

Public Document Pack

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To: Cllr David Evans (Chair)

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

4 September 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

NOTICE OF HYBRID MEETING
ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, 10TH SEPTEMBER, 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 - 20)

Purpose: To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on 11th June, 16th July and 30th July, 2024.

4 **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING** (Pages 21 - 30)

Report of Environment and Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator -

Purpose: To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee and to inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings.

5 **NORTH WALES ECONOMIC AMBITION REPORT** (Pages 31 - 70)

Report of Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) - Leader of the Council

Purpose: To consider the progress report.

6 **ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2023/24 TO INCORPORATE THE COUNCIL PLAN END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT 2023/24** (Pages 71 - 182)

Report of Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy), Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) - Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy, Cabinet Member for Planning, Public Health and Public Protection, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Transportation

Purpose: To consider the Annual Performance Report 2023-24, noting the Council Plan (2023-28) end of year performance for 2023-24.

7 **WINTER MAINTENANCE - DECISION MAKING REVIEW 2024** (Pages 183 - 216)

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

Purpose: To receive an update.

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

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ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE **11 JUNE 2024**

Minutes of the hybrid meeting of the Environment and Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held on Tuesday, 11 June 2024.

PRESENT: Councillor David Evans (Chair)

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

SUBSTITUTIONS: Councillor Ryan McKeown for Councillor Richard Lloyd and Councillor Alasdair Ibbotson for Councillor Dan Rose

CONTRIBUTORS:

Councillor Dave Hughes (Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Regional Transport Strategy), Councillor Chris Bithell (Cabinet Member for Planning, Public Health and Public Protection) Councillor Paul Johnson (Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement), Chief Officer (Planning, Environment & Economy), Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation), and Development Officer

IN ATTENDANCE: Democratic Services Manager and Democratic Services Officers

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

The Democratic Services Manager advised that It had been confirmed at the Annual Meeting of the County Council that the Chair of the Committee should come from the Labour Group. The Committee was advised that Councillor David Evans had been appointed to this role for the municipal year.

RESOLVED:

That the appointment of Councillor David Evans as Chair of the Committee be noted.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

Councillor Mike Peers nominated Councillor David Richardson as Vice-Chair of the Committee and this was seconded by Councillor Glyn Banks.

Councillor Ryan McKeown nominated Councillor Ray Hughes and this was seconded by Councillor Mel Buckley

There were no further nominations.

On being put to the vote Councillor Ray Hughes was appointed as Vice-Chair of the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Ray Hughes be appointed Vice-Chair of the Committee.

3. MINUTES

Matters arising

Page 9 (resolution c) - in response to a request for an update on the further report which was to be presented to the Committee in June outlining the Council's proposals to increase recycling waste in line with Priority 2 and the draft Resource and Waste Strategy, the Democratic Services Manager explained that the report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee to be held on 16 July 2024.

Councillor Glyn Banks referred to the concerns which had been expressed by Councillor Richard Lloyd regarding recycling waste collection points and locations. Councillor Richard Lloyd had suggested there should be more detailed consultation with the local Member for the Ward around the need and siting of recycling waste collection points in local communities. The Democratic Services Manager said he would make enquiries and provide feedback to Councillor Banks.

RESOLVED:

That the [minutes](#) of the meeting held on 5 March 2024 be approved as a correct record..

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING ([link to recording](#))

The Committee was asked to consider the Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking report. [Forward Work Programme](#)

The Democratic Services Manager explained that the meeting of the Committee scheduled on 9 July 2024 had been moved to 16 July 2024 due to the preparatory work which had to be undertaken by Democratic Services in advance of the General Election. He advised that Members had been sent notification of an update to items on the Forward Work Programme for future meetings.

It was agreed that an item to consider the revised operating hours of the Household Recycling Centres be added to the Forward Work Programme for consideration at the next meeting.

Councillor Glyn Banks suggested that the following further items be included on the Forward Work Programme: pot-holes, root control, recycling data/figures, grass cutting, Deposit Return Scheme and conversion of the fleet to EV/alternative fuels

In response to a question on the item on Streetscene Standards - to consider feedback from the Task & Finish Group, at the meeting on 12 November 2024, the Chair explained that he would contact the relevant Officer to request that further meetings of the Task and Finish Group be arranged and said that the membership of the Task and Finosh Group needed to be confirmed

The recommendations in the report were supported subject to the above amendments.

RESOLVED:

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

6. WORKFORCE TRAVEL SURVEY REPORT [\(link to recording\)](#)

The Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) introduced the [report](#). He provided background information and referred to the Employee Travel Survey which took place between 14/11/2023 – 22/12/2023. The Survey questions were determined to improve the Council's data and understanding of how staff travel and the levers we can utilise to help influence more sustainable travel behaviours. The Council has a target within the Mobility and Transport theme of its Climate Change Strategy to reduce emissions by 80% by 2030. The Climate Change Programme Manager reported on the key points as detailed in the report and responded to the concerns and questions raised.

It was proposed that Recommendation 1 in the report be amended to read that the Committee supports an unsubsidised salary sacrifice scheme. This was seconded and agreed.

Recommendations 2 and 3 in the report were agreed without amendment.

It was proposed that Recommendation 4 in the report be amended as follows: the word "despite" be removed and replaced with the words "seeking to remove". This was seconded and agreed.

Recommendation 5 in the report was moved and seconded without amendment.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee supports an unsubsidised salary sacrifice scheme which provides employees an affordable and accessible means to

transition from petrol or diesel vehicles to zero and ultra-low emission vehicles that provide sufficient range per charge.

- (b) That the Committee supports the review of the Council's Cycle to Work scheme and its promotion; highlighting the benefits and information on local infrastructure.
- (c) That the Committee supports the investigation and suitability of existing car-sharing platforms that are employee-led and identify ways in which using such a platform can be incentivised.
- (d) That the Committee supports the investigation by officers of how the barriers to using Active Travel (safer routes) and public transport (bus services) can be addressed seeking to remove current limitations.
- (e) That the Committee supports the review and updating of the methodology used to calculate employee commute carbon emissions, improving accuracy by including employee commute distances and modes of transport highlighted in the survey.

7. CRACKS IN THE FOUNDATIONS BUILDING SAFETY IN WALES – AUDIT WALES REPORT ([link to recording](#))

The Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) presented a [report](#) to consider the Audit Wales "Cracks in the Foundations" report and the recommendations made within the report and how key elements of the Building Safety Act 2022 are being implemented in Wales. The Chief Officer provided background information and reported on the main points as detailed in the report. He advised that eight recommendations were made by Audit Wales; four directed at Welsh Government and four directed at Local Authorities.

Concern was expressed that the actions the Council was undertaking do not fully comply with the recommendations in the Audit Wales report and the regulations. The following question was asked: "What steps does the Cabinet Member (Planning, Public Health and Public Protection) propose to take to lobby the Welsh Government (WG) to introduce the Local Authority in England and Wales report to the Scottish model in Wales". The Cabinet Member spoke in support of the Scottish Model.

A recorded vote was requested on the recommendation in the report. On being put to the vote the recommendation was carried

RESOLVED

That the Committee notes the outcome of the Audit Wales report and supports the actions to be taken to address the four recommendations made for Local Authorities.

8. DESTINATION MANAGEMENT ([link to recording](#))

The Chief Officer (Planning, Economy and Environment) introduced the [report](#) to seek approval of the draft Destination Management Plan and provided

background information. The Development Officer gave an overview of Destination Management and presented the key points which were detailed in the report

The Development Officer agreed to discuss with officers the suggestion that, if not already applied, charges be made for parking in tourism/recreational areas and feedback provided to the Committee. The Development Officer also agreed to contact Councillor Glyn Banks following the meeting to discuss some of the matters raised.

The recommendation in the report was carried.

RESOLVED:

That the draft Destination Management Plan be endorsed.

9. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

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

(The meeting started at 10.00 a.m. and ended at 12.02 p.m.)

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Chair

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ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
16 JULY 2024

Minutes of the hybrid meeting of the Environment and Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held on Tuesday, 16 July 2024.

PRESENT: Councillor David Evans (Chair)

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

SUBSTITUTIONS: Councillor Sam Swash for Councillor Dan Rose

CONTRIBUTORS:

Councillor Dave Hughes (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Transportation); Councillor Chris Bithell (Cabinet Member for Planning, Public Health and Public Protection); Councillor Dave Healey (Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy); Councillor Paul Johnson (Cabinet Member for Finance and Social Value); Chief Executive; Chief Officer (Planning, Environment & Economy); Chief Officer (Streetscene & Transportation); Regulatory Services Manager; Operations Manager, Streetscene Service Manager, Service Manager - Enterprise and Regeneration; Community Business Protection Manager; Trading Standards Investigations and Community Safety Manager

IN ATTENDANCE: Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Democratic Services Officers

10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

11. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING ([link to recording](#))

The Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator presented the current [Forward Work Programme](#) consideration and gave an update on progress with actions from previous meetings.

It was requested that an item on the Synthite fire be added to the Forward Work Programme. The Facilitator explained that Emergency Planning matters were within the terms of reference of Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It was agreed that the item be referred to the Corporate Resources Committee for consideration and if agreed that members of the Environment and Economy Committee be invited to attend a meeting.

It was requested that meetings of the Streetscene Task & Finish Group be progressed. The Streetscene Service Manager agreed to monitor.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the Forward Work Programme be approved;

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

12. ENFORCEMENT OF CLOSURE NOTICES AND CLOSURE ORDERS UNDER THE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, CRIME AND POLICING ACT 2014 ([link to recording](#))

The Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) introduced the [report](#). The purpose of the report was to endorse the authority for the Chief Officer for Planning, Environment and Economy to be delegated to exercise the Council's powers in relation to Closure Notices and Orders, under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

The Community and Business Protection Manager and Trading Standards Investigations & Community Safety Manager reported on the key points as detailed in the report.

The following question was raised: Are playgrounds, mobile shops, and market stalls included? The Trading Standards Investigations & Community Safety Manager agreed to look into this and advise the Committee.

The recommendation in the report was carried.

Councillor David Coggins Cogan asked that his vote against the recommendation be recorded.

RESOLVED:

That the Chief Officer for Planning, Environment and Economy, on behalf of Flintshire County Council, be given delegated authority to issue Closure Notices under section 76 of The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 and authorise officers to enforce these powers in accordance with the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

13. UPDATE ON THE WORKS OF THE ENFORCEMENT SERVICE ([link to recording](#))

The Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) presented a [report](#) to provide an update on the work of the Enforcement Service. The Regulatory Services Manager reported on the key points as detailed in the report.

During consideration of the item the following actions arose:

- Councillor Richard Lloyd requested that better signage/enforcement be provided to stop vehicles being parked on street pavements
- Councillor Mike Peers referred to section 1.07 of the report and asked if data could be provided on the illegal burning of waste. He also requested

information on the performance data charts and asked how many cases were open and the progress being made. The Chief Officer said that the information could be provided as part of an annual report on environmental crime enforcement data

- Discussion took place around the 5-minute grace period parking outside schools and it was said that this matter was being considered by the School Parking Task and Finish Group. It was requested that confirmation be sought that this was correct and if so that members of the Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee receive an update on progress.
- The Regulatory Services Manager agreed to provide data on vacancies and sickness absence for the Enforcement Team to a future meeting of the Committee
- The Regulatory Services Manager agreed to provide an overview of data on the frequency/number of school visits to a future meeting of the Committee
- Councillor Bill Crease requested that HMO landlords to be encouraged to work with the Council to make arrangements to dispose of items to avoid the possibility of fly-tipping – The Chief Officer advised that an update report on trade waste would be submitted to the Committee in October and said that the suggestion could be considered as part of the item.

Councillor Mike Peers proposed that the word “performance” be removed from the recommendation in the report. The Chief Officer agreed that in future, as part of an annual report, data on “open” cases, progress to date, and officer time, would be provided. The amendment to the recommendation was carried.

RESOLVED

That the Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee notes the actions of the Civil Parking and Environmental Enforcement team along with the data for these activities over a twelve-month period.

14. OPEN ACCESS AGREEMENT WITH FRESHWAVE [\(link to recording\)](#)

The Chief Officer (Planning, Economy and Environment) introduced the [report](#) to seek approval to sign a non-exclusive Open Access Agreement with Freshwave Facilities Limited

The Enterprise and Regeneration Manager provided background information and reported on the key considerations as detailed in the report.

The recommendation in the report was carried.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed development of Open Access Agreements as a tool to improve digital connectivity in Flintshire be supported.

15. INVESTMENT ZONE FOR FLINTSHIRE AND WREXHAM ([link to recording](#))

The Enterprise and Regeneration Manager introduced the [report](#) to update Members on the development of the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone to date and seek approval for the next steps to take the programme through the joint UK / WG Gateway process. He provided background information and advised that the report provided a summary of the Investment Zone programme and the progress made to date on its development in Flintshire and Wrexham. Whilst the announcement of a General Election created a degree of uncertainty to the process, development work on the Investment Zone has continued in readiness for further discussion with the two governments post-election.

The Enterprise and Regeneration Manager reported on the key points as detailed in the report and the Gateway 1 submission document.

Councillor David Coggins-Cogan referred to the tax incentives/grants available to attract businesses to operate in the Investment Zone and asked that the tax arrangements of large multi-national companies be taken into consideration.

RESOLVED:

That Members recognise the progress of work on the Investment Zone and supports the Council to work with Wrexham County Borough Council and the Corporate Joint Committee to work at risk through the required Gateways outlined over the next six months, to secure the funding of £160m over the next 10 years.

16. THE COUNCIL'S TRANSITION TO A RESTRICTED CAPACITY RESIDUAL WASTE COLLECTION MODEL ([link to recording](#))

The Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) introduced the [report](#) to update Scrutiny on the outcome of the waste and recycling modelling work undertaken by the consultants appointed by WRAP Cymru with the purpose of maximising recycling performance, following the adoption of the Resource and Waste Strategy in March 2024.

The Regulatory Service Manager reported on the key points as detailed in the report.

Councillor David Richardson raised a concern around the use of the phrase "lack of appetite" in Section 3.05 of the report as he felt this could be interpreted to mean all Flintshire residents. It was agreed that the wording in the report would be amended prior to the report going to Cabinet.

Councillor Allan Marshall requested that copies of the compositional analysis reports undertaken by Welsh Government agencies and the Council be sent to all Members for information. The Regulatory Services Manager advised that the data for the analysis was compiled by WRAP Cymru and a request submitted to confirm that the information could be released. The Chief Officer

suggested that a meeting could be arranged to enable Officers to explain how the data was configured to Members.

Councillor David Coggins-Cogan proposed that the recommendations in the report be amended as follows:

That Scrutiny notes the outcomes of the modelling work undertaken on restricting the capacity of residual waste collections.

That Scrutiny does not support a transition to the most effective service delivery model of retaining a comprehensive weekly recycling collection service and reducing residual waste collections to once every four weeks while retaining the 180L black wheeled bin to realise maximum recycling performance increase, greenhouse gas emission reduction and cost reduction.

A recorded vote was requested. When put to the vote the amendments were carried.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That Scrutiny notes the outcomes of the modelling work undertaken on restricting the capacity of residual waste collections.
- (b) That Scrutiny does not support a transition to the most effective service delivery model of retaining a comprehensive weekly recycling collection service and reducing residual waste collections to once every four weeks while retaining the 180L black wheeled bin to realise maximum recycling performance increase, greenhouse gas emission reduction and cost reduction.

17. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

There was one member of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 10.00 a.m. and ended at 2.32 p.m.)

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Chair

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ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

30 JULY 2024

Minutes of the Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held as a hybrid meeting on Tuesday, 30 July 2024

PRESENT: **Councillor David Evans (Chairman)**
Councillors: Glyn Banks, David Coggins-Cogan, Chris Dolphin, Richard Lloyd, David Richardson Dan Rose and Roy Wakelam

SUBSTITUTIONS: Councillors: Teresa Carberry (for Ray Hughes), Simon Jones (for Vicky Perfect), Allan Marshall (for Mike Peers) and Ted Palmer (for Mel Buckley)

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors: Marion Bateman, Gillian Brockley, Helen Brown, Bill Crease, Carol Ellis, Andy Hughes, Alasdair Ibbotson, Richard Jones, Carolyn Preece, Dale Selvester, Sam Swash and Ant Turton (in attendance as signatories to Call In Notice 1 and 2)
Councillors: Rob Davies, Ron Davies, Mared Eastwood, Chrissy Gee, David Healey, Ian Hodge, Dennis Hutchinson, Paul Johnson, Christine Jones, Gina Maddison, Roz Mansell, Ryan McKeown, Billy Mullin, Kevin Rush, Jason Shallcross, Linda Thew, Linda Thomas and Antony Wren (attended as observers)

CONTRIBUTORS: Councillor Ian Roberts (Leader of the Council); Councillor Dave Hughes (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Transportation); Chief Executive; Chief Officer (Streetscene & Transportation) and Regulatory Services Manager

IN ATTENDANCE: Democratic Services Manager

18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

No declarations of interest were made.

19. CONSIDERATION OF A MATTER REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE PURSUANT TO THE CALL IN ARRANGEMENTS ([Link to Recording](#))

The Democratic Services Manager advised that Cabinet had considered a report on 'The Council's Transition to a Restricted Capacity Residual Waste Collection Model' at a meeting held on 23 July 2024. The decision (Record of Decision 4236) had been called in on two separate occasions and were shown as [Call In Notice 1](#) and [Call In Notice 2](#) in the Agenda.

Copies of the Cabinet [report](#), [Record of Decision](#) and Endorsement of Call in 1 and 2 were included in the agenda pack.

The Democratic Services Manager explained the procedure for the call in of a Cabinet decision as detailed in the [supporting document](#) which was included in the agenda.

The Chairman invited the signatories to present the reasons for the call-in to the Committee.

20. THE COUNCIL'S TRANSITION TO A RESTRICTED CAPACITY RESIDUAL WASTE COLLECTION MODEL ([Link to Recording](#))

Representations from Call In Signatories

Councillors: Alastair Ibbotson, Bill Crease, Marion Bateman, Carol Ellis, Helen Brown and Richard Jones outlined the reasons for the Call In, expanding on the reasons outlined within the Agenda.

Responses from the Decision Makers

The Chief Officer (Streetscene & Transportation) and Regulatory Services Manager provided a detailed presentation in response to the concerns expressed by the Call In signatories.

The Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Transportation responded to the comments made by the Call In signatories.

The Chairman invited Members of the Committee to ask questions of the Decision Makers and Call In signatories.

The Chairman invited the initiators of the call in to sum up.

Councillors Alasdair Ibbotson and Richard Jones summed up on behalf of the call in signatories.

The Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) summed up the reasons for the proposals with the Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Transportation also summing up his support for the decision made by Cabinet.

The Chairman invited the Democratic Services Manager to remind Members of the options for decision making as detailed in item 3 of the Agenda.

Councillor Richard Lloyd proposed Option 2 and this was seconded by Councillor Simon Jones.

Councillor Roy Wakelam proposed Option 4 and this was seconded by Councillor David Coggins-Cogan. An explanation was provided that a second proposal could not be taken ahead of a vote on the first proposal.

On being put to the vote, the proposal for Option 2 was carried.

RESOLVED:

That having considered the decision, the Committee was 'no longer concerned', having received the explanations, but was not minded to indicate that it was 'satisfied with the explanation', therefore the Committee accepted but did not endorse the decision.

21. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

None.

(The meeting started at 2pm and ended at 5.36pm)

Chairman

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

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ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 10 th September 2024
Report Subject	Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking
Report Author	Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

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

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

RECOMMENDATION

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

REPORT DETAILS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2024/25

Date of Meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report/Presentation	Scrutiny Focus	Responsible/Contact Officer	Submission Deadline
8 Oct 24 10.00 am	Review of Highways Asset Management Plan and Highway and Car Park Inspection Policy	To provide Scrutiny with an update on the refreshed Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP) and reviewed Highway and Car Park Inspection Policy	Information	Chief Officer - Streetscene & Transportation	
	Update on Local Bus Services in Flintshire	To receive an update	Assurance	Chief Officer – Streetscene & Transportation	
	20 mph Speed Limit Update	To receive an update	Information	Chief Officer – Streetscene & Transportation	
	Additional HMO Licensing	To receive an update	Assurance	Marian Davies	
	Food Plan	To review the Food Plan	Assurance	Helen O’Loughlin	
12 Nov 24 10.00 am	Conversion of the FCC fleet to electric or alternative fuels	To receive a progress report on the implementation of the conversion of the FCC fleet to electric and alternative fuels		Chief Officer – Streetscene and Transportation	
	Residual Waste Collections Change and Communication Plan	To receive an update	Assurance	Chief Officer – Streetscene and Transportation	

ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME
APPENDIX 1

Date of Meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report/Presentation	Scrutiny Focus	Responsible/Contact Officer	Submission Deadline
	Review of reduced opening hours at Household Recycling Centres	As requested at June meeting.	Assurance	Chief Officer – Streetscene and Transportation	
10 Dec 24 10.00 am	Integrated Transport Strategy & Regional Transport Plan (RTP)	To receive an update	Assurance	Chief Officer Streetscene & Transportation	
Page 26	Streetscene Standards	To consider the recommendations of the Task & Finish Group	Pre-decision	Chief Officer Streetscene & Transportation	
	Car Parking Strategy	To receive an update	Assurance	Chief Officer – Streetscene and Transportation	
	Welsh Government Deposit Return Scheme update	To receive an update	Information	Chief Officer – Streetscene and Transportation	
14 Jan 25 10.00 am	Fleet Services Update	To receive an update	Assurance	Chief Officer Streetscene and Transportation	
	Grass Cutting Performance Update	To receive an update	Assurance	Chief Officer -	

ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME
APPENDIX 1

Date of Meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report/Presentation	Scrutiny Focus	Responsible/Contact Officer	Submission Deadline
	Waste Compliance and Duty of Care Across the Council	To receive an update	Assurance	Streetscene and Transportation Chief Officer – Streetscene and Transportation	
11 Feb 25 10.00 am					
11 March 25 10.00 am					
18 April 25 10.00 am					
6 May 25 10.00 am					
10 June 25 10.00 am					
8 July 25 10.00 am	Annual Performance Report 2024/25 to incorporate the Council Plan End of Year Performance Report 2024/25	To review the levels of progress in the achievement of activities and performance levels identified in the Council Plan and to consider the Annual Performance Report.			

ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME
APPENDIX 1

Items to be added :-

Place Making Plan Buckley

Place Making Plan Holywell

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

Action tracking for Environment & Economy OSC September 2024

Item/Date	Discussion	Action	By whom	Status
11 June 2024	Streetscene Standards Task & Finish Group – change of membership	Further meetings required and confirmation of Membership	Chris Goddard/ Facilitator	Ongoing
Enforcement of Closure Notices and Closure Orders	The following question was raised: Are playgrounds, mobile shops, and market stalls included?	The Trading Standards Investigations & Community Safety Manager agreed to look into this and advise the Committee	Richard Powell	Completed Email sent to Members of the Committee
	A discussion took place around the 5 min parking outside schools and it was said that this matter was being considered by the School Parking Task and Finish Group.	It was requested that confirmation be sought that this was correct and if so that members of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive an update on progress.	Facilitator	Ongoing

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Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting	10 th September 2024
Report Subject	North Wales Growth Deal and Economic Ambition board – Annual Report 2023-24
Cabinet Member	Leader of the Council
Report Author	Chief Officer (Planning, Environment & Economy)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the report is to present the Annual Report for 2023-24 of the Economic Ambition Board.

Quarterly and annual reporting on progress against the North Wales Growth Deal is a requirement of the Final Deal Agreement. Following consideration by the North Wales Economic Ambition Board, the reports are to be shared with Welsh Government, UK Government and the local authority, overview and scrutiny committees.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Members consider and note the Annual Report for 2023-24.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE NORTH WALES GROWTH DEAL ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24
1.01	The Annual Report looks back on the progress made over the last year by Ambition North Wales. It covers the Growth Deal and other supported activities.
1.02	The report provides an overview of the Growth Deal and the progress made in delivering the projects as well as other key milestones achieved during the year, including:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Five Outline Business Cases being approved namely the Tourism Talent Network, Egni, Deeside Anaerobic Digestion Plant, 4G+ and the Former North Wales Hospital, Denbigh. ▪ The Ful Business Case for the Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre project was approved, with the project moving into delivery and construction starting on the site. ▪ Five new projects were invited to join the Growth Deal, namely Kinmel Studios, Responsible Adventure, Wrexham Gateway, Holyhead Hydrogen Hub and the Deeside Anaerobic Digestion Plant. ▪ The launch of the Hydrogen Sponsor Challenge, and a sponsor appointed to lead on the delivery subject to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) being agreed between the parties. ▪ Recognition of Ambition North Wales carbon emissions and biodiversity methodology as a Leadership Case Study in the UK national carbon in infrastructure guidelines. ▪ Ministerial approval for the Harbour Revision Order for the Holyhead port project. ▪ Securing over £1million in additional funding through the Shared Prosperity Fund to further enhance the impact of the Growth Deal. The workstreams include Skills and Employability, Energy and Net Zero, Benefits and Social Value and Digital Connectivity. ▪ Delivery of the Welsh Government Local Broadband Fund providing gigabit-capable fibreoptic broadband at seventeen public buildings including GP surgeries, libraries and village halls across North Wales.
--	---

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	There are no financial implications arising directly from reviewing progress as set out in this report.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	<u>N/A</u>

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	The North Wales Economic Ambition Board has reviewed this report and all local authority scrutiny committees are to review it also.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	▪ Annual Report 2-23-24

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	N/A

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: Andrew Farrow, Chief Officer, Planning Environment & Economy Telephone: 01352 703201 E-mail: Andrew.farrow@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
	N/A

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Uchelgais Gogledd Cymru
Ambition North Wales



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Annual Report 2023/24



ambitionnorth.wales

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OUR AMBITION

To be confident and cohesive, focused on improving the region's economic, social and environmental well-being.

To see the region develop in a sustainable way, with opportunities for people to gain new skills, develop rewarding careers, for businesses to grow and communities to prosper.

To do this while championing the Welsh language, our culture and heritage, in line with the well-being goals for Wales.

Foreword

We are delighted to present the 2023-24 Annual Report, highlighting the progress made in delivering the North Wales Growth Deal in its third year. This 15-year agreement between Ambition North Wales, the UK Government, and the Welsh Government aims to create new high-value jobs and attract private sector investment, enhancing the economic, social, and environmental well-being of North Wales.

This summer, the long-awaited Harbour Revision Order, essential for the Holyhead port expansion project, received Welsh Ministerial approval. This milestone allows the Holyhead Gateway project, led by Stena Line, to proceed with reclaiming 11.7 hectares of land from the sea. The project which is subject to business case approval will secure capacity to create hundreds of new jobs and deliver a significant investment in the region.

Additionally, the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund allocated £126.5 million across our six councils. This allocation, based on a regional investment plan, focuses on building pride in place and increasing life chances. Collectively we have directed £1million of this funding to further enhance the impact and efficacy of the Growth Deal. Our shared regional priorities in Skills and Employability, Energy and Net Zero, Benefits and Social Value, and Digital Connectivity will deliver innovative projects designed to embed and enrich our current regional economic development plans.

Improving digital connectivity and ensuring that everyone has access to a fast and reliable digital connection is an absolute necessity in today's world. This year, through the Welsh Government's Local Broadband Fund we led a project to provide gigabit-capable fibreoptic broadband at seventeen public buildings including GP surgeries, libraries and village halls across North Wales.

Our commitment to sustainable development is exemplified through the emergence of Local Area Energy Plans - ensuring that all six of our councils set out a compelling vision for a net-zero carbon energy system by 2050 and an action plan to achieve this.

The Regional Skills Partnership is unquestionably respected in their leadership of the skills and employability agenda for North Wales and we hope to see this relationship continue to grow and gain more Welsh Government support.

Most of these examples go beyond the Growth Deal, they reflect the wider vision and ambition we hold for North Wales.

It has been our privilege to lead what has been a busy and productive year for Ambition North Wales.



Cllr. Dyfrig Siencyn
Chair of the Economic
Ambition Board



Cllr. Mark Pritchard
Vice-Chair of the
Economic Ambition Board

PROGRESSING GROWTH IN OUR REGION

It's three years since we signed the North Wales Growth deal agreement and this year we have seen another five of our projects achieve approval of their outline business cases - the Tourism Talent Network, Egni, Deeside Anaerobic Digestion Plant, 4G+ and the Former North Wales Hospital in Denbigh. This means that ten projects have now reached this stage over the last three years. Given the significance of global events during this time, I'm unashamed in my recognition of what the Ambition North Wales partnership has achieved.

The Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre also moved into delivery after securing approval of its full business case to secure the Growth Deal funding. This is a significant milestone because it sees the first of our capital projects being built. Very soon after the turf cutting ceremony on the 22 February, Wynne Construction were on-site and at work at the Plas Coch site.

The early part of last year saw us go out to market to seek new and innovative projects to join the Growth Deal. After a rigorous process, in July we were delighted to announce that five new projects had been invited to submit their outline business cases, all seeking a slice of the £30m of available capital. Kinmel Studios, Responsible Adventure, Wrexham Gateway, and the Holyhead Hydrogen Hub are working on their outline business cases, with approval already gained for the Deeside Anaerobic Digestion Plant.

This just goes to show, that in contrast to last year - which saw two of our projects withdraw from the Growth Deal and another significantly change its scope, this year has been a year of strengthening our portfolio of projects. All signalling a positive year ahead as we plan to take these new projects through into delivery. Ultimately, our ambition through these transformational initiatives remains unchanged - they will bring new high-value jobs and investment as well as deliver on our wider aspiration to build a vibrant, sustainable, and resilient economy for North Wales.

The outlook is positive with the end of this year marked with an encouraging outcome to our Hydrogen Sponsor Challenge, with a sponsor appointment to lead the delivery of a Hydrogen Hub. A Memorandum of Understanding is currently being developed, prior to an official announcement on the project sponsor being made. The project will aim to help fossil fuel powered organisations become low carbon hydrogen customers and deliver an operational hydrogen production facility.

I am proud of my team, the partnership, and the momentum we are building for excellence in our ways of working. Last year we achieved recognition as a Leadership Case Study in the UK national carbon in infrastructure guidelines. Together, we are also aware of our social responsibility as a team, and have been raising funds over the year for our charity of the year children's hospice, Ty Gobaith.

With our passion for North Wales - its economy, businesses, communities and people, we are committed to seeing our region thrive in the future. I'm looking forward to being part of the journey over the next twelve months.



Alwen Williams
Portfolio Director

“
North Wales is making its mark - uniquely positioned to build on its strengths and rise to global challenges
”

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Askar Sheibani

Chair of the Business Delivery Board



Global warming, international economic instability, and ongoing regional conflicts have prompted radical governmental policy changes worldwide. Many nations are struggling to adapt to the rapidly changing economic landscape. This has led to an acceleration in national defence and security spending, resulting in significant growth in the high-tech aerospace and engineering sectors.

According to the International Monetary Fund, achieving the Net Zero target requires an investment of up to \$6 trillion every year. In response to these global challenges, North Wales is uniquely positioned to play a pivotal role. The region has already begun laying the groundwork for substantial growth in renewable energy and decarbonisation projects.

One such project is the Tidal Stream project in Anglesey, aiming to eventually produce 240MW of low-carbon clean energy. North Wales is also home to the UK's largest solar farms, with further low-carbon energy projects planned across the region, including infrastructure for hydrogen energy.

Moreover, North Wales boasts a strong presence in the world's aerospace manufacturing and innovation sector. The region has aligned itself with the urgent global economic trajectory, making it one of the most sought-after regions for investment.

Supported by a team of highly experienced business leaders within the Business Delivery Board, Ambition North Wales is driving forward these initiatives. Their outstanding track record on an international level ensure North Wales remains at the forefront of economic development and innovation.

2023 - 24 MILESTONES

April 2023 - March 2024



April

We achieved recognition as a Leadership Case Study in the UK national carbon in infrastructure guidelines.



May

We presented on our progress, the RSP and opportunities for cross-border collaboration to the North Wales Cabinet Sub-Committee.



June

We launched the Hydrogen Sponsor challenge.



July

We welcomed 5 new projects to join the growth deal.



November

The Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre Full Business Case was approved by the Economic Ambition Board.



October

The Tourism Talent Network Outline Business Case was approved by the Economic Ambition Board.



September

A Regional Skills Partnership collaboration launched a Low Carbon Energy Prospectus and Video.



August

We hosted a stand at the National Eisteddfod in Boduan.



December

The Deeside Anaerobic Digestion Plant and Egni Outline Business Cases were approved by the Economic Ambition Board.



January

The Regional Skills Partnership's Young Person's Toolkit launched to help young people follow the pathway that best suits them.



