

Corporate Plan Performance Update: October to December 2021

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

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

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Contact details and more information

For more information, or to let us know what you think about anything in this report, contact us:

By email: strategicplanningteam@denbighshire.gov.uk

By telephone: 01824 706291

Rydym yn croesawu galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg / We welcome telephone calls in Welsh.

By post:

Strategic Planning and Performance Team
Denbighshire County Council
PO Box 62
Ruthin
LL15 9AZ

We welcome correspondence in Welsh. There will be no delay in responding to correspondence received in Welsh.

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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 December 2021, there were 2,378 people on the Single Route to Housing (SARTH) waiting list, which is a slight increase from the last period, July to September (2,283). The final report following a review of SARTH is anticipated shortly, 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. For this period, October to December, 56 people were housed, bringing our annual total to 209 so far.

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Project Update

Experiencing Obstacles: Denbigh Extra Care Housing

There have been further delays with the handover date of the Denbigh Extra Care building to Grŵp Cynefin. This will cause a delay for the start of the care contract. There have also of course been ongoing recruitment issues in the sector, Block C not being able to recruit enough staff at present to commence the full contract as agreed.

Experiencing Obstacles: Ruthin Extra Care Housing

The Ruthin Extra Care Housing facility has been substantially delayed, but a short-term lease has been agreed and pre-demolition works have commenced on site. The procurement exercise for a contractor has also been repeated following issues with the high specification. Grŵp Cynefin will hopefully confirm the successful applicant shortly.

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:

- Completion of demolition works at the former Next store in Rhyl.
- A planning application submitted for the conversion of the former Houses in Multiple Occupation at 45 to 49 Bath Street in Rhyl into apartments for Intermediate Rent.
- Cabinet approved the contract award for the construction of apartments on land off The Dell in Prestatyn.
- Scoring of tenders for the works to convert Llys Anwyl in Rhyl and to redevelop the former library site in Prestatyn.
- The purchase of two former council houses in Rhyl and one in Rhuddlan being complete.
- The acceptance of offers for the purchase of four former council houses in Rhyl.

There is confidence that the programme can still be delivered successfully despite the pandemic, but there will be a schedule over-run.

On Target: Affordable Housing

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

The 100% affordable housing scheme at Plas Deva site in Meliden by Adra is well underway. The majority of the Rent to Own and Intermediate Rental dwellings have now been built, and applicants have been invited to apply for the dwellings through the Tai Teg website. The social housing element of the site is the last phase of the development and it is due to be completed by March 2022.

The transfer deed between Clwyd Alyn and Denbighshire County Council over the highway access to the Glasdir site in Ruthin has now been completed and Clwyd Alyn are now able to draw down the Social Housing Grant money that has been allocated to this site.

Finally, First Choice Housing have been able to source a property, which can be converted suitably for a priority citizen on the Specialist Housing List in Prestatyn. The alterations are due to start in early December, and the property is expected to be completed and handed over to the family by the end of March 2022.

On Target: Empty Homes Back into Use

During this period, 42 Class C long-term properties were brought back into use. Empty home owners in Denbighshire can take advantage of the free matching service with potential developers who are ready to take forward new opportunities. There have been recent press releases to raise awareness of the scheme, and to try and bring homes back into use by highlighting some of the benefits of selling a property through this scheme. For example, empty home owners can save money on estate agency fees and Council Tax if the property has been empty for more than six months, as well as ongoing maintenance costs of the property.

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

Measure	2019 to 2020	2020 to 2021	Status
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

Measure	2018 to 2019	2021 to 2022	Status
The percentage of residents reporting they felt satisfied with the availability of housing in their area – Benchmarked Locally	42	30	Priority for improvement
The percentage of residents reporting they are satisfied with the standard of housing in their area – Benchmarked Locally	52	40	Priority for improvement

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 3 2020 to 2021	Quarter 4 2020 to 2021	Quarter 1 2021 to 2022	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Quarter 3 2021 to 2022	Status
Number of people on SARTH waiting list – Benchmarked Locally	1,937	2,139	2,297	2,283	2,378	Priority for improvement
Cumulative number of people housed from the SARTH register	237	328	67	153	209	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.

Homelessness and Housing Support Services

As a result of an Internal Audit review of accommodation provision for the homeless in March 2020, a multi-disciplinary service was introduced in April 2021. A report presented to [Partnerships Scrutiny in December 2021](#) describes the implementation and effectiveness of the new service, and the cross-service approach for delivering homelessness services in line with the Welsh Government's vision for homelessness and housing related support. Increased resources meant the team had their own mental health practitioners, a counsellor, social workers, and homelessness support practitioners to provide more holistic support. The service is also looking to appoint a substance abuse mental health professional from the health board to complete the team.

Using this **collaborative** and **integrated** approach enables the service to plan **long-term** to **prevent** and tackle homelessness. This will particularly benefit those at a **socio-economic disadvantage**.

Prestatyn Social Homes Development

Cabinet has agreed the appointment of RL Davies & Sons Limited to start construction on 15 council apartments for social rent at The Dell in Prestatyn. Five apartments that are specifically designed for wheelchair users will be built on the ground floor, and on the upper floors there will be a total of ten apartments accessible by lift and adaptable for tenants with limited mobility. There will be seven one-bedroom apartments and eight two-bedroom apartments in the block. The apartments will also be low carbon in operation through the inclusion of renewable energy and heat technologies and will help to deliver

the council's Climate & Ecological Change Strategy. This will be achieved by avoiding the use of hydrocarbons for space and water heating in the development.

This development reflects the importance of having **long-term**, sustainable structures available for the elderly and those with limited mobility. The decision supports our ambition to make sure that everyone supported to live in homes that meet their needs, particularly those with protected characteristics, such as **disability and age**, and those at a **socio-economic disadvantage**. It also contributes towards the Housing and Homelessness Strategy by enabling the building of accessible homes for social rent, **collaborating** with local developers to make this possible. Finally, the project reflects our commitment to reducing our carbon footprint and **preventing** further harm to our environment.

Redevelopment of Prestatyn Library

In [December](#), Cabinet approved the appointment of a contractor to redevelop the former Prestatyn Library. The old library building is to be demolished to allow for the construction of 14 one bedroom accessible apartments for social rent, with lift access and 2 ground floor commercial units on the site. In addition to this, there are plans to deliver improved access, parking and outdoor amenity space to be shared with residents of the existing Llys Bodnant flats.

These new apartments will be delivered in **collaboration** with Wynne & Sons Limited, and when complete, will directly benefit the protected characteristics of **Age** and **Disability**. They will provide a **long-term** housing solution that **prevents** this prominent site in the town from remaining empty, as well as benefiting individual health by providing good quality housing and amenities.

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

National comparative data has now been released for the condition of A, B and C roads for both 2019 to 2020, and 2020 to 2021. Comparing our performance against our family group of similar rural authorities, the condition of A roads in 2019 to 2020 was 'best in family' at 3.6% (despite road condition worsening from 3.4% the previous year). In 2020 to 2021 we improved to 3.5%. However, as performance by others in the group overtakes us, we are no longer 'best in family' (now Monmouthshire with 2.7%) or indeed excellent, but it is still considered good performance in the group. Performance for B roads has remained below the group median for the last two years at 5.3% and now 5%. C roads have remained excellent at 8.3% in 2019 to 2020, and are 'best in family' for 2020 to 2021 at 7.6%.

