

Corporate Plan Performance Update: July to September 2021

This document presents the council's performance against its priorities and governance areas between July to September 2021, including our application of the Sustainable Development principle, the Public Sector Equality Duty, and Socio-Economic Duty.

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Summary position

The measures evaluation for each priority has been determined through the performance management framework that we have in place. The projects evaluation has been determined by the status of our projects.

Housing: Everyone is supported to live in homes that meet their needs

Measures: Good

Projects: Good

Connected Communities: Communities are connected and have access to goods and services locally, online and through good transport links

Measures: Priority for improvement

Projects: Good

Resilient Communities: The council works with people and communities to build independence and resilience

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Good

Environment: Attractive and protected, supporting well-being and economic prosperity

Measures: Good

Projects: Excellent

Young People: A place where younger people will want to live and work and have the skills to do so

Measures: Priority for improvement

Projects: Good

Corporate Health: The council is efficient, well-managed and environmentally sustainable

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Good

A Note on Measuring Performance

In Denbighshire, our default approach to setting performance thresholds is to take the upper-quartile (best performing) from nationally comparable information as the point where performance is considered 'Excellent'. The 'Priority for Improvement' threshold is usually the median. Midway between these two values determines the threshold between 'Acceptable' and 'Good' performance.

If no data is available that we can compare ourselves with (either nationally or by comparable grouping), then we will take a local view on what we feel reasonably determines 'Excellent' and 'Priority for Improvement' performance. This should represent our ambition.

For more information on how we manage performance, view the [Performance Management Guide on our website](#).

Housing: Everyone is supported to live in homes that meet their needs

Measures: Good

Projects: Good

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update

There are only two measures with new data to present in this report. As at the end of September 2021, there were 2,283 people on the Single Route to Housing (SARTH) waiting list, down slightly from 2,297 (April to June). The final report following a review of SARTH is anticipated for the end of this year, which will give further explanation as to why there has been an increase compared to pre-pandemic levels.

Our second SARTH measure considers the number of people housed from the register into either council stock or a Denbighshire Registered Social Landlord property. As at the end of September there were 153 housed, which is an increase of 83 for the previous period.

Denbighshire Community Housing undertakes a Standardised Tenants & Residents (STAR) survey of all council house tenant on a bi-annual basis. Out of the 3,277 surveys sent to council home tenants in October 2020, responses were received from 381 households, which is an 11% response rate. Whilst it was expected that it would be more difficult for tenants to respond as normal during the Covid-19 pandemic, it was felt important to run the survey when it was due to help inform plans for the post pandemic recovery. It has been noted by Welsh Government when comparing landlords' data, that the data supplied by Denbighshire was impacted by the pandemic when many other social landlords submitted pre-Covid-19 data. In response to this, WG have asked all councils and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to re-run the STAR survey again for April 2022. This means we will repeat the survey again later this year. To view the full report and analysis of the survey responses, please refer to the Council Housing Tenants Survey report, which went to [Communities Scrutiny in July](#).

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Project Update

Experiencing Obstacles: Denbigh Extra Care Housing

The Head of Community Support Services recently met with Grŵp Cynefin to discuss the difficulties and delays that have been experienced with the project in recent months. It has now been confirmed that the start date for the care contract will be postponed until January 2022. However, Block C of the Extra Care facility is anticipated to be ready earlier, with the care contract expected to start in December.

Experiencing Obstacles: Ruthin Extra Care Housing

An update is expected from Grŵp Cynefin on the appointment of a contractor for Ruthin Extra Care Housing. During the recent meeting with Grŵp Cynefin, reassurance was given that we would soon start to see issues being addressed and progress being made.

Experiencing Obstacles: Additional Council Homes

The delivery confidence for delivering additional council housing developments has improved as progress has been made on various sites, such as:

- Architects were appointed to develop a design for the conversion of the former Houses in Multiple Occupation at Bath Street in Rhyl into apartments for intermediate rent.
- Planning permission was granted for an amendment to the proposal to construct apartments on land off The Dell in Prestatyn. Tenders received for undertaking the works were scored, and the contract was awarded to RL Davies and Sons Limited.
- Cabinet approved a recommendation to invite tenders from contractors for works to redevelop the former library site in Prestatyn.
- The purchase of a former council house in Rhyl was completed and offers were accepted for the purchase of three former council houses in Rhyl, one in Prestatyn and one in Rhuddlan.

The target of delivering 170 additional council homes will be met, but it will be delayed. By the end of March 2022, it is anticipated that 80 additional council homes will have been

delivered, 73 will be under construction and 17 will be going through the planning or acquisition process.

On Target: Affordable Housing

Delivery of our Corporate Plan target for an additional 260 affordable homes has now been achieved, and indeed exceeded as 364 additional affordable homes have been brought forward since 2017.

Affordable Housing delivery is continuing with the scheme at Plas Deva (Ffordd Talargoch) in Meliden, applications having opened for the intermediate rental properties that are due to be ready in October 2021. The development on Victoria Road in Rhyl is well underway, with the work on the second floor now started and completion of the 18 apartments on track for February to March 2022.

Llys Awelon, Ruthin, which will provide an additional 35 units, has been submitted for technical approval by Welsh Government and has now been included in the Social Housing Grant programme for 2021 to 2022 and 2022 to 2023. It is estimated that the development will require £5.5m of grant funding, but this may change dependent on the tender offers received by Grŵp Cynefin.

In addition to this, one property for Specialist Housing, one dwelling under the Empty Homes scheme, and two 'Homebuys' have been sourced and are currently undergoing Registered Social Landlord (RSL) board approval before the conveyancing can continue. Identifying further properties is still proving difficult due to the exceptionally buoyant property market at the moment, pushing prices up and availability being scarce. The 'race for space' is an effect of the pandemic that has been widely reported, with rural and coastal areas being particularly affected.

On Target: Empty Homes Back into Use

The Empty Homes project has successfully brought 490 empty homes back into use to date. Delivery confidence is high that we will meet the target of 500 homes. The Empty Homes Matching Service continues to seek matches and outcomes, and the pilot scheme is now due for review. Our work is currently adopting a reactive approach due to the challenges and pressures arising from Covid-19 and other resources issues; however, the project has the ability to adopt a proactive approach, which is our ambition for this work.

Annual or biennial measures

2019 to 2021 data

Measure	2019 to 2020	2020 to 2021	Status
The number of people who were on the Complex Disabilities Specialist Housing Needs Register for whom supported housing has been secured – Benchmarked Locally	9	5	Acceptable
The additional supply of council houses provided	10	14	Does not apply Count only
Number of additional homes provided in Denbighshire – Benchmarked Locally	242	435	Excellent
Number of empty properties brought back into use (old definition) – Benchmarked Locally	179	184	Excellent
The number of private sector homes improved in standard and quality due to intervention from the council – Benchmarked Locally	810	415	Good
The additional supply of affordable housing, including social housing, provided during the year – Benchmarked Locally	139	154	Excellent
Percentage of households successfully prevented from homelessness (Section 66 duty) – Benchmarked Nationally	57	52.3	Priority for improvement
Percentage of households successfully relieved from homelessness (Section 73 duty) – Benchmarked Nationally	30	30.7	Priority for improvement

Stakeholder Survey 2018 to 2022

2020 to 2021 data for the following two measures is not expected until the Stakeholder Survey results are finalised, the survey is currently live until October 24th.

Measure	2018 to 2019	Status
The percentage of residents reporting they felt satisfied with the availability of housing in their area – Benchmarked Locally	42	Priority for improvement
The percentage of residents reporting they are satisfied with the standard of housing in their area – Benchmarked Locally	52	Acceptable

Our measure concerning additional Extra Care Homes supported by the council will not be reported until those schemes are completed.

Quarterly or biannual measures

Measure	Quarter 2 2020 to 2021	Quarter 3 2020 to 2021	Quarter 4 2020 to 2021	Quarter 1 2021 to 2022	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Status
Number of people on SARTH waiting list – Benchmarked Locally	1,791	1,937	2,139	2,297	2,283	Priority for improvement
Cumulative number of people housed from the SARTH register	140	237	328	67	153	Does not apply Count only

Well-being and Equality

This priority applies the five ways of working and directly supports Wales' Well-being Goals around **prosperity**, environmental **resilience**, **health**, **equality**, **cohesive communities**, and a **globally responsible** Wales with a **vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language**. Below are some further highlights from the last year of work that we have undertaken in support of the Well-being Goals and the Sustainable Development Principle; but also benefiting those with protected characteristics or who are at a socio-economic disadvantage.

Tenancy Hardship Grant

The Tenancy Hardship Grant, which Denbighshire County Council is administering on behalf of Welsh Government, is a grant to provide financial assistance for people in private rented accommodation who are struggling to pay their rent because of the Covid-19 pandemic. A total of £9.8 million is available to support people in private rented accommodation across Wales.

This grant aims to support those who:

- Have built-up 8 weeks or more of rent arrears between March 2020 and June 2021.
- Have struggled to pay rent or rent arrears due to Covid-19.
- Live in and hold a tenancy for private sector property in Wales.
- Have not been in receipt of housing benefit or housing cost payments through Universal Credit when rent arrears were built-up.
- Have not been able to fully pay rent during the period when they went into arrears because of Covid-19.

This grant, delivered **collaboratively** and in an **integrated** approach with the Welsh Government, will aim to help those who are at a **socio-economic disadvantage** and **prevent** households from becoming homeless or from getting into greater debt.

UK Government's Afghan Relocation Assistance Policy

In September 2021, Denbighshire County Council agreed to extend its role in the UK Government's Afghan Relocation Assistance Policy (ARAP) to provide support for a total

of five refugee families. Temporary accommodation is currently being sourced from the private rented sector, and has already been used to house the one family currently resettled. The number of refugees could be increased to 10 families, dependent on a comprehensive funding commitment from the UK Government Home Office beyond its present one-year timeframe.

This scheme shows Denbighshire County Council working in **collaboration** with the UK Government, **integrating** our approaches to put in place appropriate housing for those affected by the recent events in Afghanistan. These families will be at a **socio-economic disadvantage**, and the scheme will offer them **long-term** safety and support and **prevent** further hardship. This work also supports the protected characteristics of **Race, Religion and Belief**.

Major redevelopment plans for Denbigh asylum

The scheme to redevelop Denbigh's grade II listed North Wales Hospital was approved unanimously by Denbighshire County Council. The project could boost the area's economy by £75m and create 1,200 jobs. It is proposed that as many as 300 homes could be constructed on the site, along with a pub, shop and a new ground for Denbigh Cricket Club.

This scheme will provide **long-term** quality housing for Denbigh and **prevent** further decay to a historically important local asset. Working **collaboratively** with our contractors, and **integrating** with WG aspirations for housing, this significant development will support the local community by **involving** them with the offer of skilled jobs and apprenticeships, as well as helping to develop local supply chains. This will have a specific benefit for the Denbighshire economy and provide opportunities to those who may be of a **socio-economic disadvantage**.

Connected Communities: Communities are connected and have access to goods and services locally, online and through good transport links

Measures: Priority for improvement

Projects: Good

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update

At October 2021 the coverage of superfast broadband (>30mbps) in Denbighshire was at 92.75%; a small increase of 0.12% since July.