February

The Former North Wales Hospital Outline Business Case was approved by the Economic Ambition Board.



March

A series of workshops were held to review the key outputs of the Local Area Energy Plans.

LEADERSHIP CASE STUDY

We achieved recognition as a Leadership Case Study in the UK national carbon in infrastructure guidelines PAS 2080 which was hailed as a "game-changer" by the World Economic Forum. The guidelines provide a standard for managing carbon in buildings and infrastructure, reducing carbon and cost through intelligent design, construction, and use.

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SPARCX

We sponsored SparcX alongside the Regional Skills Partnership. The event, hosted by M-Sparc, was an opportunity for employers and job seekers in the Science and Tech sector to meet to discuss recruitment opportunities. The event was a great success, with many job seekers securing job interviews.

CONTRACTS SIGNED FOR SECOND PHASE OF DSP

Contracts were signed for the second phase of the Digital Signal Processing Centre's Growth Deal funded equipment. The procurement also secured £101,415 additional social value from the suppliers, including annual technology seminars, potential internships, free equipment, and technical support.

WE ATTENDED THE WALES START UP AWARDS

We were sponsors for the North Wales category, with Plantsea Ltd taking the award. Plantsea Ltd aim to replace environmentally damaging petroleum-based plastics with biodegradable alternatives using natural resources found on the seashore.



HYDROGEN SPONSOR CHALLENGE PRE-LAUNCH EVENT

The Hydrogen Sponsor Challenge pre-launch event was held on the 18th April in Llandudno Junction - then Minister for Economy Vaughan Gething and then Under-Secretary of State for Wales James Davies MP delivered keynote speeches at the event. It was attended by over forty organisations from across the hydrogen value chain, government, and Ambition North Wales partners. The day was a success, with positive feedback and significant networking between organisations.

TWO YEARS INTO DELIVERY

The Digital Signal Processing (DSP) Centre

In early 2023, Bangor University's DSP Centre project entered its second year of delivery. Since its launch, the project has progressed to achieving academic and professional recognition in publications such as the Institute of Engineering Technology and more. To date the DSP Centre achieved the following:



created 13
gross direct
jobs



generated an
additional
£1.275m GVA



secured £1.5
million
additional
funding



53 people
attending skills
training



18 partners
in a
collaboration

Professor Paul Spencer, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research:

“As the first project to receive Growth Deal funding, the DSP Centre exemplifies how external investment can substantially drive economic development and foster the future growth and prosperity of North Wales.”



ABERINNOVATION

A delegation from the Innovation in High Value Manufacturing Programme Board visited AberInnovation in early July. The visit was a great networking opportunity and covered AberInnovation and IBERS work on agri-food, phenomics and climate adaptation work, as well as research from the Aberystwyth University cross-disciplinary Rural Futures Hub.

MINISTERIAL APPROVAL FOR THE HARBOUR REVISION ORDER

The Holyhead Gateway Port Expansion Project received Welsh Government Ministerial approval for the Harbour Revision Order in August. This removed one of the projects major uncertainties in relation to the project's delivery.

LAUNCH - LOW CARBON ENERGY PROSPECTUS AND VIDEO

In collaboration with providers in the region, our Regional Skills Partnership developed resources to highlight the excellent educational and training facilities available in North Wales to support the low carbon energy industry.



NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD

We hosted a stand at the National Eisteddfod in Boduan. Those who visited the stand saw a demonstration of tidal energy through a turbine model, children enjoyed a treasure hunt, a postcard activity and a selfie frame. Portfolio Director, Alwen Williams participated in a panel discussion on Unlocking the North Wales Economy, hosted by Nia Thomas, BBC Broadcaster.





New projects join the Growth Deal

In July, we announced that the North Wales Economic Ambition Board had supported a recommendation to invite five new projects to join the Growth Deal portfolio. They were each awarded a provisional allocation of Growth Deal capital funding subject to agreeing a Memorandum of Understanding - setting out expectations of them in relation to securing the funding, and approval of their business cases.

All are transformational projects, which have the potential to bring significant addition to North Wales communities and the economy by generating additional investment and employment opportunities in key sectors. They reflect our vision for innovative and sustainable economic prosperity through collaboration between public and private sectors.

Responsible Adventure

Zip World

£6.2m

Wrexham Gateway

Wrexham County Borough Council

£4.79m

Holyhead Hydrogen Hub

Menter Môn

£3.8m

Kinmel Studios

Stage Fifty

£6.8m

Deeside Anaerobic Digestion Plant

The Circular Economy Developments Ltd

£6.4m

LOW CARBON ENERGY

The Deeside Anaerobic Digestion Plant and Egni Outline Business Cases were approved by the Economic Ambition Board.

The Deeside project will promote a local circular economy using waste materials from local industry as feedstock contributing to a greener future for North Wales.

The Egni project will see the build of a second building on the M-Sparc site, developing a Centre of Excellence, enhancing research, design and innovation in low carbon energy.



EEOC FULL BUSINESS CASE APPROVED

The Economic Ambition Board gave its approval to the full business case for Wrexham University's Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre (EEOC). The Growth Deal will fund £11.55m of the total project value.

The project will deliver a specialist centre for research and development, business collaboration and skills development in optics, photonics and composites as lightweight alternatives for manufacturing.

PROGRESS FOR PARC BRYN CEGIN

The Design and Consultancy Teams for Parc Bryn Cegin, Bangor have been appointed by Welsh Government. This is the first step towards obtaining a project scheme which will be submitted for planning and other consents.



TOURISM TALENT NETWORK

We announced that the Tourism Talent Network had moved to its final Growth Deal funding stage, having had its outline business case approved by the Economic Ambition Board.

The project, led by Grŵp Llandrillo Menai, will see the first specialist tourism skills hub set up in Wales. It will aim to transform the approach to developing skills for the tourism and hospitality industry in the north.

FIRST CONSTRUCTION PROJECT UNDERWAY

Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre

In early 2024, the Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre was the Growth Deal's first construction project to move into delivery.

The Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre is a pioneering build. It will deliver a specialist centre for research and development, business collaboration and skills development in optics, photonics and composites as lightweight alternatives for manufacturing. The result will be to offer regional manufacturing businesses support in reducing the environmental impact of their products and processes.

In addition, the development will integrate hydrogen as a substitute fuel source contributing to sustainable practices in industry.

A key part of the project is to attract investment to North Wales and create local employment, with between 70 and 90 new jobs projected and more than 1,000 people trained to deliver innovative solutions for the future.

The project also includes improvements for facilities at a second university site – the OpTIC Technology Centre at St Asaph.



Professor Maria Hinfelaar, Vice-Chancellor, Wrexham University:
“This investment has enabled a transformational build which - once operational - will support regional businesses to develop cutting-edge solutions to their manufacturing challenges, reducing carbon emissions and bringing potential cost and efficiency benefits.”



INVESTMENT STRATEGY

The Economic Ambition Board endorsed an Investment Strategy for North Wales. The aim of the strategy is to attract Growth Deal and wider regional economic development into the region.

FORMER NORTH WALES HOSPITAL OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE APPROVED

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The Former North Wales Hospital Outline Business Case was approved by the Economic Ambition Board. The site looks set to become a central part of the community once again, providing employment and homes for local people.



HYDROGEN HUB GAINS SPONSOR

A sponsor was selected by the Economic Ambition Board for the Hydrogen Sponsor Challenge.

The project intends to implement full chain hydrogen production, transport and end use.

The next step in the process will see the sponsor agree a Memorandum of Understanding with Ambition North Wales before developing an outline business case over the coming year.

REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS IN NORTH WALES

Funding was secured from the Welsh Government towards a piece of research and analysis to strengthen local and regional food systems in North Wales. A series of workshops have taken place to identify possible future regional agri-food projects.



EEOC COMMENCES CONSTRUCTION

Together with Wrexham University we signed the funding agreement for the Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre project.

This followed with an official Turf Cutting on the site - marking the start of the North Wales Growth Deal's first construction project. Fay Jones MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Wales and Rebecca Evans MS, Minister for Finance and Local Government were joined on site at Wrexham University's Plas Coch Campus in Wrexham by representatives from the University, Ambition North Wales and Wynne Construction.

LOCAL BROADBAND FUND



The Local Broadband fund project concluded at the end of March. The project, led by Ambition North Wales, was funded through the Welsh Government's Local Broadband Fund. The project has upgraded broadband connections to 17 public sector managed sites, this involved the installation of gigabit-capable fibreoptic broadband at local authority and health sites in Wrexham, Gwynedd, Flintshire, Denbighshire and Conwy. These sites include libraries and village halls. The work has resulted in wider network improvements in the target areas.

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upgraded
broadband
connections to

17

public sector
managed sites



THE NORTH WALES GROWTH DEAL

Page 49

funded by:



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



UK Government
Llywodraeth y DU

Office of the Secretary of State for Wales
Yr Ysgrifennydd Iechyd a Chalon Cymru

OVERVIEW OF THE GROWTH DEAL

- To build a more vibrant, sustainable and resilient economy in North Wales.
- To build on our strengths, to boost productivity while tackling long-term challenges and economic barriers to deliver inclusive growth.
- To promote growth in a scalable, inclusive and sustainable way, in line with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

INVESTMENT



£240M

Growth Deal target investment



Total Target Investment: over **£1bn**

SPENDING OBJECTIVES



Create up to **4,200** new jobs



Generate up to **£2.4bn** net additional GVA

OUR PROGRAMMES



Innovation in High Value Manufacturing



Agri-food and Tourism



Digital Connectivity



Land and Property



Low Carbon Energy



Agri-food and Tourism

The programme aims to promote and support employment and training in the Agri-food and Tourism sectors, building on world-leading skills and expertise already established within the region.



Glynllifon Rural Economy Hub

Lead Sponsor: Grŵp Llandrillo Menai

A distinctive, world class rural economy hub offering food-grade facilities and knowledge transfer services to enhance the food and drink sector.

Preparing the Full Business Case



Tourism Talent Network

Lead Sponsor: Grŵp Llandrillo Menai

Future-proof tourism and hospitality skills provision and increase the commercial benefits from one of the best established and fastest growing sectors in the region.

Preparing the Full Business Case



Responsible Adventure

Lead Sponsor: Zip World

This project will promote North Wales as a leading sustainable tourism destination. It aims to attract additional visitors in a way which is environmentally sustainable and considerate to local communities. It consists of developing a new sustainable cable car, slate explorer and eBus network.

Preparing the Outline Business Case





Digital Connectivity

Addressing connectivity challenges within the region, enhancing the capability to develop new technologies for the future ensuring that businesses and residents can benefit from fast, high-quality connectivity.

Page 52



Connected Campuses

Lead Sponsor: Ambition North Wales

Establishing network coverage at key commercial sites in the region, supporting businesses with valuable connectivity options.

Preparing the
Outline Business
Case



Connected Key Sites and Corridors

Lead Sponsor: Ambition North Wales

Enhancing the reliability and quality of mobile services on the main roads and rail routes, enabling full-fibre services to key commercial sites across the region.

Preparing the Full
Business Case



The Digital Signal Processing Centre

Lead Sponsor: Bangor University

Research and development of new technologies which improve how data is processed efficiently and reliably between devices and people.

Project
Implementation and
Monitoring



The Last Few %

Lead Sponsor: Ambition North Wales

Providing a minimum 'superfast' (30Mbps) broadband to poorly connected communities across North Wales.

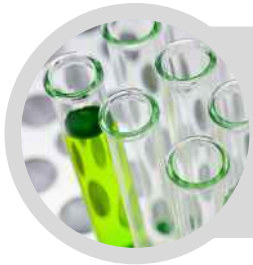
Preparing the Full
Business Case





Innovation in High Value Manufacturing

Promote innovation and commercialisation of technology in the manufacturing industry, building on the existing strength of the sector within our region.



Centre for Environmental Biotechnology

Lead Sponsor: Bangor University

Exploring the use of biological processes as low carbon alternatives to products and industrial manufacturing processes.

Preparing the
Business
Justification Case

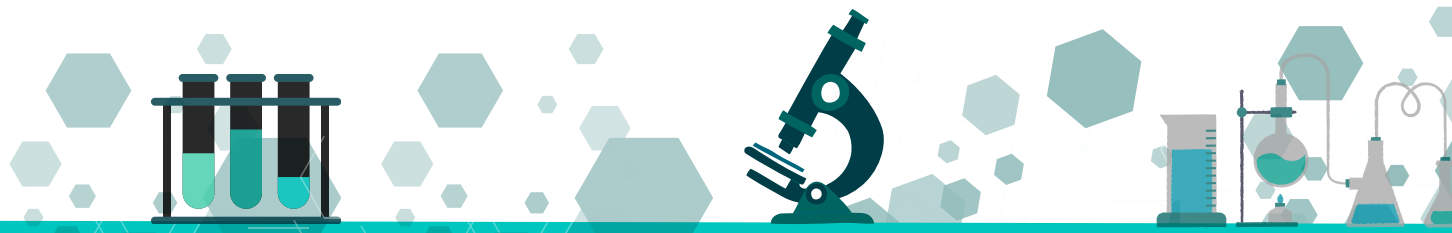


Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre

Lead Sponsor: Wrexham University

Delivering state-of-the-art facilities to explore optics, photonics and composite materials as a lightweight material alternative, reducing carbon within the sector.

Project
Implementation
and Monitoring





Land and Property

Addressing land and property challenges within the region, to unlock opportunities and build on our strengths. The programme will develop sites to provide residential and employment premises. It will also maximise capacity at key transport links.



Former North Wales Hospital

Lead Sponsor: Jones Bros Civil Engineering UK

Remove dangerous buildings and prepare the site for new homes and new commercial units for new and existing businesses to relocate and expand.

Preparing the Full Business Case



Holyhead Gateway

Lead Sponsor: Stenaline

Improve the port's capacity and facilities, creating a multi purpose berth for new energy projects, commercial traffic and cruise ships.

Preparing the Outline Business Case



Parc Bryn Cegin

Lead Sponsor: Ambition North Wales

Develop new build employment premises suitable for new and existing businesses to expand and relocate.

Preparing the Outline Business Case



Warren Hall, Broughton

Lead Sponsor: Ambition North Wales and Welsh Government

The provision of primary services to deliver development plots for new and existing businesses to expand or relocate.

Preparing the Strategic Case



Western Gateway, Wrexham

Lead Sponsor: Ambition North Wales

The provision of primary services to deliver development plots for new and existing businesses to expand or relocate.

Preparing the Strategic Case



Kinmel Studios

Lead Sponsor: Stage Fifty

This project will design, build and operate a new film and television studio at Tir Llwyd Enterprise Park, Kinmel Bay.

Preparing the Strategic Case



Wrexham Gateway

Lead Sponsor: Wrexham County Borough Council

Part of the Wrexham Gateway masterplan, this project aims to deliver a transformative mixed-use regeneration scheme of the area around Wrexham General Station.

Preparing the Strategic Case



Low Carbon Energy

Unlocking the benefits of developing low carbon energy projects within the region, positioning North Wales as a leading location for the low carbon energy sector.



Cydnerth (Morlais)

Lead Sponsor: Menter Môn

Develop additional grid connections for tidal energy suppliers to deploy more turbines within the zone.

Preparing the Outline Business Case



Egni

Lead Sponsor: Bangor University

Developing a Centre of Excellence, enhancing research, design and innovation in low carbon energy.

Preparing the Full Business Case



Hydrogen Hub

Lead Sponsor: Ambition North Wales

Kick-start the region's hydrogen economy by supporting and delivering a hydrogen hub.

Preparing the Strategic Outline Case



Smart Local Energy

Lead Sponsor: Ambition North Wales

Support projects to achieve renewable energy, decarbonisation and have local ownership.

Preparing the Full Business Case



Trawsfynydd

Lead Sponsor: Cwmni Egin (Welsh Government)

Deploy Small or Advanced Modular Reactors at the site to generate low carbon energy.

Preparing the Strategic Outline Case

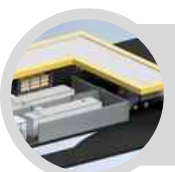


Deeside Anaerobic Digestion Plant

Lead Sponsor: The Circular Economy Developments Ltd

This project will promote a local circular economy using waste materials from local industry as feedstock contributing to a greener future for North Wales.

Preparing the Full Business Case



Holyhead Hydrogen Hub

Lead Sponsor: Menter Môn

This project will establish a green hydrogen production and distribution facility, at Parc Cybi, Holyhead within the Anglesey Freeport zone.

Preparing the Outline Business Case

GOVERNANCE OVERVIEW

Local authority partners established the Economic Ambition Board as a joint committee in 2019, and is the decision-making body for the North Wales Growth Deal, as well as leading regional economic collaboration.

Having secured the Growth Deal in December 2020, the partners entered 'Governance Agreement 2'. This agreement, a legally binding document, defines the role and function of the Economic Ambition Board and its use of delegated powers. It also outlines the decision-making structures and democratic accountability.

The Growth Deal's governance arrangements enable decisions to be made openly and transparently for the benefit of the whole of the region. While the Economic Ambition Board acts as the decision-making body for the Growth Deal, there are strong formal and informal links to the Welsh and UK Governments as funders of the Deal.

The Economic Ambition Board has adopted a delivery model based on a best-practice approach to portfolio, programme and project management. This approach is an integrated way of meeting an organisation's ambition, driving better decisions and increasing the likelihood of successful outcomes.

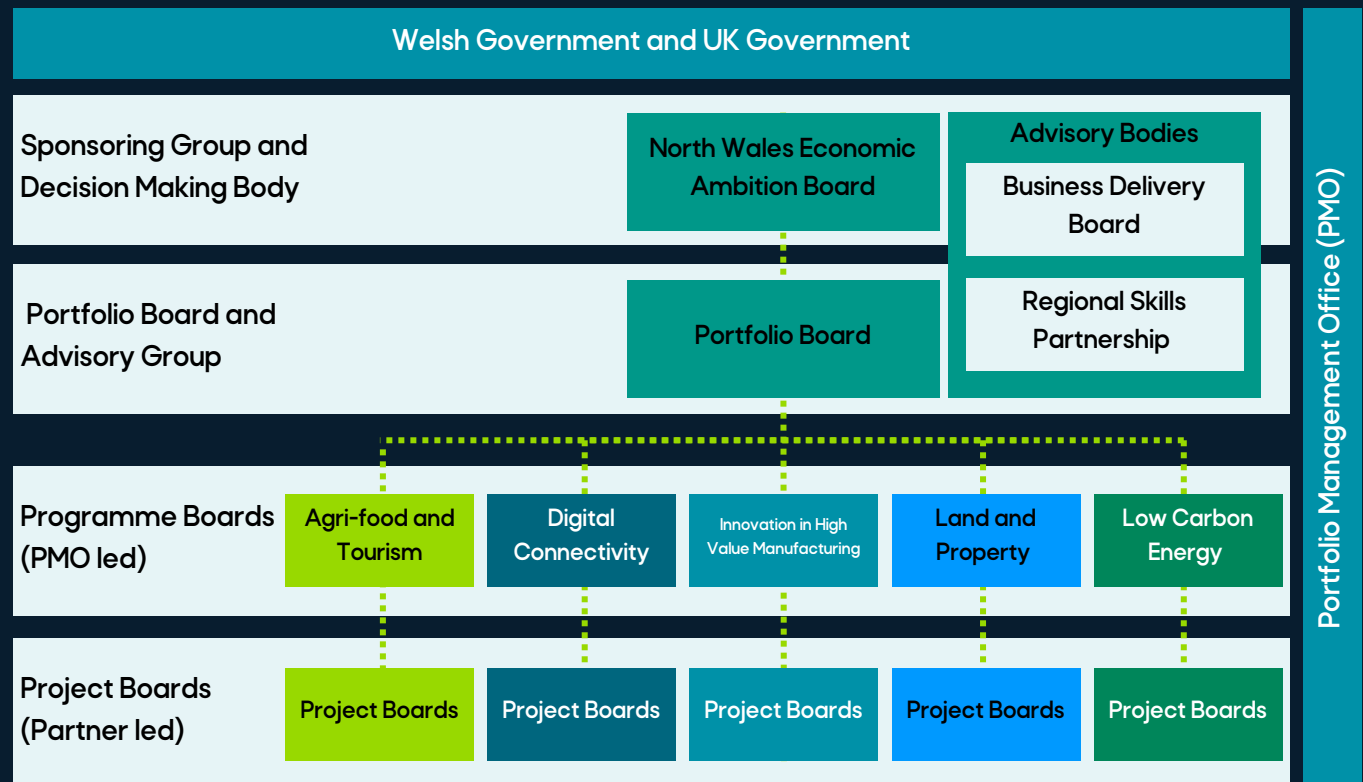
REPORTING

The Portfolio Management Office produce quarterly progress reports and an annual report on the Growth Deal which are shared with the Welsh Government and UK Government, the Economic Ambition Board and its partners. These reports are publicly available on our website.

SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS

Scrutiny of the North Wales Growth Deal is provided by the six local authorities through the existing Scrutiny Committee arrangements. The Scrutiny Committees consider the quarterly and annual reports produced by the Portfolio Management Office.

GROWTH DEAL PROJECT DELIVERY STRUCTURE





BEYOND THE GROWTH DEAL



SKILLS AND EMPLOYABILITY

OVERVIEW BY THE NORTH WALES REGIONAL SKILLS PARTNERSHIP (RSP):

It has been a busy year for the North Wales Regional Skills Partnership. Now 12 months into delivery of its 2023-25 Skills and Employment plan, the team have achieved so much in supporting employers and individuals - and facilitated connections between them. From commissioning research work, to developing resources for young people and employers, it has been a productive year - with a number of exciting projects in the pipeline.

HIGHLIGHTS OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS:

Recruiting ex-offenders

Finding work after leaving prison can be difficult for individuals due to the myths of recruiting ex-offenders. To dispel some of these myths, the RSP, Ministry of Justice, Working Wales, Welsh Government and DWP worked together to offer employer visits to HMP Berwyn.

The aim was to show employers how individuals develop their competences while in the prison, gaining practical and transferable skills for the workplace.



Career Pathways Pilot

In collaboration with Anglesey Council's Education Department, Teachers, Coleg Menai, GWE, Careers Wales, and Llwyddo'n Lleol the RSP have established a Career Pathways Pilot on Anglesey. The aim is to inspire young minds about local training and career opportunities and the different pathways to their future - through pilot projects across all five secondary schools on the island.

One project for the group is the Teacher Encounter Pilot, which equips teachers with insights into regional job opportunities, allowing them to integrate this knowledge into their classroom teaching and make the connections between the curriculum and working skills.

Another initiative being developed is the 'Inspire to Build' project, led by the Construction Employer Sub-group. This will be a short-term programme, shining a spotlight on higher-level construction roles such as architecture, planning and quantity surveying.

Seren Conference Seminar: 'North Wales: Your Pathways to the Future'

The team held a seminar - 'North Wales: Your Pathways to the Future' at a Seren Conference in November to highlight graduate employment and training opportunities. Over 400 young people attended, where they received information on degree apprenticeships, labour market intelligence on key growth sectors, North Wales Growth Deal opportunities and employers with graduate roles.

Low Carbon Energy Skills Research

Low Carbon Energy is a major growth area in North Wales. To better understand the sector, Wavehill were commissioned to undertake a skills analysis across the low carbon energy industry in the region. This involved offshore and onshore Wind, Marine energy i.e. tidal, as well as Nuclear including SMR developments and Decommissioning. The project objective was to better understand the skills and job roles required by developers and their supply chain, now and over the next 10 years. Key developers in the region, RWE, Magnox, BP, Cwmni Eginio and Morlais steered the direction of the work. The RSP will now work with providers to understand available provision against industry requirements and identify any gaps.

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Low Carbon Energy Prospectus and Video

In collaboration with providers in the region, the RSP have developed resources to highlight the excellent educational and training facilities available in North Wales to support the low carbon energy industry as it evolves and grows. The aim was to collate engaging resources which inform and inspire businesses in the low carbon energy industry to establish in North Wales, due to the region's outstanding training facilities for staff.



Young Person's Toolkit

Young people are our future, so it's essential that they feel fully informed about their options. To support decision-making, a young person's toolkit has been developed - bringing together key information that will help them to feel confident when making choices about their future. The toolkit is also a great tool for parents, teachers, career advisors and others. Four key elements have been developed in the toolkit - a young person's skills plan, an animated video summary of the skills plan, written case studies and videos from individuals sharing their thoughts on working in the region.

Digital Skills Research

To better understand the Digital Skills landscape in North Wales, the RSP commissioned research - engaging with organisations of all sizes and across sectors. The purpose was to gain insights into the needs of employers when considering basic and advanced digital skills, tools and technologies, as well as workforce diversity. Tony Venus of ODAG Consulting, carried out the research and presented his findings, report and recommendations, which were approved by the RSP Board and the Digital Dozen. The latter will now take action on the recommendations.



Offshore Energy Alliance Skills Topic champion

Offshore Energy Alliance (OEA) and the RSP united to propel North Wales as a hub for a skilled local supply chain to the growing offshore wind industry. The region's coast is poised for a significant surge in offshore energy initiatives. With Mona, Morgan, and Awel y Môr, wind farms in the pipeline are set to play a pivotal role in the UK's renewable energy landscape. The RSP and OEA collaboration is designed to ensure skills requirements are exceeded.





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NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) are new regional corporate local government entities with similar powers, duties, governance, and administrative structures to local authorities in Wales.

The Welsh Government regulations came into place in April 2021 and from 30 June 2022 onwards the CJCs were assigned their statutory duties to prepare a Strategic Development Plan and a Regional Transport Plan. In addition, they have a responsibility to enhance and promote the economic well-being of the area.

The North Wales CJC comprises the six Local Authorities in North Wales and the Snowdonia National Park Authority.

This new corporate body will still be known as Ambition North Wales - ensuring we build on our established collaborative work and reputation. The North Wales Corporate Joint Committee will be our legal name.

TRANSFER OF AMBITION NORTH WALES

It has been agreed that the functions of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board will be transferred into the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee. Four independent workstreams will be established for the transfer, these are Legal and Governance; People and HR; Finance, Processes and Systems; and Communications and Engagement.

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

A Strategic Development Plan recognises that planning for an individual local planning authority administrative area does not necessarily reflect how people live their lives, how markets operate or how business functions. Strategic Development Plan's offer the ability to ensure that a wider geographical area is considered in a single plan.

REGIONAL TRANSPORT PLAN

A Regional Transport Plan sets out the policies to achieve an accessible, sustainable, affordable, and integrated transport system for North Wales. Delivery of the plan and its priorities will support the economy to thrive, encourage modal shift away from private car use, and reduce the negative environmental impact of our transport network.



LOCAL AREA ENERGY PLANS

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LOCAL AREA ENERGY PLANS AND REGIONAL ENERGY STRATEGY



The Strategic Energy Team have worked closely with the 5 local authorities (with Conwy's plan having already been developed) and consultants ARUP, The Carbon Trust and Afallen to deliver Local Area Energy Plans (LAEP) specific to each Local Authority area.

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The Local Area Energy Plan outlines a compelling vision for what a net-zero carbon energy system could look like in 2050 for the local area. Drawing on a robust evidence base developed during the LAEP's creation, an action plan has been produced to drive the transition of the local energy system towards net zero.

Over the last year, our role has been:

- Managing the contract with ARUP, The Carbon Trust and Afallen
- Coordinate and facilitate stakeholder engagement, progress meetings, workshops and focus groups
- Providing a regional perspective to the plans and represent the region in national discussions
- Ensuring alignment between LAEP's, Regional Energy Strategy and National Plans and Policies

The LAEP's are being finalised and presented to each Local Authority during Q1 of 2024/25.





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SHARED PROSPERITY FUNDING

SHARED PROSPERITY FUNDING

We secured over £1m of Shared Prosperity Funding to deliver on the following workstreams complimenting Growth Deal delivery:

Skills and Employability

Skills and Employability Portal

Skills and Employability Portal – Development of an online Skills and Employment Portal for North Wales. The portal will acknowledge flagship businesses, provide information about large scale job generating projects, raise awareness of future jobs and opportunities and inspire young people to consider a career within a priority sector.

Energy and Net Zero

Access to Smart Local Energy

A project to supply grants to SMEs, social enterprises and community organisations so they can procure bid writing consultation. The ultimate aim is for the awarded SME's and social enterprises to subsequently access funding through the Growth Deal Smart Local Energy Fund.

Carbon Emissions and Biodiversity

Sharing best practice and delivering training sessions on how climate change considerations should inform business case development.

Benefits and Social Value

Commitments and best practice

Develop an online monitoring platform for social value commitments and share best practice.

Digital

Rural Digital Community Support

Providing support for communities to improve their broadband connectivity.

SME Connectivity Assessments

Providing SMEs with business specific advice and guidance on how they can adopt the latest wireless network technologies to improve productivity and innovation.

Access Agreements

Providing information and support for councils to investigate the feasibility of adopting access agreements to enable use of lighting columns for 4G small cell deployment. The project goal is to supply the councils with the relevant information.

Mobile Coverage Survey

A project to purchase survey equipment to enable the region to assess 4G signal quality independently of network operators' own assessments. The capability will identify areas of need and help in lobbying operators on location specific issues.

POWERED BY
LEVELLING
— UP —

Tŷ GOBAITH

The team chose Tŷ Gobaith as the chosen charity for the year. Since September the team have been busy raising monies to support the charity.

The team have participated in Dark Runs across the region, hosted a bake sale at Sarn Mynach, and arranged a clothes donation for the charity's Llandudno shop.

Tŷ Gobaith is a centre of excellence for children's palliative care helping children and families with the best care and support when and where they need it.



To date the team have raised an amazing

£1,810

*including a match funding contribution from the Principality Building Society



THE NEXT TWELVE MONTHS

Over the next twelve months our focus, alongside our partners, remains unchanged. We will drive our projects forward to deliver the new jobs and investment that North Wales deserves.

Let us not forget that the Growth Deal is addressing chronic failures in our economy. If these projects were easy to deliver they would have been operational years ago. Solving these failures takes time, it takes patience and it takes resilience from everyone involved. Working collaboratively together, with both Governments and the private sector requires compassion in the way we form partnerships, in the way we lead and inspire teams to overcome the hurdles and deliver these challenging projects together.

Ultimately we are all striving for the same outcome, we want to see North Wales thrive at every level and compete on a global scale. This gives us a chance to retain our talented young people and offer them jobs that can provide them with the standard of living they deserve. This was not on offer when I was a school leaver so I feel very passionate about making a difference for those following in the generations behind me. I left North Wales at the age of 22 and I returned here to work at the age of 43. That's over two decades of my life - arguably the most important of all, spent building my career in Cardiff and London. I am privileged to now be in this role and despite the challenges I will make sure the Growth Deal investment makes a real difference and offers young people the choice I didn't have.

Looking ahead, we have an extremely busy first half of the year with a significant number of business cases expected to be approved including the Former North Wales Hospital, Denbigh project, the Deeside Anaerobic Digestion Plan and the Tourism Talent Network and the Centre for Environmental Biotechnology.

In addition to moving these key projects forward, we are embarking on a significant change which will see the Portfolio Management Office team and the North Wales Growth Deal transfer into the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee. My focus will be firmly on has to be on the successful and smooth transfer of projects but ultimately people into this new Local Government entity. From July 2024, I will move into the role of Chief Executive of the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee and will continue the work to ensure that we meet our statutory duties and produce a Regional Transport Plan, a Strategic Development Plan and do everything possible to promote regional economic wellbeing.

At a personal level, and in the spirit of transparency, this year for me has been the most challenging yet since joining Local Government in 2020. My team, the Ambition North Wales Partnership and wider colleagues who identify as being part of one 'Team North Wales' are an incredible cohort of people who are passionate about making a difference. Together we will navigate through all of the challenges ahead and look forward with wisdom, confidence and enthusiasm about the year ahead.



Alwen Williams
Portfolio Director

OUR PARTNERS



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£240M OF GROWTH DEAL FUNDING BY



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ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 10 th September 2024
Report Subject	Annual Performance Report 2023/24 (combined with the Council Plan End of Year Performance Report 2023/4)
Cabinet Member	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Transportation; Cabinet Member for Planning, Public Health and Public Protection; and Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy
Report Author	Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation)
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Annual Performance Report sets out an analysis and summary of how well the Council has performed against our Well-being Objectives, Priorities and Sub-priorities at the end of the financial year 2023/24 of our Council Plan (2023-28). The Annual Performance Report also provides a summary of performance regarding other key areas of focus within the Council, i.e., Partnership and Collaboration Activity, Strategic Equality Plan.

The Council Plan (2023-28) sets out our deliverable organisational priorities and outcomes to align with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, seven well-being goals and five ways of working to create a sustainable Wales.