At January 2022, the coverage of superfast broadband (>30mbps) in Denbighshire was at 93.37%, a small increase of 0.62% since October. 4.18% of premises had broadband of 10mbps or below. This is a 0.15% decrease since October 2021.

The Connected Nations report, produced by OfCom, was published in December 2021 and has revealed data for the percentage of mobile 4G road signal (by all operators on all ABCD roads). 50.63% of all roads had 4G coverage. This compares to coverage of 49.2% in May 2021.

51% of public transactions with the council were undertaken via the web during October to December 2021, compared to the total number of transactions undertaken using all access channels. This is a 3% decrease on July to September's figure.

We previously reported that 79% of damaged roads and pavements were made safe within target time during July to September 2021. This figure has now been corrected to

64%. During October to December 2021, 51% of damaged roads and pavements were made safe within target time.

Corporate Plan Programme Board: Project Update

Experiencing Obstacles: Superfast Broadband and Mobile Networks

Our Digital Support Officer's contract has been extended for a further two years, as they continue to be busy supporting individuals and businesses struggling with poor connectivity, including our own staff. To date, 147 individuals and businesses have been advised, and 90 of these have found permanent solutions to their issues. The digital officer is also assisting 15 groups, two of which have signed contracts with Openreach for Fibre installations. Two more were at the contract signing stage, but Openreach has now put all Community Fibre Partnerships on hold whilst they re-evaluate their own upgrades and strategies. In particular, we are still waiting for a quote from Openreach for the Nantglyn (and surrounding villages) project. This is taking considerably longer than we had anticipated, and is likely to be delayed further as some properties within the catchment have been upgraded by other means. This project was due to end in March 2022 and consideration is now being given to how the funding will be utilised going forward.

On Target: Digital Exclusion

A programme of upgrading and improving the public access technology facilities in all libraries in Denbighshire began in November 2021. The project will see new public access computers installed, a new pc management system, self-service printing, an online booking system and printing through Wi-Fi.

We provided training for Residential Care home staff in November and December 2021 following a skills audit. A new Work Start employee started within Working Denbighshire in November 2021 and they will work on virtual reality interview content within our 'Economically Vulnerable' work stream.

Denbighshire Digital Buddies continues to attract more clients, although volunteer numbers remain low. We have recently sent out a press release to try to attract more Welsh Speaking volunteers and a new website is being constructed with the Denbighshire Voluntary Services Council, which will have a dedicated space for Digital Buddies.

On Target: Infrastructure for Events

The terms and conditions, process and booking system for the mobile equipment hire scheme are in development. We are still waiting to take delivery of the van and trailer to support the scheme. We are hoping to launch the scheme from this Summer.

£121,249 has been awarded to groups including Community Councils, Village Halls and Community Centres as part of a targeted support package to improve events infrastructure locally. All applicants have been informed whether they have been successful or not, and approved projects will have 24 months, from the date of approval, to deliver.

Our interviews with promoters are now complete and a Market Research report has been produced and shared with the council. A work programme needs to be produced based on the report and will be discussed at the March 2022 Project Board.

Project Brief: Travel to Work, Education and Services

A business case for a 'Sustainable Transport Plan' is not yet available. A [report was presented to Performance Scrutiny Committee in November 2021](#). The Committee made comments and observations in relation to electric vehicle charging infrastructure, the need to include the views and needs of disabled people, the importance of linking in with regional and national transport strategy, and the need to involve and engage users and communities.

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	Good
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	8.3	7.6	Excellent

Measure	2019 to 2020	2020 to 2021	Status
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 3 2020 to 2021	Quarter 4 2020 to 2021	Quarter 1 2021 to 2022	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Quarter 3 2021 to 2022	Status
The percentage of Superfast Coverage in Denbighshire (>30 Mbps) – Benchmarked Locally	91.87	92.23	92.63	92.75	93.37	Priority for improvement
The percentage of premises with Broadband of 10 Mbps or below – Benchmarked Locally	4.71	4.45	4.34	4.33	4.18	Acceptable
The percentage of transactions undertaken via the web, compared to the total number of transactions undertaken using all access channels	50	50	56	48	51	Acceptable

Measure	Quarter 3 2020 to 2021	Quarter 4 2020 to 2021	Quarter 1 2021 to 2022	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Quarter 3 2021 to 2022	Status
The percentage of mobile 4G road signal (all operators) – Benchmarked Locally	49.8	No data Six-monthly	49.2	No data Six-monthly	50.63	Priority for improvement
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	87	67	64	51	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

In December 2021, [Cabinet received a report](#) outlining options for the replacement of the bridge and a summary of the views of those that have participated in our engagement. The overwhelming message from engagement was that the bridge should be replaced as soon as possible and provided evidence of significant community support to strengthen the business case. Cabinet recognised the value of Llannerch Bridge to rural communities and confirmed its support for the principle of replacing the bridge, subject to securing the necessary funding to do so. This will include making an approach to Welsh Government to request external funding.

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**.

Denbighshire Libraries

A team behind a libraries digital training programme has received a coveted accolade. The Estyn Allan training and development programme has been recognised by the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals for its innovative and confidence building work in 2021, and has also been announced as the Welsh Library Team of the Year. Funded by a Welsh Government Cultural Recovery Fund grant of £169,950, secured by The Society of Chief Librarians (SCL) in Wales, Estyn Allan went live in January 2021 and has developed 33 trainees from across all 22 public library services in Wales. SCL Cymru felt that due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, it was vital that a training and development programme to develop library staff skills was needed to enable libraries to reach their potential in engaging with readers and library users online.

Improvement to the digital services offer in the county 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. This work will also benefit those at a **socio-economic disadvantage**.

Active travel

[Partnerships Scrutiny Committee received an update report in November 2021](#) reviewing the Covid-19 active travel schemes implemented in Llangollen, Ruthin and Rhyl, which were subsequently removed. The Committee requested that the council review the process used to implement and remove all Covid-19 Active Travel Plan Schemes in Denbighshire with a view to identifying good practice and lessons learnt that may be applied when distributing future short-term emergency funding streams that may become available.

Involving stakeholders in the development of our active travel routes is key to their **long-term** sustainability and meeting the well-being needs of our residents. Working collaboratively with communities, including businesses, and partners such as Sustrans and Welsh Government will hopefully lead to the effective **integration** of national and local objectives, maximising project benefits for our communities, **preventing** disruption and benefiting health. Active travel schemes can also benefit those with the protected characteristics of **Disability** and **Age**, improving access in and around our key settlements.

Free After Three

In a bid to support our local high streets in the run up to Christmas and New Year, council-run town centre car parks were free to use every day from 3pm between November 21 and December 31, 2021. By **involving** communities and listening to their needs, this popular festive initiative was welcomed by residents and businesses, encouraging people to shop local and hopefully **prevent** stagnation of the high street at this difficult time. This also supported those who are at a **socio-economic disadvantage**.

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

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Good

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update

North Wales has seen a 19.6% increase in domestic crime in 2021 to 2022 so far.

Comparing to the same period last year, Denbighshire has seen a 17.3% increase in the number of repeat victims of domestic crime during 2021 to 2022, rising from 434 to 509 by December 2021. As a whole, North Wales has seen a 7.8% decrease in repeat victims of domestic violence from September to December 2021, compared to only a 3.8% decrease in Denbighshire. The number of repeat offenders of domestic abuse in Denbighshire has decreased 20% from 75 in December 2020 to 60 for December 2021. In North Wales there has been a 24.2% decrease overall.

