each objective;
- produce an annual report by 31st March each year, which will include specified employment information, including information on training and pay;
- engage with people from protected groups;
- assess impact of new and revised policies on people from protected groups; and
- publish and use equality information.

The purpose of the equality objectives is to reduce specific areas of inequality which were identified using both qualitative and quantitative evidence. We have also worked with the other public bodies across North Wales to identify regional equality objectives.








1.4 Alongside the [SEP](#) our work on equality is supported by a [Diversity and Equality Policy](#), and Plain Language Guide and delivered as part of various Council documents such as the Council Plan and Customer Strategy.

2. Progress

2.1 Our [equality objectives](#) and [Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24](#) were published in March 2020. The action plan to meet the SEP is provided in Appendix 1; this also highlights the progress made to meet each action.

2.2 The following table sets out our performance towards achieving the actions we set ourselves. For each objective, we have assessed ourselves using the following criteria:

- R** **Limited Progress** - delay in scheduled activity; not on track
- A** **Satisfactory Progress** - some delay in scheduled activity, but broadly on track
- G** **Good Progress** - activities completed on schedule, on track

| Equality Objective | Progress |
|--|---|
| Improve health, well-being and social care outcomes including outcomes for older people and disabled people. |  |
| Reduce gaps in educational attainment between protected groups and implement strategies to improve well-being |  |
| Ensure equal pay within the workplace by having in place fair, open and transparent grading and salary strategies in place |  |
| Improve personal safety for all protected groups |  |
| Increasing access to services and decision making for all protected groups |  |
| Improve living standards of people with different protected characteristics |  |
| Develop our knowledge of the socio-economic duty to protect people from poverty |  |

3. Meeting our Equality Objectives 2023/24

3.1 This section sets out our key achievements to meeting our seven equality objectives during 2023/24.

Objective 1: Improve health, well-being and social care outcomes including outcomes for older people and disabled people.

During 2023/24:

- Managing Anxiety courses were offered to employees to support them to manage their mental health.
- A Mental Health First Aid course was available for employees, which aimed to promote understanding of mental health issues and to provide the skills to respond appropriately to others, who may need support.
- Through Carers Wales, “Me Time”, on-line support sessions were offered to carers.
- We participated in [Time to Talk Day](#) encouraging employees to talk about mental health.
- A Catch, Challenge and Change your Negative Thinking course was offered to employees. This looked at how thinking impacts stress and anxiety and explored the unhelpful thinking styles that can become habit forming and the negative thoughts that can impact daily lives.
- Managing Stress at Work courses were provided to employees, in addition to Well-being, Resilience and Mindfulness workshops. These provided an opportunity to learn about and experience mindfulness skills to help employees notice and become more self-aware of unhelpful patterns of thinking; developing the ability to self-regulate response to stress.
- During the Christmas period, information on support available to employees who felt unable to cope or who were lonely was promoted to the workforce.
- Alongside Jobcentre Plus we organised a successful Health and Well-being event which brought together local health care providers from a wide range of service providers to support individuals in Flintshire who live with a health condition, or who care for someone with a health condition. It gave local people the opportunity to meet these services face to face and access advice about what is available to assist with an existing health condition.
- A Team of Mental Health Champions has now been established within the Streetscene and Transportation Portfolio. The role of the Champions is to be the “Go – To” people who can listen to employees concerns and signpost to effective support.

Making a difference

Introducing mental health champions

The majority of employees in Streetscene are male and initiatives have been introduced to support their mental health. [Mental Health UK](#) report that mental health outcomes for men and women are not equal - 75% of deaths by suicide are males.

Employees have volunteered to become Mental Health Champions in our Streetscene and Transportation Portfolio. They meet quarterly and include as a standing agenda item "Word on the Streetscene" allowing any emerging trends to be discussed during the meeting. Mental Health Champions received training on Vicarious Trauma to provide support and resilience to our public facing workers who respond to emergency and critical incidents.

The Champions have developed a calendar to promote mental health initiatives, this includes providing a "Blue Monday", where Streetscene employees can talk over tea and bacon sandwiches.

The outcomes of the initiatives to promote mental health in Streetscene include:

- Employees feel listened to.
- Proactive rather than a reactive response
- Greater visibility of mental health.
- Awareness of where to get help.

Objective 2: Reduce gaps in educational attainment between protected groups and implement strategies to improve well-being

During 2023/24:

- Three additional schools participated in [Show Racism the Red Card's](#) "Leaders of Now" project. The aims of the programme are to:
 - Empower young people to be actively anti-racist in their own communities.
 - Create a self-sustaining network of anti-racism activists.
 - Enable ongoing longer-term conversations about racism and anti-racism.
 - Enable young people to feel confident in challenging racism within their own spaces.
 - Gather intelligence on what young people want/need from us and be pupil-led.

- Give pupils a voice that is heard by senior school leaders.
- The Inspire Pride Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) youth group continued to run and face to face meetings are now being held.
- There has been a comprehensive offer of support to Refugee families moving into Flintshire. This has included support to access and engage with education along with wrap around services to support the whole family to integrate successfully with the wider community.
- A pre-school pathway working group has been established to create seamless pathways through childcare to education, and to ensure children with needs are supported on this journey.

Making a difference

Celebrating Being Me!!

School students worked with our Youth Service to organise a Pride event, “Celebrating Being Me” for all secondary schools in the county. This event involved workshops on hate crime, digital resilience, self-esteem and body image. The “Celebrating Being Me” event took place as part of Pride Month (June). It was attended by approximately 250 pupils from secondary schools across the county supported by staff from 25 different charities and organisations with an affinity to the LGBTQ+ community.



Objective 3: Ensure equal pay within the workplace by having in place fair, open and transparent grading and salary strategies in place

During the past 12 months:

- We have started to review our pay model to ensure it continues to be fair.
- We have maintained [Disability Confident](#) employment status, this is a UK Government scheme for employers to take action to improve how they recruit, retain and develop disabled people.
- We have continued to work with Hft to support people with learning disabilities or autism to find paid employment. Hft are contracted by the Council to deliver and develop Day and Work opportunities across the county for adults with a learning disability.
- 10 people from Ukraine completed the Clean Slate course during 2023/24. Clean Slate supports people find employment in the construction industry.
- We have continued to offer flexible working patterns to support our employees maintain a work life balance.

Making a difference

Supporting disabled people into work

We have formed a partnership with HfT and Deeside Business Forum to support individuals with mental health issues, neurodiversity and learning disabilities, to secure paid employment in their local community.

In February 2024, a reverse jobs fair was held at Coleg Cambria, with support from Next Steps and HfT. The event was well attended by over 50 individuals and organisations. Following on from the event, one individual has been approached regarding paid employment, and another individual is setting up their own business with support from Big Ideas Wales.

The 'EmployAbility Hub' has also been launched on the Deeside Business Forum website, which lists all the supported individuals who are seeking paid employment.

Next Steps provides support and guidance for people to enter education, training, voluntary work and employment.



Objective 4: Improve personal safety for all protected groups

During 2023/24:

- A part of our commitment to Victim Support’s Hate Crime Charter, Victim Support offered on-line and face to face hate crime awareness training enabling more employees to recognise hate crime, understand the impact of hate crime and know how to make a report. Courses included:
 - On-line hate crime
 - Migrant Rights
 - Hate crime Awareness.
- The Regional Community Cohesion Team also provided a course “Hate Crime and Vulnerability in North Wales” which looked at how employees could support people who had been victims of hate crime.
- There were 193 reports of hate incidents in Flintshire during 2023/24.

| Type of incident | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 |
|--------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Racially motivated | 99 | 92 | 126 | 151 | 111 |
| Homophobic | 40 | 39 | 61 | 58 | 35 |
| Disability Related | 20 | 38 | 65 | 39 | 22 |
| Transphobic | 4 | 7 | 7 | 10 | 11 |
| Religious | 5 | 7 | 6 | 13 | 14 |
| Total | 168 | 183 | 265 | 271 | 193 |

There was a decrease in reporting of hate crime during 2023/24 compared to the previous year. North Wales Police report that figures for Flintshire are consistent with the regional and national picture.

- Members of North Wales Public Sector Equality Network (NWPSSEN) worked together to encourage reporting of hate crime during Hate Crime Awareness week in October. We also published messages on social media alongside other public bodies to encourage people to report hate crime.

- 1,067 employees completed the e-learning module on Hate Crime Awareness.
- Victim Support continued to provide Hate Crime training, which our employees attended.
- We raised the Trans Flag on 20th November to commemorate the Transgender Day of Remembrance in memory of all Trans people who have lost their lives to Transphobic violence.
- We raised the Rainbow flag during LGBT History month to highlight our commitment to equality. The Rainbow flag is a symbol recognised as the celebration of the LGBTQ+ community.
- We supported the White Ribbon Campaign for an end to violence against women.
- 1,013 employees completed the Modern Slavery e-learning training.

Making a difference

Victim Support's Hate Crime Charter

We signed up to Victim Support's Hate Crime Charter during 2022/23 and have been working towards gaining the Trust Mark for demonstrating delivery on the pledges in the Charter.

The Charter sets out the rights of victims, and the commitments of organisations. These include tackling hate crime, providing support and information for victims, and raising employees' awareness of hate crime.

We have been working with Victim Support to raise awareness of hate crime and support employees to recognise hate crime and take action to support victims.

Our next steps are to review relevant policies to ensure they explicitly reference hate crime and support available to the victims, so that we can achieve the Trust Mark.