Performance against the Council Plan (2023-28) Well-being Objectives and Priorities was positive overall for 2023/24 with 74% of the actions and 64% of the performance measures meeting or exceeding target for the year.

RECOMMENDATIONS

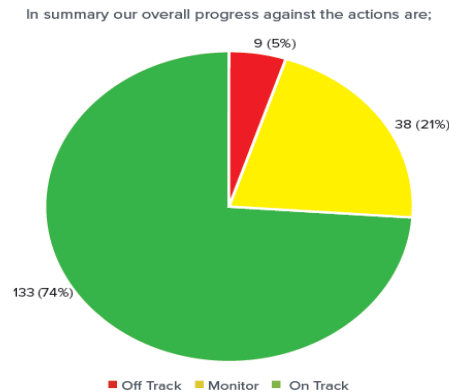
1	Committee to approve the 2023/24 Annual Performance Report, combined with the Council Plan End of Year 2023/24 Performance Report, noting the performance achieved.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2023/24
1.01	<p>The Annual Performance Report (the Report) is produced in accordance with two key legislations;</p> <p><u>Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015</u></p> <p>The performance and governance provisions in the Act are framed within the context of the well-being duty in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 which sets out a legally binding common purpose for the public bodies subject to that Act to improve the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales. It sets out seven well-being goals which these public bodies must work towards and five ways of working to guide how public bodies should deliver.</p> <p><u>Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021</u></p> <p>Councils are democratically accountable for the performance of their services, including their governance arrangements. They are supported through external audit, inspection and regulatory bodies who have a key role in assuring the quality of our public services in Wales</p>
1.02	<p>The Annual Performance Report must be approved by the full Council prior to publication.</p>
1.03	<p>Last year, feedback was received from Members and Chief Officers that the Annual Performance Report 2022/23 and the Council Plan 2022/23, End of Year Performance Report provided similar information and therefore, would it be possible to merge the two reports to reduce duplication and provide more consistency.</p> <p>The Annual Performance Report 2023/24 now provides a high level summary of the Council Plan (2023-28) end of year performance, with the full analysis available as an appendix on progress against our Well-being Objectives and Priorities (Appendix B).</p> <p>The Annual Performance 2023/24 also takes into consideration assessment of our performance regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regulatory, audit and inspection activity• Annual Governance Statement• Corporate Self-assessment• Welsh Language• Budget Monitoring• Risk Management• Climate Change

Council Plan 2023/24 Performance

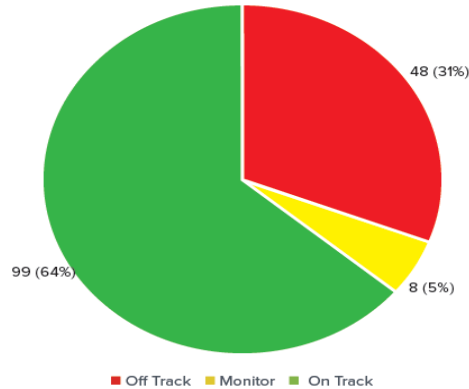
Performance for 2023/24 against our Council Plan Actions is summarised in the chart below.



In summary:

- 133 (74%) actions achieved the target (Green RAG Status - on track)
- 38 (21%) actions are being monitored (Amber RAG status - monitor)
- 9 (5%) actions missed target (Red RAG status - off track)

Performance for 2023/24 against our Council Plan Measures is summarised in the chart below.



In summary:

- 99 (64%) actions achieved the target (Green RAG Status - on track)
- 8 (5%) actions are being monitored (Amber RAG status - monitor)
- 48 (31%) actions missed target (Red RAG status - off track)

For detailed analysis regarding the:

- Priority – Poverty (specifically Sub-priority - Fuel Poverty)
- Priority – Green Society and Environment
- Priority – Economy
- Priority – Personal Community and Well-being (specifically A Well-connected, Safe and Clean Environment)

of the Council Plan (2023-28) end of year performance report, please see Appendix B.

1.05	The Annual Performance Report 2023/24 will be made available via the Council's website once published.
1.06	As part of performance monitoring both Cabinet and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee have considered performance areas which under-perform (downward trend and/or low quartile benchmark position) throughout 2023/24 (and will continue to do so in the next financial year) in regard to the Council Plan (2023-28) but also other key areas of performance i.e., Corporate Self-assessment.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
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2.01	There are no specific resource implications as part of this report.
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3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
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3.01	<p>Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles</p> <p>In regard to the impact on the Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles, the Council Plan (2023-28) continues to be aligned to these Principles;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term • Prevention • Integration • Collaboration • Involvement <p>By completing a high-level IIA for the Council Plan (2023-28), it enabled the Council to have an overview of the various additional IIA's that will be carried out to support the Council Plan (2023-28) priorities.</p> <p>Well-being Goals Impact</p> <p>The Council Plan (2023-28) continues to provide evidence of alignment with the seven Well-being Goals (part of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and Five Ways of Working (Sustainable Development Principle). To do this effectively the Council ensures that specific strategic and policy reports include impact and risk assessments and considers the Well-being Goals.</p> <p>The Well-being Goals are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosperous Wales • Resilient Wales • Healthier Wales • More Equal Wales • Cohesive Wales • Vibrant Wales • Globally Responsible Wales
------	--

	<p>Council's Well-being Objectives</p> <p>The information detailed within the Annual Performance Report 2023/24 and Council Plan End of Year Performance Report 2023/24 demonstrates the progress made against the Well-being Objectives.</p> <p>Risks are identified as part of the annual review of the Council Plan and are detailed within Council Plan (Part 2 Document). In accordance with the Risk Management Framework, risks are reviewed monthly and reported upon.</p>
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4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	<p>Consultation with Senior Managers and Chief Officers was undertaken on setting the actions and measures to support performance for 2023/24 of the Council Plan (2023-28).</p> <p>Consultation is undertaken throughout the year by Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committees to review the Council Plan (2023-28) performance reports.</p>

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	<p>Appendix A - Draft Annual Performance Report 2023/24.</p> <p>Appendix B - Council Plan (2023-28) End of Year Performance Report for 2023/24.</p>

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>Previous Annual Performance Reports Annual Governance Statement 2023/24 Annual Audit Wales Summary 2023 Council Plan (2023-28) Corporate Self-assessment Climate Change information Public Services Board Risk Management Framework Strategic Equality Plan Statement of Accounts Welsh Language</p>

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Emma Heath, Strategic Performance Advisor Telephone: 01352 702744 E-mail: emma.heath@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	Council Plan (2023-28): the document which sets out the priorities for Flintshire County Council and the big things that the Council aims to achieve over the duration of the Plan.



Annual Performance Report

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2023/24



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Welcome to Flintshire’s Annual Performance Report (APR). This document gives an overview of the performance of the Council during 2023/24 against the priorities set within our Council Plan (2023-28) and progress against our Well-being Objectives;

- Protecting people from poverty by supporting them to meet their basic needs
- Housing in Flintshire meeting the needs of our residents and supporting safer communities
- Limiting the impact of the Council’s services on the natural environment and supporting the wider communities of Flintshire to reduce their own carbon footprint
- Enabling a sustainable economic recovery and growth
- Supporting people in need to live as well as they can
- Enabling and Supporting Learning Communities

The Annual Performance Report also provides an overview of performance of the Council in relation to other key areas, including climate change and monitoring budget.

Flintshire County Council continues to pride itself on being a Council which performs highly for its local communities and one which is guided and motivated by a set of strong social values.

The past year has been another challenging year for many, especially in light of the current economic situation and the continued cost of living pressures. However, as a Council we have continued to deliver good quality services; development of sustainable housing, supporting residents of Flintshire, delivering high quality education and learning opportunities, and a continued commitment to being a green Council.

Next year we will be mid-way through of five-year Council Plan and as a Council this provides us with the perfect opportunity to review progress achieved so far against our existing priorities and Well-being Objectives and also inform planning for the Council’s future direction to support with making a positive and lasting difference.



Neal Cockerton
Chief Executive



Ian Roberts
Leader of the Council

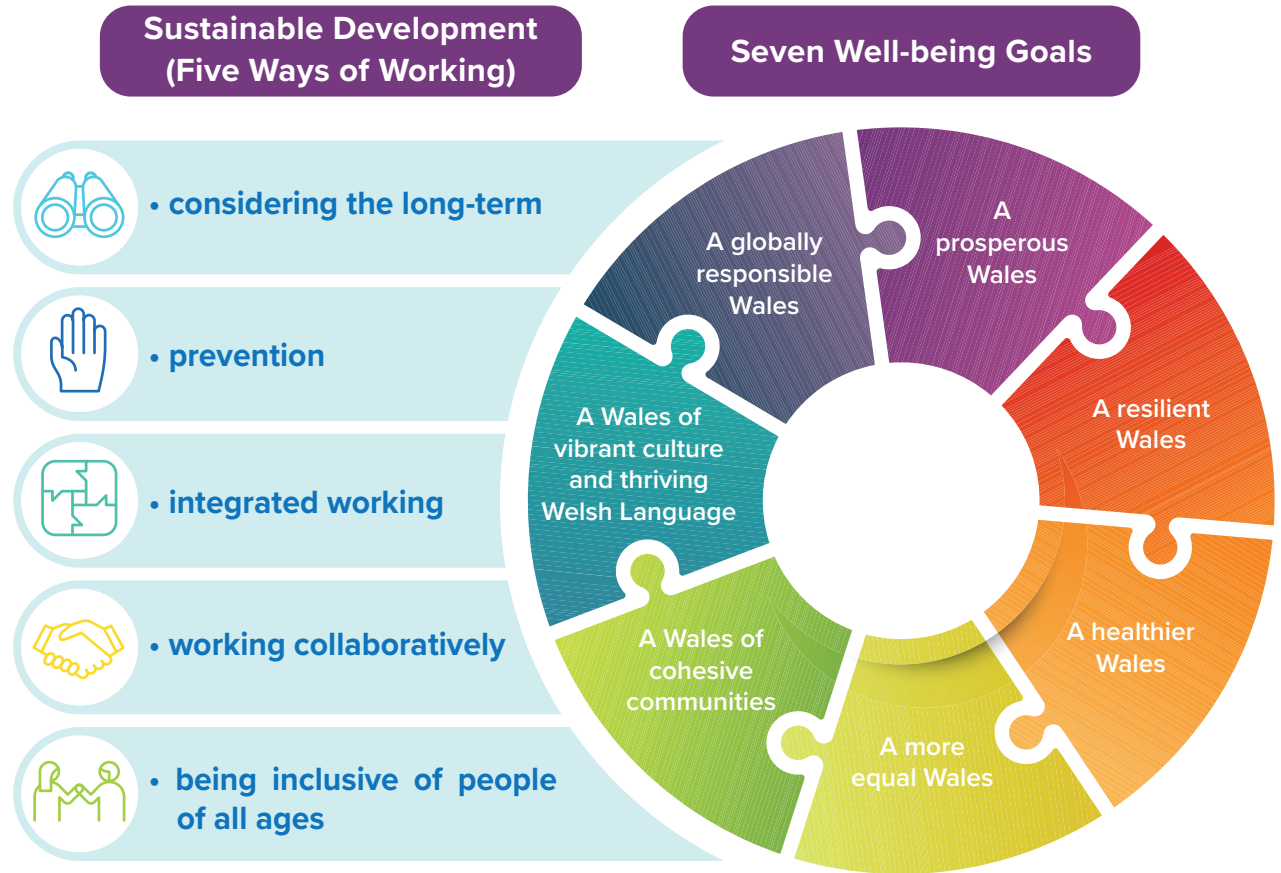
2

Priority Setting

The report has amended slightly from last year’s Annual Performance Report and now includes analysis of our end of year performance in relation to the Council Plan (2023-28), whereas previously this report used to focus on performance within each Portfolio.

The Council Plan (2023-28) sets out the Council’s seven priorities and Well-being Objectives and what we aim to achieve. These priorities and Well-being Objectives have been chosen as the areas where the Council can add the most value and also help us to identify how we are working towards the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

Designated public bodies are required to work individually and collectively to improve well-being in Wales. The seven well-being goals and the five ways of working (Sustainable Development Principle) set a general purpose for public bodies.



Section 5 of the report will provide a high level overview of our performance against the Council Plan (2023-28) under the following headings.

- Priority
- Key Achievements and More
- What We Said We Will Do
- Future Improvements

Full details of the Council Plan (2023-28) End of Year Performance for 2023-24 can be found [here](#)

Alignment of Council Plan 2023-28 Priorities and Well-Being Objectives 3

The Annual Performance Report as advised in Section 2, aligns closely with the Council Plan (2023-28) priorities and the Well-being Objectives, as detailed below:

PRIORITY	WELL-BEING OBJECTIVES
 POVERTY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protecting people from poverty by supporting them to meet their basic needs and be resilient.
 AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE HOUSING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing in Flintshire meeting the needs of our residents and supporting safer communities.
 GREEN SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limiting the impact of the Council’s services on the natural environment and supporting the wider communities of Flintshire to reduce their own carbon footprint.
 ECONOMY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connecting communities and enabling sustainable economic recovery and growth.
 PERSONAL & COMMUNITY WELL-BEING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting people in need to live as well as they can.
 EDUCATION AND SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enabling and Supporting Learning Communities.
 A WELL-MANAGED COUNCIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A responsible, resourceful and trusted Council operating as efficiently as possible.

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4

Council Plan (2023-28) Summary of Performance

Overall, 2023/24 performance has been a positive start to the Council Plan (2023-28) with 74% of actions that have either met or exceeded their targets for the year, achieving a green RAG (Red, Amber, Green) status and 65% of measures also have either met or exceeded their targets, achieving green RAG status.

The Council recognises that not all outcomes (actions and measures) have been achieved, but there is a need to be mindful of the number of competing priorities as a Council we have responsibility for, and the

increased economic and financial constraints; however, performance and improvement remain a high priority for the Council with many positive outcomes achieved this financial year.


With the Council Plan being a five-year plan and the aim of thinking longer term (Sustainable Development Principle) there are outcomes which are continuing next year and others that will continue through the duration of the Plan. Thus, allowing performance to be analysed over a period of time.

4.1 Assessment of Our Performance


The table below provides an overview of how progress against the Council Plan (2023-28) is measured. Please see attached Appendix 1 for full analysis of the 2023/24 End of Year Performance Monitoring Report.

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Performance Indicators for Actions



Limited Progress -
delay in
scheduled activity;
not on track.




Satisfactory Progress -
some delay in
scheduled activity,
but broadly
on track.

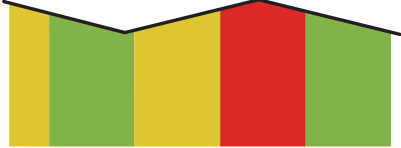


Good Progress -
activities
completed
on schedule,
on track.

Performance Indicators for Measures



Speed dial will provide an analysis of how a measures has performed in that year, using a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) status to highlight the achievement.



Will provide further analysis of the trend of a measure and how it has performed over a period of time.

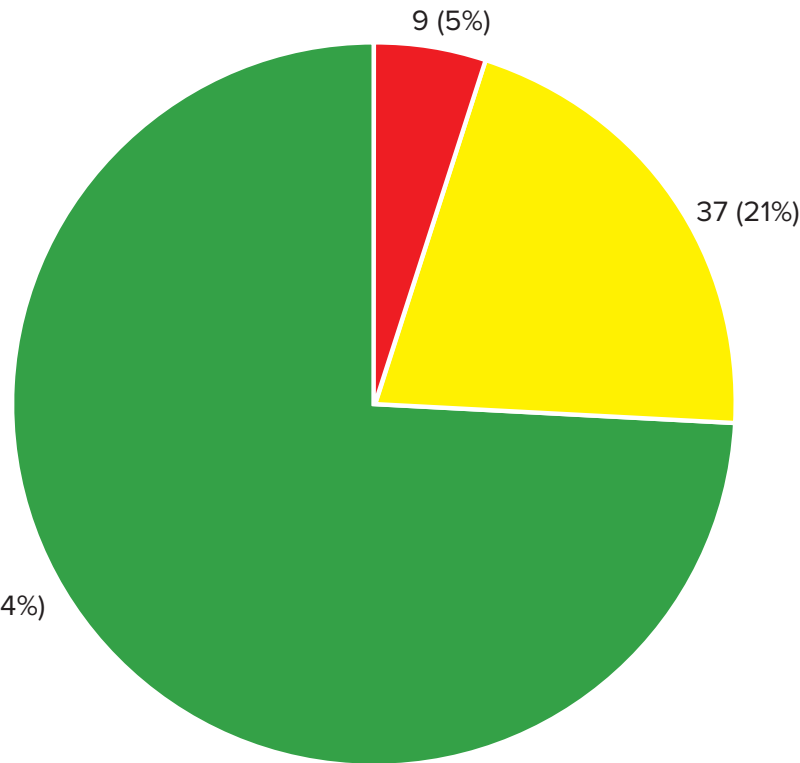
Council Plan (2023-28) Summary of Performance

4.2 Summary of Performance for Actions

Performance for 2023/24 against our Council Plan (2023-28) actions is summarised in the chart below.

Chart 1a: Council Plan Performance - Actions 2023/24

In summary our overall progress against the actions are;



■ Off Track ■ Monitor ■ On Track

In summary our overall progress against the actions are;

- 134 (74%) actions met or exceeded the target (green RAG)

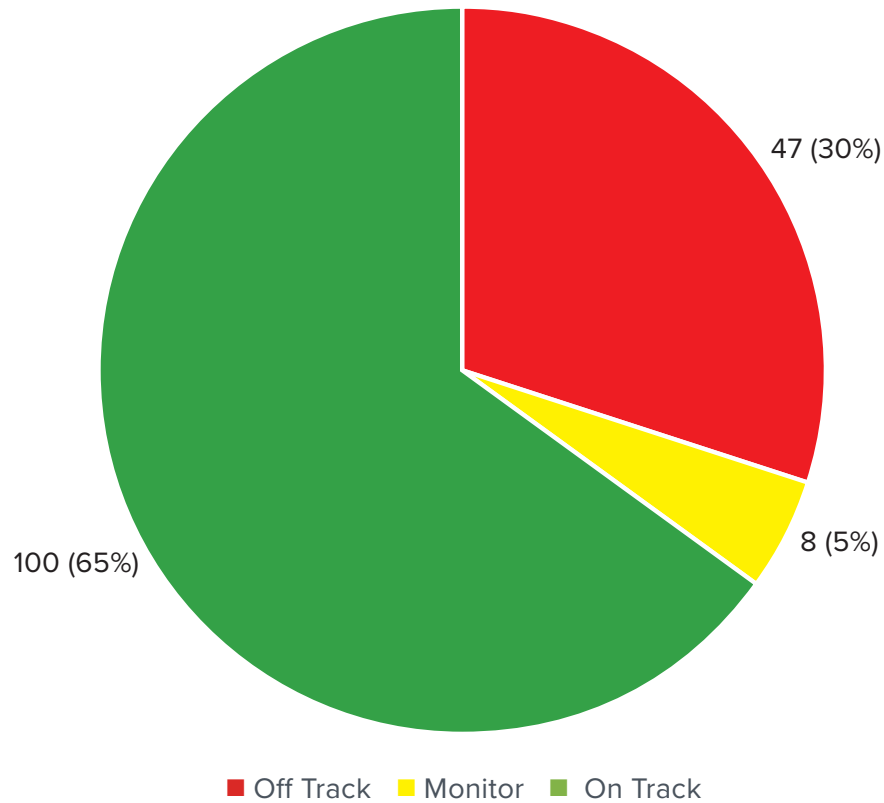
- 37 (21%) actions are being monitored (amber RAG)

- 9 (5%) actions missed target (red RAG)

4.2 Summary of Performance for Measures

Performance for 2023/24 against our Council Plan (2023-28) measures is summarised in the chart below.

Chart 2a: Council Plan Performance - Measures 2023/24



Analysis of the end of year performance against the targets set for 2023-24 shows:

■ 100 (65%) measures have a green RAG status

■ 8 (5%) measures have an amber RAG status

■ 47 (30%) measures have a red RAG status

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives



Priority:

Well-being Objective:
Protecting people from poverty by supporting them to meet their basic needs and be resilient.



Poverty

What We Said We Will Do:

- Deliver Welsh Government support schemes linked to the cost-of-living crisis.
- Maximise the number of people signposted for support to facilitate longer term change.
- Explore development of support schemes to mitigate in work poverty.
- Ensure children and young people have access to transitional play/youth activity to support succession from play opportunities into youth clubs to further support young people’s development.
- Provide free physical activity and well-being sessions within the summer School Holiday Enrichment Programme.
- Provide free access to Fit, Fed and Read sessions during summer holidays providing activities, sport, reading, crafts and meals.



- Introduce and develop a “Well Fed at Home Service”.
- Engage, support and refer vulnerable households to reduce fuel poverty and improve health and Well-being.
- Continue to provide free of charge public access to the internet at Flintshire Connects Centres.
- Support people to use digital technology through Digital Workforce Volunteers.

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives

Key Achievements and More for 2023/24

- A hardship scheme has been implemented to support Local Authority households to mitigate effects of in-work poverty by promoting Discretionary Housing Payments and budgeting advice.
- The cost-of-living crisis continues to increase, impacting residents, and referrals to the Council continue to be received. Ongoing advice and support still form part of the Discretionary Housing Payments application process and advice is also provided around options for support, even if an application is unsuccessful.
- Automatic payments for School Essential Grants resulted in 3085 children receiving payments, reducing the pressure on families and allowing them to order and purchase school uniforms. Automatic payments also enabled the team to prioritise new applications.
- The 2023 Fit, Fed and Read community programme took place across the county during a five-week period in July and August 2023, with a wide range of public sector partners tackling issues such as health inequalities, food poverty, literacy levels, and physical and mental well-being. 5,040 families and young people attended the 39 sessions. The scheme made a significant contribution in supporting 3,000 children to sign up to the annual Summer Reading Challenge. 110 volunteering hours were recorded by our young ambassadors.
- The Youth Service continues to deliver a range of open access and targeted provision in a range of settings, including open access youth clubs, schools, forest school, community centres and street-based work. Flintshire Youth Service delivered 1928 sessions between April 23 - March 24 with 14,743 registered attendees.
- 150 Christmas dinner boxes were provided to vulnerable residents.
- The 'Well Fed at Home' service launched in April 2023 and the service is proving popular. In Quarter Four, Well Fed had over 200 customers ordering meals from the Well Fed food hubs within the community led hubs and mobile shop. Well Fed mobile shop visits 45 locations across Flintshire including schools, churches, community groups and sheltered accommodation schemes with residents purchasing 16,533 subsidised meals.



Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives

- Provided advice and sign posting support to 508 households against a target of 200.
- 1,203 households received energy efficiency improvements against a target of 1,200.
- Supported by workforce volunteers, Digital Surgeries launched in March 2024. A schedule of surgeries are planned throughout 2024 in different towns across the county.
- Free of charge access to the internet is available at all Flintshire Connects Centres.
- National Data Bank - free SIM cards and data vouchers are available from our Connects Centres to eligible residents. The free data has been provided by Virgin Media O2, Vodafone and Three. Connects work with the Good Things Foundation, a charity helping people improve their lives through digital.



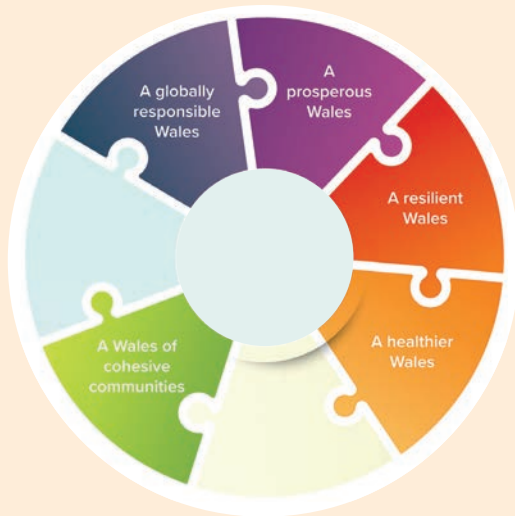
Future Improvements

- Increase campaigns to raise awareness and take-up of Free School Meals, School Essential Grants, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction.
- Support community led hubs to open their own food pantries, reducing food waste from local supermarkets and increasing access to seasonal food. This will include to hold a 'Good Food Flintshire' event in Autumn, working corroboratively with other key agencies.
- Low subscribers to My Account by Contract Holders (tenants). Promotion will help increase awareness and Housing Officers should aim to offer digital by default whenever a new contract is issued.



Priority:

Well-being Objective:
Housing in Flintshire meeting the needs of our residents and supporting safer communities.



Affordable and Accessible Housing

What We Said We Will Do:

- Commission a wide range of housing related support that meets the needs of the people of Flintshire.
- Ensure a multi-agency partnership approach to homeless prevention and develop a culture where homelessness is “everyone’s business”.
- Develop self-service approaches that enable people to identify their own housing options through on line support.
- Create a Single Point of Access service for housing help and advice.
- Work with housing association partners to build new social housing properties and additional affordable properties.
- Ensure the Council’s housing stock maintains the current Welsh Housing Quality Standards.
- Support our tenants to access technology and create sustainable digital communities.
- Finalise the plan for the decarbonisation of Council homes in line with Welsh Government guidance to ensure their thermal efficiency is optimised and the cost of heating homes are minimised.
- Ensure increase in stock capacity meets the identified needs and demands.
- Implement the initial recommendations of the sheltered housing review to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of current and prospective tenants.
- Work with residents to ensure our communities are well managed, safe, and sustainable places to live.
- Engage with private sector tenants, giving them a voice, and responding to their needs.
- Work in partnership with landlords and private sector agents to better understand their needs.

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives

Key Achievements and More for 2023/24

- Housing Support and Homelessness services continue to explore every opportunity to prevent homelessness and reduce escalations in housing hardships that may lead to risk of homelessness. There has been an increase in homeless households rehoused by the Council and Housing Partners through the 50% homeless nominations process.
- Work continues to promote Housing Support and Homelessness services through the development of website content and active engagement with residents electronically, which for many is a preferred method of sourcing information. Additionally, officers regularly attend local activities to promote services and support offers through groups such as local Community Hubs, Children’s Services Forum and Citizen Advice Bureau frontline worker events and the Flintshire Support Network (FSN).
- Community Based Accommodation Support Services Team (CBASS) received over 500 out of hours calls with 156 residents requiring attendance. The CBASS teams support residents have a range of needs including substance misuse and mental health problems. The team work closely with Social Services and other services to support residents to stay safe and well and maintain their tenancy.
- Housing Supply Map and availability data has been included as part of the Housing Hub webpages on the Council’s website.

This allows residents to be better informed about local social housing supply.

- There has been an increase in homeless households rehoused by the Council and Housing Partners through the 50% homeless nominations process.
- The Council continues to target properties that do not meet the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) 65 rating through various improvement works. This includes, installation of efficient central heating systems, renewable technology (Solar Panels and Air Source Heating) and extensive external refurbishment contracts comprising of new windows, doors, loft insulation and roof coverings, the energy performance and thermal efficiency of our properties is addressed and improved. Our current average SAP rating for our entire stock is 73.5. The Council are currently moving towards incorporating our decarbonisation measures into our investment programmes of refurbishment works to our tenanted homes.



Key Achievements and More for 2023/24

- Staff service improvement groups are working through priorities as identified through the last Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR) to see where improvements can be made.
- Work continues with regards to housing support and advice for landlords when they have issues with residents. This is positive prevention activity to avoid housing problems and risks of homelessness. Where landlords are selling properties we now have a purchase offer and an established process in partnership with Housing Strategy and Empty Homes Teams. This is in direct response to landlords telling us they are selling up and leaving the market.
- Positive joint work with the Empty Homes Team to identify properties that are long term empty and can be secured for long term leasing to ease the pressures on homeless accommodation. Ongoing work with Regional Partners and TPAS Cymru to engage with Private Sector Contract Holders.
- Utilised 96% of the allocated £13.3m Social Housing Grant (SHG) in 2023/24.



Future Improvements

- Scope the potential merger of the Telecare (Social Services) and Carelink teams to create a more efficient service for both the Council and the customer.
- Undertake the STAR survey again in 2024/25 and assess response to areas identified previously for improvement, including tenants views and these are taken into account to inform service provision and delivering of services.
- Ensure the sheltered housing review continues to assess and identifies the needs of current and prospective tenants and the council implements solutions to achieve them.
- Deliver the agreed restructure of the Housing and Prevention Service increasing resources to engage with Private Sector Landlords.

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives



Priority:

Well-being Objective:
Limiting and enhancing the impact of the Council's services on the natural environment and supporting the wider communities of Flintshire to reduce their own carbon footprint.



Green Society and Environment

What We Said We Will Do:

- Produce guidance on viable and deliverable options to mitigate the impact of phosphates from new development on Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) protected rivers.
- Work with Flintshire's leisure and culture trust partners to reduce carbon emissions.
- Develop plans towards net zero carbon for our assets in line with Welsh Government guidance.
- Review the procurement policy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from suppliers.
- Ensure climate change and biodiversity are considered a priority in key decision making across all Council services.
- Assess the feasibility of schemes within land assets for resisting flood and drought while enhancing biodiversity and increasing carbon storage.
- Identify projects to further support climate adaptation ambitions following Welsh Government guidance.
- Reduce the environmental impact of our fleet by transitioning to ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEV).
- Deliver an increase in canopy cover as part of the Urban Tree and Woodland Plan.
- Enhance the natural environment through the delivery of the Section 6 Environment (Wales) Act 2016 biodiversity duty.
- Explore opportunities to develop the Flintshire Coast Park through the production of a scoping study.
- Support the development of public electric vehicle charging network.
- Promote active travel and further develop the County's walking and cycleway network.
- Implement formalised crossing facilities at existing school crossing patrol sites.
- Work in partnership, actively support and engage with community led groups by developing recycling initiatives.

Key Achievements and More

- The adoption of the Local Development Plan (LDP) was premised on the basis of certain allocated housing sites having to demonstrate nutrient neutrality in terms of not harming the Bala Lake and River Dee (Special Area of Conservation) through the release of phosphates from waste water treatment works into the River Alyn. Work commenced on the feasibility of developing wetlands alongside the waste water treatment works at Mold, Buckley and Hope, which would have required developer financial contributions as part of a process to have been set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). However, the release of updated and unchanged permits for the three waste water treatment works by Natural Resources Wales and the availability of 'headroom' (difference between the level of phosphate permitted by the permit and the actual level of phosphate being released by the treatment works) evidenced by Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water has provided a window within which to deliver LDP allocations.
- The revised Procurement Strategy for 2024/2027, has a key theme centred around 'Climate Emergency' - ensuring procurement exercises have a reduced impact on CO2 emissions, and that our suppliers embrace our Net Zero Carbon ambitions too.
- The Council's investment in the RE:fit Framework for 2024/25 and 2025/26 will see energy efficiency and renewable energy works worth £1.5 million invested in our building assets. The framework has been awarded and project work will commence post - April 2024.
- The programme of activities to decarbonise the Council's assets and services continues to work to plan by meeting interim targets. This is a long term target regarding the Council's carbon footprint taking us to 2030, and we are currently on target at 10%, giving us a green RAG status.
- The following strategies and plans have been reviewed and now incorporate the Council's Net Zero Carbon ambitions: Asset Management Plan, Procurement Strategy, Biodiversity Plan, Waste Strategy, and Housing Strategy and action plan.
- A working draft of the Flood Risk Management Strategy has been drafted with consultants and the next stage is to complete the draft action plan in order to carry out stakeholder consultation with Members and key stakeholders. This will then lead to a public consultation exercise on the strategy before review of comments made, sign off by the Council, and submission to Welsh Government.
- Bee friendly status: Bee friendly status obtained in recognition of our work for pollinators, we are the fourth Local Authority in Wales to receive the status.
- Small Grants for Nature: The Council have delivered our first small community nature grant which allocated over £13,000 to

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives

Key Achievements and More

small community groups and schools to support local features for nature.

- Ponds for Schools project successfully obtained funding from the Airbus Community Impact Fund to restore ponds in two schools, the projects included preparatory educational visits, pond works, and volunteering sessions with Airbus corporate staff.
- Significant natural environment enhancement through changes in estate management, tree planting and green infrastructure projects.
- Assessment of over 180 Flintshire owned sites for suitability for tree planting is to become part of the Flintshire Forest.
- Successful Countryside and Greenfield Valley events programme with 7537 event participants.
- Shared Prosperity Funding secured to further progress establishing the Flintshire Coast Park.
- Social media promotional and awareness content reached 54,000, which is a 10% increase of social followers.
- Active Travelschemes including; Holywell Urban Area and Flint Six Schools have been delivered

as part of Safer Routes in Communities initiatives enabling pupils to walk and cycle to school safely, as well as benefitting the wider local communities.