Within the national Dewis Cymru website the number of resources for Denbighshire stands at 532 at the end of December. This is a decrease of 5.3% on the figures we saw for the same period the previous year, and a decrease of 14% on the July to September figures. At the end of December 2021, there were 11,030 resources for Wales on Dewis Cymru, and 2,762 for North Wales.

302 carer assessments took place between October and December. This is 44% decrease on the same period last year (reduced by 235 from 537). 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 1,050 (July to September) to 1,044 days for the period covering October to December.

Corporate Plan Programme Board: Project Update

Experiencing Obstacles: Involvement in shaping and improving services

In this period ONEDAY Limited held a youth workshop, with very positive feedback. The Youth Council are keen to engage with the council for future projects. A draft activity report from this work has been received by the Project Team for their consideration. Projected work for January to March 2022 is to complete the Year 3 research to inform a new engagement policy. There is still the intention to run a speculative tender on Sell2Wales. Risks associated with this project are proving difficult to mitigate, mainly around attitudes to either the project or to engagement with the council more generally.

Experiencing Obstacles: Supporting Carers

The Supporting Carers Project is now in its final six months and has been moved to business as usual. The project team met in September and agreed that they wish to continue with the scheduled meetings until March 2022 and will carry on addressing challenges and mitigating any risks. The project manager continues to liaise with the team and is gathering further evidence to inform the final report. A joint statement was issued by Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, Welsh Ambulance Services, the National Health Trust, and the six North Wales local authorities to highlight the unprecedented demand on health and social care services, which is leading to significant delays in care provision and pressure on the emergency services. Services are asking families if they can help by supporting loved ones at home. There is more need than ever to ensure unpaid carers are identified as soon as possible and have better information and support to ensure that they are able to continue with their caring role. Carers Wales has pointed out that unpaid carers are the unrecognised third pillar of health and social care during the pandemic.

On Target: Reduce Domestic Abuse

The 'Act to Reduce Domestic Abuse' project is now offering Ask and Act (Group 2) training for front facing personnel. 61 staff had received this as at November. Hafan Cymru has also promoted their work at primary heads meetings, with Personal Social Education (PSE) coordinators, and continue to engage with schools in Denbighshire on the topic of domestic abuse. An entry to encourage suppliers to raise awareness on domestic abuse has now been included into the non-core tender document that suppliers receive. A

successful communications drive with Denbighshire Leisure highlighted the White Ribbon campaign on November 25, which promoted eradicating violence against women.

On Target: Working towards becoming a Dementia friendly council

This project is now embedded within the council’s core business and will no longer be reported on in these reports.

On Target: County-wide Community Development

Our Community Development Team have been busy preparing and distributing individual grant agreements to the 14 projects that were successful with their bids to the UK Community Renewal Fund. The team held an online meet and greet session for providers of the successful projects, where key points in the grant agreements were highlighted and an opportunity given for networking.

Open Spaces Commuted Sums 2021 Funding Round was launched in November. There is £223k available across 14 communities in Denbighshire for the purposes of enhancing and improving open spaces.

The team has also been working with Economic and Business Development colleagues to support bids to be submitted under the UK Government’s Levelling-Up agenda.

Annual or biennial measures

Measure	2018 to 2019	2021 to 2022	Status
The percentage of people reporting they have received the right information or advice when they needed it – Benchmarked Locally	88	No data No survey	Acceptable
The percentage of carers reporting they feel supported to continue in their caring role – Benchmarked Locally	55	No data No survey	Priority for improvement
The percentage of people reporting that they know who to contact about their care and support – Benchmarked Locally	84	No data No survey	Acceptable

Measure	2018 to 2019	2021 to 2022	Status
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	63	Good
The percentage of people who feel able to influence decisions affecting their local area – Benchmarked Locally	27	20	Priority for improvement

Quarterly or biannual measures

Measure	Quarter 3 2020 to 2021	Quarter 4 2020 to 2021	Quarter 1 2021 to 2022	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Quarter 3 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)	434	555	148	332	509	Does not apply Count only
The cumulative (year to date) number of repeat offenders of Domestic Abuse (3 or more in 12 months)	75	108	18	35	60	Does not apply Count only
The number of live resources on the Dewis Cymru Platform – Benchmarked Locally	562	623	565	620	532	Acceptable

Measure	Quarter 3 2020 to 2021	Quarter 4 2020 to 2021	Quarter 1 2021 to 2022	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Quarter 3 2021 to 2022	Status
The number of assessments of need for support for carers undertaken during the year	537	878	114	221	302	Does not apply Count only
The average length of time (measured in days) adults (aged 65 or over) are supported in residential care homes – Benchmarked Nationally	1,046	1,053	1,053	1,050	1,044	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 October to December 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.

Getting Back Together

In December the council was successful in its bid to the Welsh Government's Connected Communities Loneliness and Isolation fund. We call this our 'Getting Back Together' fund. Denbighshire Voluntary Services Council and the council's Community Support Services, Community Development, Libraries and One Stop Shops have already received requests for support for a range of activities and interventions that will help residents re-engage with friends, families, and those with shared interests.

Integrating and working **collaboratively**, this 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 reduce loneliness, improve health, **prevent** harm, and meet unrealised needs in the **long-term**.

Meifod

[In November](#), Denbighshire's Cabinet unanimously agreed to reopen a non-profit garden furniture manufacturing service, which provides working opportunities for people supported by the council's learning disability service. The centre has been closed since March 2020, but will reopen after maintenance work is completed. Councillors heard how additional investment will improve the centre once feedback from service users and a council task and finish group is gathered. Plans include offering more training in a wider range of skills.

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.

Libraries Supporting Communities

The first week of October was Libraries Week, an annual showcase and celebration of the best that libraries have to offer. This year the theme was 'Taking Action and Changing Lives', celebrating the central role that libraries play in their community as a driver for inclusion, sustainability, social mobility and community cohesion. Libraries invited community members to learn how reading has had an impact on their life. Visit the [library web pages](#) for more information and to join.

Our libraries are critical hubs within our communities, directly benefiting those who are at a **socio-economic disadvantage**, and offer **long-term** solutions that **prevent** isolation, exclusion and information poverty, by **integrating** and **collaborating** with partners, whilst **involving** users.

Regional Memory Support Assessment Service

North Wales had secured additional and recurring funding of £672k per annum from Welsh Government for developing an enhanced regional approach to supporting

individuals who had memory issues / concerns or dementia at the pre-assessment and post-diagnosis stages. At its [meeting in November](#), Cabinet agreed that the council would act as the lead commissioner on behalf of the Regional Collaboration Team on an invitation to tender for a Regional Memory Support Assessment Service. Potentially valued at up to £3.36m over 5 years, the funding would be used to support the implementation of the North Wales Dementia Strategy.

Integrating and **collaborating** with partners, the service will directly support the protected characteristic of **Age and Disability**; it will encourage **involvement** and will bring new support to improve health for those living with dementia, **prevent** harm and meet unrealised needs in the **long-term**.

Winter Fuel Support Scheme

Applications for a winter fuel support scheme for Denbighshire opened on 13 December 2021. The council will be administering the Welsh Government Winter Fuel Support Scheme, which offers eligible households a chance to claim a one-off payment of £200 to provide support towards paying winter fuel bills. The scheme is open to households where one member is in receipt of Income Support, Income Based Job Seekers Allowance, Income Based Employment and Support Allowance, Universal Credit or Working Tax Credits.