As at October 2021, 4.33% of premises had broadband of 10mbps or below. This is a 0.01% decrease since July 2021 (the reason for this is unknown). The Wales figure remained at 2.3%.

48% of transactions were undertaken via the web during July to September 2021, compared to the total number of transactions undertaken using all access channels. This is an 8% decrease on April to June's figure, and is a priority for improvement.

79% of damaged roads and pavements were made safe within target time. Whilst this is an improvement on performance during April to June (67%), performance is still considered to be a priority for improvement.

Corporate Plan Programme Board: Project Update

On Target: Superfast Broadband and Mobile Networks

The council continues to support individuals and businesses struggling with poor connectivity. To date, 138 individuals and businesses have been advised, and 84 of these have found a solution to their issues. We are also continuing to press that Openreach progress the Nantglyn (and surrounding villages) project.

Our Digital Officer is continuing to work with communities to obtain fibre internet. The Welsh Government Gigabit Top-up voucher scheme was offline for nearly 6 months, which has delayed progress. Unfortunately, the website showing eligible premises has now been removed as new data about Openreach's future plans is being analysed. This could result if fewer Denbighshire premises being able to apply for the much needed Welsh

Government top-up voucher. The council is also contacting community councils to promote the uptake of Community Fibre Partnerships and to inform remote areas about the [Copper based telephony switch off in December 2025](#).

On Target: Digital Exclusion

All libraries now have dedicated solo digital spaces. These spaces have been opened up so that members of the public can book them direct without needing to be referred by a provider. The spaces ensure sufficient privacy so that the user could, for example, use them to receive 1:1 digital skills support from a volunteer digital buddy, or access online training and video job interviews without disturbing other library users.

On Target: Infrastructure for Events

Project representatives have attended all six Member Area Groups to communicate the aims, criteria and timelines of the targeted support package fund. Letters explaining the scheme were sent to all City, Town and Community Councils. Applications for the fund closed on September 30, 2021, and the Community Development Team are currently preparing offer letters and associated documentation to all successful applicants.

Work has commenced on branding the vehicle and trailer that will support the mobile equipment hire scheme. All hire equipment is now stored at Rhyl Pavilion Theatre, with some larger equipment (e.g. barriers) stored at the Events Arena.

Interviews with promoters is expected to start from September 2021 in readiness for the Summer 2022 season.

Project Brief: Travel to Work, Education and Services

The Corporate Plan Programme Board has asked for a business case to develop a 'Sustainable Transport Plan'. The plan will support the carbon reduction agenda.

Annual or biennial measures

2019 to 2021 data

Measure	2019 to 2020	2020 to 2021	Status
The percentage of principle A roads that are in overall poor condition – Benchmarked Nationally	3.6	3.5	Acceptable
The percentage of non-principal/classified B roads that are in overall poor condition – Benchmarked Nationally	5.3	5	Priority for improvement
The percentage of non-principal/classified C roads that are in overall poor condition – Benchmarked Nationally	8.2	7.6	Good
The percentage of adults (aged 16 or over) who have used the internet within the last 3 months (Conwy and Denbighshire) – Benchmarked Locally	87.7	89.8	Acceptable

Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation 2014 to 2019

Measure	2014	2019	Status
Percentage of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Denbighshire in the 10% most deprived in Wales in terms of Access to Services (Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation - WIMD)	14	14	Does not apply Count only

Quarterly or Biannual Measures

Measure	Quarter 2 2020 to 2021	Quarter 3 2020 to 2021	Quarter 4 2020 to 2021	Quarter 1 2021 to 2022	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Status
The percentage of Superfast	91.83	91.87	92.23	92.63	92.75	Priority for improvement

Measure	Quarter 2 2020 to 2021	Quarter 3 2020 to 2021	Quarter 4 2020 to 2021	Quarter 1 2021 to 2022	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Status
Coverage in Denbighshire (>30 Mbps) – Benchmarked Locally						
The percentage of premises with Broadband of 10 Mbps or below – Benchmarked Locally	4.76	4.71	4.45	4.34	4.33	Acceptable
The percentage of transactions undertaken via the web, compared to the total number of transactions undertaken using all access channels	48	50	50	56	48	Priority for improvement
The percentage of mobile 4G road signal (all operators) – Benchmarked Locally	No data	49.8	No data	49.2	Data pending	Priority for improvement

Measure	Quarter 2 2020 to 2021	Quarter 3 2020 to 2021	Quarter 4 2020 to 2021	Quarter 1 2021 to 2022	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Status
Percentage of damaged roads and pavements made safe within target time (CAT1 - Category 1 defects dealt within timescale) – Benchmarked Locally	No data due to Covid-19	No data due to Covid-19	87	67	79	Priority for improvement

Well-being and Equality

This priority applies the five ways of working and directly supports Wales' Well-being Goals around **prosperity**, environmental **resilience**, **health**, **equality**, **cohesiveness**, **global responsibility**, and a **vibrant culture with a thriving Welsh language**. Below are some further highlights from the last three months that we have undertaken in support of the Well-being Goals and the Sustainable Development Principle; but also benefiting those with protected characteristics or who are at a socio-economic disadvantage.

Llannerch Bridge

Workshops have been held with consultants, and the council has met with other partners, such as Natural Resources Wales, to look at potential options for replacing the bridge. Our public engagement exercise, using online media, sought views on replacing the bridge. We also reached out to residents throughout September and October in both Trefnant and Tremeirchion to gather their views on the replacement structure. The next step will be for Cabinet to discuss the potential replacement of the bridge in November, where the headlines from the initial assessment of the responses to our engagement will be presented.

Any project to replace the bridge will apply the five ways of working under the sustainable development principle, looking for a **long-term** solution that **prevents** further harm, **integrating** and **collaborating** with stakeholders and partners to seek a solution, whilst of course **involving** local residents in the development of an option for any replacement structure. Such a project would also benefit local residents at a **socio-economic disadvantage**.

Digital exclusion: online connectivity in a residential care home

The infrastructure at Cysgod y Gaer has been updated to superfast broadband with download speeds of 65mg, allowing for greater use of smart devices for the residents at the home to stay in touch with loved ones and friends. IPads, Alexas and Portal devices are now being widely used by residents, and staff have been trained to offer support with the new technology. This project supports the protected characteristic of **Age**, demonstrating how we have supported the well-being of older people by helping them connect with others at an incredibly isolating time.

The digital exclusion project applies the five ways of working under the sustainable development principle, looking to **long-term** solutions that **prevent** isolation, exclusion and data poverty, by **integrating** and **collaborating** with partners, whilst **involving** users.

1Bws

Working in partnership with the six North Wales authorities, bus operators and Transport for Wales, the council is pleased to support the 1Bws ticket for travel on busses across North Wales, which was launched in Rhyl in August. An adult ticket will cost £5.70, a child (or young person with a My Travel Pass) will pay £3.70, as will holders of English and Scottish concessionary bus passes. A family ticket is £12. The initiative will hopefully encourage increased bus use in the region, thereby also helping protect our environment.

This is a great **collaborative** project that will benefit those at a **socio-economic disadvantage**, removing barriers that **prevent** people from travelling. It is a good example of **long-term** thinking, **integrating** ambitions for the region, and has also come about as a result of listening to feedback from customers, who said bus tickets were confusing. It is an example of **involving** customers in shaping services.

Resilient Communities: The council works with people and communities to build independence and resilience

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Good

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update

Domestic Crime in Denbighshire increased in the first six months of 2021 to 2022. As a whole, North Wales has seen a 14.2% increase in Domestic Crime so far this year.

There has been an increase of 23.4% in the cumulative number of repeat victims of domestic violence this year, compared to the same time last year. Figures have increased from 269 to 332 victims. As a whole, North Wales has seen a 2.5% decrease in repeat victims of domestic violence from July to September 2021.

The number of repeat offenders of Domestic Abuse in the first six months of 2021 to 2022 has decreased significantly in Denbighshire. Figures have reduced from 50 offenders this time last year to 35 offenders, a 30% decrease. The overall picture for North Wales from July to September 2021 shows repeat offenders of Domestic Abuse decreased by 38%.

Within the national Dewis Cymru website the number of resources for Denbighshire stands at 620 at the end of September. This is an increase of 14% on the figures we saw for the same period the previous year. It is possible that the Covid-19 pandemic has led people and service providers to use this platform more regularly. At the end of September 2021, there were 10,781 resources for Wales on Dewis Cymru, and 2,752 for North Wales.

The number of carer assessments that took place between July and September is 221.

This is 45% decrease on the same period last year (reduced by 99 assessments).

Support for carers has continued and community support has been available regardless of whether carers have received an assessment.

Data for the average length of time adults (aged 65 years or over) are supported in residential care homes has reduced slightly from to 1,050 days for the period covering July to September. However, compared to the same period last year, where there were 1,028 assessments, the figure has increased by 2.2%. Although our figures remain high in

relation to the Wales average (800), it is understood that Denbighshire has a higher average age population. We are still within our original target of 1,200 days.

Corporate Plan Programme Board: Project Update

Experiencing Obstacles: Involvement in shaping and improving services

During this period, we launched our year 2 survey, which ran until September 30, 2021. Findings will be shared before the end of the year. Two workshops were held in September, with a third scheduled for early October with the Youth Council. Talks are ongoing to secure a replacement online engagement solution beyond the lifespan of the project. Although the change request for this has been agreed with the Corporate Plan Programme Board, discussions with ICT indicate that a replacement solution may need to be sourced externally. The current avenue being explored is a 'speculative interest' notice on Sell2Wales that will invite companies to demonstrate solutions.

Experiencing Obstacles: Supporting Carers

The Supporting Carers Project Team is continuing to address challenges and mitigate any risks arising from Covid-19. Best practice ideas and plans for resuming face-to-face support is underway, although there is a consensus from members that they don't want to lose online services and they will plan to continue offering choice; there has been big benefit seen using online platforms reaching out to more carers.

A Carers Survey has recently been available through the council's County Conversation Engagement Portal, which is now closed with the results being analysed.

The Welsh Government has informed the Local Authority of the award of a grant to provide non-traditional respite for carers; this will enable local authorities to meet the anticipated spike in demand for respite services caused by the impact of the pandemic on the mental and physical health of carers. This is part of their commitment in the new National Carers Strategy to prioritise increased demand for day centres and more traditional sitting service and replacement care post-Covid-19. Carers Trust Wales has been commissioned to work with Bangor and Swansea Universities to draft a roadmap to respite that can be used to inform how this money is spent.

76 Young Carers Identity Card have been issued in Denbighshire and being used as an accepted form of identity, for example with vaccinations at college and universities. The next steps are to develop an App and raise awareness through social media; Wrexham, Conwy and Denbighshire (WCD) Young Carers have funding for an under 8 service and now have 8 members in Denbighshire.

On Target: Reduce Domestic Abuse

The council's domestic abuse policy has been launched and council staff are referring fathers to the Caring Dad's sessions as part of the early intervention work. In terms of the perpetrator workstream, early intervention work requires more development with the Domestic Abuse Safety Unit (DASU) for an autumn or winter training provision. Our final workstreams on volunteering and community benefits have also started.