- All civil engineering works associated with the formalised crossing facilities has been completed and will be operational in May 2024.
- Electric Vehicle (EV) charging feasibility study and associated Delivery Plan completed in February 2024. The aim of the study is to identify the next phase of EV charge-points within public car parks in Flintshire.

- The Waste Strategy Team have been actively engaging with communities in Flintshire to promote our recycling and reuse services. This has taken place with housing associations, at community group meetings and on the doorstep. A six week consultation took place with Flintshire residents and stakeholders to gain their input into developing a future Resource and Waste Strategy. Five engagement events took place in January 2024, where team members met and discussed recycling with Flintshire residents. Work has also begun with Repair Café Wales to introduce more repair centres.



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Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives

Key Achievements and More

- A new Resource and Waste Strategy was adopted in March 2024 which identifies measures to maximise the amount of waste reused, recycled and composted.
- Service Delivery waste and recycling crews continue to visit approximately 11,624 per day and this year have maintained a successful collection rate of 99.72%.



Future Improvements

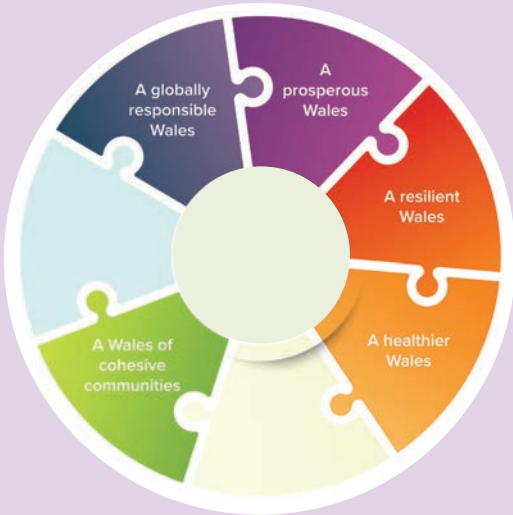
- The roll out of the Climate Essentials e-learn to the wider workforce was delayed to coincide with the roll out of the new Learning portal. Once this module is available it will vastly increase the number of employees and Members receiving carbon related training.
- To improve on recycling targets. In 2023/24 the Council missed the statutory recycling target for the fourth year in succession, resulting in potential infraction charges.
- Work has been underway this year to identify Flintshire Council land assets with the potential for planting schemes in order to provide natural flood mitigation, and improved biodiversity and carbon sequestration of our land. This work is nearing completion and will help to inform sites that can be considered for planting in the coming years.

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives



Priority:

Well-being Objective:
Connecting communities and enabling a sustainable economic recovery and growth.



Economy

What We Said We Will Do:

- Ensure that Economy interventions consider and meet the needs of rural businesses and individuals.
- Commission a data review for rural Flintshire and hold community consultation to better understand rural community needs.
- Monitor the health and vitality of town centres to support effective management and business investment decisions.
- Encourage and supporting investment in town centre properties specially to facilitate more sustainable uses and including improvements to the environment.
- Understand the needs of and supporting community enterprises in town centre locations.
- Libraries and leisure centres are community well-being hubs with social objectives underpinning their operation.
- Engage town centre small businesses and promote support packages available to them.
- Support small and/or local businesses to engage with public sector procurement opportunities.
- Support recovery of the County’s Street and indoor markets.
- Support growth of the local and regional food and drink business sector through marketing and collaborative projects.
- Support recovery of the tourism and hospitality sectors and rebuild confidence in the industry.
- Increase the scale and impact of the social business sector.
- Support local businesses in their efforts to reduce their carbon footprint and become more resource efficient.
- Improve digital connectivity across the County for businesses and residents.
- Make decisions at Planning Committee in line with the adopted Local Development Plan.
- Co-ordinate a multi-agency approach to support businesses to recruit people from disadvantaged groups.
- Deliver mentoring and wider support programmes to assist disadvantaged people to re-engage with the labour market.

Key Achievements and More

- All current interventions (outside of specific town centre projects) supporting individuals and businesses are targeting all of the County.
- Discussions are underway with Wrexham University about how the needs of rural Flintshire residents can be most effectively assessed and supported.
- The Council processed over £30m of Shared Prosperity Fund project proposals in conjunction with similar processes across the other North Wales Councils. £11m of funding was awarded to projects in Flintshire supporting businesses, supporting places and communities and improving skills and employability. The majority of projects cover all of the County including rural areas, especially those focused on the visitor economy, which will bring a disproportionate benefit to rural businesses.
- Work has continued during Quarter Four (January - March 2024) to monitor and respond to the health, vibrancy and needs of town centres across Flintshire. This has included planning and delivering an online consultation for four towns across Flintshire, which 3,356 local people responded to, and also reviewing data related to the town centres to develop up-to-date profiles of the current strengths and focus for future improvement / investment. The focus during quarter four has been on initiating work in four of the seven towns (Connah's Quay, Flint, Mold and Queensferry). The place making plan for Shotton has been developed and identifies 10 key themes and priorities responding to local needs. The place making plans for both Holywell and Buckley have also been commissioned and work has progressed on these also.
- 'Save The High Street' has been engaged by the Council's Regeneration Team to deliver tailored business support for town centre businesses across the seven town centres of Flintshire, to support their growth, development and diversification through the delivery of an intensive eight week support programme. Flintshire was the first local authority in Wales to partner with 'Save The High Street' using funding secured from the Shared Prosperity Fund. Fourteen town centre businesses participated in the 'Save The High Street' eight week intensive programme. Due to the success of the pilot project, a further 30 businesses will benefit from this provision between April and November 2024. Excellent feedback has been received from local businesses who participated and has been featured in the local press. Work has continued to roll-out grant schemes and encourage take-up amongst local businesses as take-up has been excellent.
- The Regeneration Team secured £1.178million from UK Government to deliver Town Centre Investment Programme across seven towns in Flintshire (Buckley, Connah's Quay, Flint, Holywell, Mold, Shotton, Queensferry) in 2023/24 and 2024/25. The programme comprises of nine projects in total - a mix of capital and revenue initiatives aimed at supporting our Flintshire's high streets.

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives

Key Achievements and More

- During January - March 2024, 42 support sessions have been delivered by the Council’s Social Enterprise Officer to social enterprises in the towns of Buckley, Connah’s Quay, Mold and Shotton. These sessions have involved understanding their needs and tailoring support provided to these in addition to encouraging the social enterprises to utilise the Flintshire Social Impact toolkit to calculate their overall social value. Of the organisations supported during January - March 2024, this has involved a total of £807,269 social value being recorded.
- £466,458 secured from Welsh Government’s ‘Transforming Towns’ and UK Government’s Shared Prosperity Funding £180,000 of this total being contributed to businesses towards improving their premises.
- £63,130 has been awarded to local communities to deliver activities and events in towns across Flintshire to improve footfall and the vibrancy of towns.
- The development of the Flintshire Social Impact toolkit and increase of numbers of social enterprises using it, continues to demonstrate the impact of social enterprise activity in Flintshire. During this reporting period (2023/24) the

- fourteen participating social enterprises reported the generation of a combined social value of £2,119,680.98 through the 18 activities being measured.
- The Business Development Team have delivered two Net Zero Carbon Workshops and in partnership with Deeside Decarbonisation Forum have delivered four network events, engaging with 271 business delegates throughout the year.
- Mold Street Market continues to thrive with an average of 66 traders attending each market day and 24 new traders have been accommodated since April 2023, (including the replacement of retired stallholders). Mold Indoor Market is currently 87% occupied with interest shown in the two remaining vacant units.
- 143 business support sessions were delivered to 43 social enterprises.
- Engagement with over 90 commercial investors to support new businesses moving into Flintshire or expanding current operations.
- Fibre connectivity has improved significantly in Flintshire recently. A number of regional projects to improve connectivity are approaching delivery phase. Locally, work is underway to encourage network operators to fill gaps in mobile phone coverage and capacity.
- A successful joint partnership between Communities For Work Plus, Jobcentre Plus and Careers Wales through the Jobs, Skills and Training Events group has delivered a number of successful

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Key Achievements and More

projects throughout the year highlighting opportunities available locally in Flintshire.

- £160,000 Brilliant Basics Fund Grant was secured to develop and improve regionally recognised trails across Flintshire and associated infrastructure.
- The Flintshire Tourism Association supported with securing and the delivery of £64,000 funding from Cadwyn Clwyd to support wider business and marketing activities over the summer.
- The Flintshire Tourism Ambassador Course was delivered in July 2023. Seventy ambassadors have completed and achieved the Bronze and Silver Award during 2023/24.

<https://www.ambassador.wales>

Future Improvements

- The Council will be working closely with Welsh Government and communities in order to increase patronage on public transport through the delivery of education and infrastructure improvements.



Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives



Priority:

Well-being Objective:
Supporting people in need to live as well as they can.



Personal and Community Well-being

What We Said We Will Do:

- Continue to grow the Microcare market, including access to commissioned care packages.
- Develop a national, regional, and local approach to Early Years Transformation so that all our children ages 0-7 have the best possible start in life and are able to reach their full potential.
- Support people to achieve their mental well-being outcomes by promoting personal and community well-being through open access courses delivered by the Learning Partnership.
- Work in partnership with the Community Mental Health Team and Social Services Mental Health Support Service to develop clear pathways for individuals needing access to Mental Health services, and a sustainable model for the future.
- Utilise the progression model as a way of promoting people's independence skills.
- Provide additional placements for step down care within our in-house provision (Croes Atti 2).
- Work with Housing to fund a small team of people to support individuals with low level Mental health problems to improve their housing.
- Plan for the relocation of Tri Ffordd supported employment project to Maes Gwern in Mold.
- Prepare for the implementation of the new Liberty Protect Safeguard procedures.
- Deliver a programme of registered Children's Homes to help avoid the need for residential placements outside Flintshire.
- Explore the recommissioning of advocacy services on a regional basis.
- Develop childcare expansion and seamless childcare provision across programmes.
- Continue to grow our in-house fostering service to support more looked after children.
- Continue to grow our in-house homecare service to support more people to live at home, utilising a rolling scheme of recruitment.
- Establish a Dementia Strategy Implementation Group, to include representation from people with lived experience.

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives

Key Achievements and More

- 46 Microcare businesses were operational at the end of March 2024. The intention is to increase this by another 10 providers over the next 12 months.
- The Wellbeing and Recovery Team is now fully operational and delivering excellent outcomes. The service focusses on those residents who have housing problems, or are homeless, or at risk of homelessness and require additional support due to their mental health. The service is part funded through Social Care and Housing Support Grant and consideration will be given to increasing capacity during 2024-2025.
- In order to provide additional capacity for step down care within our in-house provision, twelve step down Discharge to Recover and Assess beds have been agreed for Croes Atti Newydd Net Zero Carbon operation (planned for completion in May 2025). This will increase the step down provision from its current level of 16 to a total of 28 across Flintshire.
- The design concept for the Maes Gwern hub has evolved to incorporate areas to enable health services and therapies to be



delivered at the site. This is in addition to the learning disability, mental health, and autism support services to create an integrated social services and health hub. The construction start date to commence April 2024.

- Continue to support individuals to achieve their mental well-being outcomes by promoting personal and community well-being through open access courses delivered by the Learning Partnership, with 66 courses available. Courses have been well attended throughout the financial year.
- The North East Wales Community Equipment service continue to deliver a level of service exceeding Welsh Government standards for equipment requests. 93% of equipment has been reused this year; this equates to £2,185,980 cost avoidance (average £42,076 a week). Without this level of re-use of equipment, the North East Wales Community Equipment Service budget would only cover 12.5 weeks of operation.
- The Children’s Safeguarding Unit continue to maintain consistency in holding case conferences within statutory timescales, working with increasing numbers on the child protection register.

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives

Key Achievements and More



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- Between April 2023 and March 2024, 1109 safeguarding reports for adults were received, representing a 23% increase on last year. 667 of these reports met the threshold for an enquiry under Section 126, representing a significant increase in demand, however, the Safeguarding Unit continue to prioritise safeguarding reports on an individual basis.

- The children’s residential homes are now fully operational. Ty Nyth is a tri-party partnership collaboration between Flintshire County Council (FCC), Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC) and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB), offering up to four places

for children and young people aged 8-18 years. Park Avenue provides care and support including accommodation, for up to four children and young people between the ages of 8-18 years old who are supported by Flintshire County Council. Bromfield Park and Chevrons Road offers care and support including accommodation for one young person aged 8-18 years as a solo placement or two siblings aged 8-18 years. Mesen Fach is an emergency crisis flat on the site of Ty Nyth.

- Foster carer recruitment has been active this year, with four new general foster carers approved and a further eight connected person carers.
- Flying Start two year olds part time childcare expansion Phase 2 is currently being rolled out across Flintshire with an additional 23 children for 2024/25.
- The Adults Advocacy Contract has been successfully commissioned in collaboration with Wrexham County Borough Council. This has been awarded to ASNEW or Independent Professional Advocacy and Community Advocacy, and Advance Brighter Futures have been awarded Self Advocacy.

- The Flintshire Dementia Strategy supports around 850 people living with dementia, and carers, receiving care and support or engaging in community activities in Flintshire.

- Throughout 2023 over thirty community events were attended to engage with Flintshire residents to drive environment initiatives and behavioural change.



Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives



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- Fourteen sessions offering a range of activities and sport for young people around Flintshire are available. The Youth Services work with Community Councils and sit on the contextual safeguarding meetings to ensure they are in the right areas.



Future Improvements

- Recruitment for in-house home carers continues to be challenging, however the service has developed a recruitment plan to help increase the workforce and grow the share of the market.
- Increase the number of community champions to deliver environmental initiatives.

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives



Priority:

**Well-being Objective:
Enabling and supporting
learning communities.**



Education and Skills

What We Said We Will Do:

- Support the implementation of the revised curriculum for secondary pupils in years 7 and 8.
- Continue to deliver Alternative Provision (Education) and to increase the number of young people on the programme gaining qualifications and achieving their full potential (subject to external grant funding).
- Provide bespoke support for schools through training and development to improve the level of speech language and communication skills for pupils.
- Explore and develop options for in house provision in response to the increasing number of pupils struggling to engage with education due to mental health difficulties.
- Embed the delivery plan for Integrated Youth Services by maintaining focus on digital, school and community engagement.
- Provide Duke of Edinburgh Award training opportunities for young people in Alternative Provision, schools, and community groups (subject to external grant funding).
- Schedule Council approval to progress Wales Government’s Band B Sustainable Communities projects within the Learning Investment Programme.
- Continue construction of the 3-16 campus at Mynydd Isa.
- Deliver the Adult Community Learning (ACL) programme.
- Complete the annual strategic actions within the Welsh Education Strategic Plan 5-year action plan.
- Run a referral programme for children and young people with ACEs or a disability and their families to provide low cost / no cost physical activity opportunities to improve overall health and well-being.
- Embed a Whole School Approach to Emotional Health and Wellbeing in all Flintshire schools.

Key Achievements and More

- Informal Qualifications delivered by Flintshire Youth Service and eight young people were recruited for the Youth Work Young Leaders Award.
- Anti-Racism: 'Leaders of Now' is a pilot project that has seen young people from four secondary schools in Flintshire lead the way in challenging racism in their own settings.
- The model of intervention for the Community Focused Schools Team has been established and further developed to focus on transition.
- All secondary schools in Flintshire have implemented the revised curriculum for secondary pupils in Years 7 and 8 from September 2023. Each school continues to work with their supporting improvement adviser to embed this work.
- Over the past six months, from October 2023 to March 2024, the PlayPals project has been successfully implemented across eight schools in different areas of Flintshire.
- Substance Education by Flintshire Sorted: This was undertaken in twelve schools and PPRUs through assemblies, lunchtime walkaround sessions and input into lessons, engaging a total of 2,152 children and young people. 75 sessions also took place in the community.
- Over 70 Young People enrolled on the Bronze and Silver Duke of Edinburgh.
- £6.23m of capital investment was injected across the school network to improve facilities for learners.
- Construction of new 3-16 campus continues and is progressing well, following the site start in November 2022 on the Argoed High School site Net Zero Carbon in operation.
- Sixty young people successfully completed the John Muir Award through the Forest School programme.
- The Council's contribution to the Adult Community Learning Partnership continues to grow, with over 1,036 learners and 246 sessions being delivered during this reporting year. Examples of the courses that we provided include - First Aid for Parents, Pre and Post-natal Fitness, Employability Skills, Autism Awareness, Safeguarding, Social Media workshops, Food Safety qualifications.
- Secured funding through the Shared Prosperity Fund to improve responses and support to children and young people at risk of exploitation by enabling Action for Children to deliver their SideStep Programme until December 2025.
- Welsh Language Music Club - 35 young people took part in a 4 week programme across two schools.
- 56 young people from secondary schools competed in the Eisteddfod in a variety of different competitions, including Cogurdd, Dance, Singing and Reciting.

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives

Key Achievements and More

- A review has been undertaken to consider the current provision and engage with Welsh medium settings to determine need. The findings are being collated and will be presented to the Welsh Education Strategic Plan Forum.
- Flintshire schools are positively engaged with developing their work around the whole school approach to emotional health and well-being. This work will be ongoing as schools continue to embed effective practice.
- 24 candidates from schools and Education and Youth successfully completed the local Trauma Informed Schools UK diploma training.
- The Council has successfully achieved the Integrated Youth Services delivery plan by maintaining a strong digital presence, ensuring school and community immersion workers and play team are active in schools, and sustaining ongoing community engagement.
- All schools have now formally adopted their own digital strategy. This gives all schools a standard to work from to develop their digital progression in a structured manner.



Future Improvements

- The level of exclusion remains high across secondary schools, and this remains a targeted priority. The focus on Trauma Informed practice will continue with the aim of supporting a reduction in the need for exclusion by encouraging schools to adopt a different approach to managing serious behaviour incidents.
- There has been a 12 month gap in the position of the Welsh Language Youth Worker. The new post holder was successfully recruited at the end of 2023 and starts their position in May 2024. The sustaining of the current projects has been a success and focus will be placed on growth for 2024/25, including the Welsh language skills across the play and youth team.



Priority:

Well-being Objective:
Responsible, resourceful, and trusted Council operating efficiently as possible.



A Well Managed Council

What We Said We Will Do:

- Maintain competitive pay and reward, and terms and conditions of employment.
- Recruit sufficient permanent high quality staff with suitable qualifications and experience.
- Retain existing employees by supporting them to carry out their roles effectively, and by ensuring that our total offer for new and existing employees is competitive within the market place.
- Increase the level of Welsh Language across the organisation.
- Develop and implement an Action Plan to meet Welsh Government’s Anti-racist Wales Action Plan.
- Complete an annual self-assessment against the Welsh Language Standards and implement an action plan for improvement across all Portfolios.
- Publish the Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report to meet our statutory public sector equality duties.
- Ensure the funding needs of the Council cover the medium term are met through financial planning.
- Ensure robust processes exist for the management and recovery of debt including Council Tax and rent.
- Monitor Council Progress against the Corporate Asset Management Plan.
- Continue to provide a corporate Contact Centre for handling telephone calls to the Council.
- Provide access to Council services on the internet in a responsive way (information can be accessed using different devices).
- Work with public sector partners, develop and publish a local Well-being Plan for 2023-28 setting out the local well-being objectives and how the Public Services Board, including the Council, aims to achieve them.
- Deliver three engagement events to encourage other organisations to sign up to the Armed Forces Covenant, which contribute to Flintshire County Council being re-accredited with the Defence Employers Recognition Scheme Gold Award in 2024.

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives

Key Achievements and More

- During the year 754 positions were filled, which is positive and indicates that we are able to recruit to a large number of positions, all of which will have been assessed as meeting the essential criteria for the post (including qualifications and experience), (percentage determined after deducting those who commenced employment but left during the first 12 months).
- A range of Welsh language courses have been accessed by a number of learners and by offering different levels/methods of learning makes it more accessible.
- There have been 2,403 portal accesses to Vivup from September 2023 up until the end of February 2024. 500 self-help downloads have been recorded and 63 employees have accessed counselling.
- The annual self-assessment for all Portfolios regarding Welsh Language Standards has been completed, with actions being identified and implemented. Regular reviews and reminders of Welsh Language Standards continue to be shared across the Portfolios.
- The Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report was approved and published in March 2024. The action plan is now included within the Strategic Equality Plan 2024/28 which has now been published.
- The Council was able to set a legal and balanced budget for 2024/25 in February 2024. Work is underway to update the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2025/26 onwards and an update report is scheduled for June/July 2024.
- The Council continues to apply robust, but fair, debt recovery processes to maximise collection levels across all areas. At the same time, the Revenues service engages constructively with residents who struggle to meet their payment obligations by entering into affordable payment plans. The approach to debt recovery is set out in the Councils Corporate Debt Recovery Policy.
- The Corporate Asset Management Plan informs the Capital Programme, which is reviewed annually, and progress is monitored throughout the year. The Corporate Asset Management Plan will be refreshed 2024/25.
- Work has commenced on the Office Strategy; draft principles have been prepared and further work is required to firm up principles.
- The corporate Contact Centre is open Monday-Friday between 08:30 - 17:00. The team continues to handle a wide range of telephone calls for services in Housing, Streetscene, Planning, Elections and Blue Badges. In addition, the team answer calls to the Council’s main telephone number.
- The Digital Flintshire Hub continues to promotes a range of initiatives to help people to use digital technology now and in the future. The Hub includes resources to keep people safe

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Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives

Key Achievements and More

online, training, health and wellbeing resources, digital events and activities. The Hub also provides information about the Council's ambitious plans contained in the Digital Strategy.

- The joint Flintshire and Wrexham Public Services Board (PSB) have been working on the first year of the Well-being Plan 2023-28. Three Outcome Boards and an Integration Team have been established and partnership project working is ongoing.
- Engagement events have been delivered by the Business Team. The Engagement Officer for the Armed Forces Employers Recognition Scheme is also invited to attend the Flintshire Armed Forces Forum. A significant number of employees have attended the Armed Forces Covenant training.



Future Improvements

- Although the use of agency workers has increased in 2023/24, reducing the use of agency workers still remains a key priority for the Council.
- Low subscribers to My Account by Contract Holders (tenants). Promotion will help increase awareness and Housing Officers should aim to offer digital by default whenever a new contract is issued.
- We need to encourage more organisations to sign up to the Armed Forces Covenant. Two organisations signed up to the Covenant during 2023/24.

Strategic Equality Plan



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During the past 12 months, the new Strategic Equality Plan, (SEP) 2024-28 has been developed and published. The new Plan includes actions from Welsh Government’s Anti-racist Wales action plan and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, Plus (LGBTQ+) Action Plan for Wales. The Council’s Housing Team is working with Tai Pawb to develop specific actions and training to embed an anti-racist approach within the Service. A new LGBTQ+ e-learning module has been developed to support the implementation of the new SEP and meet the commitments of the LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales.

Vision Support reviewed the Council website to ensure it is fully accessible for people who are blind or have visual impairments. The results of their review were positive and no issues with accessibility were identified.

We have continued to work with the University of Manchester on developing a new approach for Integrated Impact Assessments (IIA). The new IIA Tool has been piloted by several officers across the Council, this takes into account recommendations made by Audit Wales in their report “Equality Impact Assessments: more than a tick box exercise”. An evaluation of the new Tool will be completed by the University during 2024/25 which will involve interviews with both IIA authors and decision makers. This will help understand how the outcomes of IIAs influence decisions made by the Council.

Welsh Language

There has been an increased number of initiatives to increase the use of Welsh by employees. In addition to providing Welsh language skills training and offering informal chat sessions. Several teams are participating in Bangor University's ARFer project which aims to increase the use of incidental Welsh amongst employees, whatever their level of skill. We have developed video recordings with phonics to support employees use more Cymraeg in meetings and on the telephone. This means that employees can hear and see words and phrases to support pronunciation.

laith, the Welsh Centre for language planning, delivered a series of courses- "Welsh Matters for Everyone" and "Welsh Matters for Managers".

The aim of these courses was to look at:

- **Influences on language use** - reflect upon personal experience and knowledge, understand changes to the status of the Welsh Language and what influences language attitudes and behaviours.
- **Why Use Welsh** - understand National Policy and legislation and the Language Standards in Flintshire
- **Facts and figures about the Welsh Language** - linguistic demography of Wales and Flintshire
- **Working Bilingually** - importance of bilingual services

We have experienced difficulties recruiting Welsh speaking job applicants, as have other public bodies. To tackle this we worked with Wrexham County Borough Council and partners, including Menter Iaith Fflint a Wrecsam, Mudiad Meithrin and Coleg Cambria, to look at solutions to attracting and recruiting more Welsh speakers to our organisations. This has involved two employees being involved in promotional videos to show how we support employees to use Welsh at work. The North Wales Regional Public Services Board also commissioned Iaith to look at issues and solutions to recruiting and retaining Welsh speaking employees. This work will be completed during 2024/25.

During 2023/24, we asked employees to complete a Welsh language attitude survey the results will be used to develop more initiatives to promote the Welsh language during 2024/25.



Partnership and Collaboration Activity

Flintshire has a longstanding and proud track record of partnership working. The communities it serves rightly expect the statutory and third sector partners to work together to manage shared priorities through collaboration. The Flintshire Public Services Board is at the heart of promoting a positive culture of working together, setting shared priorities, and combining resources for the benefit of Flintshire, with an overall aim of improving local well-being.

The Flintshire Public Services Board was formally established in April 2016 following the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 coming into effect. The Flintshire Public Services Board and Wrexham Public Services Board formally merged in January 2023.

Membership of the Flintshire and Wrexham Public Services Board includes Natural Resources Wales, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, Flintshire County Council, Wrexham County Borough Council, Association of Voluntary Organisations Wrexham, Flintshire Local Voluntary Council, Coleg Cambria, DWP, North Wales Police, Wrexham Glyndwr University and Welsh Government.

The Flintshire and Wrexham Public Services Board is working with its communities to change how we do things, to make sure we will be able to face the challenges ahead such as the climate and nature emergency, and how we ensure good mental health and wellbeing for all.

A key focus for the Flintshire and Wrexham Public Service Board has been the development of a new five-year Well-being Plan, drawing

on the findings of the Well-being Assessments produced in 2022. The Flintshire and Wrexham Public Services Board Well-Being Plan 2023-2028 contains two well-being objectives for the Public Services Board over the coming five years:

- 1. **Building flourishing communities by reducing inequalities across environment, education, employment, income, and housing.**
- 2. **Improve community well-being by enabling people of all ages to live safe, healthy, and independent lives.**

Under these objectives are several outcomes, which fall under three themes: Children and Young People, Our Communities, and Where We Work.

The Well-being Plan 2023 - 2028 will shape the work of the Public Services Board over coming years and there will be close working with other Public Services Boards across North Wales, along with local communities.



Risk Management

All Council Plans, business as usual and emerging risks are identified, assessed, treated, and monitored using the Council's Risk Management Framework.

Risks are identified using qualitative (milestones & actions) and quantitative (performance indicators, financial) data. Risk identification remains a key priority for the Council.

It is a continuous process which is embedded in not only in our day to day (business as usual) but embedded within our Council Planning, Portfolio Business Planning, Project Management, and Partnerships (short term, medium term and long term).

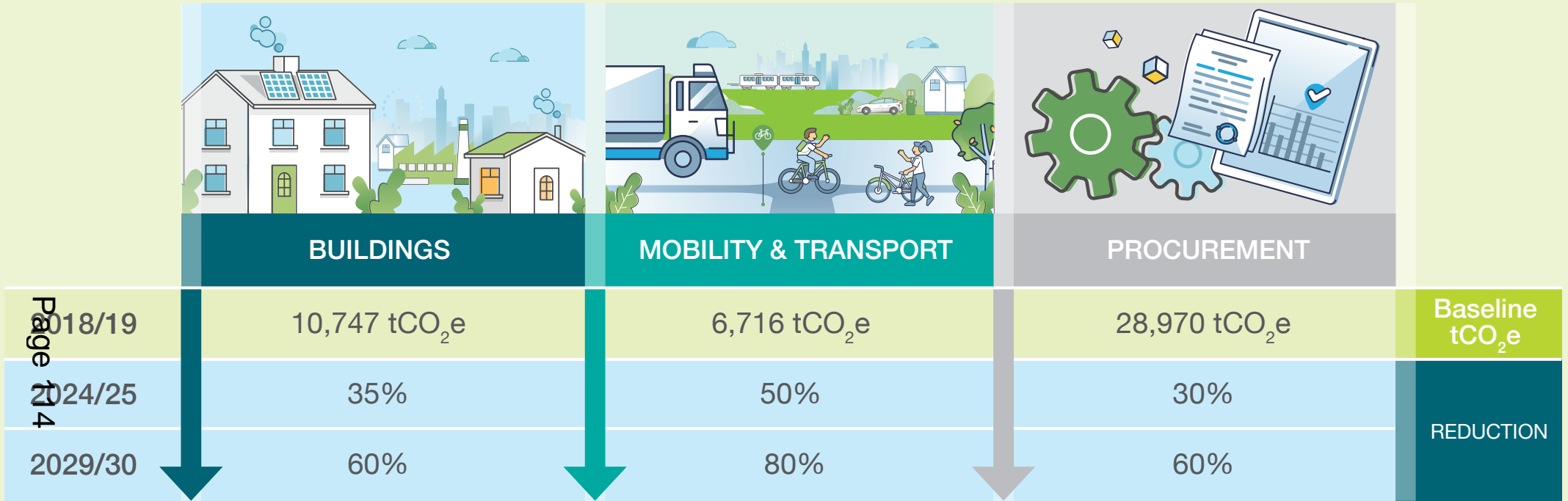


The Council is regulated by organisations throughout the year. These include, amongst others, Audit Wales, Estyn (the education inspectorate) and the Care Inspectorate Wales.

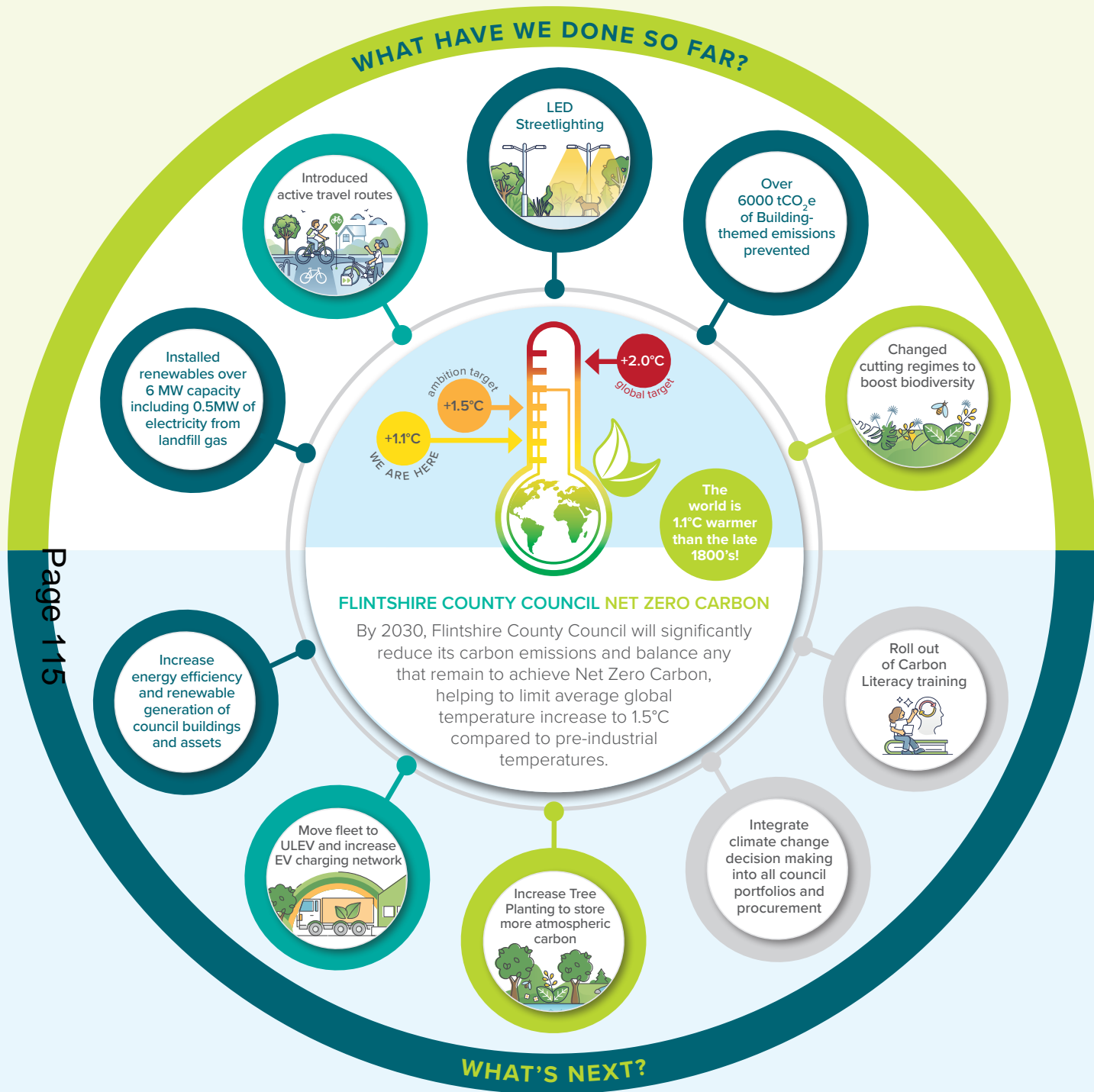
The Annual Audit Summary for 2023, sets out the audit and regulatory work completed by Audit Wales of Flintshire County Council since the last annual report which was published in April 2024. Overall, the Auditor General for Wales has reached a positive conclusion and no formal recommendations have been made during the year. Full details of the report are available on Audit Wales [website](#).