Integrating our mutual ambition to **prevent** hardship, at least in the short-term, this **collaborative** initiative between Welsh Government and the council directly benefits those living within **socio-economic disadvantage**. Due to the nature of eligibility for this funding, this should support people with several protected characteristics, such as **Age, Disability, Marriage and Civil Partnership** (particularly in supporting unpaid Carers looking after family members).

Trading Standards

Local authority Trading Standards officers have joined forces with printing businesses who produce leaflets and flyers commonly used by traders to directly promote services on the doorstep. The engagement with printers across the region aims to highlight the risk to consumers, advise businesses, encourage business compliance, and is an opportunity to reduce the volume of anonymous and untraceable leaflets within communities. Commonly

flyers are an A5 promotional card depicting gardening or roofing services with bold references to 'OAP discounts', 'no job too big or small' and 'cooling off periods'.

Evidence from doorstep crime victims often portrays the perpetrators as plausible and professional when soliciting for work. Criminals frequently target residential areas with leaflets or flyers before cold calling with the intent of fraud. Larger production runs are provided commercially by online or local printing businesses. Although a legitimate form of advertising they have been found to omit statutory business information, mislead consumers and provide no route for redress or for trading standards officers to investigate their origin.

This work combined was further highlighted in early October where North Wales Police issued an alert over rogue traders operating in the Rhyl area. Suspicious activity was seen with strangers approaching residents to work on their property and those residents were advised to report this behaviour to the police.

By **involving** businesses and victims of this crime, and **integrating** with North Wales Police, this **collaborative** initiative directly benefits the protected characteristics of **Age** and **Disability** and those at a **socio-economic disadvantage**. Through this work, Trading Standards are also seeking to provide **long-term** protection to our communities and **prevent** harm to our more vulnerable citizens.

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 largely concerned with annual data, therefore most measures will not be reported on until the end of the financial year. However, we have new data to share from our 2021 Stakeholder Survey, in which there were three measures pertinent to this outcome, covering satisfaction with open spaces:

- Countryside – 85% (87% in 2018)
- Beaches – 69% (70% in 2018)
- Parks – 59% (64% in 2018)

Corporate Plan Programme Board: Project Update

Experiencing Obstacles: Climate and Ecological Change

Although the in-year delivery confidence for the programme is reported as experiencing obstacles, due to delays in projects moving from concept to development phase, it is expected that there is enough time before March 2022 to complete most of the planned activity and to fully realise benefits from the spring and summer.

The first ever analysis of local councils' climate action plans reveals that Denbighshire is the only authority in the region to score above the Welsh national average (47% against an average of 31%), and came second only to Cardiff City Council (who scored 70%).

On Target: Tree Planting

Planting work will be undertaken between December 2021 and March 2022, during which time we will meet our target to plant 18,000 trees target. This specific project will at this point be closed. However, we are still keen to create further woodland in the county.

In November 2021 we launched a survey to seek the views of residents regarding the creation of four woodland sites in Denbighshire. These are planned for Ruthin's Llanrhydd Street and Cae Ddol, Maes Esgob at Dyserth, and Maes Gwilym in Rhyl. This woodland creation project will be important to help us tackle climate change in Denbighshire and feedback through this survey will be important for us to help map out the future for these sites. We are also keen to hear if residents would like to get involved with each site, such as the tree planting days and any other volunteering or training opportunities in the future.

On Target: East Rhyl Coastal Defence

Construction of the East Rhyl flood defence scheme remains on target, and promenade work is progressing to plan. Financial spend also remains on target with 84.7% of the estimated outturn costs now spent. A partial handover from Balfour Beattie to Denbighshire of Zones 2 and 3 was carried out in November. Completion of the overall project is anticipated in February 2022.

On Target: Improving Biodiversity

The Wildflower Meadow project started in 2019, following Denbighshire County Council's declaration of a climate and ecological emergency. Nearly 60 sites, including highway verges, footpath edges, cycleways and amenity grasslands, are now being managed to create wildflower meadows across the county. These sites, along with the 11 roadside nature reserves, come to about 30 football pitches worth of grassland managed as native wildflower meadows. As well as protecting wildflowers, the meadows are also giving a helping hand to native insects in the county area. During the last two years the Wildflower Meadow project has seen a total of 268 different wildflower species recorded across sites. Nearly a quarter were classified as a scarce or rare species within Denbighshire.

On Target: Nature Corridor

There have been many successes achieved within the project this autumn, which keep us on track to achieve set targets for the end of the project next year. On a large habitat scale this includes the excavation of the second round of ponds in the new section grazed and cleared this summer, and the wetland has now started to mature and grow into the landscape. We expect with the rainfall this winter that the site will fill and attract many wading birds that have already shown great interest. The site will also assist in flood

management. The tree planting campaign for the winter has also begun, with many sites lined up across the project area, including several schools. This all contributes to the wider scale green corridor development.

We have also been very active with community engagement this autumn, running workshops for schools, craft sessions, volunteer sessions and tree planting events, as well as weekly walking sessions. While there is uncertainty over the ongoing Covid-19 situation and what this would mean for community engagement, our sessions continue sensitive to the guidelines until we are instructed otherwise.

On Target: Moorland Management

During October 2021, 5 hectares of Moel Y Faen was hydroseeded with an upland grass seed mix. This required a significant collaboration between Denbighshire and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), North Wales Fire & Rescue Service, and 100,000 litres of water donated by Hafren Dyfrdwy / Severn Trent Water. In addition, a further 5 hectares of seeding was completed using conventional sowing where the terrain permitted. 1 further hectare of mature heather has also been cut in blocks on land opposite the Ponderosa Café, creating temporary fire breaks and introducing age structure into the heather. The cut heather has been collected and spread on poorly regenerating ground to scatter heather seed.

Wider moorland management on the Llantysilio Mountain and Llandegla Moor is being organised by the Moorland Field Officer, funded by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and the Biodiversity Ecosystem Resilience Fund (BERF); and peatland restoration work funded by the National Peatland Action Programme. A wildfire risk assessment of the moorland areas in Denbighshire is ongoing, identifying areas of risk, prescribing management, and liaising with farmers and landowners.

On Target: Living Assets

Our understanding of Denbighshire's Living Assets is now much clearer. Survey work and inspections have been carried out in several locations across the county to develop a dataset containing information on species, condition, location, management requirements, etc. This project is due to be closed, but activity will continue as business as usual.

At Risk: Energy Efficient Council Homes

At the start of this Corporate Plan the project set an ambitious target of 70% of council houses (existing and acquired) to have achieved an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of C or above. It is anticipated that 50% will have been achieved this by the end of March 2022. The pandemic has had a significant impact on our ability to carry out internal works, although efforts have been concentrated on external works that have contributed to the target. Despite the many challenges there have been some noteworthy successes:

- Contract completed to improve thermal efficiency and introduce renewable energy generation to 55 homes in Meliden.
- Provision of air source heat pumps in 120 off-gas properties.
- Contract to improve thermal efficiency of 55 properties in Rhyl.
- Secured Welsh Government funding for improvements to homes in Ruthin and Betws Gwerfil Goch to introduce renewable heating technologies.

Efficiencies in our housing stock do not count towards our Climate and Ecological Change targets specifically, but energy efficiency will remain a priority beyond the lifetime of our Corporate Plan 2017 to 2022. The anticipated new Welsh Government target is that an EPC rating of A must be achieved for all existing stock, which will pose a significant challenge for the council.