Objective 5: Increasing access to services and decision making for all protected groups

During 2023/24:

- We launched an innovative service for residents of Flintshire where volunteers from across the organisation, [the Digital Support Squad](#), provide face to face support to give people confidence to use digital technology free of charge.
- The Recycling service has produced a number of informative recycling and environmental documents in multiple languages so that essential information is readily available and accessible to residents who do not speak English or Welsh. As part of the 2024 Resource and Waste Strategy review, we have committed to continuing this practice.
- Vision Support reviewed the Council website to ensure accessibility for people with visual impairments.
- North East Wales Community Cohesion Team funded, facilitated and co-produced nine creative projects for North East Wales (N.E.W.) Futures. This is an initiative to hear the voices of diverse communities in Wrexham, Flintshire and Denbighshire. The projects included supporting self-advocacy through developing a short film about the discrimination experienced by people with a learning disability.

Making a difference

Pride of Flintshire

Pride of Flintshire took place in June 2023. This event celebrates the achievements of our children looked after, including an award ceremony hosted by the young people themselves, and a range of fun activities for children of all ages.

The event is organised and hosted by Flintshire Young Voices Speak Out participation group. The group offers children looked after in Flintshire the chance to have their voices heard, to contribute to developments of the service, give their feedback on policies and procedures within the local authority and attend the Children's Services Forum.

The group welcomes guest speakers including the Police, Looked After Children's Nurses and Housing.



Objective 6: Improve living standards of people with different protected characteristics

During 2023/24:

- Campaigns to promote support with maintaining housing tenancy, managing money, keeping homes safe and accessing benefits were promoted to the workforce and members of the public. These campaigns included information on self-referral to the Housing Support Grant Team.
- We successfully brought a [prosecution](#) against a landlord for not meeting his House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) license conditions, which put the residents, including families and young children, at risk. Residents had complained to the Council about conditions, which we investigated and took action against the landlord.
- 1050 adaptations were made to support disabled people to continue living at home.
- 327 households received energy efficiency improvements.
- We have continued to support Refugees from Syria and Afghanistan and people from Ukraine.

Making a difference

Short-term Emergency Accommodation for young people with learning disabilities

Social Services now has four properties available to support people who find themselves homeless, or in need of accommodation urgently. The most recent addition is a bedsit which has been used to accommodate a young person with autism who was at risk of homelessness.

The Progression Service have supported this young person to engage in the community locally and visit another supported living establishment to build natural friendships. As a result, the young person feels they can live independent of a formal package of support and are being supported to find long term accommodation in the area as they wish to continue building on the networks and friendships they have made.

Objective 7 Develop our knowledge of the socioeconomic duty to protect people from poverty

We continued to support people living in poverty during 2023/24.

During 2023/24:

- We implemented a pilot project “Parents into Employment”, this is aimed at parents who were ready to begin their transition from benefits into the world of work, the programme identified barriers preventing them looking for employment before supporting them to address these issues .
- UK Energy discounts were promoted to the workforce and members of the public to encourage people to claim extra financial support towards energy costs.
- The process for claiming a School Essentials Grant (formerly Uniform Grant) was improved and simplified, reducing the need for form-filling, and speeding up the process of issuing the payments.
- A Financial Well-being course was offered to employees, to help employees strengthen their financial wellbeing by enabling them to make informed decisions when it comes to their financial planning. The course looks at four key areas to support overall financial wellbeing:
 - Understand income and plan spending.
 - Review and keep track of borrowing.
 - Plan financial goals and prepare for those unexpected costs.
 - Start to plan for life beyond work whenever that may be.
- A Pre-Retirement Seminar was offered to employees considering retirement and those who have just started to think about retirement plans, covering lifestyle changes, income and pension.
- 2,103 young people aged 8-18 were able to order sanitary products of their choice from a selection available, up to three months’ supply in one delivery with discrete packaging.
- 484 primary and secondary age children took part in the Food and Fun Scheme during the Summer holidays. Over the 12 days of the programme, the children participated in a broad range of engaging activities focused on health, happiness, and wellbeing. Children attending enjoyed a healthy breakfast, snack and a hot lunch. The scheme helps parents with meeting childcare costs and offers paid employment to local people.

Making a difference

Food and Fun Programme,

Children attending Food and Fun during the summer holidays enjoyed a healthy breakfast, snack and a hot lunch provided by NEWydd Catering and Cleaning. Children also took home recipe cards and ingredients to feed a family of four.

Food and Fun has a keen focus on nutrition education, with children encouraged to try new foods and take part in practical food activities each week. Aura Leisure delivered a wide variety of sporting activities and interactive games alongside a broad offer of enrichment activities coordinated by each school. The children have enjoyed dancing, circus skills and drumming.

The Food and Fun programme benefit pupils long after it ends. School staff build on the relationships they have made with providers and the skills that they have gained from the training undertaken. An example of this can be seen in two schools who have invited the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) dieticians to work with parents on 'Come and Cook' sessions.



4. Collating information and engagement

4.1 Systems have been developed within portfolios and services to capture and monitor the profile of our customers by protected characteristic. However, all the services are different and not all protected characteristics are captured on each system. There is insufficient data available for detailed analysis for most services. It is an ongoing action to improve data capture across services.

4.2 Categories used to collate diversity data are taken from the [Census 2021](#).

4.3 Despite the challenges in collating data, improvements have been made to our processes, we are now:

- Recording the ethnic details of Social Service users. This is now a mandatory field on the Social Services client database.
- Monitoring the profile of tenants, homelessness applicants and people on the housing waiting lists.
- Recording the profile of school pupils and school attainment levels.
- Recording and monitoring diversity data to ensure there is no disproportionate representation of service users of the Youth Justice Team.

4.4 Research has been undertaken by Cyngor Gwynedd for the North Wales Public Sector Equality Network (NWPSSEN), a network of all North Wales public bodies' Equality Officers, to help identify the inequalities experienced by protected groups. This information is available for use by services.

4.5 NWPSSEN has developed an exemplar equality monitoring form with a Top Ten Tips Guidance Note. This helps ensure consistency amongst the equality monitoring categories used by public bodies across North Wales and will contribute to more effective benchmarking.

4.6 Qualitative data is collated through other means such as surveys and focus groups and through engagement with local groups such as:

- Flintshire Disability Forum
- Flintshire Youth Forum
- Faith contacts
- Older People's Forum
- North Wales Regional Equality Network
- School's Councils
- Stonewall Cymru
- Travelling Ahead who work with Gypsies and Travellers
- Unique transgender group
- 50 plus Action Group

4.7 We have continued to collaborate with the Regional Community Cohesion Team to strengthen engagement. During 2023/24 the Community Cohesion Team provided financial support to Menter Iaith Fflint a Wrecsam to promote Saint David's Day to people who did not speak English or Welsh and encourage them to participate in the celebrations. The Regional Community Cohesion Team continued to facilitate an interfaith forum and a multi-cultural hub. The Team engaged with different communities on different themes to help identify potential equality objectives. They also facilitated a workshop with people from ethnic minorities on barriers to employment with public sector bodies.

Using information to meet the general duty.

4.8 The profile of customers/service users is compared against the profile of the community to identify areas of over/under representation or under achievement which enables services to set targets for improvement. An example of this is the work being undertaken by the Youth Offending Team. Analysis of data of referrals to the Team are regularly analysed to identify disproportionality. This work is also supported by surveys of the young people who have been referred to ensure there has been fair treatment.

4.9 Using data in this way helps services to identify potential and actual areas of discrimination and advance equality of opportunity, through setting improvement targets which will be incorporated into the [SEP](#). This information has also been used to identify the [Council's local equality objectives](#).

4.9 Comparisons of satisfaction levels and complaints and information from focus groups is also used to identify any areas of potential and actual discrimination and areas of community tensions which in turn contribute to identifying opportunities for advancing equality and for fostering good relations.

Employment Information

4.10 A full diversity profile of the workforce is published separately and includes information required by the specific duties of the Equality Act 2010. This can be found on our website. **A profile of the workforce can be found at Appendix 2.**

As can be seen from the following tables, during the past four years, there has been a small reduction in the number and percentage of employees who did not complete the employee diversity audit or who have selected the “Prefer not to say” option. An action to improve the equality data of the workforce is included within the new Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28.

Comparison of the number and percentage of employees who did not complete the diversity audit in 2019 and 2024.

| Year | 2019 | | 2024 | |
|--------------------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| | Not stated | | Not stated | |
| Protected characteristic | No. of employees | % of workforce | No. of employees | % of workforce |
| Ethnicity | 2031 | 33.14 | 1977 | 32.26 |
| Disabled | 2083 | 33.99 | 1980 | 32.31 |
| Sexual orientation | 3378 | 55.12 | 2815 | 45.93 |
| Religion and /or belief | 2867 | 46.78 | 2495 | 40.71 |
| Marital status | 2446 | 39.91 | 2379 | 38.82 |

Comparison of the number and percentage of employees who selected the “Prefer not to say” option of the diversity audit in 2019 and 2024.

| Protected characteristic | 2019 | | 2024 | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| | Prefer Not to say | | Prefer Not to say | |
| | No. of employees | % of workforce | No. of employees | % of workforce |
| Ethnicity | 73 | 1.19 | 74 | 1.2 |
| Disabled | 160 | 2.61 | 147 | 2.4 |
| Sexual orientation | 160 | 2.61 | 148 | 2.4 |
| Religion and /or belief | 158 | 2.58 | 147 | 2.4 |
| Marital status | 39 | 0.64 | 28 | 0.46 |

4.11 Qualitative information is gained through feedback from Trade Union representatives at the Joint Trade Union Consultative Committee.