TAKING ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE



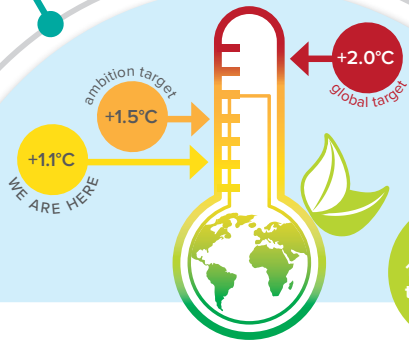
WHAT HAVE WE DONE SO FAR?



FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL NET ZERO CARBON

By 2030, Flintshire County Council will significantly reduce its carbon emissions and balance any that remain to achieve Net Zero Carbon, helping to limit average global temperature increase to 1.5°C compared to pre-industrial temperatures.

The world is 1.1°C warmer than the late 1800's!



LEARN MORE



CONTACT US

climatechange@flintshire.gov.uk



Flintshire County Council
Climate Change Strategy



What's your
carbon footprint?



Take our questionnaire

*Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg. Gweler y dudalen Gymraeg ar ein gwefan.
This document is also available in Welsh. See Welsh page on our website.*



Our Flintshire, Our Future 2023 - 2024

The budget, your Council Tax and local services

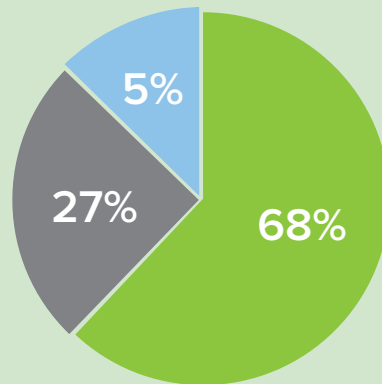
Every year councils have to set a budget which balances their resources with their spending needs. Between 2008 and 2020 all councils received reduced funding from government. As a low funded council - ranked 20 out of 22 councils in Wales - Flintshire was particularly exposed to the effects of this period of austerity.

Over the last 14 years, Flintshire County Council has reduced its spending by **£100M**. Every year it's been harder and harder to make more savings and protect services. At times hard budget choices have been needed.



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Where the Council's money comes from



- Comes from the Welsh Government
- Comes from Council Tax
- Comes from the fees we charge for some services e.g. planning fees, garden waste charges, Register Office fees

Budget Monitoring 2023/24

What your Council Tax pays for

The Council Tax you pay goes up every year, but not all the money collected goes to pay for council services. It also supports 34 Town and Community Councils, the North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner and contributes to increases in funding for other regional services.

How Council Tax is shared between the Council and other public services

£125.5M is the total the Council expects to collect in Council Tax in 2023/24, of which:

89% is retained by the Council as a contribution to run local services

17% is collected on behalf of North Wales Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner

3% is collected on behalf of our Town and Community Councils

Flintshire County Council is committed to keeping its annual increase at 5% or less and has applied a 3.99% increase to pay for council services.

All six North Wales councils also contribute to the costs of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority, The North Wales Coroners Service and GWE - the Regional Education Improvement Service. Flintshire has added an extra 0.96% to cover annual increases in these contributions.

This brings the total increase of Flintshire County Council's portion of Council Tax to 4.95%.



What this means in monetary terms for Council Tax for 2023/24

Using an average Band D property example:

	2023/24	2022/23	Increased Cost	Percentage increase
Flintshire County Council	£1,521.33	£1,449.58	£71.75	4.95%
North Wales Police & Crime Commissioner	£333.09	£316.80	£16.29	5.14%
Town and Community Councils*	£51.98*	£49.02*	£2.96*	6.04%*
TOTAL COST	£1,906.40	£1,815.40	£91.00	5.01%

* average cost across all 34 Town and Community Councils, the cost on individual bills will differ from Council to Council



The Council was successful in balancing the budget for 2023/2024

What is the Annual Governance Statement?

The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2018 require us to prepare a statement on internal control.

Like many authorities in Wales, this is referred to as the 'Annual Governance Statement'. This is a public document that reports on the extent to which we as the Council comply with our own code of governance.



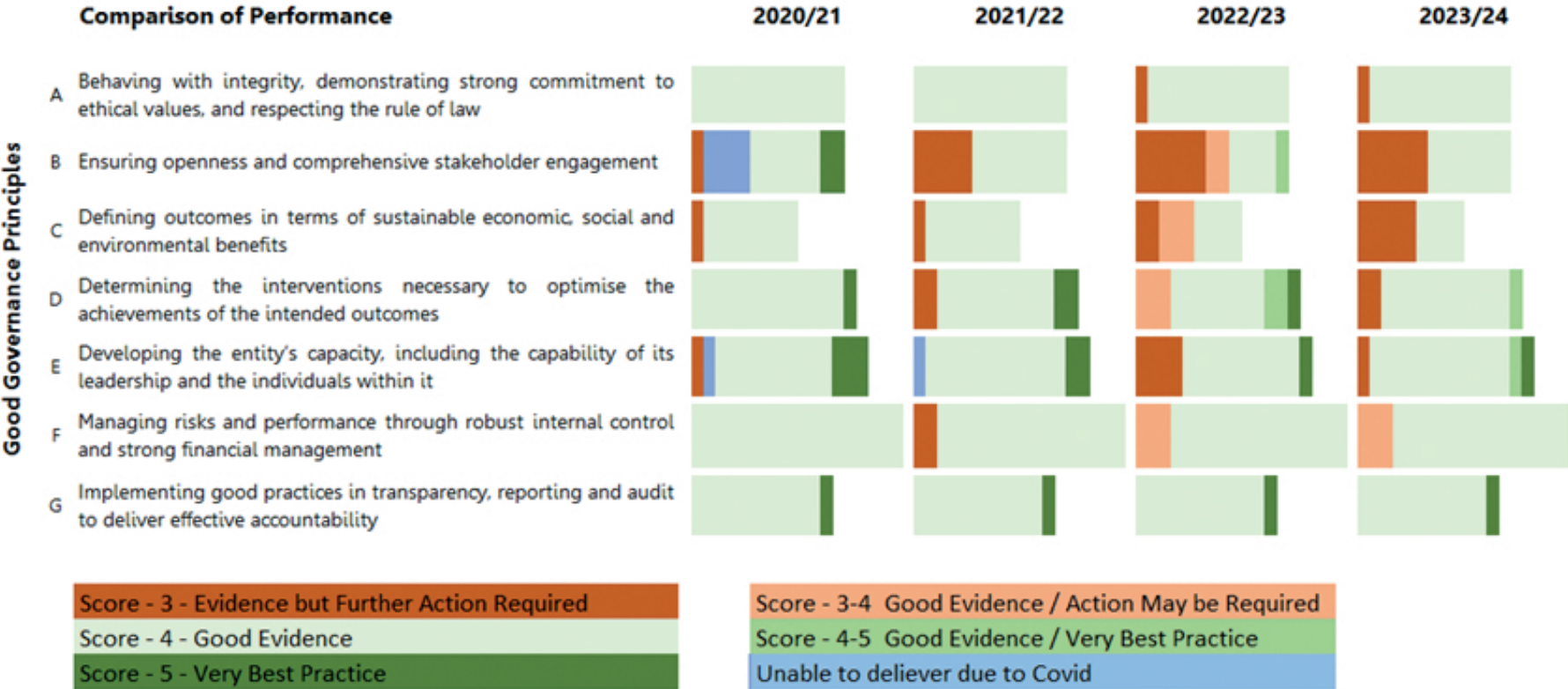
In the Annual Governance Statement, we, the Council:

- Acknowledge our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of governance;
- Summarise the key elements of that governance framework and the roles of those responsible for the development and maintenance of the governance environment;
- Describe how we have monitored and evaluated the effectiveness of our governance arrangements in year, and any planned changes in the coming period;
- Provide details of how we have responded to any issue(s) identified in last year's governance statement;
- Report on any governance issues identified from this review and provide a commitment to addressing them; and
- In referring to the Council, this includes its group relationship with other entities such as New Homes and Newydd

The Annual Governance Statement reports on the governance arrangements that has been in place at Flintshire County Council during the financial year 2023/24 and up to the date of approval of the Statement of Accounts.

Annual Governance Statement

Comparison of the Effectiveness of the Council's Governance Arrangement



There will not be a separate action for those scored 3-4 if the issue has already been covered by actions to address those scored a 3

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Corporate Self-assessment

The Corporate Self-Assessment is a comprehensive assessment of the corporate organisation and not a detailed assessment of the performance of each service portfolio, the assessment themes are designed in this way. The Corporate Self-assessment is meant to provide a platform for assurance and self-improvement and would lead to an improvement plan for the organisation.

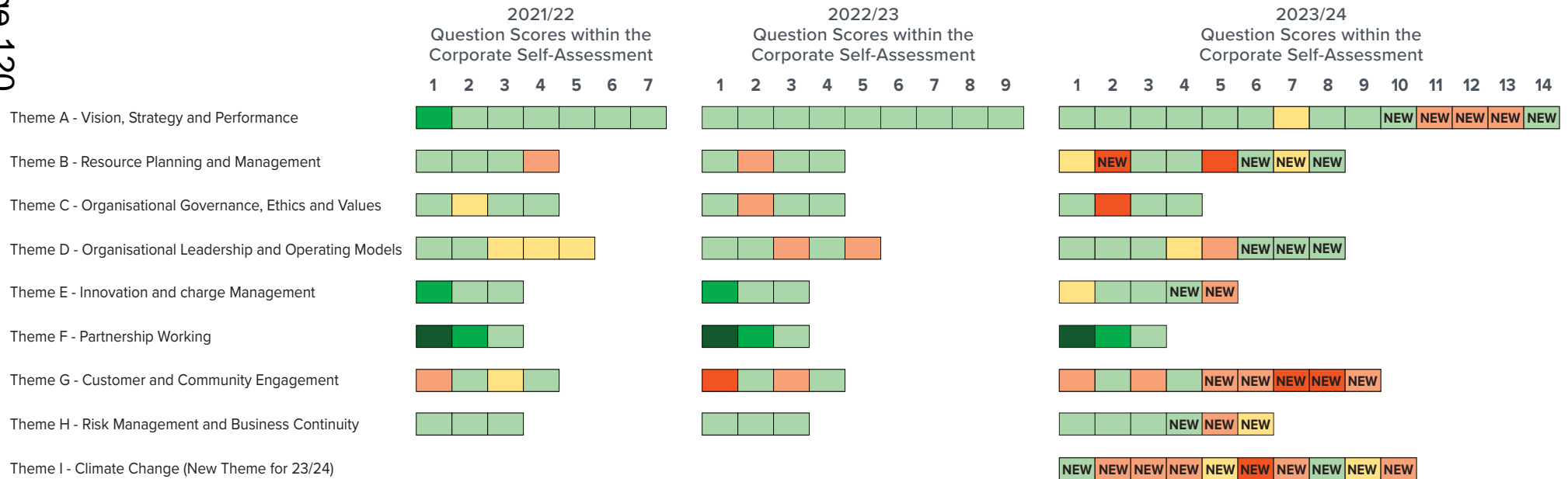
The Corporate Self-Assessment model focuses on a number of themes and considers a number of core questions within each of these themes. As with all models there will inevitably be overlaps across themes, however, the themes are sufficiently defined and demarked

to avoid too much overlapping or duplication. This year, the Corporate Self-Assessment also incorporates a number of additional questions and a new theme to cover areas that will be considered within the Panel Performance Assessment.

Building on the approach in 2021 the Corporate Self-assessment has a stronger focus on i) a more proportionate and targeted collection of evidence and ii) the analysis of evidence, focusing on the strengths, areas for development and the impact that is being achieved. This approach will help the formulation of the action plan.

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Comparison between 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24 Corporate Self Assessments



■ Score 5 - Very Best Practice (1% ■ Score 4/5 (1% ■ Score 4 - Good Evidence (58%) ■ Score 3/4 (16%) ■ Score 3 - Evidence but Further Action Required (19%)
 ■ Score 2/3 - Some Evidence but Lacking in Key Areas (4%) ■ Score 2 - Some Evidence but Lacking in Key Areas (1%)

Note: Two additional questions were added to the 22/23 Corporate Self-assessment within Theme A

Note: A total of 32 new questions and a new theme (Theme I) were added to the 23/24 Corporate Self-assessment

Additional Background Information

There are a number of related documents which support the Annual Performance Report and are available on Flintshire County Council’s website.

- Council Plan 2023-28
- Social Services Annual Performance Report
- Welsh Language Standards
- Strategic Equality Plan
- Risk Management Framework
- Corporate Self-assessment
- Previous Annual Performance Reports



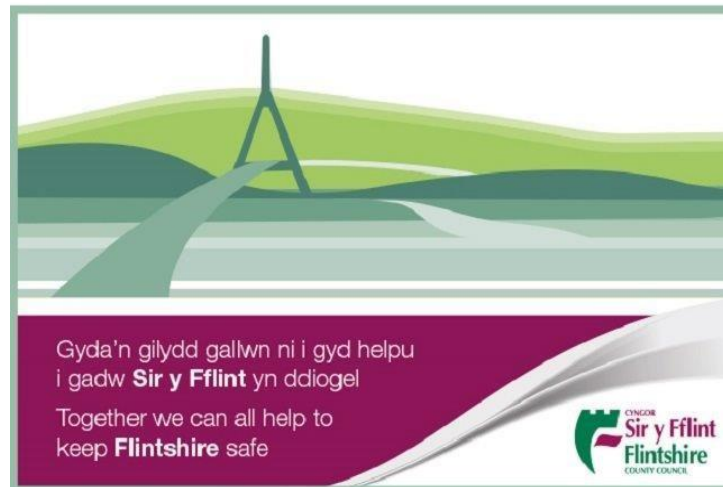
Thank you for reading our Annual Performance Report for 2023/24.

Your views and suggestions about how we might improve the content and layout of the Annual Performance Report for future years are welcome.

Please contact the Performance and Risk Management Team:
Email: PRM@flintshire.gov.uk

Council Plan End of Year Performance Monitoring Report 2023/24

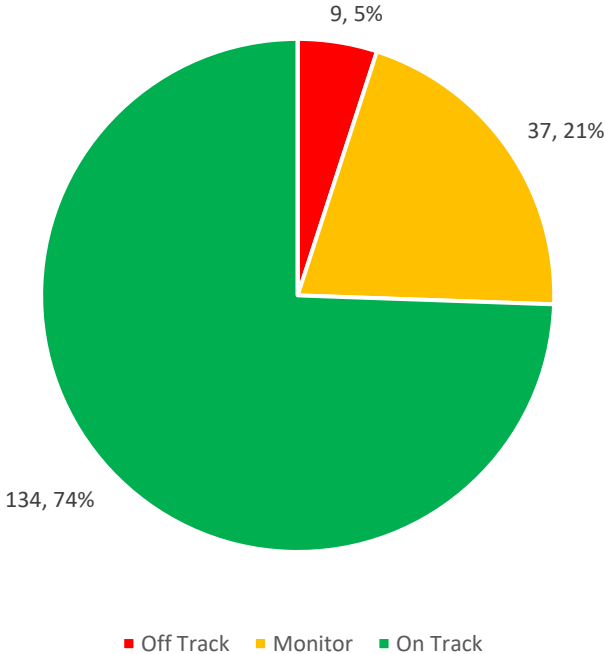
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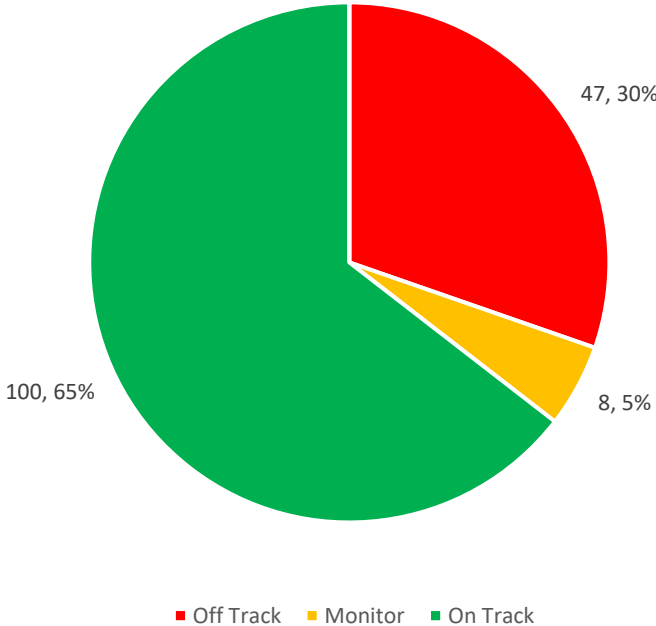
Analysis

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Council Plan - Action RAG Status



Council Plan - Measure RAG Status



- Key**
- ▲ Red: Limited Progress – delay in scheduled activity and, not on track.
 - Amber: Satisfactory Progress – some delay in scheduled activity, but broadly on track.
 - ★ Green: Good Progress – activities completed on schedule and on track.

Actions Off Track

Priority	Sub-Priority	Action	RAG
Affordable and Accessible Housing	Social Housing	Increase the Council's housing portfolio by building social housing properties and affordable properties for North East Wales (NEW) Homes	▲
		Support our tenants to access technology and create sustainable digital communities	▲
Green Society and Environment	Active and Sustainable Travel Options	Declassification of hazardous routes across the county where appropriate through the implementation of engineering initiatives	▲
	Circular Economy	Achieve Welsh Government recycling targets	▲
		Promote the option to reuse and repair unwanted items at Household Recycling Centres by partnering with local Charities or social enterprises	▲
Economy	Rural Regeneration	Recruit a Digital Connectivity Officer to support rural communities to access better quality connectivity options	▲
	Reducing Worklessness	Deliver mentoring and wider support programmes to assist disadvantaged people to re-engage with the labour market	▲
A Well Managed Council	People	Reduce the use of agency workers	▲
	Flintshire Assets	Review of Industrial Estate Strategy (Area by Area)	▲

Measures Off Track

Priority	Sub-Priority	Measure	RAG
Poverty	Food Poverty	Number of residents supported by the “Hospital to Home” meals service	▲
Affordable and Accessible Housing	Housing Support and Homeless Prevention	Number of presentations to the homeless service	▲
		Percentage of successful prevention outcomes for homelessness under Housing (Wales) Act 2014	▲
		Percentage of successful relief outcomes for homelessness under Housing (Wales) Act 2014	▲
		Number of households accommodated by the Council under Housing (Wales) Act 2014 homeless duties	▲
		Average length of stay (days) for those households in interim homeless accommodation under Housing (Wales) Act 2014	▲
	Housing Needs and Housing Options	Number of applicants rehoused via SARTH by All Housing Partners	▲
		Number of households rehoused with significant adaptations requirements	▲
	Social Housing	Number of Council Homes under construction	▲
		Number of Affordable Homes completed via NEW Homes	▲

Priority	Sub-Priority	Measure	RAG
		Increase in stock capacity correlates with demand profile	▲
		Total number of Medium Disabled Adaptations completed	▲
		Average number of days to complete a Medium Disabled adaptation	▲
		Average number of days to complete a Large Disabled adaptation	▲
	Private Rented Sector	Landlords engaged through Flintshire Landlord Forum	▲
Green Society and Environment	Net Zero Carbon Council	Percentage of Councillors received carbon related training	▲
		Percentage of employees received carbon related training	▲
		Number of contracts with carbon impact assessed	▲
	Climate Change and Adaptation	Increase in carbon sequestered (Kg/tCO ₂ e)	▲
	Flood Risk Management Strategy	Completion of the Flood Risk Management Strategy by the revised Welsh Government due date (March 2024)	▲
	Fleet Strategy	Number of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles on Fleet	▲
	Active and Sustainable Travel Options	Number of hazardous routes declassified through the Implementation of Active Travel infrastructure to provide safe routes to schools	▲

Priority	Sub-Priority	Measure	RAG
	Circular Economy	Percentage of waste reused, recycled or composted	▲
		Reduce the tonnage of residual waste collected from residential properties	▲
		Increase the tonnage of food waste collected from residential properties	▲
		Obtain Welsh Government funding to implement a reuse initiative at the household recycling centres	▲
		Implement a trial for the delivery of local benefits/local recycling targets initiative	▲
Economy	Rural Regeneration	Digital Connectivity Officer appointed - June 2023	▲
		Rural needs report completed by March 2024	▲
	Town Centre Regeneration	Completion of initial 3 (of 7) Place Making Plans in partnership with a range of stakeholders	▲
	Local Development Plan (LDP) Targets	Completion of first LDP Annual Monitoring Report and submission to Welsh Government (January 2024)	▲
		Completion of annual review of LDP housing trajectory	▲
		Contribution to the scoping of the form and content of the North Wales Strategic Development Plan	▲

Priority	Sub-Priority	Measure	RAG
	Reducing Worklessness	Number of individuals receiving support	▲
Personal and Community Well-being	Safeguarding	Percentage of Pre-birth assessments completed within timescales	▲
	A Well Connected, Safe and Clean Local Environment	Number of targeted environmental educational campaigns undertaken promote improved Local Environmental Quality	▲
Education and Skills	Educational Engagement and Achievement	Reduction in the number of permanent exclusions	▲
		Reduction in the number of fixed term exclusions	▲
	Digital Learning Opportunities	Number of Youth Work Sessions Delivered - Digital	▲
	Welsh Education Strategic Plan (WESP)	Number of Year 11 pupils studying Welsh	▲
A Well Managed Council	People	The number of working days lost per full time equivalent (FTE) local authority employees lost due to sickness absence	▲
		Percentage of permanent employees who leave within first year of employment	▲
		Percentage of employees who have completed all of mandatory modules	▲

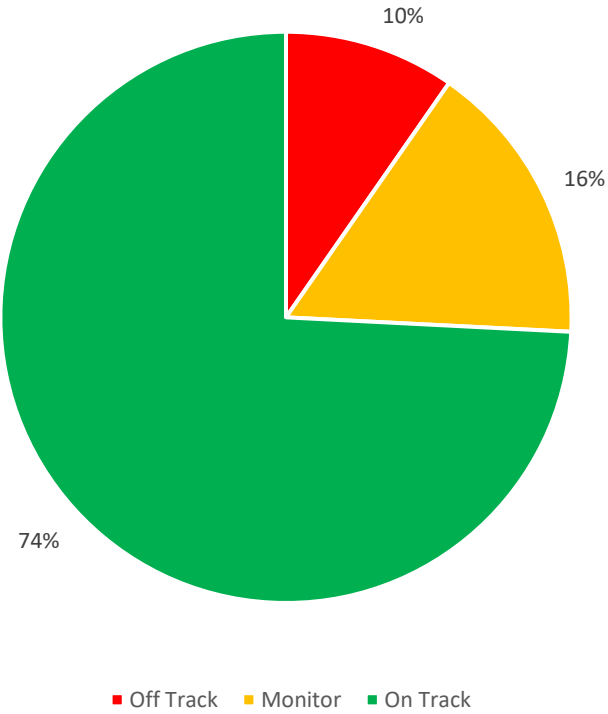
Priority	Sub-Priority	Measure	RAG
	Flintshire Assets	Commercial rent review completed: To increase rental income in line with prevailing market rents to make sure that rental income is optimised. To ensure rental consistency within estates	▲
		County Hall Master Plan options appraisal/strategy: To develop a plan which will provide the blueprint for the redevelopment of County Hall site.	▲
	Digital	80% of telephone calls to the corporate Contact Centre answered	▲
	Partnerships	Number of organisations who sign up to the Armed Forces Covenant	▲

Green Society and Environment

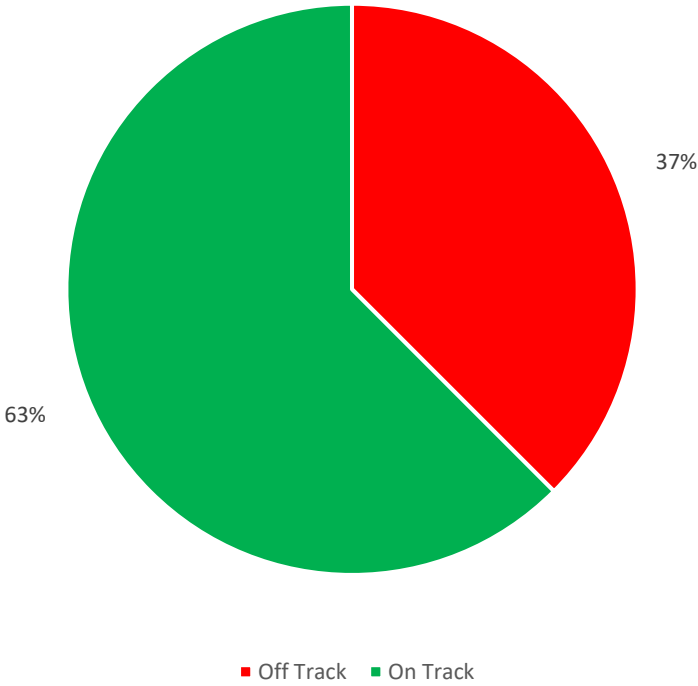
Well-being Objective: Limiting and enhancing the impact of the Council's services on the natural environment and supporting the wider communities of Flintshire to reduce their own carbon footprint.

Green Society and Environment Overall Performance



Green Society and Environment - Action RAG Status



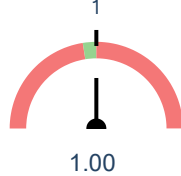
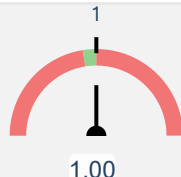
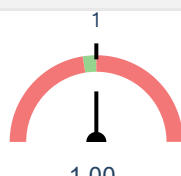
Green Society and Environment - Measure RAG Status



Phosphates Mitigation

	Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
 CPE044T	Produce guidance on viable and deliverable options to mitigate the impact of phosphates from new development on Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) protected rivers	100%		This action is no longer relevant nor required. The adoption of the Local Development Plan (LDP) was premised on the basis of certain allocated housing sites having to demonstrate nutrient neutrality in terms of not harming the Bala Lake and River Dee Special Area of Conservation (SAC) through the release of phosphates from waste water treatment works into the River Alyn. Work commenced on the feasibility of developing wetlands alongside the waste water treatment works at Mold, Buckley and Hope, which would have required developer financial contributions as part of a process to have been set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). However, the release of updated and unchanged permits for the three waste water treatment works by Natural Resources Wales and the availability of 'headroom' (difference between the level of phosphate permitted by the permit and the actual level of phosphate being released by the treatment works) evidenced by Dwr Cymru Welsh Water has provided a window within which to deliver LDP allocations. However, in the longer term it will be necessary to revisit mitigation measures and the production of SPG to address phosphates and river quality and this is being overseen by the Dee Nutrient Management Board.

Phosphates Mitigation

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CPE015M	Completion of Flintshire County Council's Wetlands Feasibility Study Report	1.00	1.00		 <p>1.00</p>	
<p>The need for a Wetlands Feasibility Report has been overtaken by headroom capacity at Mold, Buckley and Hope waste water treatment works. Housing sites in the Local Development Plan (LDP) can be accommodated by the existing waste water treatment works, without harm to the Bala Lake and R. Dee Special Area of Conservation.</p>						
CPE016M	Completion of Review of Permits at wastewater treatment works by NRW	1.00	1.00		 <p>1.00</p>	
<p>In conjunction with Dwr Cymru Welsh Water, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) have issued revised permits for Mold, Buckley and Hope waste water treatment works. 'Headroom' exists to accommodate the waste arising from Local Development Plan (LDP) allocations without harm to the Bala Lake and R. Dee Special Area of Conservation.</p>						
CPE017M	Upgrade of Mold and Buckley wastewater treatment works by DCWW	1.00	1.00		 <p>1.00</p>	
<p>Mold, Buckley and Hope waste water treatment works are operating well below the phosphate limits specified in the revised Natural Resources Wales permits. There is no need at present for investment at these three facilities in terms of dealing with phosphates.</p>						

Net Zero Carbon Council

	Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPE009T	Review the procurement policy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from suppliers	100%	✔	100% complete. The revised Procurement Strategy for 2024/2027, which includes a key theme on climate change, was formally adopted by Cabinet in March 2024.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPE010T	Develop plans towards net zero carbon for our assets in line with Welsh Government guidance	100%	✔	The Council's investment in the RE:fit framework for 2024/25 and 2025/26 will see energy efficiency and renewable energy works worth £1.5 million invested in our building assets. The framework has been awarded and project work will commence post-April 2024. Welsh Government commissioned surveys of our school sites through AECOM are being carried out throughout 2024 and these will help to inform any further works needed to decarbonise our buildings.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPE011T	Work with Flintshire's leisure and culture trust partners to reduce carbon emissions	100%	✔	The Climate Change Team have continued to work with AURA on establishing their baseline carbon footprint, and formulating a carbon reduction plan through engagement with their stakeholders. Leisure facility assets will be appraised as part of the RE:fit programme alongside other Council building stock.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPE045T	A net zero carbon Council by 2030 and supporting wider decarbonisation actions across the County, making this central to Covid-19 recovery	10%	★	The Council's carbon footprint for 2022/23 has been calculated and reported to Welsh Government. This report was appraised by both the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet in November 2023. The programme of activities to decarbonise the Council's assets and services continues to work to plan by meeting interim targets. This is a long term target taking us to 2030, and we are currently on target at 10%, giving us a green RAG status.