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

Measure	2019 to 2020	2020 to 2021	Status
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 to 2022

Measure	2018 to 2019	2021 to 2022	Status
How satisfied are people with their local open spaces? – Countryside – Benchmarked Locally	87	85	Excellent
How satisfied are people with their local open spaces? – Beaches – Benchmarked Locally	70	69	Good
How satisfied are people with their local open spaces? – Parks – Benchmarked Locally	64	59	Acceptable

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 to 2022.

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.

Electric – Going Forward

In October 2021, the council secured a total of £57,400 grant funding from the UK Government's Office for Zero Emission Vehicles, supported by the Energy Saving Trust, to support the delivery of an Electric Vehicle (EV) Public Charging Pilot. The pilot will provide fast charging points in eight public car parks across Denbighshire for use by the public. Locations have been selected using a range of criteria and include a mixture of key routes and car parks close to residential properties without access to off-road parking. The aim is to open up possibilities for people to transition to an electric vehicle where they didn't previously have access to a charging facility. The intention is for them to be installed and operational by Spring 2022.

Other projects currently under development include expanding the council's electric vehicle charging infrastructure and increasing the number of electric vehicles in our fleet to deliver council services. We are also delivering a pilot project to encourage taxi companies to transition to the use of electric vehicles after securing funding from Welsh Government.

These **collaborative** and innovative projects demonstrate our **long-term** approach in creating healthier surroundings, **integrating** with our collective ambition to **prevent** harm to the environment. This work also responds to what communities have told us through our **involvement** exercises about the need to expand Denbighshire's EV charging network, for the benefit of our tourism, as well as the environment. Electric vehicles are a big part of our future so these are important steps for the council, and this work will provide useful data to inform future expansion of the network.

New pond for Denbighshire wetland

We have progressed a makeover for a Denbighshire wetland to help protect and support local wildlife, working in partnership with Balfour Beatty to create a new pond feature at the Morfa, a 35-acre wetland in Prestatyn. This closely links to our flood defence works in this

priority, as Balfour Beatty, who are developing the Rhyl East Flood Defence Scheme, provided the work as part of the commitment in providing local community benefits.

A viewing platform was recently installed as part of the wetland restoration and now additional work has been completed, which has seen the creation of a new pond by excavating the wetland in a localised area and then transferring the excavated material to form an embankment on top of what once was an old tipping area. The wetland also sits next to the Prestatyn gutter and forms a natural sink during times of high rainfall, acting as an important flood defence. As the site returns to its natural form, without all the current vegetation, its water storage capacity will increase. Other benefits of this work include increased biodiversity, flora and birds, and a wetland attraction people to visit.

This project applies the five ways of working under the sustainable development principle, looking in the **long-term** to **prevent** damage to the environment and enhancing its use. The project is delivered by **integrating** our work with other projects and **collaborating** with partners. The project has taken account of the views of local residents and **involves** volunteers. It is a great natural asset that will benefit residents and visitors. Being free to access, it also benefits those who are at a **socio-economic disadvantage**.

New Wildflower Meadow created at St Asaph

Denbighshire's biodiversity team has worked over the last few months to reseed an ex-horse pasture at St Asaph with wildflower seed. The seed was gathered from a local meadow and includes species such as Common Spotted Orchid, Pignut, and Bird's-Foot-Trefoil. Next year it will be cut regularly to minimise the spread of weed species, before entering into a system of annual hay cuts. More seed will also be brought in to increase the diversity of the meadow. All of the council's wildflower sites are managed in line with Plantlife's Managing Grassland Road Verges guidelines, which sees the grass cutting at these sites prohibited between March and August each year, giving wildflowers enough time to grow, flower, and set seed. By creating new meadows alongside our well-established sites across the county, we will continue to provide more food for pollinators and many other forms of wildlife

This project applies the five ways of working under the sustainable development principle, looking in the **long-term** to **prevent** damage to the environment and enhancing its use.

The project is delivered by **integrating** our work with other projects, **collaborating** with partners, and **involving** volunteers in seed gathering.

Rhyl Central Coastal Defences.

The central area of Rhyl (approximately between Splash Point to the east and the Drift Park to the west) is currently protected by sea defence structures. However, these are deteriorating and, if no work is carried out, they could fail within the next 10 to 15 years. Currently, 550 residential and 45 non-residential properties are at predicted to be at risk from flooding. The purpose of the proposed scheme is to improve coastal flood defences in Central Rhyl to protect homes, businesses and the tourist economy from flooding events and coastal erosion well into the future. A public exhibition of proposals was held at Rhyl Town Hall, consultation running between January 12 and February 9. If we successfully obtain planning consents for the scheme, we expect construction to start in the autumn or winter periods of 2022 and take approximately two and a half years to complete. For more information on the scheme, [visit our website](#).

The project seeks to **involve** the public in this important development for Rhyl, helping us to determine an acceptable **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. The project **integrates** and is being delivered in **collaboration** with Welsh Government and our development partners, Mott MacDonald, and will benefit an area of significant **socio-economic disadvantage**.

Green Taxi

The Welsh Government has set a target of de-carbonising the taxi fleet entirely by 2028 and we are one of a select few local authorities in Wales taking part in the pilot. It operates on a 'try before you buy' basis, 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. We have four wheelchair-accessible Nissan Dynamo E-NV200 taxis to use as part of the pilot. The pilot will end in January, and our next report will reveal our findings.

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**.

Tackling Pollution

A pilot scheme run at a Rhyl school to reduce air pollution, carbon emissions from travel, and improve road safety has produced positive results. The School Streets project saw a temporary road closure outside Ysgol Llywelyn between 8.30am and 9.15am and 2.30pm and 3.30pm. The closure ran between March 22 and 26 and April 12 and 16. A survey carried out on the project's efforts to improve air quality from stopping vehicles idling outside the school, and safety around the site has yielded positive results. Local residents and parents have also praised the scheme.

Improving safety measures around schools and reducing carbon emissions are a priority for the council, and this is one of a number of projects that can help us achieve this. This project shows how working in **collaboration** with schools we can **integrate** initiatives that **involve** residents, parents and children, not only to **prevent** harm, but also to protect the environment in the **long-term**. This project also directly benefits the protected characteristic of **Age**.

Tourism signage to promote Vale of Clwyd

Work to install bilingual brown tourist signage on the A55 promoting the Vale of Clwyd will take place next year. The signs will include Denbigh Castle, Rhuddlan Castle and St Asaph Cathedral, all under the heading 'Vale of Clwyd'. Additional brown signage will also be erected in Denbigh, Rhuddlan and St Asaph to direct traffic to the respective attractions.

The signs are being jointly funded by a **collaboration** of Denbighshire County Council, the City of St Asaph Council, Denbigh Town Council, Rhuddlan Town Council, CADW and St Asaph Cathedral. They will help showcase three of our fantastic attractions here in Denbighshire in the **long-term**, and will encourage more visitors to come and explore our beautiful county. This is part of our wider work to encourage tourism in the area which will help Denbighshire businesses and **protect** our important tourism economy.

Waste and Recycling Update

Following a joint procurement process with Conwy County Borough Council, at its meeting in [October](#), Cabinet authorised the award of a new contract to manage Household Waste Recycling Centres (HRC), approved the adoption of a new Joint HRC Policy with Conwy, and agreed to a new charging schedule for 2022 to 2023. The preferred bidder demonstrated the most economically advantageous tender of those received, and the contract will be awarded by Conwy as the lead authority.