Level 2 rollout of Ask and Act training sessions to frontline staff is organised for October to March 2022. A total of 22 sessions are organised. Hafan Cymru will be targeting schools that have not received previous training on domestic abuse under the Sbectrum initiative.

On Target: Working towards becoming a Dementia friendly council

The Dementia Friendly Council Project Team secured recognition from the Alzheimer's Society for working towards becoming a Dementia friendly organisation. Work is ongoing to raise awareness of Dementia within the Council. This project is now noted as 'business as usual' and will no longer be reported within our quarterly performance management reports.

On Target: County-wide Community Development

The Community Development Team's newly created Customer Relationship Management system has now gone live and it is hoped will be a useful asset in tracking and recording all enquiries received by the team for support. The Team has been involved in the promotion and scoring of Event Infrastructure Funds and are currently preparing offer letters and associated documentation to all successful applicants. Community Development Officers have also recently attended grant panels for the Education Endowment Fund, and Clocaenog and Gwynt y Môr windfarm funds. The Team are still awaiting outcomes of the shortlisted UK Community Renewal Fund Applications, but in the meantime have appointed a Compliance and Monitoring Officer for the fund. The

Community Development Team has also been in contact with the Foodbank Network to inform them of changes to Universal Credit and to assess the situation with regards to the drop-in foodbank donations. The Team will launch this year's round of Open Spaces Commuted Sums in November with £128k available.

Annual or biennial measures

2020 to 2021 data for the following measures is not expected until the carers' and stakeholder surveys are run in late-summer and autumn respectively.

Measure	2018 to 2019	Status
The percentage of people reporting they have received the right information or advice when they needed it – Benchmarked Locally	88	Acceptable
The percentage of carers reporting they feel supported to continue in their caring role – Benchmarked Locally	55	Priority for improvement
The percentage of people reporting that they know who to contact about their care and support – Benchmarked Locally	84	Acceptable
The percentage of people who agree "my local area is a place where people will pull together to improve the local area" – Benchmarked Locally	59	Acceptable
The percentage of people who feel able to influence decisions affecting their local area – Benchmarked Locally	27	Priority for improvement

Quarterly or biannual measures

Measure	Quarter 2 2020 to 2021	Quarter 3 2020 to 2021	Quarter 4 2020 to 2021	Quarter 1 2021 to 2022	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Status
The cumulative (year to date) number of repeat victims of Domestic Abuse including non-crime occurrences (3 or more in 12 months, measured as year to date)	269	371	555	148	332	Does not apply. Count only
The cumulative (year to date) number of repeat offenders of Domestic Abuse (3 or more in 12 months)	50	70	108	18	35	Does not apply. Count only
The number of live resources on the Dewis Cymru Platform – Benchmarked Locally	543	562	623	565	620	Excellent
The number of assessments of need for support for carers undertaken during the year	320	404	878	114	221	Does not apply. Count only

Measure	Quarter 2 2020 to 2021	Quarter 3 2020 to 2021	Quarter 4 2020 to 2021	Quarter 1 2021 to 2022	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Status
The average length of time (measured in days) adults (aged 65 or over) are supported in residential care homes – Benchmarked Nationally	1,028	1,046	1,053	1,053	1,050	Priority for improvement

Well-being and Equality

This priority applies the five ways of working and directly supports Wales' Well-being Goals around **prosperity, health, equality, cohesiveness, global responsibility**, and a **vibrant culture with a thriving Welsh language**. Below are some further highlights from July to September that we have undertaken in support of the Well-being Goals and the Sustainable Development Principle, and benefiting those with protected characteristics or who are at a socio-economic disadvantage.

Time to Change, Wales

Back in May we became a Time to Change Wales Pledged Employer. This pledge is a public commitment to changing the way we think and act about mental health at every level of this organisation. We are committed to ending the stigma around mental health and have now launched our new mandatory Mental Health Awareness e-learning module. We have also arranged Mental Health Awareness training for Managers. All managers and supervisors should attend this training. A great deal of supportive information has been made available on our dedicated [Employee Mental Health & Well-being webpages](#).

This work supports the protected characteristic of **Disability** and it is fully accessible to all personnel. **Integrating** with BCUHB and Public Health objectives, it is an excellent

example of **collaboration** that seeks to immerse and **involve** personnel who have experienced mental health issues, offering them help and support to for their **long-term** well-being and **prevent** harm.

Awareness of Domestic Abuse

A new domestic abuse policy has been created by the Council and is available [on our website](#). The council has taken steps to promote the policy and to further support education about domestic abuse. An estimated 90% of children whose parents are abused witness that abuse. The effects are traumatic and long-lasting. When a child witnesses domestic abuse, this is child abuse. Between 40% and 70% of these children are also direct victims of the abuse that is happening at home Information on the Live Fear Free campaign may be found at www.gov.wales/live-fear-free.

The policy will benefit the protected characteristics of **Sex** and **Age**, as well as all people who are living with domestic abuse and experiencing the effects of this abuse. The creation of this policy is a contribution to a much bigger **collaborative, long-term** agenda, where we have **integrated** our objectives with partners, such as North Wales Police, to defending the rights of vulnerable people no matter their socio-economic background and seek to **prevent** any harm coming to anyone.

Respite for unpaid carers

Two flats have been renovated in Corwen and Ruthin as part of the council's commitment to support unpaid carers. These will offer respite and short breaks to unpaid carers. Both properties feature modern facilities and will allow carers and / or those they care for to have a break. Both flats have easy access and adaptations to make them disabled friendly and have sleep in facilities if overnight support is needed. This development builds on the successful pilot in Ruthin, where unpaid carers have been able to benefit from breaks within the Llys Awelon Extra Care Scheme, in partnership with North East Wales Carers Information Service (NEWCIS).

This work will directly benefit the protected characteristics of **Age, Disability, Sex, Marriage and Civil Partnership** (particularly in supporting unpaid carers looking after family members, spouse, partner etc.), and those at a **socio-economic disadvantage**. This work, delivered in partnership with our homes, shows good **integration** for

recruitment, **collaborative** working and **long-term** thinking. **Involving** individuals in an assessment of their situation is vitally important, as it gives them more control over accessing the right support packages when they need them most, and respite provision such as this is important for maintaining and **preventing** harm to the well-being of the carer and the person they are caring for.

Denbighshire Learning Disability Supported Living Schemes

At a Cabinet meeting in September, approval was given to issue temporary extensions to 35 Learning Disability Supported Living Scheme contracts for a maximum period to March 31, 2023. Additional approval was given for the process of running mini tenders for 41 contracts under the North Wales Regional Framework for Supported Living for this provision.

Approval means that we can continue to **involve** and support people with protected characteristics, such as **Disability, Age**, or those at a **socio-economic disadvantage**, in the level of support required to help them live independently, **preventing** any harm in the short-term. However, this decision informs plans for future service delivery in the **long-term**, and demonstrates our commitment to working **collaboratively** and in an **integrated** way within the North Wales Regional Framework.

Foster Care

Denbighshire has joined 'Foster Wales' in a bid to combine national expertise and increase the number and diversity of foster carers available, to keep up with the numbers of children who need care and support. This benefits the protected characteristic of **Age, Disability**, and **socio-economic disadvantage**.

Working **collaboratively** in this way, with an **integrated** approach to the well-being of children, will enable us to **prevent** harm to young people and have more choice when matching a child, finding the right fostering family to meet their mutual **long-term** needs. To find out more about fostering, click on the link here for [Foster Wales](#).

Environment: Attractive and protected, supporting well-being and economic prosperity

Measures: Good

Projects: Excellent

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update

Our measures framework for this priority is entirely concerned with annual data. Three measures are derived from our Stakeholder Survey, which is next due in the autumn, 2021.

New annual data has been published based on the Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor (STEAM). This reveals that the total economic impact of tourism in Denbighshire increased from £490.35m in 2017 to £552.35m in 2019. As predicted, however, this has now seen a 61% reduction to £213m in 2020. Nonetheless, compared to other authorities, Denbighshire's economy has performed well given the circumstances.

Corporate Plan Programme Board: Project Update

Experiencing Obstacles: Climate and Ecological Change

Denbighshire County Council has been awarded a Carbon Literate Organisation Bronze Award as part of its drive towards becoming carbon neutral. The Council becomes one of just 52 carbon literate organisations in the UK and Ireland and is the first Local Authority in Wales to do so. The Carbon Literacy Project is a unique training scheme to support organisations and individual employees in understanding the carbon impacts of their everyday actions and help them make informed choices to address climate change and reduce carbon emissions.

At present, the in-year delivery confidence for our programme is reported as experiencing obstacles. Moving projects from concept and development phases into delivery phase has taken longer than expected due to staff capacity, resulting in sign-off by the Strategic Investment Group for 2021 to 2022 capital projects being secured later than anticipated. This has compressed delivery time and will cause additional risk to projects, particularly in the Buildings and Fleet Workstreams. That said, it is still expected that there is enough

time before March 2022 to complete most of the activity intended and benefits being realised fully from the spring and summer of next year.

The 2030 delivery confidence is reported as compromised, largely due to the council being behind the pace needed to reduce carbon and increase carbon sequestration at the forecasted annual rate required to reach the Net Carbon Zero Council target. The Net Carbon Zero pathway has been adjusted to do more on the carbon emission reduction side and less on the carbon sequestration side. Achieving less this financial year will mean more will need to be achieved in future years. The Ecologically Positive Council by 2030 goal remains on track at this stage.

On Target: Tree Planting

Project planning and procurement for the 2021 to 2022 planting season is continuing with the actual planting being undertaken between December 2021 and March 2022.

On Target: East Rhyl Coastal Defence

Promenade work continues to be progressed to plan. Financial spend remains on target with 83.4% of the estimated outturn costs now spent.

On Target: Improving Biodiversity

As part of the Council's ongoing commitment to enhancing biodiversity across the county, nearly 60 sites, including highway verges, footpath edges, cycle-ways and amenity grasslands, are being managed to create wildflower meadows. These sites, along with the 11 roadside nature reserves, equate to about 30 football pitches worth of Denbighshire grassland managed as native wildflower meadows. As well as protecting wildflowers, the meadows are also supporting the welfare of native insects to the Denbighshire area. Hornet Hoverflies have been found at wildflower meadow sites in Rhuddlan and Prestatyn recently, which first came to Britain in the 1940s. They can be seen from May till October and despite looking like a stinging hornet, they are actually harmless.

On Target: Nature Corridor

The summer has been very active with several events and many volunteer sessions being run. Attention was placed on several sites, including Crescent Road allotment where much

progress was made on transforming the site into an urban green site and getting the community involved in doing so, as well as our usual sites of Coed y Morfa and Glan Morfa. We have also been running Nordic walks and craft sessions across the project area, getting those with limited mobility out and active and socialising. Several events have been held, including marine litter awareness and an allotment end of harvest celebration event, to bring people together and to draw attention to issues. Engagement with schools has been maintained with a variety of sessions planned for the coming months, including educational trips to the beach, environmental art and tree planting. As the project moves further into its final year, many of the actions are nearing completion, with the focus now on the final winter season of tree planting, habitat improvements and school ground improvement projects, as well as the creation of any material such as leaflets, learning resources, etc. Focus is also being placed on the continuity of the project through other avenues such as other funded projects and community groups.