Net Zero Carbon Council

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CPE004M	Reduction in Council greenhouse gas emissions	32,328.00	33,521.00	44,980.00		
<p>Emissions for 2022/23 were lower than forecast, however, this is largely due to the change in emission factors for supply chain. Baselines will be reviewed within the Climate Change Strategy Review in 2024/25.</p>						
CPE018M	Percentage of Councillors received carbon related training	48.00%	80.00%			
<p>Engagement and take up of carbon related training by Members has been lower than anticipated (32 Members), and the delay in roll out of the carbon essentials e-learn has meant a more accessible training has not been available. However, Carbon training has now been added to the mandatory training for Councillors and therefore, it is anticipated that this figure will rise over 2024/25.</p>						
CPE019M	Percentage of employees received carbon related training	0.85%	5.00%			
<p>52 employees have completed carbon related training. 32 of these are senior leaders from across the Council which is very positive. This target for 2023/24 has not been met due to the delay in launch of the Climate essentials e-learn. This is being rolled out alongside the new e-learning platform, and will be promoted to ensure take up is higher over 2024/25. It should also be reviewed that this training is included in the mandatory learning for employees.</p>						

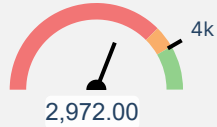
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Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CPE020M	Number of contracts with carbon impact assessed	3.00	10.00			
<p>Although only three large contracts have been assessed, these equate to a value of approximately £81 million over the next few years, which will not only allow us to report actual carbon emissions from these contracts, but include carbon measures within the construction phase so as to lower the carbon impact of our new build operations. Further engagement with large suppliers and commissioning officers will improve this target over the next financial years.</p>						
CPE021M	Percentage of schools accessing the support package	25.00%	15.00%			
<p>20 schools have accessed the Carbon toolkit package which is now available publicly on the Council's website. Ongoing support and engagement is being provided to schools to ensure successful delivery of the support package.</p>						
CPE022M	Percentage of Town and Community Councils accessing the support package	59.00%	15.00%			
<p>20 Town and Community Councils have accessed the Carbon toolkit package which is now available publicly on the council's website. Ongoing support and engagement is being provided to them to ensure successful delivery of the support package.</p>						



Climate Change and Adaptation

	Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CPE012T Review the Council's Flood Risk Management Strategy	60%	●	A working draft of the strategy has been drafted with consultants and the next stage is to complete the draft action plan in order to carry out stakeholder consultation with Members and key stakeholders. This will then lead to a public consultation exercise on the strategy before review of comments made, sign off by the Council, and submission to Welsh Government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CPE013T Review the Council's Strategic Flood Consequences Assessment	100%	✔	Strategy complete and feedback has been provided to our consultants. The strategy has not yet been submitted to Welsh Government as there are further delays in the publication of the revised TAN15
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CPE014T Carry out flood investigations and alleviation works where appropriate	100%	✔	This is an ongoing business as usual task that is the core business of the FCERM team. They are currently still engaged with multiple investigations following storm Babet and will be planning mitigation works as part of completing the review of the Food Risk Management Strategy.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CPE015T Assess the feasibility of schemes within land assets for resisting flood and drought while enhancing biodiversity and increasing carbon storage	90%	★	Work has been carried out between both Climate Change and Biodiversity teams to identify land assets that would be appropriate for such schemes. All land assets have been assessed through a matrix considering a number of criteria including flood risk, potential for development, biodiversity value, etc. This desktop exercise has highlighted a small list of potential sites for schemes. This is being further investigated and scoped with other teams across the Council to create a final list of feasible schemes. Completion target June 2024.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CPE046T Ensure climate change and biodiversity are considered a priority in key decision making across all Council services	90%	★	The new Integrated Impact Assessment has been through piloting and has now been launched across the Council in partnership with Manchester University. This new tool ensures that decisions affecting carbon impacts, biodiversity impacts, equalities and Welsh language. Process and roll out are being reviewed with support from Internal Audit with changes being made over the coming months.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CPE047T Identify projects to further support climate adaptation ambitions following Welsh Government guidance	40%	●	Research has been carried out to establish best practice and collate risks relevant and applicable to the county of Flintshire. Workshops with stakeholders to define risks and mitigation actions are being integrated into the climate change strategy review over 2024/25.

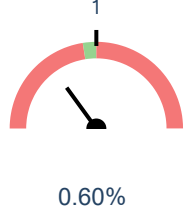
Climate Change and Adaptation

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CPE023M	Number of homes protected in vulnerable flood risk areas in Flintshire	0.00				
Target will be set once the Flood Risk Management Strategy has been completed						
CPE024M	Increase in carbon sequestered (Kg/tCO ₂ e)	2,972.00	4,000.00			
Tree planting over the 2023/24 year, that can be included within the carbon sequestration data, has been lower than forecast. Targets will be updated to reflect this.						

Flood Risk Management Strategy



	Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
 CPE012T	Review the Council's Flood Risk Management Strategy	60%		A working draft of the strategy has been drafted with consultants and the next stage is to complete the draft action plan in order to carry out stakeholder consultation with Members and key stakeholders. This will then lead to a public consultation exercise on the strategy before review of comments made, sign off by the Council, and submission to Welsh Government

Flood Risk Management Strategy

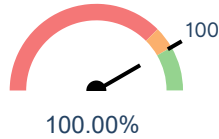

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CPE025M	Completion of the Flood Risk Management Strategy by the revised Welsh Government due date (March 2024)	0.60%	1.00%		 <p>0.60%</p>	

The Council have informed Welsh Government of its intention to complete its strategy by Autumn 2024 and this has been accepted.

Strategic Flood Consequences Assessment


	Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
 CPE013T	Review the Council's Strategic Flood Consequences Assessment	100%		Strategy complete and feedback has been provided to our consultants. The strategy has not yet been submitted to Welsh Government as there are further delays in the publication of the revised TAN15

Strategic Flood Consequences Assessment

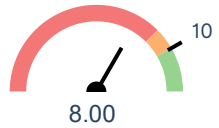
Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CPE026M	Percentage compliance with Welsh Government delivery timetable	100.00%	100.00%		 <p>100.00%</p>	

The delivery timeframe has slipped as Welsh Government have not yet been able to publish TAN15, which needs to happen in order for the strategy to be finalised and compliant with the TAN.

Fleet Strategy





	Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
 CST015T	Reduce the environmental impact of our fleet by transitioning to ultra low emission vehicles (ULEV)	3%	★	Following the decision to return the fleet provision to an in-house service, work has commenced to renew the fleet and move through a managed exit with the incumbent supplier. This work continues and future planning to enhance the ultra low emission vehicles (ULEV) fleet will continue throughout 2024.

Fleet Strategy

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CST013M	Number of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles on Fleet	8.00	10.00			

Six Electric Cars have been delivered to Social Services and two Electric Recycling Collection Vehicles have entered service in March 2024.

Green Environment

	Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPE016T	Enhance the natural environment through the delivery of the Section 6 Environment (Wales) Act 2016 biodiversity duty	100%		Significant natural environment enhancement through changes in estate management, tree planting, green infrastructure projects. Section 6 delivery supported by increased cross department awareness and action and additional grant funded natural environment team capacity.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPE017T	Deliver an increase in canopy cover as part of the Urban Tree and Woodland Plan	100%		The annual tree planting programme is complete with over 10,000 trees planted.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPE048T	Progress Ash Dieback Action Plan	100%		Despite lead officer absence for six months and a gap in technical support due to officer retention/recruitment, the team completed the high risk/priority Flintshire owned tree works.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPE049T	Develop a strategy to improve biodiversity and carbon sequestration on the agricultural estate	30%		This action has been delayed due to delays in Welsh Government guidance and support. Decisions around strategy to engage farmers with carbon action hinges on Welsh Government's new Agricultural payment scheme and its approach towards supporting sustainable farming. A decision making tool is being developed for when land assets become available, to ensure that all considerations are made for the land in meeting the Council's ambitions and targets, before the land being disposed of. This work will continue over the next financial year.

Green Environment



Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CPE005M	Number of Green infrastructure improvement and planting projects	8.00	6.00			

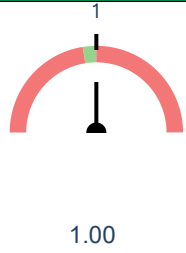
Green infrastructure and planting projects exceed the target of 6 and include: living screens, shotton, enhanced wildflower sites Mold, Connahs Quay and Buckley, Orchard creation and tree planting in Saltney, Pond restorations in Shotton and Gwernymynydd and tree planting in Mostyn.

CPE027M	Carry out baseline site species surveys on our 12 target sites to inform future increase in biodiversity from our interventions	12.00	12.00			
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Site surveys undertaken at all our wildflower sites before and following creation. Site surveys also completed at all potential sites for biodiversity enhancement through the landholdings project work.

Flintshire Forest


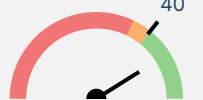
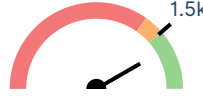
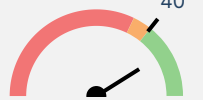
	Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
 CPE050T	Develop a Flintshire Forest Plan	100%		Work to understand a Flintshire Forest vision is complete. Analysis of available land has been completed. Draft Plan being finalised and designed.

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CPE028M	Produce a detailed Plan for delivery, to include sites highlighted for inclusion, identified funding for planting and an Engagement Plan	1.00	1.00			
Target completed						

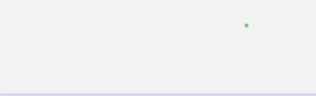
Green Access

	Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPE019T	Explore opportunities to develop the Flintshire Coast Park through the production of a scoping study	100%	✓	Scoping study is completed and has been reported to Cabinet. Shared Prosperity Funding secured to further progress establishing the Coast Park. Development Officer recruited to deliver the funding to enable the launch of the new coast park in 2024.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPE020T	Deliver the Rights of Way Improvement Plan with a focus to ensure improved access for all and the promotions of Walking for Health	100%	✓	Annual programme of works to deliver the Rights of Way Improvement Plan is complete with over £75,00 additional spend from the Access Improvement Grant.

Green Access

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CPE029M	Utilise external funding to produce management plans and feasibility documents to inform development of the Coast Park	4.00	4.00		 <p>4.00</p>	
Target completed						
CPE030M	Install Kissing Gates on the network	46.00	40.00		 <p>46.00</p>	
Target exceeded						
CPE031M	Surface 1500 metres of footpaths	1,620.00	1,500.00		 <p>1,620.00</p>	
Target exceeded						
CPE032M	Remove barriers from the network	46.00	40.00		 <p>46.00</p>	
Target exceeded						



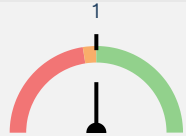

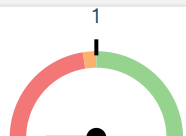

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Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CPE033M	Install roadside way markers	50.00	50.00			
Target achieved						
CPE034M	Carry out bridleway improvements	1,450.00	1,200.00			
Target exceeded						

Active and Sustainable Travel Options

	Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CST004T	Support the development of public electric vehicle charging network	0%	★	Electric Vehicle (EV) charging feasibility study and associated Delivery Plan completed in February this year. The aim of the study is to identify the next phase of EV charge-points within public car parks in Flintshire. A total of 46 sites were considered with their development being prioritised within three phases of delivery. The outcome of the study formed our 2024/25 Welsh Government Ultra Low Emission Vehicle (EULEV) transformation funding application which has been successful.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CST005T	Promote active travel and further develop the County's walking and cycleway network	98%	★	Active Travel Schemes programmed for this year have been completed with the exception of minor outstanding elements which are in the process of completion.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CST016T	Implementation of 20mph national legislation	100%	★	The Council have been successful in receiving Welsh Government grant funding for the progression of 20mph exceptions. The team are also working closely with Welsh Government to assist with the anticipated amendment to criteria.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CST017T	Implement formalised crossing facilities at existing school crossing patrol sites	98%	★	All civil engineering works associated with the formalised crossing facilities has been completed and will be operational in May 2024.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CST018T	Declassification of hazardous routes across the county where appropriate through the implementation of engineering initiatives	50%	▲	An active travel scheme has been delivered and completed, which has the effect of declassifying a hazardous route and providing an available walking route to and from school. Formal approval is required to instigate declassification.

Active and Sustainable Travel Options

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CST014M	Number of formalised crossing facilities implemented at existing School Crossing Patrol sites	3.00	3.00		 3.00	
All civil works completed. Crossings to be operational in May 2024.						
CST015M	Implementation of 20mph speed limits on the County's restricted roads.	1.00	1.00		 1.00	
Change of National Legislation for restricted roads implemented successfully within Flintshire. Further work regarding criteria amendments and exceptions process is ongoing.						
CST016M	Number of hazardous routes declassified through the Implementation of Active Travel infrastructure to provide safe routes to schools	0.00	1.00		 0.00	
An active travel scheme has been delivered and completed, which has the effect of declassifying a hazardous route and providing an available walking route to and from school. Formal approval is required to instigate declassification.						

Circular Economy

	Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CST006T	Achieve Welsh Government recycling targets	75%	▲	While the statutory recycling target for 2023/24, is 64%, we aspire to meet the target of 70% ahead of 2024/25. Our year end recycling performance for 2022/23 fell short of the 64% target resulting in potential additional infraction fines by Welsh Government. The quarter three performance for 2023/24 is showing a performance outturn of 63.79%, which is likely to decrease further following quarter four data submissions. A review of the Waste Strategy is now complete following support from the Waste and Resource Action Programme (WRAP) and Local Partnerships (commissioned by Welsh Government). A new Resource and Waste Strategy was approved for adoption in March 2024 and work has begun on implementing the required interventions to improve recycling performance.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CST008T	Promote the option to reuse and repair unwanted items at Household Recycling Centres by partnering with local Charities or social enterprises	50%	▲	A funding bid to introduce a reuse initiative across all Household Recycling Centers was submitted to Welsh Government for Circular Economy Funding in June 2022. In late 2023, an outcome for the funding application was received stating that the application had been unsuccessful therefore, there is no financial provision available to introduce the scheme. Officers are now reviewing the initiative and utilising the concept to help deliver on priority one of the newly adopted Resource and Waste Strategy. Discussions with Welsh Government on ways to support this are due to take place in April 2024.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CST009T	Work in partnership, actively support and engage with community led groups by developing recycling initiatives	100%	✱	The Waste Strategy Team have been actively engaging with communities in Flintshire to promote our recycling and reuse services. This has taken place with housing associations, at community group meetings and on the door step. Local community groups have engaged with the team to promote our recycling initiatives and encourage participation. A six week consultation took place with Flintshire residents and stakeholders to gain their input into developing a future Resource and Waste Strategy. Five engagement events took place in January where team members met and discussed recycling with Flintshire residents. Work has begun with Repair Café Wales to introduce more repair centres.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CST019T	Review the Council's Waste Strategy	100%	✱	A review of the councils current waste strategy, waste data and operational delivery took place throughout 2023 and into 2024. This concluded with a revised Resource and Waste Strategy being adopted by the Council in March 2024 which will support the authority in achieving national recycling targets and minimise the potential of infraction fines.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CST020T	Develop a Recycling Waste Transfer Station for the deposit and processing of recyclable materials	0%	●	This action needs to be closed. Plans to develop a site are not currently financially viable.

Circular Economy

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CST004M	Percentage of waste reused, recycled or composted	63.97%	70.00%	60.00%		
<p>The recycling percentage for 2023/24 Quarter 1 was 66.69%, for Quarter 2 it was 65.89%, Quarter 3 was 58.25% and Quarter 4 was 58.49% (correct at time of entry and subject to data verification by NRW), giving an overall annual performance of 62.77% for the whole year. This increase in comparison to the previous year has been predominantly due to an increase in garden waste collected.</p>						
CST005M	Average Recycling rate across Household Recycling Centres (HRCs)	76.08%	80.00%	76.00%		
<p>Quarter 4 recycling performance across all Household Recycling Centres (HRCs) has gone below 80% due to the reduced tonnages of DIY materials (wood, rubble, scrap metal) and garden waste which are typically higher during the spring and summer months.</p>						
CST017M	Reduce the tonnage of residual waste collected from residential properties	0.60%	10.00%			
<p>The amount of residual waste disposed of reduced by 56 tonnes (0.6%) in Quarter 4 (January to March) 2023/24 in comparison to the same period in the previous year.</p>						

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Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CST018M	Increase the tonnage of food waste collected from residential properties	1.20%	15.00%		<p>1.20%</p>	
<p>The amount of food waste collected for Quarter 4 (January to March 2023/24) has increased by 15 tonnes in comparison to the same period of time in the previous year resulting in the amount of food waste collected increasing by 1.2%. Without political approval to make changes to our waste and recycling collections service (2023/24) we were unable to improve recycling (food waste) capture from the residual waste stream, so the target was not achieved. We did promote food waste recycling on a number of occasions via communications (website/social media/event days/leaflets) to improve uptake, as requested by Elected Members, but this had minimal impact.</p>						
CST019M	Obtain Welsh Government funding to implement a reuse initiative at the household recycling centres	0.00	1.00		<p>0.00</p>	
<p>A funding bid to introduce a re-use initiative across all Household Recycling Centres was submitted to Welsh Government for Circular Economy Funding in June 2022. In late 2023, an outcome for the funding application was received stating that the application had been unsuccessful; therefore, there is no financial provision available to introduce the scheme. Officers are now reviewing the initiative and utilising the concept to help develop a broader Resource and Waste Strategy for the authority.</p>						
CST020M	Implement a trial for the delivery of local benefits/local recycling targets initiative	0.00	1.00		<p>0.00</p>	
<p>This initiative was proposed to support the authority with achieving 70% recycling targets. As the Council's recycling improvement action plan was not accepted by the Minister and Welsh Government as being sufficient and evidence based in demonstrating it would achieve the targets, this initiative has been withdrawn while staff resource was focused on undertaking the broader Resource and Waste Strategy Review during Quarter 4.</p>						

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Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CST021M	Number of education campaigns on recycling and waste minimisation undertaken to improve recycling performance	4.00	3.00		 4.00	

Five community drop in events were undertaken in January 2024, to educate residents on recycling targets, performance, impacts and future aspirations. We took part in the national Be Mighty, Recycle food waste campaign and food waste action week to promote food waste minimisation and recycling awareness. We promoted the legislative changes being introduced for workplace recycling, supporting local businesses, schools and the third sector to become compliant. Working with our housing team and social housing providers we identified ways to support their residents to recycle as much of their waste as possible.

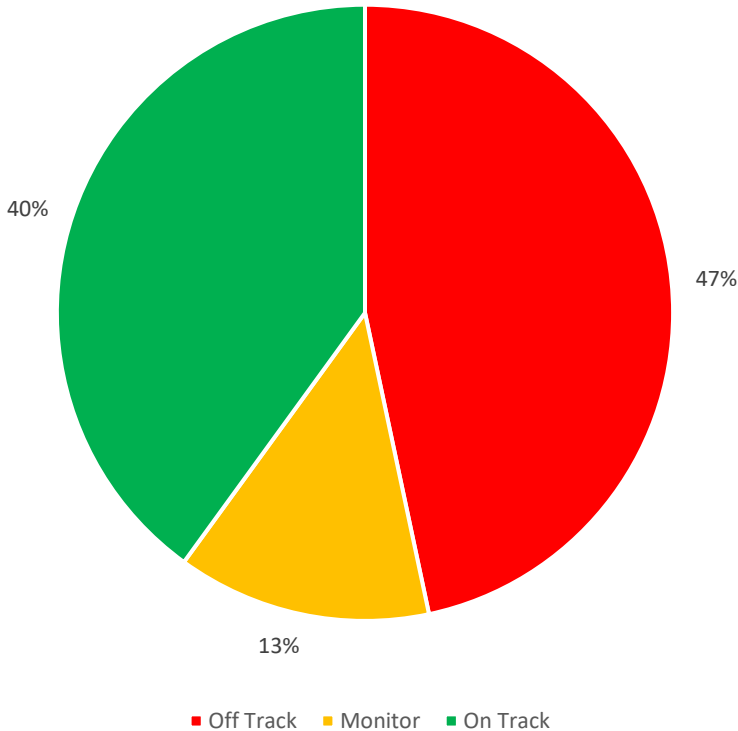
Economy

Well-being Objective: Connecting communities and enabling a sustainable economic recovery and growth.

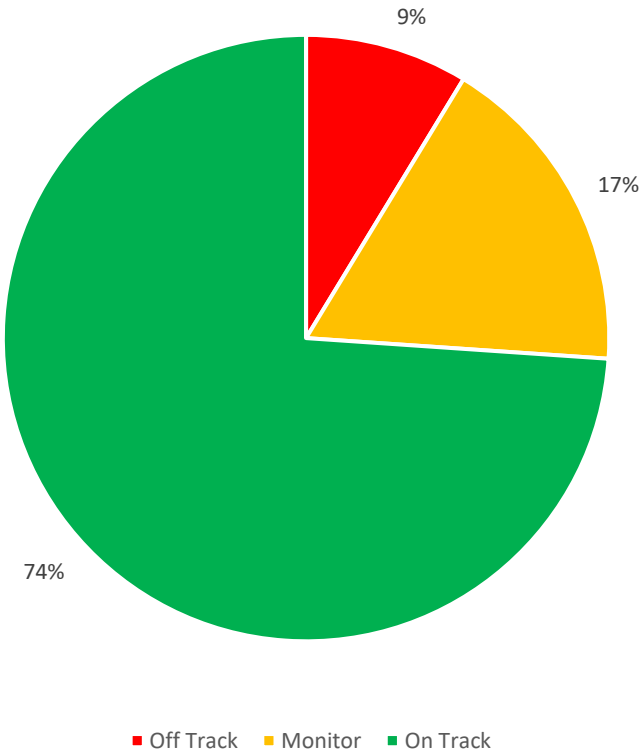
Economy Overall Performance

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Economy - Measure RAG Status



Economy - Action RAG Status



Rural Regeneration



	Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPE051T	Ensure that Economy interventions consider and meet the needs of rural businesses and individuals.	100%		All current interventions (outside of specific town centre projects) supporting individuals and businesses are targeting all of the County.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPE052T	Recruit a Digital Connectivity Officer to support rural communities to access better quality connectivity options	50%		Two attempts to recruit into the role have failed. The job has been rewritten and we hope to readvertise in April 2024.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPE053T	Commission a data review for rural Flintshire and hold community consultation to better understand rural community needs	25%		Discussions are underway with Wrexham University about how the needs of rural Flintshire residents can be most effectively assessed and supported.

Rural Regeneration







Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CPE035M	Digital Connectivity Officer appointed - June 2023	0.00	1.00			
Recruitment failed. Job has been rewritten and we hope to readvertise in April 2024.						
CPE036M	Rural needs report completed by March 2024	0.00	1.00			
Limited capacity has delayed the development of the report. Discussions are now underway with Wrexham University about the needs assessment process.						

Town Centre Regeneration

	Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CAU016T	Libraries and leisure centres are community well-being hubs with social objectives underpinning their operation	100%		Aura continued to operate four leisure centres and seven libraries (plus the mobile library and home library service) throughout 2023/24.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPE024T	Monitor the health and vitality of town centres to support effective management and business investment decisions	100%		Work has continued during Quarter 4 (January - March 2024) to monitor and respond to the health, vibrancy and needs of town centres across Flintshire. This has included planning and delivering an online consultation for four towns across Flintshire, which 3,356 local people responded to, and also reviewing data related to the town centres to develop up-to-date profiles of the current strengths and focus for future improvement/ investment. This work has been undertaken as part of the on-going place making plan development work which is focusses on an individual plan being developed for seven towns across Flintshire. The focus of the past three months has been on initiating work in four of these seven towns (Connah's Quay, Flint, Mold and Queensferry). The place making plan for Shotton has been developed to final draft during the last three months (consultation on which will be undertaken in the next three months). The Shotton plan identifies 10 key themes and priorities responding to local needs. The place making plans for both Holywell and Buckley have also been commissioned and work has progressed on these also within the last three months by the place making consultant appointed by the Council's Regeneration Team (with funding secured from the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund). It is anticipated these two plans will be completed by July 2024 (Holywell) and October 2024 (Buckley). Data and statistics gathered to monitor the health and vitality of these towns will inform the priorities outlined in these emerging plans.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPE025T	Encourage and support investment in town centre properties to facilitate more sustainable uses and including improvements to the environment	100%		The Regeneration Team secured £1.178million from UK Government to deliver Town Centre Investment Programme across seven towns in Flintshire (Buckley, Connah's Quay, Flint, Holywell, Mold, Shotton, Queensferry) in 2023/24 and 2024/25. The programme comprises of nine projects in total –a mix of capital and revenue initiatives aimed at supporting our Flintshire's high streets. Two of the nine projects have included designing and launching two grant schemes: i) Town Centre Property Improvement Grant (capital funding) and also ii) Town Centre Activities and Events Grant (revenue funding). Uptake from local beneficiaries has been extremely positive. By March 2024, £466,458 has been invested in property improvement schemes to premises on the high streets across towns in Flintshire, including £180,000 of this total being contributed from businesses towards improving their premises. £63,130 has been awarded to local communities to deliver activities and events in towns across Flintshire to improve footfall and the vibrancy of towns. Work has also continued to secure investment from Welsh Government to invest in town centre premises/projects. £410,500 grant has been claimed for completed town centre investment projects in the last three months.







	Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPE028T	Engage town centre small businesses and promote support packages available to them	100%		'Save The High Street' has been engaged by the Council's Regeneration Team to deliver tailored business support for town centre businesses across seven town centres across Flintshire, to support their growth, development and diversification through the delivery of an intensive eight week support programme. Flintshire was the first local authority in Wales to partner with 'Save The High Street' using funding secured from the Shared Prosperity Fund. 14 town centre businesses have participated in the 'Save The High Street' eight week intensive business support pilot project between January and March 2024. Due to the success of the pilot project, a further 30 businesses will be able to benefit from this provision between April and November 2024. Excellent feedback has been received from local businesses who participated and has been featured in the local press. Work has continued to roll-out grant schemes and encourage take-up amongst local businesses. Take-up has been excellent, demonstrating a real need for grant funding investment, without which private sector investment in towns in Flintshire would have not happened/been significantly less.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPE054T	Understand the needs of and supporting community enterprises in town centre locations	100%		During the last three months (January - March 2024), 42 support sessions have been delivered by the Council's Social Enterprise Officer in to to social enterprises in the towns of Buckley, Connah's Quay, Mold and Shotton. These sessions have involved understanding their needs and tailoring support provided to these in addition to encouraging the social enterprises to utilise the Flintshire Social Impact toolkit to calculate their overall social value. Of the organisations supported over the last three months, this has involved a total of £807,269 social value being recorded on the toolkit. Support sought from Flintshire County Council amongst social enterprises over the last three months has included: i) exploration of legal structures; ii) development of business plan(s); iii) general business support advice; iv) help to expand and set-up and operate from an additional premises and v) support and advice regarding sustaining community asset. The Town Centre Activities and Events Grant Scheme managed by the Council's Regeneration Team (with funding through the UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund), has received applications from a range of social enterprises. Funds awarded to date has assisted these organisation to deliver their aims and objectives whilst provide useful information to the Council to better understand their needs and aspirations.

Town Centre Regeneration

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CAU025M	Average number of weekly public opening hours available within leisure centres and library branches in Flintshire towns	536.00	536.00		 536.00	
<p>Opening hours of Aura's four leisure centres and seven libraries remain relatively static with no reduction in service levels. Some opening hours were subject to minor tweaks but this was due to the need to be responsive to customer needs rather than a reduction of the offer.</p>						
CPE037M	Completion and circulation of town centre performance data analysis report	4.00	1.00		 4.00	
<p>Four reports have been developed (not as yet circulated) as these are feeding into the development of place making plans for the towns of Connah's Quay, Mold, Flint and Queensferry (currently at development stage). Target will be met in 2024/25.</p>						
CPE038M	Completion of initial 3 (of 7) Place Making Plans in partnership with a range of stakeholders	1.00	3.00		 1.00	
<p>Shotton Place Making Plan is at completed stage - ready to be consulted on. Holywell and Buckley Plans are under development (external consultants appointed to deliver these). Target will be met in 2024/25.</p>						

Business

	Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPE029T	Support small and/or local businesses to engage with public sector procurement opportunities	100%		Business Development has worked throughout the year with Robertson Construction (Mynydd Isa School development), Read Construction (Flint Primary School development) Wall-Lag Ltd (Domestic Energy) and Gilbert Ash (Theatr Clwyd development) to support local supply chain engagement through delivery of virtual Meet the Buyer sessions; develop corporate social responsibility activities and encourage added social value commitments from Tier 1 and Tier 2 contractors.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPE030T	Support recovery of the County's street and indoor markets	100%		Mold Street Market continues to thrive with an average of 66 traders attending each market day and 24 new traders have been accommodated since April 2023, including the replacement of retired stallholders. Mold Indoor Market is currently 87% occupied with interest shown in the two remaining vacant units. Holywell Market numbers remain low with an average of seven traders each week. Market events and activities delivered throughout the year, such as Christmas and Easter Markets has resulted in increased footfall from residents and visitors to the towns. A dedicated Markets Promotion and Engagement Officer has been funded through Shared Prosperity Fund to raise the profile of the county markets and the market offer to wider audiences, including group travel, through additional events, promotional campaigns and social media activity.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPE031T	Support growth of the local and regional food and drink business sector through marketing and collaborative projects	100%		The Council has supported Mold Food and Drink Festival with hosting a successful event in September 2023. Ongoing financial support for Clwydian Range Food and Drink activities i.e. researching local food and drink products. Their availability, supply and demand by the tourism sector within the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB. We supported the organising of a local Food and Drink Networking event with Flintshire Tourism Association which provided an opportunity for local food and drink producers to showcase their products to 75 attendees (tourism and hospitality businesses). We accessed external fund to create tourism and hospitality grant programmes to support food and drink sector businesses wanting to invest in improving visitor experiences and target new markets. Shared Prosperity Fund - £679,000.

	Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
 CPE032T	Support recovery of the tourism and hospitality sectors and rebuild confidence in the industry	100%		<p>The Council has successfully accessed external funding to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and improve regionally recognised trails in Flintshire and associated infrastructure which is being much appreciated by those who are benefiting from these improvements. Brilliant Basics Fund R3 - £160,000 grant. • Improve connectivity to our coast and countryside including improving visibility of assets by implementing a programme of new and upgraded tourist and boundary sign packages for sites of cultural, heritage and natural significance. Shared Prosperity Fund - £335,000 • Create tourism grant programmes to support tourism businesses wanting to invest in improving visitor experiences and target new markets. 10 applications supported to a total value of £191,165 in 2023/24 FY. Shared Prosperity Fund - £679,000 • Launched the Flintshire Tourism Ambassador Course in July 2023. 70 ambassadors have completed and achieved the Bronze and Silver Award in 2023/24. https://www.ambassador.wales/ • Supported the Flintshire Tourism Association with securing and the delivery of £64K funding from Cadwyn Clwyd to support wider business and marketing activities over the summer. • Drafted a new Destination Management Plan 2024/26 with industry partners to support the development of the visitor sector, improve the appeal of the County to visitors and increase the economic impact of the sector. • Completed a visitor accommodation bedstock audit for Flintshire. Around 300 visitor accommodation businesses in Flintshire. 18,392 visitor accommodation bedspaces (86% in caravan and camping establishments).
 CPE033T	Support local businesses in their efforts to reduce their carbon footprint and become more resource efficient	100%		<p>Business Development has delivered two Net Zero workshops and in partnership with Deeside Decarbonisation Forum has delivered four network events, engaging with 271 business delegates throughout the year. The events are designed to share best practice within private sector decarbonisation work programmes and encourage business collaboration across Flintshire. Shared Prosperity Fund has been awarded to support a number of carbon reduction projects across Flintshire (ranging from private sector business grants to academic research) to encourage businesses to adopt greener technologies, reduce carbon footprints and become more resource efficient.</p>
 CPE034T	Increase the scale and impact of the social business sector	100%		<p>The development of the Flintshire Social Impact toolkit and increase of numbers of social enterprises using it, continues to demonstrate the impact of social enterprise activity in Flintshire. During this reporting period the 14 participating social enterprises reported the generation of a combined social value of £2,119,680.98 through the 18 activities being measured</p>

Business

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CPE008M	Number of small or micro businesses receiving support	837.00	600.00	352.00		
<p>Delivered 35 confidential impartial coaching and mentoring sessions to industrial commercial directors to encourage:- decision making relating to private sector inward investment and business expansion; act as a commercial critical friend and confidant regarding business operations. Engaged with 43 larger and 42 smaller commercial private investors to support new businesses moving into Flintshire or expanding current operations. • Delivered 15 training, advice and networking events with partners focusing on business continuity and resilience. Engaged with 717 business delegates.</p>						
CPE009M	Number of social enterprises receiving support	49.00	48.00	71.00		
<p>During this reporting period the Social Enterprise Lead Officer delivered 138 business support sessions to 49 entrepreneurs across Flintshire.</p>						
CPE010M	Number of local businesses supported to reduce their carbon footprint and become more resource efficient	271.00	48.00	78.00		
<p>Delivered 2 Net Zero workshops and in partnership with Deeside Decarbonisation Forum delivered 4 network events, engaging with 271 businesses. to share best practice within private sector decarbonisation work programmes and encourage business collaboration across Flintshire. Supported a number of Shared Prosperity Fund carbon reduction projects across Flintshire (ranging from private sector business grants to academic research) to encourage businesses to adopt greener technologies, reduce carbon footprints and become more resource efficient.</p>						

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Transport Connectivity



	Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CST021T	Review and update the Councils Integrated Transport Strategy	60%	★	The Council has provided feedback to the Corporate Joint Committee on the Case for Change along with current status of Strategic projects and feedback from local member workshops held in Autumn 2023. In order to progress the process further, Welsh Government will be organising a series of workshops with regional leads to discuss transport aspirations with a view to complete the Regional Transport Plan in March 2025.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CST022T	Support the establishment of CJsCs and delivery of the Joint Regional Transport Plan	60%	★	The Council has provided feedback to the Corporate Joint Committee on the Case for Change along with current status of Strategic projects and feedback from local member workshops held in Autumn 2023. In order to progress the process further, Welsh Government will be organising a series of workshops with regional leads to discuss transport aspirations with a view to complete the Regional Transport Plan in March 2025.

Transport Connectivity

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CST008M	Number of schemes delivered through the Welsh Government Active Travel Fund	2.80	3.00	3.00	 2.80	

Active Travel schemes programmed for this year have been completed with the exception of minor elements which are currently being completed.