4.12 Qualitative and quantitative information is used to inform equality impact assessments on HR policies and practices and to identify areas of potential/actual inequalities which require further investigation.

5.0 Equal Pay

5.1 Equal pay is the equal payment of men and women for doing equal work as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

There are three kinds of equal work:

- Like work is the same or broadly similar. It involves similar tasks which require similar knowledge and skills, and any differences in the work are not of practical importance.
- Work rated as equivalent has been rated under a valid job evaluation scheme as being of equal value in terms of how demanding it is.
- Work of equal value is not similar and has not been rated as equivalent but is of equal value in terms of demands such as effort, skill and decision-making.

5.2 A detailed analysis of the annual Equal Pay Audit by gender, disability, ethnicity and religion as at 31st March 2024, is published separately on our website. A summary of the gender pay gap since the Strategic Equality plan 2020 - 24 was published is set out in the following table.

| Gender Pay Gap | March 31 st 2020 | March 31 st 2021 | March 31 st 2022 | March 31 st 2023 |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Overall | 13.11% | 13.75% | 13.71% | 12.76% |
| NJC/ Green Book | 15.00% | 15.37% | 15.47% | 13.99% |

6.0 Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs)

6.1 Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) are one of the methods being used to mainstream equality and to support services identify specific equality targets.

6.2 A regional EIA template has been developed by NWPSen which includes equality, Welsh language, and socio-economic impacts. This was shared with both the Equality and Human Rights Commission and Welsh Language Commissioner to seek their feedback before being adopted by NWPSen members. This has now been incorporated within our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) developed to capture the relevant information required for a range of impact assessments- including environment, health, poverty, and Welsh language. Guidance notes are available for each protected characteristic to support IIA authors.

6.3 We are working with the University of Manchester piloting a new tool for IIAs, the Carbon and Co-benefits Decision Making Support Tool. The university is now at the evaluation stage, interviewing IIA authors and decision makers to understand how this influences and improves decision making. IIAs must be included within all our strategic committee reports to ensure decision makers understand the impacts of their decisions.

6.4 Periodic reviews of committee reports are undertaken to sample impact assessments to:

- Ensure they are being completed by report authors for relevant reports.
- Sample the quality of the content.
- Ensure they are available for decision makers.

The outcome of the review is reported to the Council's Chief Officer Team with recommendations for improvements.

6.5 Bespoke impact assessment training is available for teams in addition to an e-learning programme.

7.0 Training

7.1 Details of how we promote understanding and knowledge about equality is set out in the [SEP](#). There are two mandatory e-learning packages specifically on equality:

- Equality Act 2010 – completed by 710 employees.
- Equality in the Workplace – completed by 630 employees.

7.2 These are supported by e-learning packages on:

- Modern slavery – completed by 766 employees.
- Hate crime – completed by 1,067 employees.

7.3 Diversity and equality is also included in:

- Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) programme at all levels.
- E-learning modules for new managers.
- Corporate induction

7.4 During 2023/24, in addition e-learning programmes and workshops were provided on: -

- Vision Impairment Awareness course delivered by Vision Support.
- Hate Crime awareness training was delivered by Victim Support.
- Unconscious Bias training -attended by 31 employees.
- Autism Awareness (online completed by 72 employees and 39 employees attended in person workshops).
- Menopause Awareness attended by 29 employees.
- Violence Against Women e-learning module completed by 722 employees.
- Neurodiversity at work as part of Neurodiversity week 2024.

As part of Intentional Women’s Day 2024, Confidence Skills for Women and Influencing Skills for Women courses were made available to employees.

8.0 Procurement

8.1 Details of how equality is embedded into the procurement process is set out in the [SEP](#). Equality questions are included within our pre-qualification questionnaire (PQQ) for all tenders. In addition, Modern Slavery has been included as an element of the PQQ, this looks at actions potential contractors are taking to eliminate modern day slavery within their workforce and supply chains. Furthermore, social value clauses are included within contracts over £1 million; contracts of £10,000 include an element of social value in the scoring methods.

8.2 We have signed up to Welsh Government’s (WG) Code of Practice: Ethical Employment in Supply Chains. We have committed to a set of actions to tackle illegal and unfair employment practices. We publish an annual [Modern Slavery statement](#), this sets out the actions we will take to ensure there is no modern slavery within our supply chains.

9.0 Conclusion


9.1 This report outlines the progress we are making to meet both the general and specific public sector equality duties. It is however clear that collating some data to monitor progress has been challenging. Our priorities are to:



- Establish a Data Group to develop and improve employee and customer data collection and analysis across the Council.
- Improving the quality and number of IIAs that are completed and establish a new Quality Assurance Group to oversee this.
- Implement our new SEP 2024-28 which incorporates actions from Welsh Government's Anti-racist Wales and LGTQ+ Action Plan within the new Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28.



**Thank you for reading our Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report
2023/24.**


Appendix 1 Strategic Equality Plan Action Plan 2020- 2024


2023/24 Progress


| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| Objective 1: Improve health, well-being and social care outcomes including outcomes for older people and disabled people. | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| Setting up a registered Children’s Home to help avoid the need for residential placements outside Flintshire | Senior Manager Children’s Services | Flintshire’s commitment to developing a programme of Children’s homes to help avoid the need for residential placements outside of the county is ongoing. Over the last 12 months, we have been successful in registering four of our five new Childrens’ Residential Homes with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW). We continue to work with CIW around the registration process for the last of the fifth home.  |
| Continue to develop services to support the reduction of the number of children looked after by the Local Authority through the recommissioning of current services. | Senior Manager Children’s Services | The development of an in-house, Special Guardian Order service, now has two dedicated members of staff who support to develop Special Guardianship Order options. |



| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|---|---|---|
| Objective 1: Improve health, well-being and social care outcomes including outcomes for older people and disabled people. | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| | | <p>Recommissioning is due to commence for Families First Services to begin in April 2025.</p> <p></p> |
| Continuing to grow our in-house fostering service to support more looked after children, measured by the increase in new foster carer approvals in the year | Senior Manager Children’s Services | <p>The Foster Bear campaign was launched in January 2023 in collaboration with Primary Schools across Flintshire to raise awareness of local authority fostering and outline the urgency to recruit more foster carers in the county.</p> <p>So far, thirteen primary schools have welcomed Foster Bear into their classrooms, and children are given an activity pack that contains a Foster Bear teddy and activity book to take home.</p> <p></p> |
| Plan to provide additional placements for ‘discharge to recover and assess’ in the in-house provision | Senior Manager Adults Services / Commissioning Manager | The final design plans for Tŷ Croes Atti have been approved and construction work is well underway on the site which previously housed the Flint Cottage Hospital. This will increase capacity for step down care within our in-house provision, 12 |




| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|--|--|--|
| Objective 1: Improve health, well-being and social care outcomes including outcomes for older people and disabled people. | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| | | <p>step-down Discharge to Recover and Assess (D2RA) beds have been agreed at Tŷ Croes Atti, which will increase the provision across Flintshire from its current level of 16 to a total of 28. We anticipate that this facility will be completed and operational by April 2025</p> <p></p> |
| Continuing to grow the Microcare market, measured by the increase in Microcare providers. Baseline data from 2021/22 is 24 with the target by 2023 to be 34. | Commissioning Manager | <p>There have been an additional 14 Micro-Care enterprises setup during this financial year. This has grown the number of active Micro-Carers to 50 with a further 16 potentially in the pipeline. We are now also able to commission support from Micro-Carers</p> <p></p> |
| Continuing to grow our in-house homecare service to support more people to live at home, measured by the rate of increasing the rate of those people over 65 who are helped to live at home from 33 in 1,000 to 34 in 1,000. | Senior Manager Adults Services / Commissioning Manager | <p>Flintshire continues to utilise a rolling scheme of recruitment to grow our in-house homecare service to support more people to live well at home. However, recruitment across social care continues to be a challenge. To rise to this challenge, the homecare service has a designated task team</p> |




| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| Objective 1: Improve health, well-being and social care outcomes including outcomes for older people and disabled people. | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| | | <p>looking at new and innovative ways to attract applicants to the service, and a recruitment event was held in March 2024. This work is ongoing and will support the service to grow and expand the offering to people living in our communities.</p> <p></p> |
| Developing an Early Years Strategy to ensure that all our children ages 0-7 have the best possible start in life and can reach their full potential. | Senior Manager Children’s Services | A draft Early Years Strategy has been completed. However, as WG notified closure of the Early Years Pathfinder funding late December, 12 months earlier than anticipated, a decision is to be made by the Flintshire Early Years Board (June 2024) and Regional Partnership (April 2024) on the way forward. This will include the prioritisation of exiting projects. |
| Work to the action plan to further improve compliance with the National Autism Code of Practice. | Commissioning Manager | We have developed a local Implementation Plan which aims to ensure compliance with the Autism Code of Practice. This Plan is currently being evaluated as part of WG’s national evaluation of compliance with the Code of Practice. |

| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|---|-----------------------|--|
| Objective 1: Improve health, well-being and social care outcomes including outcomes for older people and disabled people. | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| | | <p>WG have evaluated the Plan and work continues to ensure compliance in all actions.</p> <p></p> |
| Continue to develop carers services through partnership with Third Sector providers | Commissioning Manager | <p>North East Wales Carers' Information Services (NEWCIS) has several Winter Warm boxes available for carers to support them with heating costs. The boxes include radiator reflectors, window film, items of warm clothing and fleece blankets. NEWCIS has also gained funding to buy some electric throws which again helps to keep the heating turned down low.</p> <p>Courses are being arranged with Scottish Power and Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) which will support carers with high energy costs. The courses will look at energy saving methods and financial help that is available to carers.</p> <p>Work is in progress to review our currently commissioned services to understand what is working and where there may be gaps that we</p> |



| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|---|---|--|
| Objective 1: Improve health, well-being and social care outcomes including outcomes for older people and disabled people. | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| | | <p>need to fill to support our carers. We are working to ensure that what will be commissioned is co-produced with carers themselves ensuring that they have input into the services available.</p> <p></p> |
| <p>Establish a Dementia Strategy Implementation Group, to include representation from people with lived experience.</p> | <p>Commissioning Manager / Senior Manager Adults Services</p> | <p>A Dementia Strategy Project Board was established in 2022 to implement the key actions identified in the Flintshire Dementia Strategy. The actions align with the implementation of the All-Wales Dementia Care Pathway of Standards.</p> <p>The Project Board meets every two months and receives input and feedback from citizens by linking to the Dementia Friendly Community Chairs Group.</p> <p>The Board’s current focus is on supporting the implementation of the new North Wales Dementia Friendly Community Recognition Scheme and the priorities identified by people with</p> |




| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| Objective 1: Improve health, well-being and social care outcomes including outcomes for older people and disabled people. | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| | | lived experience during the recent Dementia Listening Campaign.  |
| To promote the creative use of direct payments with individuals and carers to meet their outcomes. | Senior Manager Adults Services | The Direct Payments Support Service continue to encourage both citizens and social care practitioners to focus on and develop bespoke, outcomes focused solutions to meeting assessed social care needs and to help people to achieve agreed well-being outcomes. Carers reported that the Direct Payment Scheme contributed positively towards their wellbeing and that of the cared for. Carers felt that they were able to be sustained in their caring role and maintain supporting their cared for living at home.  |
| Further development of Young Carers Service and the Young Carers ID Card | Senior Manager Children's Services | Our Young Carer ID card has been launched successfully and engagement and uptake has been increasing. We now have more than 400 Young Carers across Flintshire |


| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| Objective 1: Improve health, well-being and social care outcomes including outcomes for older people and disabled people. | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| | | registered with the scheme. Work is ongoing establishing links with local businesses to encourage them to offer discounts and benefits for young people carrying the Young Carers ID Card. This acts as a thank you for the work they do as a Young Carer.  |
| Work in partnership with Aura and Street Games to deliver free on-line fitness session for LGBT young people | Information and Involvement Officer | The sessions were offered face to face to high schools across the County. One secondary school made a video to showcase their work. This project has now ended.  |
| Develop and implement an action plan in response to the research we have commissioned into the health needs of Travellers. | Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer | The report has been published and the recommendations will be considered and included in the new SEP 2024 – 28, where applicable, going forward.  |
| Develop a transit site for Travellers to reduce the number of unauthorised encampments at unsafe and unhealthy locations and improve access to health services. | Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer | Location of a transit site has been agreed, waiting on approval to progress planning application. |


| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| Objective 1: Improve health, well-being and social care outcomes including outcomes for older people and disabled people. | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| | | Reporting to seek approval has started.  |
| Work with Community Midwife Team and Vaccination Team to increase take up of Traveller children receiving MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella) vaccine | Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer | Offer of MMR has been made to all families in Flintshire. A video message has been shared by leaders from the Travelling community to encourage take-up.  |
| Implement a Health and Well- being strategy for our employees and introduce initiatives to improve our employees' mental health | Senior manager HR and OD | Additional annual leave was introduced in October 2022.  |




| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|--|---|--|
| Objective 2: Reduce gaps in educational attainment between protected groups and implement strategies to improve well-being | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| Implement an electronic system to record and report on identity-based bullying in schools | Learning Advisor, Health, Well-being and Safeguarding | A Challenging Bullying Online Reporting platform for schools to notify the Council of incidents is in place. Between April 2023 and March 2024 there were 28 incidents reported by schools. 17 reports were completed by 10 primary schools.11 |



| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|--|---|---|
| Objective 2: Reduce gaps in educational attainment between protected groups and implement strategies to improve well-being | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| | | reports were completed by 3 secondary schools.  |
| Monitor Estyn Inspection Reports and identify any equalities issues in schools to target support to school | Senior Manager School Improvement | Progress against recommendations is monitored by GwE and the Local Authority. Only one recommendation (in one school) has identified any equality issues –improving diversity in the curriculum.  |
| Monitor compliance by all schools on the Wales Government Respecting Others (statutory guidance) | Learning Advisor, Health, Well-being and Safeguarding | As part of schools safeguarding reporting to the local authority, they are asked to disclose whether they have in place up to date relevant policies, including Respecting Others. This exercise is now annual and by monitoring schools in this way, they can be followed up should they not have an active policy / require additional support. Schools' engagement with the online Respecting Others reporting platform is also a means of monitoring schools' compliance with the guidance. |


| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|--|---|---|
| Objective 2: Reduce gaps in educational attainment between protected groups and implement strategies to improve well-being | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| | |  |
| Monitor school exclusion rates by protected groups to target support to schools. | Senior Learning Advisor Engagement | On-going. Education and Youth Overview and Scrutiny committee has recognised the progress being made with this target.  |
| Monitor persistent school absenteeism by protected characteristic | Senior Learning Advisor Engagement | Regular data reviews were undertaken half termly to identify vulnerable individuals. The Inclusion Welfare Team visited any children identified as vulnerable. Inclusion Welfare Officers (IWO) have been trained to profile attendance trends within secondary school bases. A new information technology system was implemented in January 2024, and this has resulted in some technical issues regarding profiling absenteeism.  |
| Ensure all schools access modern slavery training. | Learning Advisor, Health, Well-being and Safeguarding | The Home Office offers 2 free e-learning courses on modern slavery: First responder training. This course provides guidance on: |


| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| Objective 2: Reduce gaps in educational attainment between protected groups and implement strategies to improve well-being | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to identify indicators of modern slavery • how to refer people to the National Referral Mechanism <p>Child victims of modern slavery. This course covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • child-specific indicators of modern slavery • the safeguarding process • best practice for referring children to the National Referral Mechanism <p>Courses are 45 minutes duration each and Designated Safeguarding leads and deputy leads in schools are being encouraged to undertake both courses.</p>  |
| Reduce the gap and educational attainment level for those eligible for/receiving free school meals. | Senior Manager School Improvement | WG restarted the reporting of key stage 4 outcomes at a school level using the approach adopted prior to the pandemic. All benchmarking, comparisons with other establishments, and the placing of schools and local authorities in rank |




| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| Objective 2: Reduce gaps in educational attainment between protected groups and implement strategies to improve well-being | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| | | <p>order is no longer acceptable or possible. The only comparative data available to local authorities in these key stages are the national averages. WG's expectation is that performance information is used to support schools and local authorities to understand their own context and improve their own offer. It should not be used in isolation to judge performance or compare schools. At key stage 4 2022/23, Flintshire pupils not entitled to free school meals scored higher in the Capped 9 indicator (interim measures version) with 375.5 points than pupils eligible for free school meals with 287.4 points. The gap was slightly smaller at 88.1 points compared to the national gap of 88.8 points.</p> <p></p> |
| Continue to grow/expand LGBT Youth Group | Information and Involvement Officer | The LGBT+ group continues to run during term time delivered by Theatre Clwyd in Mold and Youth Service promote the group via social media |





| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|--|---|--|
| Objective 2: Reduce gaps in educational attainment between protected groups and implement strategies to improve well-being | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| | | and sign post young people to the group.  |
| To develop a partnership with Viva to offer an additional LGBT+ group which will meet in the evenings | Information and Involvement Officer | Youth Service are working in partnership with Viva and Pride Cymru to deliver a LGBT+ youth club twice a month during term time. The sessions are promoted via Youth Service's social media and the Information and Involvement officer drop-in sessions.  |
| Monitor Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people entering youth justice system | Youth Justice Manager | Ongoing monitoring through the services' Disproportionality Action Plan and reports to the Youth Justice Service Management Board  |
| Monitor the impact of the Pupil Development Grant (PDG) delegated to schools to close the attainment gap for pupils receiving free school meals. | Senior Manager School Improvement Systems | At key stage 4 2022/23, Flintshire pupils not entitled to free school meals scored higher in the Capped 9 indicator (interim measures version) with 375.5 points than pupils eligible for free school meals with 287.4 points. The gap was slightly smaller |


| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|--|---|---|
| Objective 2: Reduce gaps in educational attainment between protected groups and implement strategies to improve well-being | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| | | at 88.1 points compared to the national gap of 88.8 points.  |
| Raise profile of STEM subjects to pupils from a Black and minority ethnic background | Senior Manager School Improvement | Work to further promote STEM subjects is included where relevant in the support plans for individual schools.  |
| Provide revised Trans policy guidance and resources to schools | Learning Advisor, Health, Well-being and Safeguarding | Local Trans Guidance for schools remains on hold pending WG Guidance. A WG consultation is expected on their guidance in 2024. Publication will take place thereafter. This will inform how the local policy will be revised to ensure they align. Schools have been attending Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) training opportunities throughout the year including the establishment of RSE clusters with primary and secondary schools working together to meet the requirements of the RSE Code. The mandatory RSE Code supports schools to design their RSE. The |




| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|--|-----|---|
| Objective 2: Reduce gaps in educational attainment between protected groups and implement strategies to improve well-being | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| | | <p>content is set within the context of broad and interlinked learning strands, namely: relationships and identity; sexual health and well-being; empowerment, safety and respect. Clusters have been provided funding to access training and resources to support the learning strands.</p> <p></p> |





| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|--|-------------------------------|---|
| Objective 3 Ensure equal pay within the workplace by having in place fair, open and transparent grading and salary strategies in place | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| Undertake an annual equal pay audit and develop an action to reduce the pay difference between men and women and other protected groups. | HR Policy and Reward Officer | <p>Report for 2022/23 published in March 2024, in line with statutory reporting timeframes. Report for 2023/24 has not yet been published.</p> <p></p> |
| Support people with learning disabilities to gain paid employment through Project Search. | Planning and Development Team | <p>The last 12 months have been an exciting time for the local Project SEARCH programme in terms of innovation and development of the local service. Within Flintshire, the programme expanded to offer two</p> |

| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| Objective 3 Ensure equal pay within the workplace by having in place fair, open and transparent grading and salary strategies in place | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| | | distinct programmes and became the first Project SEARCH scheme in the UK to offer a dedicated programme for adults aged over 25. The expansion offering two schemes has proven to be a real success. Two graduation ceremonies have been held for students to celebrate completing their internships with their family and friends.  |
| Achieve Level 3 Disability Confident Leader – DWP Disability Confident Employer | HR Policy and Reward Officer | We have maintained level 2 status of the Scheme.  |
| Continue to work with the “Clean Slate Cymru” project, an initiative funded by the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) to support refugees and Travellers secure employment. | Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer | Additional course was facilitated by Careers Wales which was attended by refugees at Mold.  |
| Continue to collate diversity data from employees to increase response rate | HR Business Information Officer | Diversity data continues to be collated and increases year on year. Non-school data is captured at recruitment stage. However, there are still gaps in school data. ICT are progressing two factor authentication to enable roll out of Employee Self |




| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|---|----------------------------------|--|
| Objective 3 Ensure equal pay within the workplace by having in place fair, open and transparent grading and salary strategies in place | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| | | Service to school employees which will enable recording of diversity data.  |
| Undertake annual workforce equality monitoring and develop an action plan to address and reduce any inequalities. | HR Business Information Officer | Report has been completed for 2023/24 but not yet been published.  |
| Identify opportunities to use positive action to reduce inequalities. | HR Business Information Officer | Analysis to take place following publication of report.  |
| Develop a strategic and consistent approach to embedding social value in the procurement process to increase apprenticeship opportunities to disabled people, people from a Black and minority ethnic background and women. | Social Value Development Officer | Contracts over £25k are assessed to identify whether social value can be added. It is mandatory for contracts over £1M. Recruitment of disabled people and people from a Black and ethnic minority background is included as a social value option for contractors.  |
| Increase the number of employees who complete the equality e-learning modules. | Strategic Policy Advisor | The e-learning modules for equality are mandatory and process is now in |



| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|--|-----|--|
| Objective 3 Ensure equal pay within the workplace by having in place fair, open and transparent grading and salary strategies in place | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| | | place advising managers of who has not completed the modules. This means that there is now an increase in completion rates. Over 65% employees have completed this training module.  |



| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|--|---|---|
| Objective 4: Improve personal safety for all protected groups | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| Continue training employees in key teams to recognise and report a hate motivated incident and hate crime. | Regional Community Cohesion Officer | Regular Hate crime training is provided through the Victim Support  |
| Raise awareness of hate incidents and hate crime in schools through the Welsh Government, Community Cohesion Grant | Strategic Policy Advisor /Regional Community Cohesion Officer | Training was delivered across schools in Flintshire.  |
| Develop initiatives to promote community cohesion through the Regional Community Cohesion Grant | Strategic Policy Advisor /Regional Community Cohesion Officer | A range of activities were undertaken by the Regional Community Cohesion Team including the Diverse Together project, bringing people from different backgrounds together virtually.  |

| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|--|---------------------------------|--|
| Objective 4: Improve personal safety for all protected groups | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| Participate in LGBT History month. | Strategic Policy Advisor | A virtual celebration was held through raising the Rainbow flag and promoting through social media and a press release.  |
| Participate in the annual hate crime awareness week to increase reports across all protected characteristics. | Strategic Policy Advisor | We worked with the North Wales Public Sector Equality Officer Network promoting information through social media.  |
| Increase the number of employees who complete the Welsh Government's Domestic Violence against women e-learning modules. | HR Business Information Officer | Over 83% employees have now completed the training.  |
| Increase the number of employees who attend Modern Slavery training. | Strategic Policy Advisor | Over 64% employees completed the Modern Slavery e-learning training.  |



| Strategic Equality Plan – Action plan | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|
| Objective 5: Increasing access to services and decision making for all protected groups | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| Put in place equality monitoring processes in key services to identify potential barriers to access | Strategic Policy Advisor | This action is being included as part of the Anti-racist Wales action plan and being taken forward. |



| Strategic Equality Plan – Action plan | | |
|---|-----------------------------|---|
| Objective 5: Increasing access to services and decision making for all protected groups | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| | |  |
| Complete review of website to ensure it meets accessibility standards | Digital Solutions Architect | Weekly checks are being completed to check compliance. A Council wide Web Group has been established to ensure the website meets the accessibility standards.  |
| Review opportunities to improve access to public transport for disabled and older people | Transport Manager | Fflecsi service has been introduced in Holwell to great success. Local travel arrangements are currently being reviewed following procurement exercise. All Active Travel Schemes for 2023/24 have been completed as well as a package of crossing facilities at historic School, Crossing Patrol sites. Safer Routes in Communities schemes are progressing following recent successful award of funding from WG.  |
| Develop an activity plan for the new model of Archive Services which positively targets the engagement of protected groups. | Principal Archivist | Submission for Heritage Lottery funding, which included a draft Activity Plan, has been successful. The Activity Plan is currently in the process of development. |

| Strategic Equality Plan – Action plan | | |
|--|---------------------------------|--|
| Objective 5: Increasing access to services and decision making for all protected groups | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| | |  |
| Secure Welsh Government funding enable WiFi on Traveller sites including the transit site. | Gypsy Traveller Liaison Officer | Application has been submitted to WG. Awaiting outcome from WG.  |
| Work with Aura (leisure services) and Street Games to provide organised sports activities on our own Traveller sites | Gypsy Traveller Liaison Officer | An application has been made to the Serious Violence Fund to support this activity. Two youth engagement officers have been employed to work with Gypsy, Roma, Travellers and refugee children for twelve months |

| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| Objective 6: Improve living standards of people with different protected characteristics | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| Develop plan for a transit site for Travellers. | Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer | Location of transit site has been agreed, waiting for formal approval to proceed with planning application.  |
| Become a resettlement area for Asylum Seekers and Refugees | | We are now supporting ten families in Flintshire who are residing in Dispersed Accommodation. The Home Office target for 2024/2025 is 377 bed spaces in Flintshire.  |



| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|---|---|---|
| Objective 7 Develop our knowledge of the socio-economic duty to protect people from poverty | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| <p>Ensuring access to period products, free of charge and accessible in the most practical and dignified way possible to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all learners in all schools; • those who menstruate; and • prioritising those from low-income households. | <p>Learning Advisor – Health, Well-being & Safeguarding</p> | <p>All female pupils in Flintshire schools (x78) have access to a selection of sanitary products in school. Period products are being distributed through each Foodbank in the county. All youth groups have been provided with a selection of period products. Aura Leisure Officers carry period product first aid kits with them and products are promoted across toilet facilities in leisure centres and libraries. Products are also distributed through 15 adult community learning venues. Education staff and community staff have had period product training to support having effective conversations with those who menstruate and understanding more about the products available. Community events held online for parents/carers of young people to raise awareness on period products and menstrual health. Reusable period products online ordering programme for young people aged 8 – 18 years old ran throughout March 2024.</p> |

| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|--|--|--|
| Objective 7 Develop our knowledge of the socio-economic duty to protect people from poverty | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| | |  |
| Maximise the numbers attending the Food and Fun programme (previously known as School Holiday Enrichment Programme) in the school summer holidays. | Learning Advisor – Health, Well-being & Safeguarding | 484 children benefitted from Food and Fun at 13 schools during the Summer of 2023 including two special schools. Children attending enjoyed a healthy breakfast, snack and a hot lunch. Food and Fun has a keen focus on nutrition education and physical activity, with children encouraged to try new foods different physical activities each week. 496 ‘Bag Bwyd’ (pantry ingredients) to feed a family of four, were provided to the parents of children attending  |
| Continue to raise awareness of Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) and ensure that all low-income households are aware of what they are entitled to and how they can make a claim. | Team Manager – Benefits Assessment | Take Up actions have included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated correspondence issued to all applicants for Disabled Facilities Grants, Free School Meals and School Essential Grants to advise they may also be eligible for CTRS. |

| Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| Objective 7 Develop our knowledge of the socio-economic duty to protect people from poverty | | |
| Action | Who | Progress |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created Cost of Living Hub to allow customers to easily access information in relation to all Benefits and Grants including CTRS. Contacting customers who are claiming Housing Benefit only to see if they wish claim CTRS. Promoted to all Council Tax paying households as part of annual billing. Promotion at local hubs/network events.  |
| Continue to raise awareness of the Welfare Reform Team who can support any customers impacted by Welfare Reform changes or who are simply struggling financially. | Welfare Reform Team Manager | <p>Referrals continue to be received due to the continuation of the impacts of the cost of living. It is envisaged that figures will continue to rise with the increased costs of energy bills and general cost of living expenditure.</p>  |
| Continue to raise awareness to ensure all low-income households are aware they may be eligible to receive Free School Meals and a uniform Grant. | Team Manager – Grants and Performance | <p>Take Up actions have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contacting all eligible Free School Meals (FSM) customers who had not claimed the School Essential Grant to advise of their eligibility |