On Target: Moorland Management

As restrictions have lifted, it has been possible for officers to become more familiar with the area that the project is concerned with, meeting with landowners and farmers. The wildfire risk assessment has also progressed and been applied to a number of upland locations. The plan for phase 2 of the restoration works of the 2018 wildfire damage on Llantysilio Mountain has now been developed and agreed with Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and funding secured. The plan will now be implemented during the autumn and winter period with procurement for works in October. A moorland condition survey will be undertaken by contractors in 2022.

On Target: Living Assets

Site meetings have been held with colleagues to discuss tree planting plans associated with the Climate Change and Ecological Emergency. Discussions with colleagues on a more strategic approach to tree management will continue in order to make this more efficient and better for the trees. We are now planning to celebrate 'Living Assets' during National Tree Week (November 27 to December 5). We are continuing to develop the council's new Tree and Woodland Strategy.

At Risk: Energy Efficient Council Homes

Delivery confidence remains at risk due to the impact of Covid-19, but we have nonetheless seen a great many improvements to properties during the last year, not least through the delivery of air source heat pumps (ASHP). We are now aiming to install a further 150 during 2022 to 2023, which will be an upgrade to the majority of the housing stock. Meanwhile, progress continues on our 2021 to 2022 capital works. In September Cabinet approved the award of the recently tendered external enveloping framework to six contractors, and to tender the first two lots from the framework by way of mini competition.

Annual or biennial measures

2019 to 2021 data

Measure	2019 to 2020	2020 to 2021	Status
Total carbon tonnage emitted through staff commuting – Benchmarked Locally	1,848	1,719	Good
Total carbon tonnage emitted through business travel – Benchmarked Locally	550	126	Excellent
Total carbon tonnage emitted through supply chains – Benchmarked Locally	22,710	22,206	Good
Percentage of council owned and operated land in the highest categories of species richness – Benchmarked Locally	37.5	38.1	Acceptable
STEAM - Total Economic Impact of Tourism (£ million) – Benchmarked Locally	552.35	213.00	Priority for improvement
The percentage of existing and acquired council housing stock (1st April 2017 baseline) achieving an EPC (Energy) rating of C or above – Benchmarked Locally	40	46	Priority for improvement
The annual number of trees planted to increase canopy cover in Rhyl and Denbigh – Benchmarked Locally	4300	4400	Excellent

Stakeholder Survey 2018

2020 to 2021 data for the following three measures is not expected until the Stakeholder Survey is run in the autumn, 2021.

Measure	2018 to 2019	Status
How satisfied are people with their local open spaces? – Countryside – Benchmarked Locally	87	Excellent
How satisfied are people with their local open spaces? – Beaches – Benchmarked Locally	70	Good
How satisfied are people with their local open spaces? – Parks – Benchmarked Locally	64	Good

Our measure around the number of properties with a reduced risk of flooding (1,000s) will not be reported until the completion of identified flood schemes, which started in 2020.

Quarterly or biannual measures

Our measure on the percentage of all new build council housing achieving an EPC (Energy) rating of A will not be reported until the completion of new builds in 2021.

Well-being and Equality

This priority applies the five ways of working and directly supports Wales' Well-being Goals around environmental **resilience, prosperity, health, equality, cohesiveness, global responsibility**, and a **vibrant culture with a thriving Welsh language**. Below are some further highlights from the last year of work that we have undertaken in support of the Well-being Goals and the Sustainable Development Principle; but also benefiting those with protected characteristics or who are at a socio-economic disadvantage.

Botanical Gardens

A range of measures to stop anti-social behaviour at Rhyl's Botanical Gardens have been found to have had a successful impact, including the commissioning of a security company on a trial basis to patrol the park and lock the gates each evening, and the installation of nine additional CCTV cameras in the park. Feedback provided at a meeting involving the council, The Friends of the Botanical Gardens group, North Wales Police, Lead Members, Local Members, and the Vale of Clwyd MP revealed that the measures implemented had made a positive contribution in reducing anti-social behaviour at the grounds. In addition to the current measures Denbighshire Youth Services have also carried out regular patrols of

the park to engage with local youths and highlight the importance of respecting the park as a local facility for the benefit of all.

Involving local people in this way and working **collaboratively** and in an **integrated** way has **prevented** a worsening situation at the gardens, whilst hopefully working towards a **long-term** solution. Engagement will be carried out with local schools to ensure the message is delivered that anti-social behaviour in the park will not be tolerated and the park is a facility to be enjoyed by the whole community. This benefits the protected characteristic of **Age** and **socio-economic disadvantage**.

Public Space Protection Order

In August the council launched a Public Space Protection Order to ensure dog owners control their pets whilst using county public areas, including sports pitches. There are also restrictions on Rhyl and Prestatyn beaches during May to September.

The order has been introduced through the **involvement** of residents, who have raised a number of complaints regarding anti-social behaviour from dog owners who don't control their pets properly in public places. In the interests of public safety, the order will help **prevent** anyone coming to harm and allow residents to benefit from the enjoyment of our public spaces safely in the **long-term**.

Supporting Recovery

Denbighshire County Council is committed to working towards building resilient communities and supporting thriving economies to provide a good quality of life for residents. In anticipation of a busy summer, the council worked to manage increased visitor numbers, providing additional car parking spaces at Moel Famau and at the Horseshoe Falls, deploying additional rangers at beauty spots, and ensuring street cleaning provision and waste management operations were ready for increased footfall at tourist hotspots (which included a deep clean of Rhyl).

Work such as this hopefully encourages visitors to see our county as a beautiful place to return to, as well as ensuring local communities to feel more positive about their environment, also encouraging their **involvement** and ownership to **prevent** harm to our assets. It will hopefully bring **long-term** benefits to our environment and the economy, including to those at a **socio-economic disadvantage**.

Coastal Defence

During July to August the council invited residents, businesses and visitors to have their say on Rhyl's coastal defences, specifically the central area between Drift Park and Splash Point. The promenade here is an important and busy part of Rhyl's identity and economy, but options are likely to be limited owing to what is physically needed to protect the town. Options include scour protection and concrete repairs to the existing sea wall, a concrete revetment to absorb energy from the waves and to provide access to the beach, a new flood defence wall and raising the height of the promenade, and widening the promenade behind the Rhyl Central car park.

Involving people at this important early stage as we develop our bid for funding will help us determine a **long-term** solution that will be to the satisfaction of local residents, whilst meeting the increasing threat posed by climate-change and **prevent** any damage to homes or businesses. Ensuring the promenade remains accessible to all is also important from the perspective of **Age** and **Disability**.

Green Open Space

The former multi use games area (MUGA) at Crescent Road, Rhyl, has been transformed into a functional and attractive green open space on a busy street in West Rhyl. During a twelve-month period, contractors, Countryside Services and Keep Wales Tidy staff worked together to create the green space. Weekly sessions have been run at the site to improve communal areas, tend to the newly planted trees and wildflowers, and support local residents and community groups in their first growing season.

Community groups involved in the project have been encouraged by council staff and through word of mouth. There are a wide range of age groups and backgrounds involved through these groups, including a mixture of residents, Syrian families, and attendees of Youth Support Service, North Wales Training and Youth Justice. Welsh Government provided funding through their 'Transforming Towns, Green Infrastructure' project and their 'Well Connected and Opportunities for All' project to help transform the site.

This is a fantastic **collaborative** project that has **integrated** the ambitions of partners and, through **involvement**, helped the community come together cohesively, hopefully for the **long-term**, despite **Age, Religion and Belief**. It also **prevents** anti-social behaviour,

which was previously a problem on the site. If you are interested in renting a plot here or at any of our other sites please [visit our website](#).

Reducing School Emissions

Ysgol Dinas Bran, at Llangollen, is leading the way for Denbighshire with a green energy project that will help reduce the school's carbon footprint, installing a 150Kw array of solar panels on the school roof. Other elements of the work include heating control upgrades and LED lighting. The whole project is expected to reduce the school's carbon emissions by 73 tonnes per year. The new Solar Panels went live in August and heating control and LED lighting will all be complete by Christmas.

This project applies all aspects of the sustainable development principle, being a **collaborative** project that **integrates** our shared ambition for a carbon neutral society and will **prevent** harm to our environment in the **long-term**, as well as bring economic savings for the school. It is pleasing that this is one of the early carbon change projects to be delivered as schools were particularly vocal in their support of the environment when developing our Corporate Plan, and it shows how they have been **involved** and listened to.

Green Taxi

The Welsh Government has set a target of de-carbonising Wales' taxi fleet entirely by 2028, and Denbighshire County Council is one of a select few of local authorities in Wales taking part in the pilot. It will operate a try before you buy initiative, allowing hackney licensed taxi drivers to try the vehicle free of charge for 30 days, including free electric charging at specific locations in Denbighshire, vehicle licensing, breakdown cover and insurance. Denbighshire has four wheelchair-accessible Nissan Dynamo E-NV200 taxis to use as part of the pilot. The associated charging infrastructure will also be installed, consisting of four 50kw rapid chargers (two being located in Rhyl and two in Prestatyn).

The council is also developing other electric vehicle initiatives, including expanding our electric vehicle charging infrastructure to enable us to operate fewer diesel vehicles and increase the number of low emission fleet vehicles. Work will include installing electric vehicle charging infrastructure for the public to use to charge their electric vehicles in eight council owned public car parks.

Working **collaboratively** with the Welsh Government, **integrating** with their ambition for Wales, and **involving** taxi operators in this pilot will help us to work towards becoming a net carbon zero society in the **long-term**, **preventing** further harm to the environment. Accessible taxis will also benefit those with the protected characteristics of **Age** and **Disability**.

Young People: A place where younger people will want to live and work and have the skills to do so

Measures: Priority for improvement

Projects: Good

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update

As outlined in the previous report, Welsh Government's curriculum reforms and the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic has left us with very few measures against which we can report within this priority. During the last few months of the Summer Term and the early part of the Autumn Term, attendance continued to be adversely affected as class cohorts self-isolated or schools were made to close; and attainment data of course is no longer comparable, being based on teacher assessment and not examination results. This poses a real challenge to the council in understanding how our schools are performing, but we will continue to work with our School Improvement partners in GwE to ensure that the very best outcomes are being achieved by our pupils. A joint report by GwE and the Interim Head of Education was taken to [Performance Scrutiny in June](#) on how our regional consortium and the Local Authority are supporting schools in the implementation of the new curriculum for Wales.

Data for 2018-19 academic year has just been released for the Child Measurement Programme for Wales, revealing a slight improvement in the previously declining trend for the healthy weight of Denbighshire's 4-5 year olds. Denbighshire now ranks 13th in Wales (as opposed to 2nd worst the year before), now just 0.5% below the Wales median with 71.8%. 286 (28.2%) children were measured as overweight or obese in 2018-19 (down from 343 for 2017-18).