Digital Infrastructure

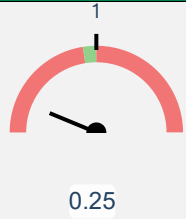
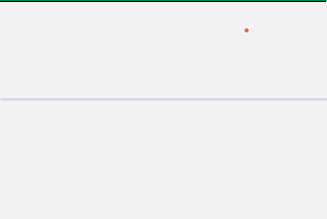
	Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
 CPE055T	Improve digital connectivity across the County for businesses and residents	100%		Fibre connectivity has improved significantly in Flintshire recently. A number of regional projects to improve connectivity are approaching delivery phase. Locally, work is underway to encourage network operators to fill gaps in mobile phone coverage and capacity.

Local Development Plan (LDP) Targets

	Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPE038T	Monitor overall Plan performance via the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) and submit to Welsh Government	50%	●	Following the adoption of the Local Development Plan in January 2023, the first Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) will need to reflect the first full 12 month period following adoption. The AMR will have a base date of 1st April 2024, and must be submitted to Welsh Government by 31st October 2024. Initial work on producing a draft report is underway.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPE039T	Maintain and update the Local Development Plan (LDP) Housing Trajectory in line with planning decisions made	50%	●	The updating of the housing trajectory will form part of the first Annual Monitoring Report to be submitted to Welsh Government by 31st October 2024. Work on monitoring housing land is undertaken each April and will feed into the trajectory.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPE040T	Make decisions at Planning Committee in line with the adopted Local Development Plan (LDP)	100%	✔	Policies in the adopted Local Development Plan (LDP) have been consistently applied in both Planning Committee and delegated decisions on planning applications.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPE041T	Reference the LDP growth strategy in early work on a North Wales Strategic Development Plan (SDP)	20%	●	Work is commencing on scoping out the preparation of a Strategic Development Plan (SDP) for North Wales. The growth strategy of the Local Development Plan (LDP) will provide up to date planning context for the SDP.

Local Development Plan (LDP) Targets

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CPE039M	Completion of first LDP Annual Monitoring Report and submission to Welsh Government (January 2024)	0.50	1.00		 <p>0.50</p>	
<p>Work is underway on the first Annual Monitoring Report with a base date of 01/04/24 to be submitted to Welsh Government by 31/10/24. A report on progress will be taken to Planning Strategy Group.</p>						
CPE040M	Completion of annual review of LDP housing trajectory	0.50	1.00		 <p>0.50</p>	
<p>Work on updating the housing trajectory is being undertaken as part of work on the first Annual Monitoring Report with a base date of 01/04/24 to be submitted to Welsh Government by 31/10/24.</p>						
CPE041M	Percentage of decision made on planning applications in accordance with officer recommendation	91.70%	100.00%		 <p>91.70%</p>	
<p>In the January, February and March 2024 Planning Committees, one application out of 12 was refused contrary to officer recommendations.</p>						


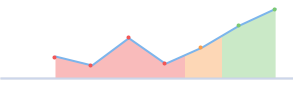
Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CPE042M	Contribution to the scoping of the form and content of the North Wales Strategic Development Plan	0.25	1.00		 <p>1 0.25</p>	

The Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) has appointed a Project Coordinator and Officers are assisting in collating all background evidence and setting up a framework structure for the Strategic Development Plan.

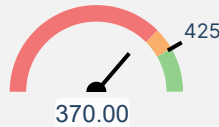
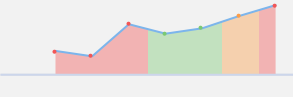
Reducing Worklessness

	Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPE042T	Co-ordinate a multi-agency approach to support businesses to recruit people from disadvantaged groups	100%	✔	A successful joint partnership between Communities For Work Plus, Jobcentre Plus and Careers Wales through the Jobs, Skills and Training Events group has delivered a number of successful projects throughout the year highlighting opportunities available locally in Flintshire including: job fairs, recruitment events, sector specific based training and where necessary redundancy support events. This continued during Quarter 4 where the group partnered with Eleven 11, a training company who provides a full turnkey civil engineering solution for the utility and telecommunications sector, this saw 10 individuals selected to take part in four weeks of intensive training to become Water Repair and Maintenance Operatives and gain industry-recognised qualifications. These individuals are coming to the close of their training and will be offered guaranteed job interviews with Eleven 11 Group who are supporting Welsh Water with their current work schedule across North Wales.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPE043T	Deliver mentoring and wider support programmes to assist disadvantaged people to re-engage with the labour market	90%	▲	Mentors have engaged with their participants to provide on-going employability support to move them closer to the labour market or gaining employment. All the relevant ID requirements have been obtained by the mentors for the new participants of the programme. Participants have met regularly with the mentors to identify their support needs and have produced a plan of action to ensure that the right support is given to each individual.

Reducing Worklessness

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CPE012M	Number of individuals entering employment, learning or volunteering	206.00	185.00	118.00		

At the end of Quarter 4 we have surpassed our target for the number of individuals entering employment, learning or volunteering. Individuals have been successful in securing roles within hospitality and events, construction, logistics and production to name a few. Preparation for employment has been key throughout this year as individuals still struggle with the effects of covid on their confidence and mental health. Young people especially have benefited from a Preparation into Employment course at Flint library which has given them the confidence and skills to move closer to the labour market. Volunteering and work placement opportunities with Groundwork and FLVC have further supported clients on their pathway to gaining meaningful sustainable employment.

CPE013M	Number of individuals receiving support	370.00	425.00	267.00		
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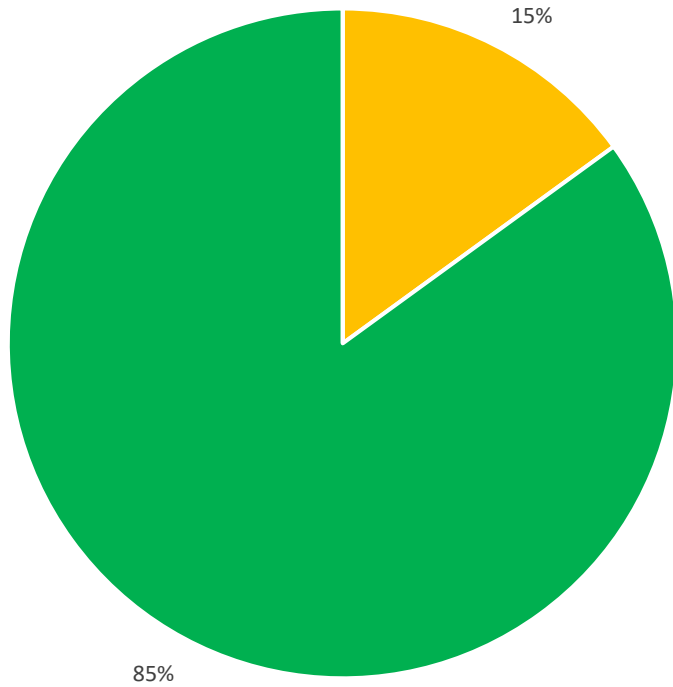
In Quarter 4, a total number of 59 participants registered on the Communities for Work plus programme. Referrals were received from Work Wednesday (Flint library), Job Centre Plus, Flintshire County Council's website, internal departments of Flintshire and self referrals. Also, during Quarter 4 all Communities for Work+ staff were going through redundancy process which started in January and ended in April. This was due to a 35% funding cut by Welsh Government which resulted in the team being reduced from 15 staff to 7. The 24/25 target have been set to reflect this.

Personal and Community Well-being

Page 177 **Well-being Objective:** Supporting people in need to live as well as they can.

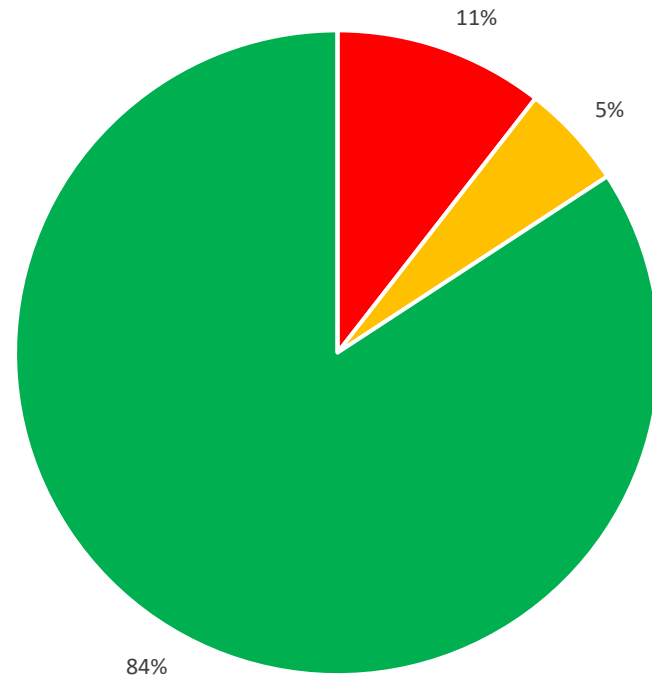
Personal and Community Well-being Overall Performance

Personal and Community Wellbeing - Action RAG Status



Monitor On Track

Personal and Community Wellbeing - Measure RAG Status

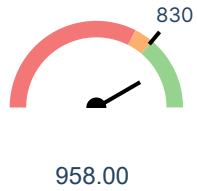



Off Track Monitor On Track

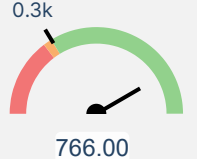

A Well-connected, Safe and Clean Local Environment

	Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
 CAU017T	Provide community hub sessions which target areas that have high anti-social behaviour and crime rates; to support young people who are at risk and to engage them with partners (subject to external grant funding)	100%		14 session available around Flintshire offering a range of activities and sport. We work with Community councils and sit on the contextual safeguarding and VARM meetings to ensure we are in the right areas 15913 with 805 sessions this year. This is reliant on Funding that we write bids for and are successful.
 CST012T	Work in partnership, actively support and engage with community led groups by developing Local Environmental Quality initiatives	100%		Partnership working continues to flourish and this Quarter has seen some considerable sized events taking place - especially in clearance of waste which has been flytipped. Spring cleaning events were organised to enhance community involvement and external stakeholders were in attendance for support and promote local initiatives.

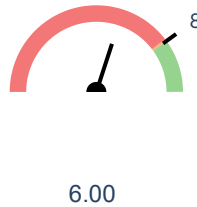

A Well-connected, Safe and Clean Local Environment

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CAU026M	Number of current monthly members with NERS, Well-Being and Junior subscriptions	958.00	830.00			

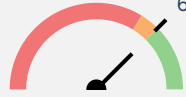

For the 12-month period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024, the National Exercise Referral Scheme (NERS) averaged 362 direct debit paying members per month, Well-Being (post-NERS exit membership) averaged 122 per month, and Junior (11-17 years) averaged 474 per month. All three schemes grew incrementally throughout the year as the post-pandemic return to normality continued, particularly the confidence levels of NERS and Well-Being clients, with NERS membership increasing by 18% and Well-Being membership increasing by 62% when comparing the March 2024 outturn with the April 2023 figures. The Actual (averaged) annual figure for the three fitness schemes totals 958 which exceeds the average Target for the four quarters (815) by 143 or 17.5%.

CAU027M	Number of community sessions held and number of participants attending	766.00	300.00			
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The number of community sessions held in 2023/24 was 766 with 10872 people attending.

CST011M	Number of targeted environmental educational campaigns undertaken promote improved Local Environmental Quality	6.00	8.00	4.00		
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A number of environmental campaigns were made during this period, which were undertaken in collaboration with the Waste Strategy Team and Environmental Enforcement team. Workshops and presentations were also undertaken across Flintshire and in collaboration with Network Rail in Sandycroft. Attendance at Community Council Meetings also undertaken.

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CST022M	Number of community engagement events attended to promote improved Local Environmental Quality	6.00	6.00		 6.00	

Events such as the Easter litter pick in Pennyfford and Ffynonngroyw, collaborations with local stakeholders, Countyside Services, KWT and residents. Clean up at Westwood Primary School in Buckley. Alleyway cleaning and clearance in Connah's Quay.

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ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 10 th September 2024
Report Subject	Winter Maintenance – Decision Making Review 2024
Cabinet Member	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Transportation
Report Author	Chief Officer, Streetscene & Transportation
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to advise Cabinet on the outcome of a review of the current decision-making process for gritting action within the Winter Maintenance Policy 2023-2025 following Cabinet's agreement in September 2023 for us to consider geographically specific treatment decision making. A budget efficiency of £25k was put forward and approved in budget setting by the County Council in February 2024, which reflects this review.

Winter service operations play a fundamental role in ensuring that our highway networks are safe and available during adverse weather conditions from around October through to April each year. The winter maintenance service is recognised as one of the most important functions that the highway authority provides.

Maintaining access to the network is crucial for emergency services, businesses, social services, education, and the public. This report outlines the current winter maintenance policy (see Appendix 1) and proposed alterations to the decision-making process and treatment routes, the legislative requirements for providing such a service, risks and the actions taken by the Streetscene and Transportation portfolio to support winter service operations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Scrutiny supports the proposal to transition to a domain-based approach for decision making for gritting action with a step change proposed for the 2024/2025 season.
2	Scrutiny supports the proposal to a full migration to domain-based treatments from the 2025/2026 season following the outcome of the step change over the 2024/2025 season.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE BACKGROUND TO THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS FOR GRITTING ACTION WITHIN THE WINTER MAINTENANCE POLICY
1.01	<p><u>Current Position</u></p> <p>The Council, as the local highway authority for county roads, has a general duty, under Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980, to maintain the highway network in a good state of repair to render it safe for ordinary traffic at all times of the year. Highway authorities in England and Wales also have a duty “to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice” (Highways Act 1980, Section A1 (TA) as modified by Section 111 of the Railways and Transport Act 2003).</p>
1.02	<p>The council’s winter maintenance service is essential in aiding the safe movement of highway users, maintaining communications, reducing delays, and enabling everyday life to continue. The Council must prioritise its response to winter weather, whilst exercising due regard to logistics and available resources.</p>
1.03	<p>The winter period is defined as between 1st October and 30th April each year and the decision-making process for carrying out winter maintenance action is carried out by nominated Duty Managers. Five Duty Managers will be rostered throughout the winter period to monitor weather forecast information and decide on appropriate preventative action. This decision will be based largely on predicted road surface temperatures (NOT air temperatures), the amount of moisture on the road and/or the amount of residual salt on the network from previous treatments.</p>
1.04	<p>The current decision-making process is based upon forecasts from the two Flintshire weather stations in Hendre and Brynford. When ice is predicted, Priority 1 routes will be pre-salted before the onset of any frost or ice. The twelve Priority 1 precautionary gritting routes account for 45% of the total County highway network.</p>
1.05	<p>When the forecasts from the two stations (Hendre and Brynford) are received, decisions for treatment are currently made for the county as a whole, based on the lowest road surface temperature forecasted, which means that all Priority 1 routes would be treated at the same time even if higher temperatures (no frost) were predicted by one of the weather stations (i.e. one out, all out).</p>
1.06	<p>Due to the topography of Flintshire, road surface temperatures can differ greatly from high routes to low lying areas, and we do see some variations in weather. During times of marginal forecasts, this can result in predicted road surface temperatures being minus (-) on the higher routes and plus (+) within the low-lying areas. This means that treatment decisions have been taken for the whole county, meaning that some roads may have been treated despite not actually reaching a temperature where a hazard could form.</p>
1.07	<p>As a result, we aspire to have domain-based forecasting, which would allow decisions to be made based on domains and not a countywide treatment, which in turn would allow us to operate a more effective service targeting domains where road surface temperatures are predicted to be lower.</p>

Looking at the county from a spatial perspective by dividing up the winter response into individual domains would allow for greater efficiency in winter action when compared to a “one out, all out” generic countywide approach.

1.08 Future Considerations / Decisions

In order to migrate to domain-based treatments, a full review of the current winter maintenance operations will be required. This includes reviewing the current weather station locations and treatment route optimisation.

Flintshire has historically been split into two climatic domains named Hendre and Brynford and, currently, these are the only two weather stations based within Flintshire (see Figure 1 below).

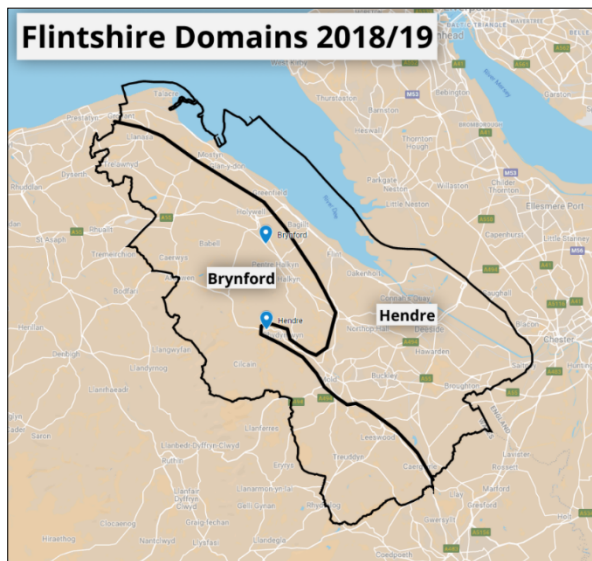


Figure 1: Flintshire’s current climatic domains in Hendre and Brynford

However, there are several other stations located on the periphery to the county boundary, which are available and accessible by the Duty Officers and could be used for route treatment decision making.

The additional weather stations are as follows: -

- Shotwick Domain - A494 Trunk Road (Cheshire)
- Rhualt and the Clwydian Range – A55 Rhualt (Denbighshire)
- Bodfari Domain – A541 Bodfari (Denbighshire)
- Bwlchgwyn Domain – Bwlchgwyn (Wrexham)

1.09 By incorporating these weather stations into our decision making, Flintshire would be able to operate with the three main domains below: -

- Clwydian Range
- Semi-High
- Coastal and Deeside

1.10 If the Priority 1 treatment routes were optimised into the above three domains, this would allow Duty Managers to treat domains separately based on the forecast for each weather station and on the topography of the county, meaning that a more efficient and selective treatment plan could be put into practice.

A full migration to domain-based treatments would be introduced for the 2025/2026 season with a step change proposed for the 2024/2025 season, in order to assess and determine whether the number of weather stations and locations of the weather stations are sufficient.

The following map in Figure 2 shows the three proposed domains that would be adopted under the proposals.

1.11

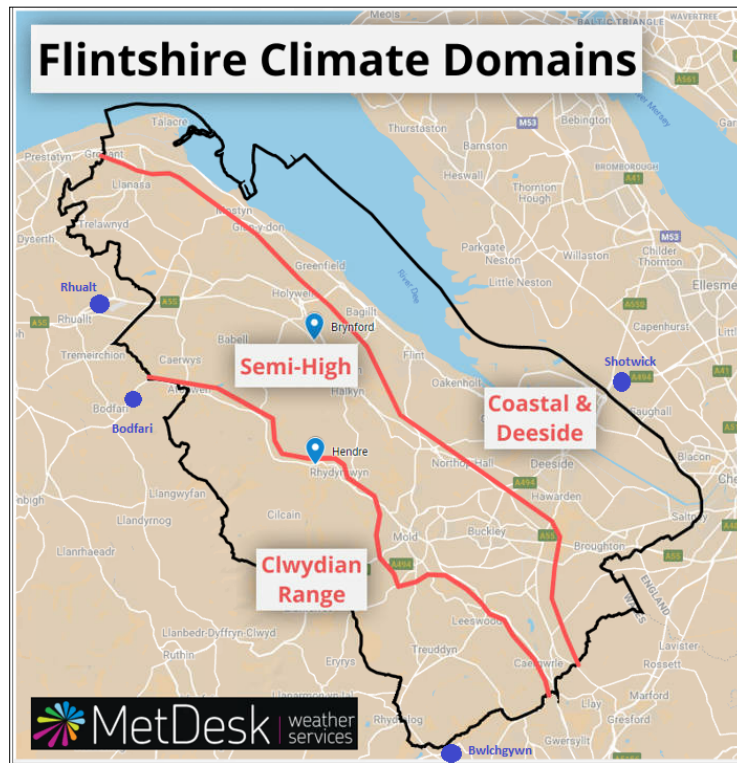


Figure 2 – Flintshire Climate Domains showing the additional weather stations in Shotwick, Rhualt, Bodfari and Bwlchgwyn, along with the three proposed domains.

1.12 Proposed Changes

By including the Rhualt, Bodfari, Shotwick and Bwlchgwyn weather stations into Flintshire’s forecasting, treatment decisions could then be made for each of the three domains, Clwydian Range, Semi-High and Coastal and Deeside. This will allow a more targeted approach on treatment areas.

With minor changes to the current treatment routes 7 and 11, which are predominantly within the Coastal and Deeside domain, when forecasts are favourable, the Coastal and Deeside domain will be monitored and not treated. This approach will only be taken outside the core winter months, which are in October, November, March and April.

December, January, and February are the core winter months when a one out, all out approach would be maintained.

1.13

Domain based decisions will only be taken when marginal temperatures are forecasted, and the likely spread rate would be the minimum of 10 grams of salt per square metre.

Domain based decisions will only affect the county road network; the trunk road network will remain unaffected and will be treated each time a decision is made.

1.14 Records show that, over the past 10 years, on average there are 30 turnouts (treatments) outside the core winter months, as demonstrated in the table below:

	No. of Runs												10 year Average
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	
Oct	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Nov	13	11	0	3	31	16	6	18	5	4	6	9	10
Dec	24	11	27	3	24	51	10	27	24	13	45	17	24
Jan	40	20	51	31	32	36	48	19	51	36	33	33	37
Feb	20	14	27	29	20	55	12	31	22	14	18	19	25
Mar	34	5	8	21	8	49	10	15	8	10	19	12	16
Apr	9	0	0	12	1	5	4	0	6	6	4	1	4
Total	141	61	113	99	116	213	91	111	116	83	125	91	116

1.15 If forecasts are favourable on the 30 average turnouts, the Deeside and Coastal route could be monitored and not treated; this is subject to the prevailing weather conditions outside the core winter months.

1.16 The following table shows the cost per treatment (per route) based on a 10 grams per meter square spreading rate. 10gm² is the lowest spread rate available to the decision maker within the North Wales Collaborative Precautionary Treatment Matrix (appendix 3).

Treatment route	Domains				Cost per Treatment
	Coastal	Semi High	Clwydian	Trunk Road	
Route 1	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	£387.20
Route 2	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	£451.20
Route 3	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	£483.20
Route 4	No	Yes	Yes	No	£419.20
Route 5	No	Yes	Yes	No	£412.80
Route 6	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	£412.80
Route 7	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	£425.60
Route 8	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	£412.80
Route 9	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	£432.00
Route 10	Yes	Yes	No	No	£400.00
Route 11	Yes	No	No	Yes	£406.40
Route 12	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	£406.40
					£5,049.60

1.17 When the weather conditions are favourable outside the core winter months, with minor alterations, route 7 and route 11 could be monitored without the variable cost of treatment. Based on monitoring 30 occasions within the Deeside and Coastal domain, routes 7 and 11 could potentially provide a financial saving of up to £25k for the authority.

1.18 It is recommended that the authority transitions to a domain-based decision-making model with a step change proposed for the 2024/2025 season to assess and determine whether the number of weather stations and locations of the weather stations are sufficient and a full migration to domain-based treatments from the 2025/2026 season.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	<p>Revenue Budget: The winter maintenance service is designed to cope with an average winter, but also have the capability to be extended or adapted when winters become more severe or of a longer duration than average and the revenue budget for the service is based on expenditure in an average winter with annual fluctuations catered for by the contingency reserve fund. The revenue budget of £846k for winter maintenance consists of fixed and variable costs, which are dependent on the weather conditions throughout the season. The winter maintenance contingency reserve of £250k was drawn down last financial year (2023/24) and has not been replenished, which creates a financial risk to the authority.</p> <p>The fixed costs within the winter maintenance service are based on staffing, contractor standby, vehicles and fleet. Due to increased charges for the provision of the gritting fleet this financial year, the expected fixed costs for the winter service are £609k.</p> <p>The variable costs are based on the turnouts (i.e. treatments of the network). These are unknown at the start of each season and can only be predicted based on the data that has been recorded over the past 10 years. When heavy snow is present, the additional demand and response by Streetscene performing a 24-hour operation is estimated at an additional £150k per week.</p> <p>Winter maintenance expenditure in any single financial year is subject to the variations of the winter weather from season to season. As a result, there can be significant unpredictable fluctuations between years. The normal practice has been that, in a severe, extreme or prolonged winter season, for the excess expenditure over the average year budget to be financed from the reserve fund and, in a mild winter, the savings used to replenish the reserve. However, this is becoming less and less commonplace as the climate changes.</p> <p>Capital Budget: there are no implications for the approved capital programme for either the current financial year, although funding may be required in the future for either additional weather stations or upgrading existing weather stations.</p> <p>Human Resources: there are no implications for additional capacity or for any change to current workforce structures or roles.</p> <p>Other Resources: A full description of the resources required for the winter service is provided within the current policy in Appendix 1.</p> <p>Technology: All of the gritting fleet has global positioning satellite (GPS) and automated gritting technology. This technology improves the level of service provided in terms of accuracy, health and safety, monitoring and recording, resulting in a more cost-effective service.</p> <p>A system of 6 weather stations will be operated and used to feed into the weather forecast model and to monitor local conditions. A professional forecasting service provided by MetDesk on an all-Wales basis is used to guide treatment decisions. Information from the weather stations is fed into the weather forecast model.</p>

	<p>It is also used to check on temperature (air and road), humidity and wind speed. This enables both improved local forecasts to be obtained and actual conditions monitored. All the information can be accessed using a desktop/laptop PC or on smartphones/tablets.</p> <p>Additional funding may be required in 2025/26 for the upgrading of existing weather stations or additional weather stations once the outcome of the step change proposed for 2024/25 is known.</p>
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3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
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3.01	A domain-based forecasting system to decide when and where to salt the gritting network to the exact domains needing treatment will use a more targeted approach, which will reduce emissions from fewer vehicular movements, potentially use less rock salt, which is a finite resource, and save the authority money by reducing the number of gritting runs needed (based on an average winter).
3.02	The road network being monitored and treated over the winter will not change, but the way duty managers make gritting decisions will be changed under the proposals. Previously, the entire county was treated following a forecast of low road surface temperatures anywhere in that area. Going forward, duty managers will base their decisions on the weather and temperatures forecasted for each domain. The domain-based weather stations will underpin the decision making and treatment regime and allow for a more targeted and dynamic approach.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
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4.01	Consultation undertaken with the Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Transportation
4.02	Consultation undertaken with Trade Unions
4.03	Consultation required with Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee

5.00	APPENDICES
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5.01	Appendix 1 – Current Winter Maintenance Policy
5.02	Appendix 2 – Report to Cabinet (September 2023) – Review of the Winter Maintenance Policy 2023/2024

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
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6.01	Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 19th September, 2023, 10.00 am (flintshire.gov.uk)
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7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Barry Wilkinson, Highway Network Service Manager Telephone: 01352 704656 E-mail: barry.wilkinson@flintshire.gov.uk</p>
7.02	<p>Contact Officer: Ian Bushell, Area Operational Manager Telephone: 01352 704780 E-mail: ian.bushell@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	<p>Winter Maintenance: the particular network management requirements during winter are not 'maintenance' in the traditional sense, but specialist operational services responding to adverse weather events.</p>

Winter Maintenance Policy 2023-2025



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1 | Background

- 1.1 Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 places a statutory duty on the Highway Authority to maintain the highway, as follows:-

“(1A) In particular, a Highway Authority is under a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that a safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice.”

- 1.2 The legislation does not impose an absolute duty but rather involves a balance between the degree of risk and the steps necessary to eliminate the risk.
- 1.3 In order to provide a statutory defence, a County Policy on winter maintenance services is required which should be reviewed on a regular basis.
- 1.4 The requirement to ensure compliance with Section 1.3 has been emphasised in collaborative meetings that have taken place amongst the six North Wales Authorities following the Coroner’s inquest into the winter maintenance incidents that have occurred in North Wales Authorities during recent years.
- 1.5 The level of service for County Roads is determined by the elected Members of each Council. This is based on a risk assessment approach to determining a cost effective hierarchy of routes and treatments. The Authority believes that the level of service meets the requirements on the current interpretation of **‘reasonably practicable’** but will continue to keep service provision under review, particularly in respect of any legal judgements. A review of the Winter Maintenance operations is undertaken each year before the winter season.

2 | Purpose of Policy

- 2.1 To demonstrate compliance with the statutory duties of the Highway Authority by recording a managed, cost effective approach to providing winter maintenance service in the interest of public safety.
- 2.2 To provide a statutory defence against third party claims.
- 2.3 To inform and involve Members in the procedures associated with the winter maintenance service
- 2.4 To set out the aims and standards for the winter maintenance service, the facilities and resources available and guidance as to how the aims and standards are to be achieved.

3 | Procedures

3.1 Winter Weather Forecasts

3.1.1 Daily weather forecasts are received throughout the winter period and are specific to Flintshire County Council. The forecast is currently provided by MetDesk. MetDesk utilise their experience at weather forecasting combined with additional data from weather models and information provided by Ice Prediction sensors situated at:

1. A55 at Brynford
2. A541 at Hendre

to predict the weather for a 36 hour period from approximately 12-noon daily. The weather forecast is provided through a web based system and this forms the basis of the decision making process with regards to gritting actions taken in the interest of road safety over the succeeding 24 hours.

3.1.2 The Forecast Provider provides forecast information in the in the following format:

- ▶ Projected road surface temperature graphs for two ice sensor sites within the County and others in the neighbouring Counties. These sites have been specifically chosen to provide information which is considered representative of the whole County.
- ▶ A site specific forecast for each of the ice sensor sites covering a 36-hour period from the time of issue (normally 12:00 hrs).
- ▶ A 24-hour consultancy service, staff can talk to forecasters at the Weather Centre to expand on the general forecast.
- ▶ A 2-5 day forecast text indicating the outlook.
- ▶ A morning summary in text describing the events of the night before and a preliminary forecast covering the succeeding 24 hours.
- ▶ Alerts and forecast amendments electronically and by direct contact throughout the 24 hour period.

3.1.3 A cross boundary partnership approach is adopted throughout the North Wales Authorities and in conjunction with North & Mid Wales Trunk Road Agency (NMWTRA) to ensure an effective and consistent service delivery.

3.1.4 A North Wales protocol for distributing daily weather forecasting information and proposed action details has been formally adopted. This has been coordinated through the North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agency (NMWTRA) and has established improved communications between neighbouring Authorities, NMWTRA and North Wales Police. The actions of all the North Wales Authorities are recorded on the Forecast Provider web page for all partner authorities to view.

3.2 Priority of Roads

3.2.1 Roads within the Authority have been prioritised for treatment into Priority 1, 2 and 3 routes.

3.2.2 **Priority 1 routes** are roads carrying substantial volumes of traffic having characteristics, which require protection from frost throughout the night. These routes form the spinal road network of the Authority and merit high priority to sustain the free flowing movement of traffic. They include:-

- ▶ Trunk Roads (48kms)
- ▶ Class A Roads (151kms)
- ▶ Class B and C Roads (351kms)
- ▶ Strategic Core Bus Network
- ▶ Main access roads to schools or establishments of higher education
- ▶ Town centre access and distributor roads through villages and housing estates
- ▶ Industrial Estate Roads (10.1Kms)

The 12 **Priority 1** precautionary gritting routes total **45%** of the total County highways network.

3.2.3 **Priority 2 routes** are formed from the unclassified roads that form main distributor routes in both the urban and rural areas. They include:-

- ▶ Housing Estate Roads
- ▶ Access routes between smaller rural communities
- ▶ Remaining bus routes
- ▶ Known problems, including significant gradients, exposed areas and other topological factors
- ▶ Council maintained Car Parks

Priority 2 gritting routes will be treated upon satisfactory completion of the Priority 1 routes providing the criteria set out in 3.2.3 are met and adequate resources are available.

3.2.4 **Priority 3 routes** are all the remaining adopted roads within the County.

3.2.5 Priority of Roads

3.2.5.1 All Priority 1 routes will be subject to precautionary gritting operations throughout the winter period at the discretion of the Highway Network Manager or his representative. The decision to undertake precautionary gritting actions is made daily at around 13:00hrs between the period from 1 November to 30 April of the following year.

3.2.5.2 Priority 2 routes will only be treated in the event of icy conditions or a forecast of prolonged icy conditions, and following the satisfactory treatment of the Priority 1 routes. The Duty Officer will make the decision whether or not to proceed to Priority 2 routes. The protocol for treatment during this period will be for a continued action on the Priority 1 gritting routes as required with discretionary actions being taken on Priority 2 routes in response to known or observed problem areas, or in relation to requests that have been assessed and justified by staff of

Flintshire County Council. If temperatures remain below zero with prolonged icy conditions the winter maintenance teams will continue to undertake inspections and liaise closely with the Duty Officer. The level of actions will be dictated by the available resources and the weather forecast outlook. Bulk gritting vehicles and manual salting gangs will be deployed for this purpose. A discretionary decision to suspend further actions pending improving weather conditions may be taken.