In [December](#), Communities Scrutiny Committee received an update on the council's progress to implement a new waste and recycling operating model. [Appendix 3](#) of the report that was presented provides a helpful map of the key milestones, the majority of which are still on track. Phase 1 groundworks for the new single centralised depot at Colomendy Industrial Estate, Denbigh, is well underway. In [October](#), Cabinet approved a tendering exercise for a main contractor to deliver Phase 2 of the new Waste Transfer Station. Route planning for the new service has also now been completed, with every household allocated a future collection round for their weekly recycling collection and residual waste collection, both being made on the same day of the week.

We now know the number, and sizes, of the new recycling vehicles we need to purchase for the new service. Due to the pressures the manufacturing industry is facing from Covid-19 and Brexit, we have brought forward the procurement for these vehicles to make sure they are delivered on time. An option to supply up to one-third of the main recycling fleet as fully electric Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs) has been included in the specification, which will significantly lower the carbon footprint of the service. We intend to award the contract in the New Year.

The council still expects that the new service will be rolled out in summer 2023. The timing and design of the new service means that we are well-placed to ensure we operate a greener service fit for the future, and more capable of meeting statutory environmental targets. This demonstrates that the council is thinking **long-term** about preventing **harm** to the environment. It is a massive project, and we are **integrating** and **collaborating** with partners throughout, and **involving** users in key decisions about this major service change.

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

Data for 2021 to 2022 shows no change on the previous year for the number of schools providing education in buildings that have the lowest suitability and condition categories (C & D) – the number stands at 27 schools. The 21st Century Schools Programme of course will reduce this figure, and the Service has set ambitious local thresholds where 0 schools represents excellent performance in this measure.

New data is now available from our 2021 Stakeholder Survey. There were three satisfaction measures pertinent to this outcome, covering:

- Opportunities for young people at the start of their career (19%, as in 2018).
- Opportunities for young people to develop their skills (26%, down slightly from 28% in 2018).
- Leisure opportunities that appeal to young people (40% down from 50% in 2018).

Our final measure with new data relates to the 18 to 24 claimant count. In line with national trends, data for October to December reveals that the fall seen previously in Denbighshire's claimant count has started to slow as it approaches pre-pandemic levels (6.5%), resting currently at 7.1% (down from 7.5% in September). We remain behind the Wales average, which is now at 5.1%. But it is worth noting that prior to the pandemic, Denbighshire was 2% behind the Wales average, where we once more find ourselves. The UK claimant count also just remains above the Welsh average, now at 5.3%.

There continues to be no published data in relation to school attainment and attendance due to the impact of the pandemic.

Corporate Plan Programme Board: Project Update

Experiencing Obstacles: Modernising Education

A number of closure reports for Band A projects are being progressed for submission to Welsh Government. Otherwise delivery is focussed squarely on Band B projects. Wates Construction have now been appointed as the lead contractor for the delivery of Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn, and client engagement meetings have commenced; options for the proposed land swap for Ysgol Pendref are being reviewed; and an external architectural practice is developing options for the Ysgol Bryn Collen / Ysgol Gwernant scheme.

Experiencing Obstacles: Childcare Settings

The programme is also continuing to progress some projects under the Child Care Capital Grant. Construction on the Oaktree Centre's extension will commence shortly following confirmation of pre-planning commencement approval. The tender for Ysgol Twm o'r Nant has been received, but was over the forecast budget; and the project at Ysgol Dewi Sant has also seen an increase in the anticipated costs. Both of these projects are on pause pending a review of the costs.

On Target: Welsh Language Centre

The building is now fully in use with more and more activities being held at the site. The final account of the building has been settled and retention released to the contractors. The only outstanding item is operational relating to the lease for tenants.

Experiencing Obstacles: School Nutrition Project

The project does continue to experience some obstacles with timetabling around limitations caused by Covid-19. Our Come and Cook 'bolt-on' training has been postponed three times due to increasing cases in schools in the last two terms. However, we are now able to move forward and are confident that everyone from the Year 2 Tranche of schools will have attended a session before Easter 2022. Five schools have been recruited for Year 3 of the project, and two have already completed their Level 2 training and await a date for their 'bolt-on' day.

At Risk: The Employee Training Grant

Four new applications to the bursary have been received since September (bringing the total to twenty-nine). None of the new applications have been approved as of yet.

Discussions had been held with Working Denbighshire to consider whether management of the fund would best sit there; however, as it is due to finish in March, it has been agreed that the Economic and Business Development Team will continue with it until closure.

Meanwhile, the scheme continues to be proactively marketed to employers and employees.

On Target: Work Start

A total of 100 placements have been sourced and advertised by the Work Start Team to date. There is currently a 67% uptake on these placements with Denbighshire residents accessing paid and unpaid placements across a wide range of council services and small businesses. To date the Scheme has delivered a 45% conversion rate of participants gaining paid employment upon completion of their placement. This is a great achievement as participants on the scheme are those who are the furthest away from the labour market, facing multiple barriers to employment.

The Corporate Plan Board has agreed finances to bridge the funding gap from April to September 2022. A further report will be presented to the Budget Board in February 2022 to highlight a potential pressure from October 2022 (due to the timescales of the Shared Prosperity Fund).

On Target: Working Denbighshire Ready for Work

The project is aiming to deliver virtual career events during the week of March 28 – April 1. Engagement and planning for these events is underway with schools and employers to ensure strong attendance and participation. The events will be primarily targeted at year 9 students, but will be accessible to wider year groups too. Following the event, it is proposed that this project will be formally closed, with learning and needs assessed to inform potential future bids under the Shared Prosperity Fund.

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. Meetings have also been held with colleagues in HR. They will be reviewing what is advertised and will work with services to encourage them to upload their opportunities. We still hope to recruit service representatives to the Internal Volunteers Network where gaps have been identified.

Annual or biennial measures

2020 to 2022 data

Measure	2020 to 2021	2021 to 2022	Status
Percentage of pupil attendance in primary schools – Benchmarked Nationally	No data due to Covid-19	No data due to Covid-19	Excellent (Based on 2019 to 2020)
Percentage of pupil attendance in secondary schools – Benchmarked Nationally	No data due to Covid-19	No data due to Covid-19	Priority for improvement (Based on 2019 to 2020)
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
Local Authority Points Score Average - KS4 Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate Indicator – Benchmarked Nationally	No data due to Covid-19	No data due to Covid-19	Excellent (Based on 2019 to 2020)
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	No data due to Covid-19	No data due to Covid-19	Acceptable (Based on 2019 to 2020)
The number of schools providing education through suitability and condition categories C and D – Benchmarked Locally	27	27	Priority for improvement

Measure	2020 to 2021	2021 to 2022	Status
The percentage of pupils (using Pupil Attitudes to Self and School - PASS) who respond positively against pupils' feelings about school – Benchmarked Locally	87.2	No data No survey	Good

Stakeholder Survey 2018 to 2022

Measure	2018 to 2019	2021 to 2022	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	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	26	Priority for improvement
The percentage of residents that are satisfied that there are leisure opportunities that appeal to young people – Benchmarked Locally	50	40	Priority for improvement

Quarterly or biannual measures

Measure	Quarter 3 2020 to 2021	Quarter 4 2020 to 2021	Quarter 1 2021 to 2022	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Quarter 3 2021 to 2022	Status
Percentage of the population aged 18 to 24 claiming Job Seekers Allowance – Benchmarked Nationally	11.9	12.4	10.0	7.5	7.1	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.