Strategic Equality Plan – Action Plan

Objective 7 Develop our knowledge of the socio-economic duty to protect people from poverty

| Action | Who | Progress |
|--|-----------------------------|--|
| | | and where necessary provide help to complete the application form. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting via website and schools. • Promotion at local hubs/network events.  |
| Provide holistic and financial support to those customers who find themselves in financial difficulty before they fall into poverty. | Welfare Reform Team Manager | Ongoing advice and support forms part of the Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) application process even if a DHP is unsuccessful. Support is promoted at local hubs/network events.  |

Appendix 2 Profile of the workforce (including school employees) as at 31st March 2024

Profile of employees by Ethnic Origin

| 2024 | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Ethnic Origin | Total employees | % employees |
| BME | 54 | 0.88% |
| White | 4024 | 65.66% |
| Not Stated | 1977 | 32.26% |
| Prefer Not to Say | 74 | 1.20% |
| Totals | 6129 | 100.00% |

Profile of employees who classify themselves as disabled.

| 2024 | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Disabled employees | Total employees | % employees |
| No | 3818 | 62.29% |
| Not Stated | 1980 | 32.31% |
| Yes | 184 | 3.00% |
| Prefer Not to Say | 147 | 2.40% |
| Total | 6129 | 100.00% |

Profile of employees by Sexual Orientation

| 2024 | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Sexual Orientation | Total employees | % employees |
| Bi-Sexual | 33 | 0.54% |
| Gay Man | 19 | 0.31% |
| Gay Woman/Lesbian | 27 | 0.44% |
| Heterosexual / Straight | 3072 | 50.12% |
| Not Stated | 2815 | 45.93% |
| Other | 15 | 0.24% |
| Prefer Not to Say | 148 | 2.41% |
| Total | 6129 | 100.00% |

Profile of employees by Religion and Belief

| Religion or Belief | 2024 | |
|--------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| | Total employees | % employees |
| Buddhist | 7 | 0.11% |
| Christian | 1955 | 32.06% |
| Hindu | 1 | 0.02% |
| Jewish | 2 | 0.03% |
| Muslim | 5 | 0.08% |
| None | 1435 | 23.41% |
| Not Stated | 2495 | 40.71% |
| Other | 71 | 1.16% |
| Prefer Not to Say | 147 | 2.40% |
| Sikh | 1 | 0.02% |
| Total | 6129 | 100.00% |

Profile of employees by Marital Status

| Marital Status | 2024 | |
|--|-----------------|---------------|
| | Total employees | % employees |
| Divorced or in a Dissolved Civil Partnership | 200 | 3.26% |
| Married or in a Civil Partnership | 2115 | 34.51% |
| Not Married or in a Civil Partnership | 1311 | 21.39% |
| Not Stated | 2379 | 38.82% |
| Widowed or Surviving Civil Partner | 96 | 1.57% |
| Prefer Not to Say | 28 | 0.46% |
| Total | 6129 | 100.00 |

Profile of employees by Sex

| Sex | 2024 | |
|--------------|-----------------|----------------|
| | Total employees | % employees |
| Female | 4630 | 75.54% |
| Male | 1499 | 24.46% |
| Not stated | 0 | 0.00% |
| Total | 6129 | 100.00% |

Profile of employees by Age

| Age Range | 2024 | |
|---------------|-----------------|----------------|
| | Total employees | % employees |
| 16 – 24 | 224 | 3.65% |
| 25 – 34 | 1051 | 17.15% |
| 35 – 44 | 1423 | 23.22% |
| 45 – 49 | 766 | 12.50% |
| 50 – 54 | 908 | 14.81% |
| 55 – 59 | 877 | 14.31% |
| 60 – 64 | 598 | 9.76% |
| 65 – 69 | 215 | 3.51% |
| 70 – 74 | 49 | 0.80% |
| 75 and over | 18 | 0.29% |
| Totals | 6129 | 100.00% |

Appendix 3 Profile of Adult Social Services users by protected characteristic 2023/24.

Data taken from annual data collection 2023/24: all individuals aged 18 plus who were provided with advice and assistance during the year.

Profile of Adult Social Service users by sex and age

| Age | Female | | Male | | Non-Binary | | Grand Total | |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| | No. | % of all Adult Social Service users | No. | % of all Adult Social Service users | No. | % of all Adult Social Service users | No. | % of all Adult Social Service users |
| 18-64 | 996 | 19.45% | 767 | 14.98% | 13 | 0.25% | 1776 | 34.68% |
| 65-74 | 367 | 7.17% | 265 | 5.17% | 0 | 0 | 632 | 12.34% |
| 75-84 | 792 | 15.47% | 510 | 9.96% | 0 | 0 | 1302 | 25.42% |
| 85+ | 871 | 17.01% | 540 | 10.54% | 0 | 0 | 1411 | 27.55% |
| Grand Total | 3026 | 59.09% | 2082 | 40.66% | 11 | 0.25% | 5121 | 100% |

Profile of Adult Social Service users by ethnic background

| Ethnic background | No. | % |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Black and Minority Ethnic background | 39 | 0.76% |
| White British | 2544 | 49.68% |
| Not obtained | 2538 | 49.56% |
| Grand Total | 5121 | 100% |

Profile of Adult Social Service users by language

| Language | No. | % of all adult service users |
|------------|------|------------------------------|
| Bengali | 1 | 0.02% |
| Bulgarian | 1 | 0.02% |
| English | 5093 | 99.45% |
| German | 1 | 0.02% |
| Hungarian | 1 | 0.02% |
| Italian | 1 | 0.02% |
| Lithuanian | 1 | 0.02% |
| Other | 2 | 0.04% |

| | | |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Pashto/Pakhto | 1 | 0.02% |
| Polish | 5 | 0.10% |
| Portuguese | 1 | 0.02% |
| Romanian | 1 | 0.02% |
| Ukrainian | 1 | 0.02% |
| Welsh | 11 | 0.21% |
| Grand Total | 5121 | 100% |

Profile of Adult Social Service users by religion

| Religion | No. | % |
|--------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Atheist | 5 | 0.10 |
| Buddhist | 1 | 0.02 |
| Christian | 661 | 12.91 |
| Jehovah Witness | 9 | 0.18 |
| Muslim | 2 | 0.04 |
| No Religion | 110 | 2.15 |
| Other | 51 | 1.00 |
| Pagan/Druid | 1 | 0.02 |
| Unknown | 4281 | 83.60 |
| Grand Total | 5121 | 100.00 |

Appendix 4

Profile of school pupils by protected characteristic

Profile of school pupils by sex

| Sex | Primary | | Secondary | |
|--------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| | Total no. of all school pupils | % of all school pupils | Total no. of all school pupils | % of all school pupils |
| Male | 6983 | 50.80% | 5126 | 50.28% |
| Female | 6762 | 49.20% | 5069 | 49.72% |
| Total | 13745 | 100.00% | 10195 | 100.00% |

Profile of school pupils who receive Free School Meals (FSM) by sex.

| Sex | Primary | | | Secondary | | |
|--------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| | Total no. of all school pupils | No. eligible for FSM. | % FSM recipients | Total no. of all school pupils | No. eligible for FSM | % FSM recipients |
| Male | 6983 | 1228 | 50.56% | 5126 | 891 | 51.89% |
| Female | 6762 | 1201 | 49.44% | 5069 | 826 | 48.11% |
| Total | 13745 | 2429 | 100% | 10195 | 1717 | 100% |

Profile of school pupils by ethnic background and those receiving FSM

| Ethnic background | Total no. of all school pupils | % of all school pupils | No. eligible for FSM. | % FSM recipients |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Black and ethnic minority background | 1781 | 7.44% | 154 | 3.71% |
| White British | 20741 | 86.24% | 3757 | 90.62% |
| Other | 156 | 0.65% | 7 | 0.17% |
| Unknown | 1262 | 5.27% | 228 | 5.50% |
| Total | 23940 | 100% | 4146 | 100% |

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CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Date of Meeting | Thursday, 10 th October 2024 |
| Report Subject | New Brighton – adoption of a Welsh name |
| Cabinet Member | Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, and Culture |
| Report Author | Chief Officer Education and Youth |
| Type of Report | Operational |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Welsh Language Commissioner (WLC) is responsible for providing advice on Welsh place-names to individuals and organisations and has established a panel of experts, the Place-names Standardisation Panel, to advise on standard forms of Welsh place-names. Local authorities are ultimately responsible for deciding on the forms they use for local place names.

The local Ward Member for New Brighton, following consultation with residents, has approached the Council to request a Welsh form of New Brighton, “Pentre Cythraul”. The WLC supports the adoption of a Welsh form of New Brighton but recommends “Pentre Cythrel” as the standard name.

Adopting a Welsh form of New Brighton will support the Council’s Welsh Language Promotion Strategy by increasing the visibility and normalising the use of Welsh.

RECOMMENDATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | CROSC consider and approve adopting “Pentre Cythrel” as the recognised Welsh form of New Brighton and asking the Welsh Language Commissioner to include this in the standardised list of Welsh place-names. |
|---|---|

REPORT DETAILS

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 1.00 | EXPLAINING THE WELSH PLACE NAME FOR NEW BRIGHTON |
| 1.01 | The Welsh Language Commissioner (WLC) is responsible for providing advice on Welsh place-names to individuals and organisations and has established a panel of experts, the Place-names Standardisation Panel (the Panel), to advise on standard forms to be used. |
| 1.02 | The Panel follows specific guidelines and gives due regard to the meaning, history and etymology of place-names as well as current usage when forming its recommendations. However, local authorities are ultimately responsible for deciding on the forms they use for local place-names. |
| 1.03 | The Place-names Standardisation Panel aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure consistency in the spelling of place- nationwide, which supports effective and accurate maps, signage and on-line search engines; • avoid multiplying forms i.e. having more than one form of a place-name; and • respect the principles of standard modern Welsh language orthography. |
| 1.04 | Following the WLC’s publication of the list of standardised place names in 2018, the Place- names Standardisation Panel was contacted by members of the public and organisations requesting they consider “Pentre Cythraul” as the Welsh form of New Brighton. The Panel says this is a matter for the local authority. |
| 1.05 | The local Member for New Brighton ward approached Flintshire County Council to request “Pentre Cythraul” be adopted as the Welsh form of New Brighton. The Member consulted with local residents in New Brighton village on their views of a Welsh form of New Brighton. Of the 38 respondents to the consultation, 33 agreed to the adoption of “Pentre Cythraul” as the Welsh form of New Brighton. Five respondents objected on the basis of the negative meaning of “Cythraul” – devil/demon and difficulties pronouncing Welsh words. At their meeting in September 2021, the Community Council agreed to use “Pentre Cythraul” in signage for the recreational area. |
| 1.06 | “Pentre Cythraul”, has been recognised and used locally as the Welsh form of New Brighton for many years. It is recognised by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA), as it is included on driving licences, is used by Royal Mail, and is already included in local signage. For example, New Brighton Community Centre. |

| | |
|------|--|
| 1.07 | <p>The name “Pentre Cythraul” stems from the village’s association with the landowning Catherall family.</p> <p>A more detailed history of the Welsh form of New Brighton has been provided by the WLC and is included as Appendix 1.</p> |
| 1.08 | <p>The WLC has indicated support for the use of an official Welsh form of New Brighton, but prefers “Pentre Cythrel” (rather than “Pentre Cythraul”), <i>“as the name is an oral development of ‘Catherall’ and reflects how the name is pronounced locally; using ‘cythraul’ would be a further step away from the original colloquial name”</i>.</p> <p>Local residents who use the Welsh name “Pentre Cythraul” are supportive of the Panel’s suggestion of “Pentre Cythrel”.</p> |
| 1.09 | <p>The Welsh name “Pentre Cythrel” will also address the objections raised in the consultation and the negative association of “Pentre Cythraul” (Devil’s Village).</p> |
| 1.10 | <p>Formally recognising a Welsh form of New Brighton will support the Council’s Welsh Language Promotion Strategy by raising the visibility of the language. It also ensures Welsh is treated equal to English.</p> |
| 1.11 | <p>Adopting a Welsh name would not incur any additional costs as signage can be changed as and when it is renewed.</p> <p>The Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) would need to be updated to reflect the change. The LLPG informs all the statutory necessary bodies, including Ordnance Survey and Royal Mail.</p> |
| 1.12 | <p>If supported by Cabinet, the WLC will need to be informed of the decision to ensure the Welsh name for New Brighton is included in the official published standardised list of place names.</p> |
| 1.13 | <p>Once approved there will need to be communication with the local community to inform them of the standard Welsh name for New Brighton and to explain the rationale for the decision.</p> |
| 1.14 | <p>The Panel has also raised some queries on other Welsh place-names in Flintshire, such as spellings, use/lack of hyphens in some place names and is asking the Council to consider these.</p> <p>A working group comprising key officers is being established to look at these issues and will engage with relevant Town and Community Councils.</p> <p>Further reports will be presented to Cabinet at a later date on recommendations to accept or reject the suggestions.</p> |

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| 2.00 | RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS |
| 2.01 | There are no resource implications, as signage is renewed it will be replaced with bilingual signage to include the new Welsh name. |

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| 3.00 | IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT |
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| 3.01 | A Welsh Language impact assessment has been undertaken. A Welsh name for New Brighton will have a positive impact by raising the visibility of the Welsh language and ensure the Welsh language is treated equal to the English language. |
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| 3.02 | Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact | |
| | Long-term | Positive - safeguarding the Welsh language for future generations through raising the visibility of Welsh through bilingual signage. |
| | Prevention | Positive – through normalising and formalising the use of Welsh place-names. |
| | Integration | No change |
| | Collaboration | No change |
| | Involvement | The local Member for New Brighton Ward has consulted with the residents. The WLC has shared views on an appropriate Welsh name for New Brighton. |

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| 3.03 | Well-being Goals Impact | |
| | Prosperous Wales | No impact |
| | Resilient Wales | No impact |
| | Healthier Wales | No impact |
| | More equal Wales | Positive - through ensuring that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language. |
| | Cohesive Wales | No impact |

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| | Vibrant Wales | Positive - through promoting the Welsh language |
| | Globally responsible Wales | No impact |

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| 4.00 | CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT |
| 4.01 | The local Member for New Brighton Ward consulted with residents, of the 38 respondents 33 were in favour of a Welsh name for New Brighton. |

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| 5.00 | APPENDICES |
| 5.01 | Appendix 1 – WLC’s notes on a Welsh name for New Brighton. |

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| 6.00 | LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS |
| 6.01 | Welsh Language Commissioner Standardised Welsh place-names |
| 6.02 | Integrated Impact Assessment  Summary IIA Pentre Cythrel.docx |

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| 7.00 | CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS |
| 7.01 | Contact Officer: Fiona Mocko, Strategic Policy Advisor Telephone: English 01352 702122 Welsh 01267 224923 E-mail: Fiona.mocko@flintshire.gov.uk |

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| 8.00 | GLOSSARY OF TERMS These are provided corporately on the Infonet and maintained by the Executive Office |
| | Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) - is the central corporate database for all addressing used in an authority and is recognised by central government and emergency service. The local database is combined at a national level to form a national database. A key identifier in the database is the Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN) which is a unique identifier for every addressable location in Great Britain. |

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Appendix 1 Welsh Name for New Brighton Notes for Flintshire's local authority

Please note that the latest academic information on Flintshire place-names along with more historical forms can be found in Hywel Wyn Owen and Ken Lloyd Gruffydd, *Place-names of Flintshire* (University of Wales Press, 2017).

New Brighton

New Brighton was named after New Brighton, Wirral (named after Brighton, Sussex), probably as a result of immigration. But before that, another name was in colloquial use, namely *Pentre Catherall*, after Josiah Catherall who built a row of houses there for his workers in the 19th century. [The Welsh Academy English-Welsh Dictionary Online](#) (under the entry 'new') gives 'Pentre Catheral, Argoed' as the Welsh name for New Brighton.

Pentre Cythrel was a variation on that Welsh name. Both names are believed to be spoken names as Blue Bell was the only name noted on the 1840 map. The tradition continued in the early 20th century: 'New Brighton but known colloquially as Pentre'r Gŵr Drwg' (*translation from original Welsh*) (1913), local evidence that may suggest that *Pentre Catherall/Cythrel* as such did not survive into the 20th century, although it can be argued that the 1913 transcriber was trying to avoid writing the word *cythraul*, which would have been widely regarded as blasphemous and an offensive Welsh name for the devil. Having said that, there is an entry in the [Baner ac Amserau Cymru](#) newspaper from 1906 titled 'Telegram Pentre Catherall' where that name is used throughout the short article and reference is made to how 'some call it Pentre C-th-r-l' (*translation from original Welsh*). Again, the lines (-) are used to avoid blasphemy.

Certainly, as the linguistic profile of the area changed and as the mining heritage disappeared, the forms *Pentre Catherall* and *Pentre Cythrel* also gradually disappeared. This name was discussed by the Welsh Language Board's Placenames Standardisation Team in 2010 and as there was no evidence at that time that *Pentre Catherall/Cythrel* was used locally, the Team decided to recommend *New Brighton* as a single standard form. This was consistent with the principle set out in the [Guidelines for Standardising Place-names in Wales](#) that antiquarian forms that are no longer in use should not be revived. We have no record of Flintshire County Council wishing to discuss this recommendation further at the time.

Responsibility for standardising place-names was transferred from the Welsh Language Board to the Commissioner in 2012. In 2018, the Commissioner published the [List of Standardised Welsh Place-names](#) on our website so that the public could search and view the standard forms of Welsh place-names and we have since received several enquiries asking about the status of the Welsh form *Pentre Cythraul* with some referring to *Pentre Cythrel* as the spoken form. A comment was received shortly after the publication of the List by a member of staff of Menter Fflint a Wrecsam, for example:

Appendix 1 Welsh Name for New Brighton Notes for Flintshire's local authority

'We were very disappointed to see that the list recommended using the English name only. The Welsh name, 'Pentre Cythraul', is in regular use among Flintshire residents.' (*Translation from original Welsh*)

They referred to the Urdd office's practice of using *Pentre Cythraul* in their address ([Fflint a Wrecsam | Urdd Gobaith Cymru](#)) and noted that the Menter also uses it. An article published on the [BBC Wales Fyw](#) website on 8 October 2019 claims that the Royal Mail and DVLA recognise the name *Pentre Cythraul*. The enquirer also referred to an unsuccessful attempt to submit a petition to the UK Government in 2013 calling on Flintshire County Council to officially adopt the Welsh name. The petition was rejected, however, as it was not a matter for the UK Government: [New Brighton / Pentre Cythraul - Petitions \(parliament.uk\)](#). They also mentioned how 'some older people refer to it as 'Pentre'r Gŵr Drwg' (because they do not want to blaspheme!) but *Pentre Cythraul* is the most well-known Welsh form here'.