The only other measure with new data in this report relates to the 18 to 24 claimant count. In line with national trends, data for July to September reveal that Denbighshire's claimant count has fallen again from 10% to 7.7%. We remain behind the Wales average, which is now at 6.1%, but the gap (1.6%, down from 3%) has markedly narrowed. Prior to the pandemic, Denbighshire was 2% behind the Wales average. The UK claimant count also remains above the Welsh average, now at 6.5%.

Corporate Plan Programme Board: Project Update

Experiencing Obstacles: Modernising Education

Positive progress has been made with the Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn project over the last couple of months, with Mott MacDonald providing support to progress the project to the procurement stage, utilising the North Wales Construction Framework. Options are also being reviewed for the proposed land swap for Ysgol Pendref; and with the commissioning forms approved for Ysgol Bryn Collen and Ysgol Gwernant, the council's Design and Construction Team are reviewing internal capacity to progress the project.

A number of closure reports for Band A are being prepared for submission to Welsh Government.

Experiencing Obstacles: Childcare Settings

The Modernising Education Programme also continues to progress a number of small projects through the Child Care Capital Grant. Construction of the Oaktree extension will be commencing shortly, whilst the Ysgol Twm o'r Nant project will progress to the procurement stage. The project at Ysgol Dewi Sant has been delayed to resolve site options due to drainage limitations.

On Target: Welsh Language Centre

All four rooms within the new centre were in use during the summer term, occupied by Cylch Meithrin Llanelwy, Ysgol Glan Clwyd, Mudiad Meithrin and Bangor University. It is expected that usage will increase from September with latecomer provision due to start.

Experiencing Obstacles: School Nutrition Project

For year 2 of the project, 6 schools and 12 members of staff were recruited. The Level 2 Community Food and Nutrition Skills Course, delivered on-line, ran from January to April. The Come and Cook 'bolt-on' date and mode of delivery is yet to be confirmed in line with Welsh Government guidelines, but it is expected to be during the autumn term. The aim was to recruit 10 schools, but 6 is a great engagement given the current situation in schools.

Recruitment for year 3 schools will commence from September. Engagement will depend on the impact of the pandemic, especially as the new term begins. We have scheduled training for the autumn and spring to allow for this.

At Risk: The Employee Training Grant

Formerly the Young Person Employment Bursary, the application criteria has been reviewed to support more people and businesses in the county during the Covid-19 recovery period. Uptake continues to be slow, but the project has asked if Working Denbighshire can assist with its marketing. In order to be eligible you must be living in Denbighshire, earning below the county median salary (£28,199), be in employment (minimum 16 hours), and can clearly demonstrate availability of suitable positions with a Denbighshire based company. Funding of between £250 and £2,000 per person can be awarded for training, development, or accessing mentoring to allow individuals to progress within their current workplace, or with a new employer. Those who have received the grant have seen their wages increase on average by 24 per cent per annum. Information on the bursary is available on [our website](#).

Closed: Pupil Attitude to Self and School (PASS)

We have reached the end of our four-year pilot of the PASS Survey, and have in this period retendered for a new contract whereby we hope to continue to support schools with this important resource. The final award of the contract is still under consideration.

On Target: Work Start

Demand for the service continues to rise. To date the service has allocated 87 placements – 66 paid and 21 unpaid. A total of 56 placements have been completed or are currently active, demonstrating a 64% uptake. This is lower than pre-Covid-19 performance. The service is therefore looking to promote their offer more through the council's communication channels and social media platforms. The Work Start Scheme is also working closely with Care and Waste Recycling teams to develop and provide key recruitment initiatives to support pressures in these services. At present funding for the Scheme ends in March and options are being explored for its continuance.

On Target: Working Denbighshire Ready for Work

It has been difficult to progress this work under Covid-19 conditions, but project activities have resumed now that the new academic year has commenced. Secondary head teachers have agreed timescales for future events, looking now to the start of next term between January and March. This timeframe aligns with the year 9 GCSE options period and will result in greater engagement and participation. A questionnaire and attendance form has been distributed to schools to help inform and plan the virtual events. A detailed action plan for the delivery of the events has also been developed, including the launching of a new virtual platform.

On Target: Volunteering

Following the adoption of the new volunteering policy and the launch of the 'One Stop Shop' webpage, the council continues to promote Covid-19 volunteering opportunities. As restrictions are easing, we will be encouraging services to think more about the volunteering opportunities that they can provide and encourage them to advertise. We hope to recruit service representatives to the Internal Volunteers Network where gaps have been identified.

Annual or Biennial Measures

2020 to 2022 data

Measure	2019 to 2020	2020 to 2021	Status
Percentage of pupil attendance in primary schools – Benchmarked Nationally	94.9	No data due to Covid-19	Excellent
Percentage of pupil attendance in secondary schools – Benchmarked Nationally	93.4	No data due to Covid-19	Priority for improvement
The percentage of children aged 4-5 years who are a healthy weight or underweight (reported one year in arrears) – Benchmarked Nationally	71.8	Data pending	Priority for improvement

Measure	2019 to 2020	2020 to 2021	Status
Local Authority Points Score Average - KS4 Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate Indicator – Benchmarked Nationally	33	No data due to Covid-19	Excellent
The percentage of children achieving 5 GSCEs A*-C (Level 2, Key Stage 4), including English or Welsh (1st language), Maths and English Literature, by the end of secondary school, against the percentage that achieved the expected standard at the end of primary school (Level 4, Key Stage 2) – Benchmarked Nationally	55	No data due to Covid-19	Acceptable
The number of schools providing education through suitability and condition categories C and D – Benchmarked Locally	30	27	Priority for improvement
The percentage of pupils (using Pupil Attitudes to Self and School - PASS) who respond positively against pupils' feelings about school – Benchmarked Locally	86.1	87.2	Good

Stakeholder Survey 2018

2020 to 2021 data for the following three measures is not expected until the Stakeholder Survey is run in the autumn, 2021.

Measure	2018 to 2019	Status
The percentage of residents that are satisfied that there are job opportunities for young people at the start of their career – Benchmarked Locally	19	Priority for improvement
The percentage of residents that are satisfied that there are opportunities for young people to develop their skills – Benchmarked Locally	28	Priority for improvement
The percentage of residents that are satisfied that there are leisure opportunities that appeal to young people – Benchmarked Locally	50	Acceptable

Quarterly or biannual measures

Measure	Quarter 2 2020 to 2021	Quarter 3 2020 to 2021	Quarter 4 2020 to 2021	Quarter 1 2021 to 2022	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Status
Percentage of the population aged 18 to 24 claiming Job Seekers Allowance – Benchmarked Nationally	11.9	11.9	12.4	10	7.7	Priority for improvement

Well-being and Equality

This priority applies the five ways of working and directly supports Wales' Well-being Goals around **prosperity, health, equality, cohesiveness, global responsibility**, and a **vibrant culture with a thriving Welsh language**. Below are some further highlights from the last year of work that we have undertaken in support of the Well-being Goals and the Sustainable Development Principle; but also benefiting those with protected characteristics or who are at a socio-economic disadvantage.

Healthy Eating

Almost 500 children and young people took part in a healthy eating scheme during the summer. Denbighshire School Holiday Enrichment's Food and Fun programme saw eight schools keep their doors open for three weeks of the school holidays for those aged between 3 and 12. Rhyl High, Prestatyn High, Christchurch, ysgolion Llywelyn, Penmorfa, Esgob Morgan, Plas Brondyffryn, and Cefn Meiriadog all took part in the scheme. Children enjoyed a healthy breakfast and a hot lunch provided each day by Denbighshire's School Meal Service and Food and Fun focused on nutrition education, with children encouraged to try new foods and take part in practical food activities. The scheme is funded through the Welsh Local Government Agency and run in partnership with Denbighshire County Council and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB). The schools also

provided extra activities including making tie dye t-shirts, mosaic tiles and stress balls while children took part in mindfulness sessions, dance and a variety of sports.

Integrating and **collaborating** with partners was a key part of this work, which sought to instil through **involvement** positive behaviours in children, young people and their families for their **long-term** well-being, and hopefully **prevent** harm or detriment. This work directly benefited the protected characteristic of **Age**, and those who are at a **socio-economic disadvantage**.

Construction Awards

Christ the Word Catholic School, which was officially opened in 2019, has been shortlisted in the Social Infrastructure Project of the Year category at the British Construction Industry Awards (BCIA) 2021. The building was funded by Denbighshire County Council and the Welsh Government through its 21st Century Schools Programme, delivering a brand new educational facility for 420 full time pupils aged 3-11, and 500 pupils aged 11-16. The BCIA look to recognise and reward excellence in project delivery and the delivery of positive outcomes for society. These awards, which will take place on October 13, also celebrate the hard work and dedication of the whole project team involved.

This **collaborative** project, working in partnership and **integrating** goals with Welsh Government, the Diocese of Wrexham, and Keir Construction, delivered a site that includes a chapel, a four-court sports hall, main hall, small hall, drama studio, all-weather pitch, and specialist classrooms such as music, design technology, and science. Pupils, parents and staff were **involved** in the design of the new school, which will enhance the learning experience of young people for the **long-term**. Replacing two old facilities, the creation of the new school will **prevent** and address many of the issues associated with out-dated learning facilities, not least sustainability and access, benefiting those with the protected characteristics of **Disability**, in addition to **Age, Religion and Belief**, and in one of our most deprived areas, those who are at a **socio-economic disadvantage**.

Reducing Carbon

Ysgol Dinas Bran, at Llangollen, is seeing a green energy project taking place on site that will help reduce the school's carbon footprint. Part of Denbighshire County Council's Climate and Ecological Change Programme, the green project at Ysgol Dinas Bran and

Llangollen Leisure Centre has seen a 150Kw array of solar panels installed on the school roof. Other elements of the work include heating control upgrades and LED lighting. The whole project is expected to reduce the school's carbon emissions by 73 tonnes per year. The new Solar Panels went live in August and heating control and LED lighting will all be complete by Christmas.

When we **involved** young people in the development of the Corporate Plan, they spoke passionately about the need to do more to protect our environment. This project demonstrates **long-term** thinking, offering a sustainable solution to rising energy costs as well as the challenge of reducing our carbon output and **preventing** further harm to our planet. **Collaborating** and **integrating** with the ambitions of schools and pupils to work towards a Carbon neutral society in this way will help us learn important lessons that we can share with other partners and schools.

Keeping Everyone Safe

Due to an increase in the number of Covid-19 cases associated with schools, learners and staff undertook further measures to help control the spread of the virus. This includes continuing to encourage pupils and staff to take twice weekly lateral flow tests to help identify and isolate asymptomatic cases and the wearing of face coverings by secondary school pupils, staff and visitors in indoor communal areas outside of the classroom. Other arrangements include reducing close interactions between staff and learners, such as physical distancing and seating plans in classrooms.

Working **collaboratively** with schools at this time remains as important as ever, **integrating** our common desire to keep everyone safe and **prevent** any harm, particularly to the most vulnerable (we know Covid-19 can be particularly adverse on those with a **Disability**, or from **Black and Asian** backgrounds. Those at a **socio-economic disadvantage** are also most likely to present with cases).