Keeping Everyone Safe

The Autumn term continued to be a difficult one for schools. September saw some further measures be brought in to control the spread of the virus, but by November we were confident enough to revert back to lower levels of interventions. In December, however, with the rapid spread of the new Omicron variant, the decision was made to end face-to-face learning on December 17, with remote learning continuing until December 21. Face-to-face learning resumed from January 10, but the rapid spread of the new variant has made the Spring Term very difficult for schools to manage around staff shortages and affected cohorts.

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).

Welsh in Education

During October to December the council ran a consultation on a new 10-year Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) for 2022 to 2032. The draft plan sets out the council's vision for Welsh-medium education, followed by a number of targets and actions, based around seven outcomes, with the aim of increasing the use of Welsh in education over the next 10 years. These outcomes will contribute towards achieving the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 Strategy, which aims to have one million Welsh speakers by 2050. The outcome of the consultation was presented to [Cabinet in December](#), who approved the submission of the plan to Welsh Government.

This work, delivered **collaboratively** with our partners directly supports the goal for a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language. We have sought to **involve** stakeholders throughout the development of the plan, and **integrate** our ambition and work with that of the Welsh Government's to achieve this **long-term** ambition for Wales.

The work will hopefully **prevent** any decline in the number of Welsh Speakers in our county, and will directly benefit the protected characteristic of **Age** and **Race**.

Dee Valley Rangers

In October the council restarted its Dee Valley Young Ranger group, aimed at people aged between 11 and 18 who want to learn more about the amazing landscape on our doorstep, get involved in practical conservation work, wildlife surveying, and experience fun recreational activities in the outdoors. The group meets on a monthly basis, with events of between 4 and 6 hours. The first event was held in Coed Pen y Pigyn, where conifer trees were cut back to make room for native oaks, followed by some cooking on the bonfire. The group was also joined by local artist, Jude Wood, to create some woodland art. Anyone interested in joining the group should contact ros.stockdale@denbighshire.gov.uk.

This is a great initiative that **involves** young people to work **collaboratively** and think **long-term** about the preservation of our natural assets, **integrating** with our collective ambition to **prevent** harm to the environment. This work directly benefits the protected characteristics of **Age**.

Rhyl Youth Centre

Denbighshire County Council has announced plans to refurbish the former East Parade Café to create a new safe space to support young people. The modern Youth Centre will create a comfortable environment for young people to develop skills and access tailored support through activities and training. Plans include space for a chill-out zone, games area, training, a multi-station kitchen for independent living skills and training, as well as a bespoke therapeutic space. Targeted support will be available to individuals through one-to-ones, group meetings and through accredited courses and partnership work, which aims to help individuals to achieve their potential. Refurbishment work is expected to begin at the start of 2022.

Working **collaboratively** with our partners and **integrating** our ambition for young people to succeed, the new facility will help us engage and **involve** Young People, support them in their **long-term** aspirations, and hopefully **prevent** any disengagement from further training or skills development. This work directly benefits the protected characteristic of **Age**, and in a deprived part of the county, help those at a **socio-economic disadvantage**.

New School Kitchen

A newly modernised school kitchen has been provided for Ysgol Llanbedr. The previous kitchen was not fit for purpose, lacking appropriate storage facilities and adequate equipment. The area has now been extended and completely modernised with a new floor, ceiling, energy efficient kitchen equipment and storerooms. The new building and the equipment has been commissioned to allow for a full menu to be once again prepared on site.

The new kitchen will help meet the school's needs in the **long-term** and support the provision of nutritious meals for pupils, and **prevent** any deficit in provision. The project will benefit the protected characteristic of **Age**. It will also help with the delivery of Free School Meals, which will help those at a **socio-economic disadvantage**.

Kick Start

Working Denbighshire have been promoting Kick Start work opportunities, which is aimed at helping young people gain valuable experience in a working environment whilst getting paid to do so. This could open the doors to further employment or other opportunities within the sectors of the placement. More information is available on the [Department for Work and Pensions \(DWP\) website](#).

Integrating and working **collaboratively** with the DWP, this scheme seeks to **involve** young people in meaningful training experiences that will benefit their **long-term** careers, whilst also **preventing** worklessness. It directly benefits the protected characteristic of **Age**, and will help those at a **socio-economic disadvantage**.

Supporting Local Businesses

A pop-up shop was opened in Rhyl's White Rose Shopping Centre in November to give independent businesses a spotlight in the run up to Christmas Day. Organised in partnership with Antur Cymru and utilising Welsh Government funding, Love Live Local @Rhyl offered on the ground support to local businesses, providing a platform for start-ups and small businesses wishing to trial a new venture on a low-risk basis. Participant producers received a fully-funded diverse range of support from our Business Wales advisory team. Support offered included business and market planning, digital agility, HR and tendering support. As well as offering business support, the hub also provided a new

retail offer for Denbighshire and encouraged visitors to the town. More information on our Love Live Local campaign can be found on [our website](#).

This **collaborative** trial **integrated** with the ambitions of partners and local businesses to **prevent** stagnation and grow our local economy. By **involving** small businesses in this way, we have hopefully encouraged the seeds of growth within their enterprises for the **long-term**. This work will benefit those at a **socio-economic disadvantage**.

Young Persons' Champion

In [December](#), the Council approved the creation of the role of Young Persons' Champion. Whoever is nominated to the role will play an important part in acting as a strong strategic leader on raising and promoting young people's issues; arguing, supporting and defending the concerns, issues and needs of young people in the county.

The work of this new role will directly benefit the protected characteristic of **Age**.

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

Measures: Acceptable

Governance: Good

Corporate Health Performance Framework: Measures Update

With this report, 43% of our Corporate Plan measures currently present as a priority for improvement, down from 45% in the last report. Two of our corporate projects are currently presenting as 'compromised' (Denbighshire and Flintshire Joint Archive Project and the Queen's Building, Rhyl), with 84% of projects regularly updated by project managers (this is down from 90% in the last report for July to September). 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 delivery confidence status of Phase 1 for the Queen's Building is compromised due to the cost of the plan being significantly over the budget allocation, along with the increase in demolition costs. Discussions are underway with Welsh Government for additional funding.

We have received no formal recommendations for improvement from external regulators (Estyn, Care Inspectorate Wales and Audit Wales). There has been one further low assurance report in this period from internal audit, covering Exceptions, Exemptions and Variations from Contract Procedure Rules (CPRs). This was presented to the [Governance and Audit Committee in November](#). The review found that a number of instances, across all services, where CPRs has not been adhered to. An action plan addressing all the risk issues identified has been developed, and the Corporate Executive Team have agreed that a regular report would be produced to show compliance with CPRs going forward.

In this report, there are ten measures with new data that provide insight to stakeholder perception of the council and the way in which it conducts its business. Nine of these indicators were introduced in response to the Statutory Guidance on Performance following the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021:

- Overall satisfaction with the council - 32% (down from 40% in 2018)
- Works well with partners – 62%

- Good working relationship between political leaders and senior management – 60%
- Manages performance well – 28%
- Manages risks and challenges well – 30%
- Manages its finances well – 26%
- Has long-term plans in place – 31%
- Treats its workforce well – 35%
- Makes the best use of its Assets and Resources – 20%
- Purchases goods and services in a fair and efficient way – 30%

The percentages overall here are disappointing, but it must be stressed that these figures are not a reflection of performance, only of perception. They should not overshadow the good and dedicated work of officers and services, and by their nature, these kinds of surveys naturally attract a negative bias. Nonetheless we must listen to the messages that we receive from our customers and partners, and we acknowledge that more could certainly be done to improve public understanding of how the council operates. This is a difficult balance, however. Despite significant promotion of the survey across our sites, networks, website and social media, this survey returned the lowest number of responses than any previous Residents' Survey at only 374. Speaking with partners across North Wales, this is a common picture, response rates to other similar engagement exercises being likewise small. Reduced footfall due to Covid-19 will have played a part here. We have to ask these questions annually, so in 2022 we will explore different and hopefully better ways of engaging with our stakeholders.