The Commissioner received a copy of Flintshire County Council's gazetteer in 2018 where *Pentre Cythraul* had been recorded along with a handful of other names in a separate column without explanation of the status of those names. It therefore appears that this form was recorded by the local authority and that the local authority was aware of it, but it was not officially recorded as the Welsh form for *New Brighton*.

The subsequent enquiries and comments that we've received all refer to the form *Pentre Cythraul* (or *Pentre Cythrel* orally). It should be noted that none have asked us to consider the form *Pentre Catherall* (or *Pentre Catheral*) as the Welsh form. One enquirer noted that 'all local Welsh speakers' used the name *Pentre Cythraul*. Another enquirer contacted us as a group of local people had raised money to erect a new sign for a leisure area and noted that they were not allowed to use *Pentre Cythraul* on the sign as a Council officer had said that the Commissioner had not approved that form.

Several people have contacted us about the name claiming that the Welsh name is used increasingly by local Welsh speakers, and there is evidence in *Place-names of Flintshire* that residents referred to the place as 'the Pentre' up to the 1950s. Our Place-names Standardisation Panel therefore supports the use of an official Welsh form and favours the form *Pentre Cythrel* (rather than *Pentre Cythraul*) as the name is an oral development of 'Catherall' and reflects how the name is pronounced locally; using 'cythraul' would be a further step away from the original colloquial name.

If Flintshire County Council wishes to adopt *Pentre Cythrel* as a Welsh form and is prepared to mainstream the name into all council work and systems, the Commissioner would then reflect that in the List of Standardised Welsh Place-names and recommend that form as the standard Welsh name to be used alongside *New Brighton*.



CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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| Date of Meeting | Thursday 10 th October 2024 |
| Report Subject | Office Rationalisation Programme and County Hall Campus |
| Cabinet Member | Cabinet Member for Corporate Services |
| Report Author | Corporate Manager Capital Programme and Assets |
| Type of Report | Operational (Part 2) |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Corporate Asset Management Plan 2022 – 2027 identifies achievements made to date, including the efficiencies generated under the office rationalisation programme and the demolition of phases 3 and 4 at County Hall.

The Plan also sets out the proposal to move forward with the redevelopment of the County Hall Campus to address the future needs of the Council and provide a range of options and an integrated approach to the assets and organisations on the campus site.

The Corporate Asset Management Plan, the shift towards hybrid working arrangements in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the backdrop of unprecedented financial challenges for the Council, provide the necessary platform to proceed with the next stage in the office rationalisation programme and the County Hall Campus redevelopment.

This report provides an overview of projected costs associated with this programme of work, highlights anticipated efficiencies and an indication of when these may be realised, and outlines interdependencies.

The report provides a summary of the timing, and phasing, and seeks approval for phase 1 works, noting the costs and efficiencies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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| 1 | That CROSC consider the contents of the report and provide feedback/recommendations to Cabinet. |
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REPORT DETAILS

| 1.00 | EXPLAINING THE OFFICE RATIONALISATION PROGRAMME AND COUNTY HALL CAMPUS REDEVELOPMENT |
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| 1.01 | <p>The 'refreshed' Corporate Asset Management Plan 2022 – 2027, containing the Council's medium-term strategy for managing its assets, was approved by Cabinet at its meeting in October 2022.</p> <p>The Plan outlines the achievements made to date under the former Asset Management Plan. This includes the progress of the office rationalisation programme in reducing occupied space in County Hall by 50%, the demolition of phases 3 and 4 at County Hall, and the move of employees to the refurbished office in Ewloe, creating efficiencies in building costs, utilities, maintenance, and rateable value.</p> <p>The Plan also highlights the requirements to take forward the redevelopment of the County Hall Campus when market conditions dictate, addressing the future needs of the Council, recognising that options and an integrated approach to the other assets and organisations on the Campus would be needed.</p> |
| 1.02 | <p>The ambitions of the Corporate Asset Management Plan, alongside the shift towards more hybrid working arrangements as we adapted to new ways of working in response to and following the COVID-19 pandemic, and the unprecedented financial challenge currently facing the Council, combine to create factors that now make it critical to progress to the next stage of the office rationalisation programme and County Hall Campus redevelopment.</p> <p>As these two projects are interconnected, they have been considered initially as one piece of work, with multiple phases.</p> |
| 1.03 | <p>Phase one of the project has already commenced and will run until 28th February 2025. The main objective of phase one is to move as much and as many people out of County Hall as is possible.</p> <p>To enable this to happen, works are required at Ty Dewi Sant. It is essential that these works are undertaken as soon as possible under phase one of the project as they are necessary to provide alternative office accommodation for employees moving out of County Hall.</p> <p>Proposed works at Ty Dewi Sant are scheduled to start, assuming approval, in Autumn 2024.</p> |
| 1.04 | <p>There is a budget amount noted in Appendix 1, for a light refurbishment of the 3rd Floor of the Council Offices, Flint. This follows invasive survey work which is currently being undertaken as noted in the recent communication to members and staff</p> |
| 1.05 | <p>Phase two of the project will have three key areas of focus:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. An alternative heating system and utilities supply for the other organisations/assets that remain on the County Hall Campus. (as per the Councils legal obligations) |

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| | <p>2. Relocating the NEWydd central production kitchen out of County Hall.</p> <p>3. Complete clear out of County Hall. (which will enable the total NNDR efficiency)</p> |
| 1.06 | Phase three of the project will focus on the longer-term redevelopment of the County Hall Campus. The Officer team are currently investigating ways that the demolition costs can be offset by the holistic development of the Campus. |
| 1.07 | Reports on future phases will be presented to CROSC and Cabinet. |

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| 2.00 | RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS |
| 2.01 | A summary of projected costs is provided at Appendix 1 of this report. Focus to date has been on confirming phase one costs as these are critical to ensure the move out of County Hall by 28 th February 2025. |
| 2.02 | <p>The total estimated project costs for Phase 1 are £805,545.</p> <p>Given the sequence required to complete Phase 1 works prior to the 28th February 2025, £805,545 will be required for approval in the 2024/25 Month 6 capital report as an additional allocation from the current capital surplus.</p> |
| 2.03 | The estimates for Phase 2 work will be included in the 2025/26 – 2027/28 Capital Programme for consideration later in the year. |
| 2.04 | <p>As when the Council vacated phases 3 and 4 of County Hall, there will be efficiencies from moving out of County Hall completely. However, there will be a phased realisation of these efficiencies, some cannot be fully realised during Phase 1.</p> <p>Efficiencies have been identified and estimated as far as is possible, with an indication of the efficiencies projected for 2025-26. These can be found at Appendix 2 of this report.</p> |

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| 3.00 | IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT |
| 3.01 | <p>Whilst the aim is to move as much as possible out of County Hall by 28th February 2025, there are some exceptions where this will not be possible.</p> <p>As a landlord, and as part of the contractual agreement in place, the Council is required to provide utilities to the Law Courts on the County Hall Campus. This will require the Building Management System (BMS) to remain operational and for some security and caretaking allocation to remain on site.</p> |

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| 3.02 | <p>In addition to the above, NEWydd Catering & Cleaning Ltd have their central kitchen at County Hall, in practical terms this cannot be relocated before 28th February 2025.</p> <p>The most suitable option for future provision is still being worked on and even if there was a confirmed plan in place, works cannot be commissioned and undertaken in the time available.</p> |
| 3.03 | <p>The need to vacate County Hall by 28th February 2025 had been fixed given the interdependency to the relocation of the Data Centre, after which time there will be no network and/or WiFi facilities at County Hall.</p> <p>Some network and WiFi services will need to be facilitated for the remaining occupied areas of County Hall during phase two. This would enable limited provision to support NEWydd's Central Production and network to support the BMS and alarm/fire systems.</p> |
| 3.04 | <p>An Integrated Impact Assessment has not been undertaken as there is no proposed change to services or service strategies/policies.</p> |

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| 4.00 | CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT |
| 4.01 | A copy of this report will be presented to Cabinet on 15 th October 2024. |
| 4.02 | The Office Rationalisation Programme and County Hall Campus was not included as a Non-digital Transformation Project in the report on the Transformation Programme presented to Cabinet at its meeting on 23 rd July 2024. However, the Office Rationalisation Programme and County Hall Campus should fall under the Transformation Programme. |
| 4.03 | Reports on future phases will be presented to CROSC and Cabinet as appropriate. |

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| 5.00 | APPENDICES |
| 5.01 | Appendix 1 – Summary of phases and projected costs |
| 5.02 | Appendix 2 – Potential Efficiencies |

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| 6.00 | LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS |
| 6.01 | <p>Corporate Asset Management Plan, as presented to Cabinet in October 2022, available online: https://committeemeetings.flintshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=391&Mid=5236&Ver=4&LLL=0</p> |

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| 7.00 | CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS |
| 7.01 | Contact Officer: Kelly Oldham-Jones – Strategic Executive Officer Telephone: 01352 702143 E-mail: kelly.oldham-jones@flintshire.gov.uk |

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| 8.00 | GLOSSARY OF TERMS These are provided corporately on the Infonet (link) and maintained by the Executive Office |
| | 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. |

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