Tackling Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

Denbighshire Youth Services, supported by their local Neighbourhood Policing Team, have been providing activities to young people in the Corwen area to help keep youngsters away from crime and anti-social behaviour.

Collaborative initiatives such as this are about **preventing** harm in a young person's future and, through **involvement**, helping them grow to become mature adults that make informed choices in the **long-term**. **Integrating** with the police in this way will ultimately help both organisations, as well as benefit the protected characteristic of **Age**.

Supporting Businesses

To help the council has launched a survey to help shape support to businesses across the county. It asks businesses about their experience in the last 18 months, how they are responding to climate change, and how the council can improve and enhance its support. To take part in the survey click on the link here for the [business survey](#). Businesses taking part in the survey will receive a report collated from all the information received, and all individual responses will be kept anonymous.

Involving businesses in this way will help us work **collaboratively** and **integrate** our ambitions for a prosperous **long-term** future, hopefully **preventing** the loss of any employment in the area, or missed opportunities. There is a particular challenge at the moment with youth unemployment, so we are keep to work with businesses to see what more can be done to help give young people a step-up (benefiting the protected characteristic of **Age**).

Summer of Fun

The council provided a range of free sporting, cultural and play based bilingual activities as part of the Welsh Government's Summer of Fun project, taking place across the county between July and September. Events and activities were for children and young people aged 0 to 25 and designed to support children and young people to express themselves through play, offer community based interactive, creative and play-based initiatives for all ages, and provide opportunities to play with friends and peers. Denbighshire's new Play Ranger Service operated Let's Play Out sessions and offered outdoor play opportunities; while Denbighshire Youth Service, Technocamps, Salford Children's Camp, Denbighshire Music Cooperative and the Urdd will be offering a range of activities, including community based youth work sessions, open access youth work days, outdoor activity days and sessions, STEM and the schools out project.

Only through **collaborative** working can an offer such as this be made available, **involving** and benefiting our young people in the **long-term**. This directly benefits the protected characteristic of **Age** and **socio-economic disadvantage**.

Corporate Health: The council is efficient, well-managed and environmentally sustainable

Measures: Acceptable

Governance: Good

Corporate Health Performance Framework: Measures Update

Below is a brief update on any new data received for performance measures identified in support of Corporate Health. Please see the tables below for the current outturn and past performance, where the information is available. A performance status has been applied against each measure based on a local determination of excellent performance and reflecting our ambition for the council.

We have received new data for two annual measures concerning gender pay differences. The mean hourly rate of pay for women has continued to rise positively for a second year, women being paid 13.5% more than men during 2020 to 2021. However, the percentage of women in the lowest paid salaries has risen slightly from 79.1% to 79.9%.

With this report, 45% of our Corporate Plan measures currently present as a priority for improvement, up from 41% in the last report. Two of our corporate projects are currently presenting as 'compromised' (Denbighshire and Flintshire Joint Archive Project; and the Corporate Support Services Review), with 90% of projects regularly updated by project managers. For information, the Archive project is revising designs for the same site with a view to submitting a new funding application to Welsh Government. The Corporate Support Services Review programme has now been closed – please see the [Service Challenge Action update below](#).

We have received no formal recommendations for improvement from external regulators (Estyn, Care Inspectorate Wales and Audit Wales). There has been one low assurance report from internal audit, following-up on a previous audit of Contract Management. It was found that limited progress has been made in addressing the actions that had been agreed, but that a number of actions were dependent on approval by the Senior Leadership Team of the Contract Management Framework, which has since been endorsed. Ongoing resource pressures have also restricted the ability of the service to provide appropriate contract management oversight, training and guidance, but the service

has given assurance to the Governance and Audit Committee that this can be provided going forward.

Our measure on budget variance (i.e. what we have and receive versus what we are spending) has increased from 708k in June 2021 to 2,445k as at September 2021. The council's reserves remain at £7.135m.

The percentage of negative news stories about the council (taken as a proportion of all news stories about the council) has fallen between July and September, down from 10% to 6%. This represents 13 negative stories out of a total of 220. However, the percentage of external complaints upheld or partly upheld over the last quarter has increased slightly from 62 to 67%. This represents 45 out of 67 complaints. This number is consistent for the same period the previous year, although the rate upheld is higher than our annual average for 2020 to 2021 (60%).

As at September 2021, sickness absence stood at 7.54 days, up from 7.12 in the last period. This compares to 6.57 days in September 2020. As at July 2021, the percentage of staff who have had at least 3 one-to-one meetings in the last 12 months stood at 42%.

38% of the council's spend was with local suppliers during July to September. 88% of contracts (over £25k and under £1,000k) contained community benefits. No collaborative procurement activities were undertaken during the period, but none were missed either. There are, however, 12 potential collaborative procurements on the horizon and these will be developed in the coming months.

Our final measure considers the council's efforts to support residents into work through placements that we ourselves offer within the council. During July to September we successfully supported 46 additional placements, bringing our annual cumulative total to 110. This is a sharp increase on the trend for the same time last year, aided by the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions.

Corporate Health Self-Assessment: Governance Areas

The following is our self-assessment against the seven key governance areas and seeks to paint a picture of how well the council is performing, how we know that (linking to evidence where it is available), and what we can do to improve.

Corporate Planning

Below are improvement actions that have been identified in support of Corporate Health in this area of governance.

Agree and implement a whole council approach to New Ways of Working.

Welsh Government advice remains that staff should continue to work from home where it is possible to do so. However, the Senior Leadership Team is sensitive that there is an increased desire for a managed return to offices. Risk Assessments are therefore to be carried out during the autumn to inform how the council can support limited use of our office buildings in a safe way. These interim measures will not be a return to the way things were, nor is it the long-term approach that is being considered as part of the New Ways of Working (NWOW) project.

The project team continues to meet monthly and minutes are published on the council's internal website. The team has considered different workstyles that the council adopts; training and support needed for organisational change; working with other public sector organisations; and new or revised policies that will need to be drawn up. A draft Asset Strategy has also been developed, and will be shared with members in the autumn.

Develop a new Corporate Plan by October 2022.

In this period, the Strategic Planning and Performance Team has been working to complete the initial phase of our County Conversation, as well as the update of the Conwy and Denbighshire Well-being Assessment. Looking ahead, there will be workshops held in November with SLT and Cabinet to look at what lessons have been learned with the existing Corporate Plan, and to analyse the key issues identified thus far. Intelligence gathered through all these exercises will be presented to the new Council in the summer of 2022 to help guide a final decision on objectives by October.

Develop interim Strategic Equality Plan

The council has now published its interim Strategic Equality Plan to cover the period between October 2021 to October. The document meets our legislative requirements to produce a plan every 4 years, and will inform our new Corporate Plan 2022 to 2027. The Strategic Plan and accompanying Equality Objectives may be viewed on [our website](#).

Respond to the requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

The council launched its new stakeholder survey in September, to run for six weeks until the end of October. The survey has been designed to satisfy legislative requirements, and will inform our next self-assessment report in 2022. Arrangements for a Panel Assessment will be discussed with the new council following the elections in May 2022. Discussions on arrangements for the implementation of the new Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) will commence from September.

Plan for new replacement EU funding arrangements.

The council continues to monitor the impact of Brexit, and has been working through this period to appoint a Compliance, Monitoring and Administration Officer to support Community Renewal Fund arrangements. The Senior Leadership Team has also reviewed capacity requirements to manage the upcoming Shared Prosperity and Levelling Up funds, additional resource being identified to manage these going forward.

Service Challenge Action: Provide a public statement in support of an accessible and diverse council in advance of the next election period to inform potential candidates.

In September the Council committed itself to be a 'Diverse Council'. It was agreed to:

- Provide a clear public commitment to improving diversity in democracy.
- Demonstrate an open and welcoming culture to all, promoting the highest standards of behaviour and conduct.
- Set out a local Diverse Council Action Plan ahead of the 2022 local elections.
- Demonstrate a commitment to a duty of care for Councillors.
- Provide flexibility in council business by reviewing our practical arrangements for the holding of meetings.
- Ensure that all members are aware of the allowances and salaries to which they are entitled, particularly any reimbursement for costs of care, so that all members receive fair remuneration for their work and that the role of member is not limited to those who can afford it.

As a result, the Democratic Services Committee has been tasked with developing a Diverse Council Action Plan ahead of the 2022 local government elections.

Service Challenge Action: Update the Corporate Executive Team on the position with the Corporate Support Services Review.

The Head of Business Improvement and Modernisation has provided an update to the Corporate Executive Team, it being confirmed that workstreams already underway will continue to completion. Some other activity may be progressed, but no longer as part of the formal programme.

Service Challenge Action: Ensure a question is asked at each Service Performance Challenge regarding commitment to customer service.

This consideration will be put forward in a paper summarising lessons learned and proposals for the 2022 Service Challenge Programme, to be taken to the Corporate Executive Team in the next period. It is felt that the format of the challenges during the summer worked well for its condensed timetable and less paperwork. Consideration does need to be given, however, to how service level data is reviewed, as this is an important part of our Performance Management Framework.

Financial Planning

Below are improvement actions that have been identified in support of Corporate Health in this area of governance.

Annual Treasury Management

The Head of Finance and Property Services presented the [Annual Treasury Management report](#) to Governance and Audit Committee in July. It details the Council's investment and borrowing activity during 2020 to 2021, as well as outlying the economic climate during that time and shows how the Council complied with its Prudential Indicators.

Of course Covid-19 dominated 2020 to 2021, and the start of the financial year saw many central banks cutting interest rates as lockdowns caused economic activity to grind to a halt. The Bank of England cut Bank Rate to 0.1% and the UK government provided a range of fiscal stimulus measures, the size of which has not been seen in peacetime. The council borrowed money throughout the year from the Public Works Loan Board (PWL),

as well as accessing temporary borrowing from other local authorities at very low rates to cover short-term cash flow requirements. As a result of this borrowing, the average rate on the council's debt increased from 3.82% at April 1, 2020, to 3.95% at March 31, 2021. The council's outstanding borrowing at March 31, 2021 was £235m, at an average rate of 3.95%, and the council held £17.8m in investments at an average rate of 0.003%.

Audit Wales Financial Sustainability Assessment

In September 2021, Audit Wales published their findings on the [Financial Sustainability Assessment](#) they conducted during January 2021 to April 2021. The report highlighted a number of key findings, including:

- The council is well placed to maintain its financial sustainability over the medium term. It has a good track record of managing its budget and continues to work to further improve its financial position.
- The immediate impact of Covid-19 on the council's financial sustainability has been mitigated by additional Welsh Government funding.
- The council's financial planning arrangements are mature and further developing to maintain its financial sustainability over the medium-term.
- The council's useable reserves have remained relatively stable since 2016 to 2017 and are forecast to increase.
- There continues to be some significant budget variations that the Council is working to resolve.
- The council has a track record of delivering most of its budget savings, but not always as planned.
- The council has maintained a liquidity ratio of below 1 over the period from 2016 to 2017 and 2019 to 2020.