- 3.2.5.3** Priority 3 routes will normally be treated dependent upon the availability of appropriate resources following the satisfactory attention to Priority 1 and 2 routes and will be restricted to normal working hours, and in response to known or observed problem areas, or in relation to requests that have been assessed and justified by staff of Flintshire County Council..
- 3.2.6** During the onset of snow conditions and the satisfactory treatment of the Priority 1 routes, all available plant and resources will be deployed to clear snow within the Priority 2 routes. During such operations the gritting appliances will be directed by Flintshire County Council staff who will patrol their respective areas and liaise with the Duty Officer.
- 3.2.7** The Authority employs 38 No. agricultural snow ploughing contractors to clear the highway during periods of snow conditions. Each Contractor has a dedicated route which enables the Authority to clear the entire adopted highway network within the County. During snow conditions contractors may be hired at the discretion of the Duty Officer or his representative at the tendered rates. The schedule of the snow ploughing contractors is available to all winter maintenance staff to access as required.

3.2.8 Road Priority/ Treatment Matrix Treatment

Route type	Precautionary Salting	Salting	Times
Priority 1	At any time of the day	At any time of the day	When ice is predicted Priority 1 routes will be pre salted before the on-set of frost. Where severe conditions such as snow or ice persist resources will remain on Priority 1 routes
Priority 2	None	At any time of the day	Priority 2 routes will only be treated if severe weather conditions persist and the Priority 1 routes have been completed
Priority 3	None	At any time of the day	On satisfactory completion of Priority 1 and Priority 2 routes and if severe weather conditions persist these roads will be treated on a reactive basis dependent upon resources

3.3 De-icing Materials

3.3.1 Flintshire County Council procures its de-icing materials through a tendered process. The current tender is with Compass Minerals through the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation and the life of the contract is 3rd March 2022 – 21st February 2026.

3.3.2 6.3 mm nominal size rocksalt

This is the most commonly used material for general purpose gritting. It is spread at a prescribed rate of 10 – 15 grams per square metre for precautionary gritting. This rate can be increased to 40 grams per square metre when treating snow conditions. These rates are in accordance with the recommendations made in the Code of Practice for Highways Maintenance Management and the Trunk Road Maintenance Manual.

6.3 mm nominal size coated rocksalt (Safecote)

This material is standard rocksalt with an applied coating which enhances its performance to treat ice at lower temperatures (conventional rocksalt has a reduced efficiency at temperatures below -6 degrees centigrade). It has a greater adhesion to the applied surface and is effective over a longer period.

3.3.3 A total of 2200 tonnes of coated rocksalt (Safecote) is currently stored in a storage dome at Alltami Depot. A stock management service is operated in collaboration with the Compass Minerals, Winsford. The stock management system highlights the requirement for the delivery of rocksalt which is triggered by predetermined maximum and minimum intervention stock levels throughout the winter season. This service provides the following benefits:-

- ▶ Fresh stocks of rocksalt which retain maximum salinity values.
- ▶ Controlled levels of stock to meet storage availability and providing the ability to avoid storing large volumes of rocksalt outside of the winter period.
- ▶ Avoidance of a shortage of rocksalt during periods of high demand
- ▶ Regional proximity of supplier provides reduced delivery times.

3.3.4 Strategic Salt Stocks

Due to national shortages of rock salt in previous years and following advice from WLGA and Welsh Government, an additional strategic salt stock of 7000 tonnes is stored under sheeting at the Greenfield Recycling Site at Greenfield.

3.3.5 Most of the road de-icing salt used in the UK is derived from a non-renewable source through mining a natural salt bed stretching from North West England to Ireland. The majority of rock salt is a 10mm grain size to British Standard BS3247. However, a trend is emerging in the UK where a number of Highway Authorities are moving toward a 6.3mm grain size. BS3247 requires the rock salt to contain no more than 4% moisture by weight and the soluble Sodium Chloride content to be not less than 90% of the dry salt mass.

Flintshire County Council introduced using 6.3mm grain size coated salt in 2005/2006. The proprietary name of this product is Safecote.

3.3.6 To effectively remove ice from the road surface the rock salt requires the action of traffic, which assists in the process of breaking down the salt granules into a saline solution. This rapidly melts the ice and prevents further ice forming for several hours.

3.3.7 Salt in solution freezes at a lower temperature than water and if spread before the onset of freezing conditions can be effective in preventing ice from forming on road surfaces at temperatures down to -7°C. However, salt is only effective if it can form a solution with the water on the road surface. If this water has already frozen before the salt is applied, the salt is much less effective in combating the slippery conditions. The generic term ‘gritting’ is often used to describe what is actually “pre-salting” or “precautionary salting”, i.e. spreading salt before the onset of ice or frost formation.

3.3.8 The significant benefits of using Safecote Salt are:-

- ▶ more accurate spreading of the salt
- ▶ more salt remains on the road surface
- ▶ reduced wastage
- ▶ faster de-icing effect
- ▶ increased longevity on the road surface
- ▶ less Sodium Chloride used
- ▶ less corrosive to the gritter vehicles
- ▶ less corrosive to the highway infrastructure.
- ▶ cost benefit

3.3.9 Treatment Matrix

Carriageways - The Council operations will follow the standard guidance issued by Welsh Government as part of the Trunk Road Maintenance Management Policy and the Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance and any subsequent amendments. The de-icing material will continue to be Safecote.

Footways - Following successful trials of alternative de-icing materials heavily used footways in town centres, car parks and sheltered accommodation will be treated with a product called 'Safethaw'. This product is a brine solution mixed with agricultural by-product similar to that used on the highway. 'Safethaw' is sprayed by using a knapsack sprayer or a self-propelled spray bar fitted to an All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) or a pickup and will be applied in periods of heavy snow and prolonged icy conditions in accordance with the risk assessment for each element.

3.4 Operational Practices

- 3.4.1** The winter period is defined as between 1st October and 30th April each year. Streetscene drivers are contracted to deliver the service and standby payments will apply from November to March.
- 3.4.2** Forecasts are received at approximately 06.00hrs, 12.00hrs and 18.00hrs every day within the period between 1st October and 30th April each year by the duty Officer at Alltami Depot or the on-call Duty Officer at weekends.
- 3.4.3** A decision on the appropriate action will be made by the Duty Officer, and the supervisory staff and standby crew will be informed accordingly. Standby crews are available to respond to forecast changes and subsequent actions/decisions outside of normal working hours.

- 3.4.4** Priority 1 routes will be treated before the formation of ice. The average route treatment time of 3.0 hours will be taken into account in making the decision to ensure that all pre-cautionary Priority 1 routes are completed on time. Any changes to the pre-determined actions will be verified with the Duty Officer before notification to the workforce. The situation may be varied by weather conditions such as heavy rain immediately before a frost, which may restrict the time to carry out the work.
- 3.4.5** Depending on the forecast, further actions may be required to support the precautionary gritting decisions. Whilst every effort will be made to plan this action it may be considered necessary to obtain updated forecast information from the Forecast Provider prior to a decision being made. The weather forecast update will be carried out by the Duty Officer at any time of the day or night, to ensure that appropriate actions are carried out in the interest of public safety and to provide a cost-efficient service.
- 3.4.6** In the event of a forecast of snow the Priority 1 routes will be pre-treated prior to the event. Where this is not possible, for example when it starts as rain and turns to snow, a decision to delay action until the rain stops in order to prevent the salt from being washed away will be taken. It should be noted that this situation can be even more difficult if it occurs during the rush hour as traffic congestion impedes the progress of the gritting vehicle.
- 3.4.7** Following snowfall with significant accumulations, clearance work will continue around the clock until all Priority 1 roads are clear. When the Priority 1 roads are cleared to a standard which safeguards the safe passage of vehicular traffic, all available resources will be dedicated to attend to Priority 2 roads.
- 3.4.8** Priority 3 routes will receive attention when resources are available and after all Priority 1 and 2 roads have received appropriate treatment.
- 3.4.9** Services across Streetscene & Transportation (and possibly others across the wider Authority) will support the Winter Service during periods of prolonged disruption to the county. It may be necessary to curtail certain services during these periods, for reasons such as practicality or safety, and the resource and labour will be redirected to the Winter Service operations as appropriate.
- 3.4.10** During periods of snowfall, all gritting vehicles will be equipped with snow or slush ploughs depending on the type of snow being cleared. Snow ploughing contractors will be deployed at the discretion of the Duty Officer.
- 3.4.11** The decision to deploy contractors to clear roads of accumulated snowfall will be made at the discretion of the Duty Manager and subject to local condition and the prolonged impact of restricted access and treacherous conditions at the time.
- 3.4.12** Following periods of heavy snowfall, priority should be given to the inspection and clearance of gullies to ensure that meltwater from snow on verges and central reservations can quickly drain away.

3.5 Communication

During periods of severe or prolonged adverse weather conditions, the service will provide updates to the senior leaders group (including the Chief Officer Team and Cabinet Members, along with relevant operational managers) advising them of the impact of the current weather conditions, a summary of the weather forecast, a briefing on the allocated resource and operational response, and an outline of the operational plans in place to deal with the forecast.

3.6 Partnership Working

3.6.1 Liaison and cross boundary operational practices are established between Flintshire County Council and its neighbouring Authorities and North & Mid Wales Trunk Road Agency, with the intention of maintaining a consistency and continuity of winter services throughout the region.

For this purpose the following cross boundary precautionary gritting arrangements are in place:-

Wrexham County Borough Council will treat the following roads for **Flintshire County Council**:-

- ▶ B5102 from County boundary Llay to A541 Mold Road (Hollybush)

Flintshire County Council will treat the following roads for **Wrexham County Borough Council**:

- ▶ B5430 Bwlchgwyn from County Boundary to Four Crosses
- ▶ B5373 County Boundary to Miners Road (Sharps)

Flintshire County Council will treat the following roads for **Denbighshire County Council**:

- ▶ Section of road from A5151 to Gwaenysgor Crossroads

Denbighshire County Council will treat the following roads for **Flintshire County Council**:

- ▶ Section of the A494 from County Boundary, Cadole to Cadole junction

3.6.2 It is the responsibility of each individual Highway Authority to ensure adequate treatment of the roads under their jurisdiction. A protocol of daily communications between neighbouring authorities / agencies has therefore been established to ensure continuity of actions.

3.7 Footways and Cycleways

3.7.1 Footways, pedestrian areas or cycleways are not included in precautionary salting operations. Nevertheless, there will be a certain amount of overspill of salt onto footways and cycleways when precautionary salting is being carried out on adjacent carriageways.

3.7.2 Resources will be deployed to treat footways once snow has settled or during periods of prolonged freezing conditions on a priority basis at locations including:

- ▶ Town centre footways and footways in the vicinity of shopping areas
- ▶ Footways around Pay & Display Car Parks including areas around Pay & Display machines
- ▶ Footways in the vicinity of civic buildings
- ▶ Public highway in the vicinity of hospitals
- ▶ Public highway in the vicinity of residential homes / old age pensioners flats
- ▶ Public highway in the vicinity of day care centres
- ▶ Public highway in the vicinity of Schools (during term times only)
- ▶ Footbridges
- ▶ Bus Stops
- ▶ Cemeteries

If any reports of icy footways are received for locations not included in the above criteria, the footway will be inspected to assess whether treatment is appropriate, however this is dependent upon available resources.

3.8 Salt Bins and Salt Heaps

3.8.1 Streetscene Services Salt bins (Yellow Bins) are located in areas for the use of pedestrians and motorists to treat the public highway only. The decision for the distribution of salt bins is that of the Highway Network Manager or his representative in the interest of financial management.

3.8.2 Salt bin locations will be individually assessed against criteria which include:-

- ▶ Non precautionary gritting routes
- ▶ Location within bounds of public highway
- ▶ Benefit to road safety, i.e. areas with steep inclines
- ▶ Traffic volumes
- ▶ Proximity to schools and locations of public interest.

A Pro Forma to aid in the assessment of suitable salt bin locations has been created and will be distributed to staff as required.

3.8.3 All salt bins will be filled at the start of the winter season and refilled once again in January, if necessary. Similarly, salt heaps will be provided before the winter season and replenished once during the winter months.

3.8.4 Salt heaps in the rural areas will also be subject to the same assessment criteria as the salt bins.

3.8.5 Streetscene Services will provide salt bins and rock salt within Council establishments on request at cost to the relevant Department. Every effort is made to establish and meet the requirements of each Department prior to the onset of the winter season. The availability of resources will dictate the priority allocated to provide this service during the winter season.

3.8.6 Provision is available to purchase for salt bins Community Councils (Green Bins), along with rock salt from Streetscene Services with the intention of supplementing

the Authority's winter maintenance services to the benefit of the general public. Salt bins purchased by the Community Council will be distinguishable from Streetscene salt bins and will be maintainable by the Community Council. Location of the salt bin on the public highway will require prior approval of the Highway Authority.

3.9 Resources

- 3.9.1** The workforce involved will all be part of Streetscene Services and all drivers will be trained and assessed. Additional resources can be sought from other sections within the service if required.
- 3.9.2** The Council's winter maintenance fleet consists of 12 frontline gritting vehicles and 2 spare gritting vehicles. These are stored at Alltami Depot. These are supported by 3 trailer type Gritters operated by contractors should they be required.
- 3.9.3** Welsh Government and WLGA have suggested that all Authorities in Wales hold a strategic salt stock to ensure resilience in the event of further winters of extreme weather and national shortages of rock salt. For this coming season Flintshire will hold an additional residual salt stock of 7,000 tonnes covered and sheeted at the Greenfield green waste recycling site.
- 3.9.4** The suggested minimum stock levels is based on the last six-year average usage figure and with a multiplier of 150%. The tonnage of salt held in Flintshire for the period 2023-2025 will be a minimum of 9,000 tonnes.

3.10 Standards Monitoring

- 3.10.1** Flintshire County Councils service delivery is benchmarked against National performance statistics to ensure that a comparative cost-effective service delivery is being maintained.
- 3.10.2** Regional and National meetings of operational staff and support service providers creates the opportunity for continual assessment of operational practices, standards and resources.

3.11 Vehicle Tracking

- 3.11.1** Flintshire County Council's fleet of 14 bulk gritting vehicles have all been fitted with an innovative GPS tracking system. The tracking system is a monitoring device that interfaces with the control systems on the vehicles so not only do we know where the vehicle has been, but exactly what it was doing and, because it is web based, the information can be accessed remotely. The tracking system operates in real time and therefore it is easy to find out exactly where a vehicle is and to check its activity. This gives the Duty Officers the confidence to ensure that any operational decisions that they make are based on accurate live information.

3.11.2 In these increasingly litigious times it is vital that Managers are able to provide positive supporting evidence in the event of a claim. The GPS tracking system will monitor how much salt was spread on what roads, at what rate and at what time. The system is able to provide a record of all control box functions, route time, salt sensor data, spread rate/width and vehicle speed.

3.11.3 The Council operates a fleet of gritting vehicles all equipped with an Autologic system which spreads the amount of salt required based on the location, so gritter drivers can concentrate solely on the road and not have to focus on the vehicles spreading settings. The Autologic system has been pre-loaded with the Authority's road widths and ensures the optimal amount of salt has been spread to maximise the treatments, meaning salt is not wasted. The system provides optimisation and higher levels of road safety, leaving drivers free to concentrate on driving, and providing flexibility in staff deployment as route knowledge is not necessary for the driver.

3.12 Extreme Weather Protocol

3.12.1 On receipt of a severe weather warning an operational control room will be established in Alltami and manned by staff from Streetscene Services who will act as a dedicated point of contact for the Contact Centre staff. The staff within the operational control room will have direct contact with Streetscene Coordinators/Supervisors who will be on-site to investigate complaints and mobilise dedicated gritting vehicles under their direct control.

3.12.2 The operational control room will be responsible for directing all operations and act as a liaison contact to the press office through which all press releases will be made.

3.13 Community Engagement

3.13.1 Flintshire County Council is committed to provide assistance in the form of small quantities of rock salt and tools to community and local groups to enable them to assist with the removal of snow and ice off the footpaths within the urban areas.

3.13.2 The Highway Network Manager will write annually, prior to the winter, to all Community Councils and known action groups for contact details of interested parties and for their requirements.

3.13.3 Contact details provided by these groups will receive daily weather forecasts and details of the proposed daily winter maintenance action, by e-mail, direct from the forecast provider.

3.14 High Winds - Flintshire Bridge Closure/Restriction Procedure

- 3.14.1 Forecasts** - Weather forecasts are received daily via e-mail from MetDesk for the next 3 days. These should be reviewed daily by the Duty Officer to anticipate likely restrictions and resources required to implement a bridge closure or lane closures.
- 3.14.2** When wind gusts are forecast over 50 mph within the next 24 hours the Duty Officer should ring Weather service provider and seek advice from a forecaster of the risk of high winds in excess of the criteria described below.
- 3.14.3** Based on the advice of the forecaster the Duty Officer will decide on any necessary restriction using the criteria described below.
- 3.14.4** Experience has shown that a planned closure based on forecasts is preferable to waiting until wind speeds increase and reacting to them at short notice. If a closure is planned, due to a forecast advice from MetDesk, the FCC Press Office should be informed immediately so they can list the closure on the FCC web site and inform local radio stations in advance of the closure.
- 3.14.5 Criteria for Traffic Restrictions for A548 Flintshire Bridge**

<i>Wind Speed (miles/h)</i>	<i>Wind Speed (km/h)</i>	<i>Wind Speed (m/s)</i>	<i>Restriction</i>
50-55	80-88	22-25	No restriction – Monitor wind speeds
55	88	25	Close bridge or Down-wind lane closures (see note (i))
60	95	27	Close bridge

Notes:-

- (i) In exceptional circumstances a down-wind lane closure can be implemented to allow the bridge to remain open for wind speeds above 55 mph. Generally this method of restriction would only be considered when there is advance notice of anticipated high wind speeds over a prolonged period. A down-wind lane closure provides an empty lane in the event that a vehicle is blown off course or blown over. In addition traffic speed is generally reduced. For down-wind lane closures there will be a slow lane closure on one carriageway and a fast lane closure on the other.
- (ii) The above allowable wind speeds may be increased by 5 mph if the wind is a head or tail wind i.e. blowing along the bridge in a due East or Westerly direction.

- 3.14.6 Closure** - If a full closure is decided upon, the duty officer will:
- ▶ Arrange for warning and diversion signs to be deployed and for the bridge to be close.
 - ▶ Inform all listed in the Contact List contained within the FCC Winter Maintenance Operation Plan handbook which is issued to all nominated personnel.
 - ▶ The police will inform the media and other emergency services of the closure
- 3.14.7** If a lane closure is decided upon the Duty Officer will arrange this and inform FCC Street works Section and the Police.
- 3.14.8 Monitoring** - If it is decided that no immediate action is required, the situation shall be monitored by the Duty Officer until the risk of high winds has receded.
- 3.14.9** If a restriction/closure is implemented the Duty Officer shall monitor the situation and contact the Police to keep them informed of the anticipated re-opening time.
- 3.14.10 Re-Opening** - When the weather improves the Duty Officer shall decide on a time for the removal of any restriction. PA can give advice on timing of reducing wind gust speeds.
- 3.14.11** The Duty Officer shall arrange for the removal of signs, cones and diversion signs used for the closure and inform the FCC Street works Section & Press Office, Police, Shotton Paper and FCC Business Development when the bridge is re-opened.
- 3.15 Flooding**
- 3.15.1 Forecasts** - Weather forecasts are received daily from MetDesk (forecast provider) for the next 2-5 days. The service is also in receipt of national flood guidance alerts. These should be reviewed daily by the Duty Officer to anticipate likely impacts and resources required to respond.
- 3.15.2** The nature of flooding tends to be very localised and is difficult to predict accurately, however resources will be allocated to inspect known hotspot and drainage infrastructure prior to forecasted events.
- 3.15.3** The Duty Manager should refer to the Flintshire County Council Sandbag Policy when considering the prioritisation of requests.

4 | Risk Assessment

4.1 The winter maintenance service has undertaken various risk assessments on the provision of road surface treatments as follows:

- ▶ Precautionary Treatment on Priority 1 Roads
- ▶ Salting on Priority 2 Roads
- ▶ Salting on Priority 3 Roads
- ▶ Salting Town Centre Footways
- ▶ Salting footways with low footfall
- ▶ Salting Council maintained Car Parks

5 | Background Documents

5.1 The additional documents outlined below provided further detail and background information relating to the contents of this policy:

- ▶ Highways Act 1980
- ▶ Railways and Transport Act 2003
- ▶ Traffic Management Act 2004
- ▶ Code of Practice for Well-managed Highway Infrastructure (2016)
- ▶ Quarmby Report – July 2010
- ▶ Trunk Road Maintenance Manual
- ▶ Welsh Government Advice Documents
- ▶ WLGA Advice Documents

CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 19 th September 2023
Report Subject	Winter Maintenance Policy Review 2022-2025
Cabinet Member	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Regional Transport Strategy
Report Author	Chief Officer – Streetscene & Transportation
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the winter maintenance service over the last season and responsibilities of the Council, as well as seeking approval for the review of the winter maintenance policy.

Winter service operations play a fundamental role in ensuring that highway networks are safe and available during adverse weather conditions from around October through to April each year. The winter maintenance service is recognised as one of the most important functions that the highway authority provides. Maintaining access to the network is crucial for emergency services, businesses, social services, education, and the public.

This report outlines the current winter maintenance policy (see **Appendix 1**), the legislative requirements for providing such a service, and the actions taken by the Streetscene and Transportation portfolio to support winter service operations. In addition, the report outlines the County's response to other adverse weather events, such as heavy rainfall and high winds.

We have committed to reviewing the winter maintenance policy every two years and this report explains winter maintenance operations and seeks approval of the proposed winter service plan and winter maintenance policy for the next two years 2023-2025.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Cabinet approves the refreshed winter maintenance service policy as presented in this report and as attached in Appendix 1
2	That Cabinets notes the portfolio's response to adverse weather events over the Winter season 2022-2023.
3	That Cabinet supports the continued need to maintain the revenue budget at present levels along with earmarked reserves of £250k.

4	That a further report is presented to Cabinet in 2024 following a review of the 2023-2024 season by the weather forecasting provider in relation to geographically specific treatment decision making.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	BACKGROUND OF THE WINTER MAINTENANCE POLICY
1.01	The Council, as the local highway authority for county roads, has a general duty, under Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980, to maintain the highway network in a good state of repair to render it safe for ordinary traffic at all times of the year.
1.02	Highway authorities in England and Wales also have a duty “ <i>to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice</i> ” (Highways Act 1980, Section A1 (TA) as modified by Section 111 of the Railways and Transport Act 2003). The council’s winter maintenance service is essential in aiding the safe movement of highway users, maintaining communications, reducing delays, and enabling everyday life to continue. The Council must prioritise its response to winter weather, whilst exercising due regard to logistics and available resources.
1.03	In addition, under Section 150(1) of the Highways Act 1980, there is a requirement for the highway authority to remove an obstruction caused by the accumulation of snow, subject to a number of factors stated in Section 150(3) of the 1980 Highways Act.
1.04	<p>Furthermore, the Traffic Management Act 2004 has placed a network management duty on all local traffic authorities, which requires authorities to do all that is reasonably practicable to manage the network effectively to keep traffic moving. In meeting the duty, local authorities are required to establish contingency plans for dealing promptly and effectively with unplanned events, such as unforeseen weather conditions, in so far as is reasonably practicable.</p> <p>We are also required to conduct our operations having due regard to the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and Driver Hours Regulations.</p>
1.05	The legislation does not impose an absolute duty, but rather involves a balance between the degree of risk and the steps necessary to eliminate the risk. This legislation informs the best practice identified to highway authorities on winter service operations, which has changed in recent years. Given this duty, the industry has developed a best practice guide to manage the network with the principles set out in the new national code of practice, the latest version of which is the Well Managed Highway Infrastructure 2016 Code of Practice (COP), which provides a broader view of asset management. It is supplemented by Practical Guidance from the National Winter Service Research Group (NWSRG) which was issued in 2020. The COP reflects many years of operational practice and current issues and problems and is regarded as a benchmark by which local authorities will be assessed by both the public and the courts should disputes occur.

1.06	Flintshire County Council liaises with other North Wales highway authorities and the North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agency (NMWTRA) to ensure a consistent approach is adopted when reviewing operations and introducing changes or improvements. The council also liaises closely with NMWTRA during the winter service operational period.
1.07	Under the COP, local authorities must have a policy on winter maintenance services, which should be reviewed on a regular basis. In Flintshire, we have committed to reviewing the policy every two years, the previous policy reviewed in 2021.
1.08	The winter operating period starts in October and continues until April each year and is a year-round process with planning and preparations for each season commencing in the preceding Spring/Summer. For this reason, the response to winter weather is linked to the authority's resilience planning and it is important that the performance of the service is reviewed at the end of each season and that any learning is used to improve the delivery of the service in the future.
1.09	<p>Planning and preparation work over the summer period includes the following operations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - carrying out maintenance work on salt storage facilities - ensuring that salt stocks are replenished - checking and replacing salt bins where required - reviewing arrangements with snow ploughing contractors - recruiting staff for the delivery of the winter service - arranging and delivering training for all staff involved in the winter service - arranging and delivering training to all driving and loading staff and ensuring that they have achieved the appropriate accreditation before the start of the season - ensuring that all gritters and equipment are serviced and calibrated, including vehicle telematics - liaising with neighbouring local authorities and NMWTRA to identify best practice
1.10	<p>Below is a summary of the winter service operations delivered over the 2022-2023 winter period: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of miles/km covered by the gritters: 70,000km / 43,495 miles - Tonnages of salt spread by the gritters: 7,012 tonnes - Tonnages of salt used for salt bins: 510 tonnes - Number of turnouts: 125 (average year is 115 turnouts) - Number of labour hours used in response to the weather: 84,373 hrs
1.11	<p>At the end of each season, a review of the operational service is undertaken by officers from the Streetscene and Transportation portfolio and considers the following key areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compliance with statutory requirements 2. Any changes to standards that should be incorporated into the new policy 3. Any local concerns or complaints with the service that may require a change to operational working practices 4. Any changes in local circumstances that may require changes to policy

	<p>5. Effectiveness of the current supply chain to support the service</p> <p>6. Adequacy of current salt stocks for delivering the service effectively</p> <p>7. Effectiveness of salting car parks and footways</p> <p>8. Effectiveness of communications during a weather event</p>
1.12	<p>The review has concluded that the current operating model is adequate in responding to the risk presented during periods of adverse weather. The service is effective in the deployment of resource, whilst limiting the impact of disruption to the rest of the operational service and road users.</p>
1.13	<p>The following factors have, however, resulted in increased costs for the service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developments to the resources and equipment required during the winter maintenance season • Steadily increasing average numbers of callouts and application of preventative salting due to more frequent and more severe winter weather • Price rises in fuel, labour, and materials (gritting salt).
1.14	<p>The conclusion of the review is that no changes are required to the standards set out in the policy. However, we continue work to improve the timing of communications and the channels for communication both internally, through better use of technology, and externally, through increased access to social media. It is important that the public are aware of and understand the council's approach to delivering its winter maintenance service. It is intended that this will be achieved by issuing a pre-season press statement with all relevant information made available on the council's website.</p>
1.15	<p>The review has highlighted that there is an opportunity to reconsider the structure for winter maintenance decision making, as well as the format for the weather forecast, which is currently based on two weather stations located in Hendre and Brynford. Officers have been exploring the use of route-based forecasting or domain-based forecasting instead of the current approach. Work will be undertaken during 2023-2024 with MetDesk, our current weather forecasting providers, to analyse the results collected over the forthcoming winter season, to determine whether this weather forecasting modelling may offer any savings and can be adopted by Flintshire in the future. It is proposed that a further report will be presented to Cabinet in the summer of 2024 once this work has been completed.</p>
1.16	<p>Adverse weather arrangements (i.e., high winds, heavy rain) are planned in advance of the winter season and have now been included within the Winter Maintenance Operational Handbook, which had been revised and will be distributed to all personnel involved annually and updated as a controlled document throughout the season.</p>
1.17	<p>The decision-making process for carrying out winter maintenance action is carried out by nominated Duty Managers. Five Duty Managers will be rostered throughout the winter period to monitor weather forecast information and decide on appropriate preventative action. This decision will be based largely on predicted road surface temperatures (NOT air temperatures), the amount of moisture on the road and/or the amount of residual salt on the network from previous treatments. All Duty Managers are required to have received advanced weather forecast training and to have undertaken at least six months of continuous shadowing before commencing in the role.</p>

1.18	A minimum of 26 operational staff will be rostered to be on-call throughout the season to respond to adverse weather. There are also on-call highways response teams, if necessary, alongside the wider operational teams in times of prolonged adverse weather, such as high winds or heavy rainfall.
1.19	<p>Normally, on receipt of a severe weather warning (high winds, flooding, snow event, etc.) an operational control room will be established in Alltami. It will be operated by staff from Streetscene & Transportation, who will act as a dedicated point of contact for the Contact Centre staff and coordination of the response. The staff within the operational control room have direct contact with Streetscene area coordinators and supervisors, who will be on-site to investigate complaints, inspect the network and mobilise dedicated gritting vehicles and operational teams under their direct control.</p> <p>It also acts as a single point of contact for the senior leadership team and corporate communications, through which communications will be made.</p>
1.20	If high winds are forecasted, the details of the forecast are examined by the Duty Officer and consideration will be given as to whether or not to close the Flintshire Bridge (A548). The process to follow in the event that the bridge needs to be closed is set out within the updated Winter Maintenance Service Policy 2023-2025.
1.21	<p><u>Allocation of Salt Bins/Sandbags</u></p> <p>Salt bins are provided for residents to self-help in salting the adopted highway in their areas (not for private footways and driveways). Requests for additional salt bins across the county are subject to an assessment scoring matrix and must conform to the policy for the purpose of consistency. Requests for community council funded salt bins will be supported with the installation of green bins.</p> <p>At the start of each winter all salt bins will be filled with salt, the cost of which will be borne by the council. In the event of severe weather, further refills will be carried out as time and resources permit.</p>
1.22	The distribution of sandbags in the event of heavy rainfall and flooding will be applied as described in the Sandbag Policy adopted in September 2017.
1.23	In January 2021, a joint portfolio project was set up in response to Storm Christophe between Streetscene & Transportation and Planning, Environment & Economy and the group has been meeting regularly to prioritise investigations and works for managing flood risk on roads and highways within the county. The purpose of the joint project group is to identify assets and responsibilities of those assets and address any infrastructure issues across the county. This has resulted in infrastructure improvements; new maintenance programmes and response plans being developed in each case. The group oversees the developments and progress of each scheme and programme.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	The winter maintenance service budget is ringfenced and earmarked reserves are reviewed annually to ensure that adequate funding is available throughout the season. The demand on the budget is subject to weather conditions and every effort will be made to contain expenditure within the overall budget. In recent years, the average number of turnouts per season has increased steadily and the running costs of operations, including labour and fleet costs, have also risen. Consequently, earmarked reserves have regularly been used to meet the shortfall in revenue budget.
2.02	Winter maintenance operations on the highway network are carried out by Streetscene staff and resources are supplemented by local agricultural contractors as necessary.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	The winter maintenance service has undertaken various risk assessments on the provision of road surface treatments, which are outlined within the policy.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
4.01	<p>Consultation has taken place with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the Cabinet Member • Operational service teams and stakeholders • Neighbouring local authorities in relation to their Winter Maintenance Operations • North and Mid-Wales Trunk Road Agency (NMWTRA) • Trade Unions

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 - Winter Maintenance Policy

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Highways Act 1980.
6.02	Railways and Transport Act 2003
6.03	Traffic Management Act 2004
6.04	Well-managed Highway Infrastructure (2016) (UKRLG)

6.05	Planning For Winter Service Delivery (2020) (NWSRG)
6.06	Quarmby Report – July 2010
6.07	Welsh Government Trunk Road Maintenance Manual
6.08	Welsh Government Advice Documents
6.09	WLGA Advice Documents

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: Barry Wilkinson, Highway Network Manager Telephone: 01352 704656 E-mail: barry.wilkinson@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	Financial Year (FY): the period of 12 months commencing on 1 April
8.02	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.
8.03	Winter Maintenance: the particular network management requirements during winter are not 'maintenance' in the traditional sense, but specialist operational services responding to adverse weather events

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