Strategy for the Prevention and Detection of Fraud, Corruption & Bribery

[The Strategy for the Prevention and Detection of Fraud, Corruption and Bribery and Fraud Response Plan](#) form part of the council's counter fraud framework, a collection of interrelated policies and procedures, including the Code of Conduct, Financial Regulations and Whistle Blowing Policy. It also includes policies and procedures that are specifically targeted at countering fraud and corruption.

In developing this Strategy, the council has adopted the guiding principles included in "Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally 2020". The Strategy is not just concerned with operational activity to detect and investigate fraud and corruption, but also sets out objectives for pro-active actions to deter and prevent fraud and corruption through the continual development of an anti-fraud and corruption culture. The Fraud Response Plan has been revised to reflect existing processes and to strengthen arrangements to ensure that all relevant parties are involved at key points and to include greater alignment with HR policies, particularly the disciplinary policy and strategy for local government.

Performance Management

Below are improvement actions that have been identified in support of Corporate Health in this area of governance.

Implement annual process for stakeholder engagement on council performance.

The council's Stakeholder Survey was launched in September and ran for six weeks. Analysis will be completed during November and December. The output of the Survey will help inform our Self-Assessment in 2022, and an annual approach to stakeholder engagement in year 2. Data from the survey will also help inform our next Corporate Plan.

Provide clarity to the Senior Leadership Team on the role of the Project Management Team.

Discussions have taken place with the Corporate Executive Team and the Senior Leadership Team about the intention to further develop the Corporate Programme Office, in which the Project Management team sits. A proposal on areas for development will be taken to the Corporate Executive Team in the next few months, which will include a reconfiguration of Verto, our project management software, and the introduction of new roles in the Corporate Programme Office that will broaden the support on offer to the organisation.

Other developments in the last period

The council's Annual Report on Safeguarding Adults in Denbighshire was presented to [Partnerships Scrutiny in July](#). Despite the pressures caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the restrictions placed upon individuals and organisations by the crisis, the council's

performance in relation to safeguarding adults had remained strong, with improvements being realised in a number of areas, such as performance against the Welsh Government performance indicator on enquiries completed within 7 working days (99%). Overall there has been a significant reduction (40%) in numbers of safeguarding reports received in comparison to the same period the previous year. However, there has been an increase in the number of telephone calls to the Safeguarding team to discuss safeguarding issues. Although fewer reports have been received during the 2020-21 year, the Council had not seen an increase in cases needing to progress to strategy meetings, which appeared to be following the trends of recent years.

In June 2021 (CIW) undertook a five day 'Assurance Check' of Community Support Services (CSS) with a focus on the safety and well-being of citizens and staff employed in Community Support Services. We've recently received a very positive final report that includes findings such as:

- Citizens and carers have their voices heard and maintain control over their care and support.
- Despite competing pressures, practitioners continue to focus on what matters to people.
- Positive culture where practitioners co-produce solutions tailored to individual circumstances.
- Continuing positive culture of improvement in adult safeguarding.
- Practitioners feel supported by the significant efforts made to promote their well-being.
- Providers of care and support work well with social services and find them to be open and honest, willing to be flexible and help resolve challenges.
- Driven by external challenges and their own commitment to succeed, social services managers in Denbighshire continue to lead with confidence and develop increasingly creative solutions at pace.
- At this point in the Covid-19 pandemic, the fact that so many practitioners and managers have continued in their roles and taken on new duties to help protect others is a credit to them and the local authority.

Risk Management

Below are improvement actions that have been identified in support of Corporate Health in this area of governance.

Next formal Risk Review in September to give a particular focus to risk appetite to help improve the organisation's understanding of its application.

The September Corporate Risk Review paid particular attention to our risk appetite and our anticipated direction of travel for each risk. Risk owners were asked to reconsider all impacts and determine the most serious impact so as to affirm our level of appetite. We discussed how effectively risks are being managed down or out of the register, and the extent to which controls have been effective or not. The Risk Register now includes commentary about the anticipated direction of travel for each risk, which should help us to understand the effectiveness of our management controls over time. A case study - using Ash Die Back as an example - has been shared with managers and elected members around the practical application of risk appetite.

Service Challenge Action: Ensure service and corporate risk registers define climate and ecological risks at appropriate levels

During the September Corporate Risk Review, it was agreed that Risk 45: "The risk that the council is unable to deliver the agenda of Council and external organisations within existing resources" needed to have a singular focus on climate change. The risk is now defined as "The risk that the council fails to become a net carbon zero and ecologically positive council by 2030".

Service Challenge Action: Consider the provisions of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, particularly in regard to Corporate Joint Committee and any associated risks for the council.

A new risk has been added to the council's Corporate Risk register, which considers the implications of the new Corporate Joint Committee. Gwynedd Council is taking the lead on work to establish the Committee on behalf of North Wales. Regional Chief Executives and Leaders have been meeting through this period to agree the final proposal for the make-up of the new organisation, which must agree its own budget by January 31 for the year ahead. A Chief Executive Officer, Monitoring Officer and Section 151 officer will also need

to be appointed. The Corporate Joint Committee will oversee three key areas for the region from June 2022, namely Strategic Development, Transport, and the Economy.

Other developments in the last period

Our September Corporate Risk Review also implemented the actions identified in June's Internal Audit review of Corporate Risk Management, such as identification of critical and ancillary controls. The Corporate Executive Team will shortly be commencing 'risk focus sessions'. These sessions will provide more time to interrogate our most concerning risks with risk owners, and have been selected in part by the risk appetite 'gap' (that is the gap between the classification of the risk and our risk appetite).

Workforce Planning

Below are improvement actions that have been identified in support of Corporate Health in this area of governance.

Complementing New Ways of Working, we will review training, development and mental-health needs for staff.

A new strategy and action plan will be developed to support the new ways of working project and emerging leadership, learning and development programme. A Mental Health policy has been agreed by Cabinet, and middle managers will have received an awareness session at our Leadership Conference. Training has also been arranged for all managers and supervisors, to commence from September. Useful mental health pages have also been published on our website.

Improve the information we have about our workforce, including equality information, to support more detailed analyses in future Public Sector Duty Reports.

We have been working with colleagues to review decision making and reporting templates to ensure they comply with the Socio-Economic Duty.

Improve our workforce planning programme and consider how best to plan for posts requiring a specific level of Welsh above Level 1.

We have been planning an annual workforce planning review with all services, which is due to commence in November. This has been developed alongside discussions about the

new corporate risk around recruitment and retention, and the escalated risk about pressures in social care and health. The review for posts requiring specific levels of Welsh commenced in December 2019; unfortunately, this work was paused due to Covid-19, but will restart in the coming months.

Recruit new Heads of Service for Education and Children’s Services.

Two Heads of Services have been successfully recruited. The service remains as one but with Geraint Davies looking after Education, and Rhian Morrle overseeing Children’s Services.

Service Challenge Action: Consider the staff resource requirements associated with the additional burden of managing / supporting virtual meetings, and the increasing number of Member Task & Finish Group meetings, and consider what, if any, actions are required.

A business case was submitted to the Budget Board with detailed information on the resource shortages and growing workload in committee administration and scrutiny support. The Budget Board has included funding to address these problems in the council’s Medium Term Financial Plan for the new financial year. Consideration is being given to how soon the funding can be drawn down.

Service Challenge Action: Establish the latest position and level of risk associated with DBS / risk assessment indicators that are, or have been, a priority for improvement / acceptable.

The latest position is an improving one, but the level of risk remains a priority for improvement due to the back-log caused by Covid-19. A 6-month temporary post is being established to address the issue, which arose due to staff redeployment and the focus being on new staff being DBS checked rather than renewals (unless the renewal was for employees under Social Care Wales or CSIW).

Other developments in the last period

A new corporate risk has been identified: “The risk that recruitment and retention issues, leading to a loss of expertise and capacity, worsen resulting in poor or inadequate services.” Many services have been struggling to recruit and retain staff for some time,

particularly – but not limited to - critical front line social care and health and highways and environment roles. In September, the council temporarily suspended its bulky waste collection service due to driver shortages; whilst in care, 15 workers from across the council took on three of the toughest walks in Denbighshire to try to raise awareness of the rewarding careers that are available in the care sector.

There are of course many factors at the root of this recruitment issue, including the relatively low wages, high demands, and sometimes a perceived lack of value. There are also some regional pressures associated with neighbouring employers offering higher salaries.

We will in the next period be working with Audit Wales on a national review of asset management and workforce planning, which will take place between November 2021 and January 2022.

Assets

Below are improvement actions that have been identified in support of Corporate Health in this area of governance.

Asset Management strategy

The proposed priorities for the new Asset Management Strategy were considered and agreed by the Asset Management Group at their meeting in July. The full strategy is now in the process of being drafted. The Asset Management Group's Terms of Reference will also be updated as soon as they have been revised for the Strategic Investment Group.

ICT – Lorawan Gateways

In 2020, the council set out to investigate Lorawan infrastructure costs and the potential to implement them within the council. In this period, we have commissioned the installation of 5 Lorawan gateways across the county, covering Prestatyn and Denbigh High schools, County Hall, and Ysgolion Caer Drewyn and Tremeirchion. The funding for these came from the “push to talk” project. There may be additional Welsh Government funding to provide additional gateways in due course to further improve coverage throughout the County.

Data Breaches

Alongside the Data Protection Officer, the Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) has an explicit responsibility to ensure that information held by the council is managed safely, effectively, and in accordance with the legislation. The council has increased investments to ensure the safe management of data within the following areas:

- Greater engagement with Schools.
- Additional dedicated officer time made available in Legal Services.
- An effective cross-council collaboration in the form of the Information Governance Group, chaired by the council's Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO).
- Awareness raising across all services through training and dedicated support.

In 2020 to 2021 there were 22 data incidents involving personal data, which is an increase on last year where there were 13 incidents. Although only one of these incidents was considered reportable to the Information Commissioner's Office, it is still a significant increase. The underlying cause of these is human error, and the SIRO has some concerns that these instances have become more common because of reduced office working. To counter this, new procedures for remote 'checking' are being explored and are ongoing within ICT and Social Services, including:

- Exploring whether it is possible for Microsoft Outlook to stop automatically formulating external email addresses in the recipient section.
- Identifying whether it is possible for a pop-up to appear on Microsoft Outlook to confirm whether the sender wants to send the email (as it does when an email has no subject, without an attachment etc.) when addressed to an external recipient.
- Exploring whether reports that are being printed by Business Support Staff on behalf of another member of staff (who is not in the office) can be printed and scanned back to the relevant member of staff to check prior to the report being posted.

Refresher training on data protection is being launched for all staff, which includes advice on managing data safely when working away from the office.

Roads

Denbighshire County Council, in partnership with Welsh Government and Transport for Wales, is making improvements to Castle Street, Llangollen. This scheme has been developed through extensive consultation with the local community and local county councillors. It includes wider footways, improved and safer junctions, new traffic signals and a pedestrian crossing, new one-way systems, and resurfacing works. There will be some road closures and temporary traffic lights, but we will work closely with local residents and businesses to listen to any concerns and minimise disruption. The works should be completed by Spring 2022. Each week the [Llangollen 2020 page](#) will be updated with the details of what we've done and what we plan on doing.

Flood Investigation

In February 2020, extensive flooding occurred across Denbighshire as a result of Storm Ciara. Council officers, as well as officers from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and Dŵr Cymru, have since carried out investigations into the flooding to understand the reason why the flooding occurred, the likelihood of it happening again, and to assess whether measures can be put in place to reduce flooding in future.

February 2020 was one of the wettest on record for parts of North and Mid Wales. A series of successive weather fronts including storms Ciara, Dennis and Jorge, as well as heavy rainfall over the weekend of February 22, 2020, saw most rain gauges recording over 200% of their February Long-Term Average. The main sources of flooding during the event were the River Elwy, River Ceidiog, River Ystrad and River Clwyd.

The report was presented to [Communities Scrutiny Committee in July](#), and recommendations for improvement will be taken forward in partnership with Dŵr Cymru and NRW.

Corporate Health and Safety

The Annual Corporate Health and Safety report was presented to the [Governance and Audit Committee in September](#). The overall assessment of Denbighshire County Council's implementation of Health and Safety systems is a medium assurance. This means that Health and Safety management systems are generally developed and recorded. The overall assessment of employee involvement in Health and Safety is also a medium

assurance. Significant hazards are generally identified and managed to minimise risk. Employees are generally involved in the development and use of H&S management systems. Finally, the assessment found that overall the council's compliance with Covid-19 regulations and the delivery of a 'Covid-19 secure' workplace is a high assurance.

Property Fire Safety

The Property Health and Safety Team presented an Annual Fire Safety Report to the [Governance and Audit Committee in September](#). The report showed that as at July 2021, 99% of properties has been fire risk assessed (FRA), barring one school that had cancelled their assessment appointment. During 2021 to 2022, key priorities have been around developing the fire safety knowledge and skills of a new member of the team; identifying available options for completing FRAs digitally; reviewing and improving the current recording and allocation of FRA actions; and creating a fire awareness training program.

Service Challenge Action: Develop proposal to improve ICT provision, fibre security, business continuity, school ICT provision, and digital Denbighshire

A proposal has been the Budget Board in order to begin the process of rebuilding capacity within ICT. Discussions are underway concerning a location for a second data suite in either Rhyl or Denbigh to expand resilience. Digital Security remains a threat to the council and remains on the Corporate Risk Register. ICT and Digital Services are actively involved with both local and national groups to mitigate the risk and to ensure that we have a rolling program in place to ensure the council's Digital Perimeter Security is up-to-date and operating at optimum levels.

A number of schools are now directly receiving ICT support from Denbighshire's ICT and Digital Services function. There is still an unstable environment around third party school ICT support provision. Schools have received advice to subscribe to the service offered by the corporate ICT and Digital Services Team to mitigate the risk of digital security to schools directly.

Service Challenge Action: Create hubs in areas across Denbighshire where there is poor broadband connection, to assist and enable remote meetings

Progress has been made on the physical fibre roll-out to our corporate sites which include Libraries, Leisure Centres and other remote sites that contain Denbighshire staff. A number of these sites have now had their old broadband connection migrated to new fibre connectivity, providing improvements to download and upload speeds. There has also been steady progress on the roll-out to additional community sites, where a number of physical fibre builds have been completed. We are now awaiting activation of these fibres.

Service Challenge Action: Work to enable translation provision with Microsoft Teams software

This activity is experiencing obstacles, but work continues nationally to make progress towards enabling the translation provision within Microsoft Teams.

Service Challenge Action: Create a plan to support external partners and businesses to take forward the climate and ecological change programme

In this period, activity has begun to deliver support to partners and businesses to contribute to the Climate and Ecological Change Programme, in particular a public event is planned for November 1, and a Business Breakfast on November 9. In addition to this, a plan to identify wider behaviour change initiatives for 2022 to 2023 onwards is in development, and is anticipated to be complete by April, 2022.

Service Challenge Action: Ensure lessons learnt are captured from previous purchases of buildings

The issues with asbestos identification and removal will be included in the lessons learned log for the Queens Building project and in the project closure report, which will be completed once the phase 1 output is delivered. The Project Manager of the proposed Rhyl Gateway project has advised that a healthy contingency has been included in the budget for possible asbestos removal.

Longer-term, it is proposed that the council will need to consider allocating more funding 'at risk' to undertake feasibility work for regeneration projects, especially those involving property acquisition. This will enable more detailed project proposals to be developed and more confidence in the budget forecasts. However, it also needs to be acknowledged that in some cases, the presence of asbestos will not be known until such time as intrusive

surveys are undertaken, or the building is being demolished or refurbished. Intrusive surveys are generally not possible prior to the acquisition of a building.

Procurement

Below is the improvement action that was identified in support of Corporate Health in this area of governance.

Integrate biodiversity protection and improvement into our procurement processes and drive through community benefits that improve the environment. We will work with businesses and suppliers in Denbighshire to encourage lower carbon practice. We will also develop a new procurement strategy.

Progress towards these actions has been limited during July to September. The procurement team continues to face capacity issues. Our Community Benefits Hub is working with officers across the council to identify relevant and appropriate environmental community benefits that contribute to bio-diversity. We have agreed that identified community benefits must also include living asset management resources and planning. We have also been exploring opportunities for a potential pilot procurement that applies a managed tree community benefit.

Service Challenge Action: Promote adherence to the Procurement Policy across the council

In respect of encouraging good procurement practice, there are some challenges in this area. There has been some recent poor practice that has resulted in lengthier negotiations and timescales, and stretched capacity further. Any poor practice that has been identified will be reviewed.

Service Challenge Action: Explore long-term options for sustaining the Community Benefits Hub

The service is just starting this work to explore potential options and ways forward.

Annual or biennial measures

Title	2018 to 2019	2019 to 2020	Status
Overall satisfaction with the council (%) – Benchmarked Locally	40	No data Survey due in autumn	Priority for Improvement
The percentage of new appointees from applications where it was disclosed that they are either from a racial or religious minority group, have a disability, are gay or bi-sexual, or had their gender reassigned – Benchmarked Locally	7	15 Next report October 2021	Does not apply Count only
The percentage difference in the mean hourly rate of pay for women – Benchmarked Locally	-9.7	-13.5	Excellent
The percentage of the lowest paid salaries (bottom quarter) that are women – Benchmarked Locally	79.1	79.9	Priority for Improvement
Member attendance (expected and present), year to date – Benchmarked Locally	79	89	Good
Net Carbon Zero – Total carbon tonnage emitted and absorbed by the council (excluding supply chain) – Benchmarked Locally	14,030	10,277	Excellent

Quarterly or biannual measures

Title	Quarter 2 2020 to 2021	Quarter 3 2020 to 2021	Quarter 4 2020 to 2021	Quarter 1 2021 to 2022	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Status
The percentage of Corporate Plan Measures showing as 'Priority for Improvement' – Benchmarked Locally	47	49	49	41	45	Acceptable
The number of projects on the project register showing as 'compromised' – Benchmarked Locally	2	0	1	2	2	Acceptable
The percentage of projects whose delivery confidence was updated in the last three months – Benchmarked Locally	No data New to quarter 3	90	94	96	90	Acceptable

Title	Quarter 2 2020 to 2021	Quarter 3 2020 to 2021	Quarter 4 2020 to 2021	Quarter 1 2021 to 2022	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Status
The percentage of corporate risks inconsistent with the council's risk appetite statement – Benchmarked Locally	52	No data Six-monthly	55	No data Six-monthly	62	Priority for Improvement
The number of negative reports from external regulators – Benchmarked Locally	0	0	0	0	0	Excellent
The number of Internal Audit low assurance reports, financial year to date – Benchmarked Locally	2	4	4	0	1	Excellent
Corporate and Service Budget Variance (£k)	5,107	2,242	-718	708	2,445	Does not apply Count only

Title	Quarter 2 2020 to 2021	Quarter 3 2020 to 2021	Quarter 4 2020 to 2021	Quarter 1 2021 to 2022	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Status
Council reserves (£k)	7,135	7,135	7,135	7,135	7,135	Does not apply Count only
Negative news stories as a percentage of all news stories about the council – Benchmarked Locally	4	12	24	10	6	Good
The percentage of external complaints upheld or partly upheld over the last quarter – Benchmarked Locally	63	52	57	62	67	Priority for Improvement
The rolling average number of working days / shifts per full time equivalent (FTE) local authority employee lost due	6.57	6.61	6.47	7.12	7.54	Acceptable

Title	Quarter 2 2020 to 2021	Quarter 3 2020 to 2021	Quarter 4 2020 to 2021	Quarter 1 2021 to 2022	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Status
to sickness absence – Benchmarked Locally						
The percentage of staff who have had at least 3 one-to- one meetings in the last 12 months – Benchmarked Locally	No data New to quarter 4	No data New to quarter 4	45	44	42	Priority for Improvement
The percentage of spend with suppliers based within Denbighshire – Benchmarked Locally	36	34	36	33	38	Good
The cumulative percentage of Denbighshire contracts over £25k and under £1,000k containing community benefits –	No data New to quarter 4	No data New to quarter 4	12	75 Now reported as a cumulati ve indicator	88	Excellent

Title	Quarter 2 2020 to 2021	Quarter 3 2020 to 2021	Quarter 4 2020 to 2021	Quarter 1 2021 to 2022	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Status
Benchmarked Locally						
The cumulative number of work experience placements offered within the council	28	28	36	64	110	Does not apply Count only

Improvement Actions

Below are new improvement actions that have been identified through this report:

- Service Challenge Programme to be reviewed and proposals for 2022 to be offered to CET in November / December.

Equality and Diversity

Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment

The council is assessing current accommodation need for Gypsies, Traveller and Travelling Show people. This does not include looking for locations for sites. The process will include talking to Gypsy and Traveller families, key stakeholders and representative groups and a survey will run until October 7, 2021. Our work will include a review of local data, including the number of unauthorised encampments that have taken place in the county, and a consultation with families from the Gypsy and Travelling community living in Denbighshire. Elected members and City, Town and Community councils will also be asked to promote the survey to eligible residents, as well as feed in local knowledge around travelling patterns. The council has a legal duty to undertake a new Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) every five years as a requirement of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014, and it is also a requirement for the replacement Local Development Plan that the council is currently working on.

The assessment work will directly support **Race** and **Religion and Belief**. **Involving** stakeholders and working collaboratively with different partners and groups in this way will help us understand the **long-term** needs of the county, and **prevent** any group from facing worsening **socio-economic disadvantage**.

Community Catalysts

Denbighshire County Council has teamed up with social enterprise Community Catalysts to help kind-hearted people realise their dreams to help older and disabled people. The programme gives support to Denbighshire residents in the south and central areas of the county who are looking to set up their own small enterprise to help those in need or also bring closer the things that give enjoyment. You can find out more by visiting the [Denbighshire Community Catalysts webpage](#).

This **collaborative** initiative directly benefits the protected characteristics of **Age** and **Disability** and those at a **socio-economic disadvantage**. It encourages **involvement** and will hopefully bring to fruition new ideas to **prevent** harm and meet unrealised needs in the **long-term**.