Our measure on budget variance (i.e. what we have and receive versus what we are spending) has increased slightly from 2,445k in June 2021 to 2,731k as at December 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 risen by 2% between October and December, to 8%. This represents 19 negative stories out of a total of 218. However, the percentage of external complaints upheld or partly upheld over the last quarter has decreased from 67% to 52%, placing it back within the 'Good' threshold. This represents 50 complaints upheld or partly upheld. This number is consistent for the same period the previous year, and the rate upheld is lower than our annual average for 2020 to 2021 (60%).

As at December 2021, sickness absence stood at 9.03 days, up from 7.54 in the last period. This compares to 6.61 days in December 2020. As at December 2021, the percentage of staff who have had at least 3 one-to-one meetings in the last 12 months stood at 36%.

40% of the council's spend was with local suppliers during October to December. 87.67% of contracts (over £25k and under £1,000k) contained community benefits. One collaborative procurement activity was undertaken during the period, and no collaborative procurement opportunities were missed. There are 8 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 October to December we successfully supported 24 additional placements, bringing our annual cumulative total to 134. This is a sharp increase on our performance in the previous year, aided of course 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.

Our New Ways of Working project issued a position statement in November to address staff frustrations and anxieties about when a return to the office would be possible. For the time being Welsh Government advice remains that staff should continue to work from home where it is possible to do so. However, plans are in place for a phased return where there will be greater flexibility to authorise office attendance, depending on Covid-19 case numbers. Exact arrangements for returning to the office will vary with individuals, teams

and services, but there will be a 12-month period to evaluate office working patterns and assess long-term accommodation needs.

In [December](#), proposals for future member ways of working were presented to Council, including categories of meeting, and a Hybrid Committee Meetings Protocol. It was also confirmed that all future members would be issued with a laptop and mobile phone, but that iPads would no longer be utilised.

The project team continues to meet monthly and minutes are published on the council's internal website. Work continues to consider the implications of New Ways of Working on our HR policies, but also on training and leadership. We are also exploring options for a new office booking system. The proposed workstyles have also been agreed with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and will be put forward for union and member consideration. A draft Asset Strategy has also been developed, and will be shared with SLT and members in the new year.

Develop a new Corporate Plan by October 2022.

In this period, a number of key strands of work have come together to inform decisions on the draft Corporate Plan for 2022 to 2027. The Strategic Planning and Performance Team concluded the initial phase of our County Conversation, finishing in particular our discussions with all secondary schools in the county. We have also completed the update of the [Conwy and Denbighshire Well-being Assessment](#), which is currently out for [consultation until March 14](#).

Critically, two workshops were held with SLT and Cabinet in November to look firstly at the lessons learned with the existing Corporate Plan and its supporting processes; and secondly to analyse the key issues identified thus far (through our County Conversation and Well-being Assessment). Based on those discussions, a draft plan focussing on eight themes has been developed, [consultation on which will run from January 28 until March 11](#). The themes are:

- **Housing:** Provide sufficient and affordable good quality housing, particularly addressing the provision of was affordable to young people in the area.

- **Economy:** Support post-pandemic economic recovery, including identifying and capitalising on opportunities to upskill residents and enable them to access decent employment and income.
- **Young People:** Provide excellent standards of education, through the provision of support and care for all learner preservation of mental health and well-being.
- **Connected Communities:** Maintain a good quality road infrastructure with good transport links and broadband connectivity.
- **Environment and Climate:** Protect our natural assets and defend communities against climate change
- **Addressing Deprivation:** Tackle entrenched deprivation and its associated challenges that some of our communities face.
- **A well-run, high-performing Council:** To be a council that is fair, transparent, performs well, represents value for money, and responds to its customers.

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

The council launched a survey in September to satisfy new annual requirements around surveying stakeholders about our performance. The survey ran for six weeks and the results are shared in the analysis of measures above, and in the tables below. These results will inform our next Self-Assessment of Performance in the summer. Arrangements for a Panel Assessment will be discussed with the new council following the elections in May 2022. We have also been working in partnership with the six North Wales authorities to agree arrangements for the new Corporate Joint Committee (CJC), a report on which went to our [Cabinet in December](#).

Plan for new replacement EU funding arrangements.

Project management capacity and working arrangements have now been established to help progress work in support of the UK Community Renewal and Levelling Up funds, also looking ahead to the new Shared Prosperity Fund. The council has by now submitted three bids for community-based projects in Denbighshire to the UK Levelling Up Fund. The bids cover the Vale of Clwyd, Clwyd West, and Clwyd South, and total some £55m across those constituencies, £35m of which will directly benefit Denbighshire. The projects identified will target town centre and environmental regeneration as well as enhancing

public realm, well-being, and strengthening the local economy. The Clwyd South bid has already been approved by UK Government, and a decision on the others is expected shortly in the new year. Further to the Levelling Up Fund, more than £2.8m has been secured for community-run projects through the UK Community Renewal Fund. Projects range from supporting resident well-being to developing skills and employment locally. For a list of successful projects in Denbighshire visit the [UK Government website](#).

Diverse Council

In [September](#) the Council gave a public statement that committed it to support accessibility and diversity in local democracy. As a result, the Democratic Services Committee was tasked with developing a Diverse Council Action Plan ahead of the 2022 local government elections. The committee met in November to initially consider matters that may be contained in the action plan. Consequently, a draft action plan has been developed and will be reviewed in January.

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 February. 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. Following a recent Audit Wales review of Performance Management, proposals will also include a recommendation for the publishing of service level performance data.

Other developments in the last period

Senior Leadership Team

There are changes occurring at the Senior Leadership level of the council following the retirement of staff, which has prompted the Chief Executive to consider how the authority is structured. It is also a good opportunity to consider how the council is structured as it looks ahead to the delivery of a new Corporate Plan. However, no final decision is going to

be made until after the election of the new Council in May. Interim arrangements will be put in place in the meantime.

Financial Planning

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

Finance Report

Cabinet receive a monthly [finance report](#) that gives details of the council's revenue budget and savings. The report provides a summary update of the Capital Plan, as well as the Housing Revenue Account and Housing Capital Plan. The council's net revenue budget for 2021 to 2022 is £216.818m. The position on service and corporate budgets is a forecast overspend of £1.349m (up from £1.179m the previous month). The variance in the service budgets primarily related to an increase of £182k in residential placement costs within the Education and Children's Service, over which the council has little control. The 2021 to 2022 budget required service savings and efficiencies of £2.666m to be identified and agreed as detailed below:

- Fees and Charges inflated in line with agreed Fees and Charges policy (£0.462m).
- Operational efficiencies (£690k) mostly identified by services throughout the year and within Head Service delegated responsibility in consultation with Lead Members.
- Savings of £0.781m have also been identified which change service provision in some way (shared in detail with Cabinet and Council in the December briefings).
- 1% (£0.733m) Schools efficiency target from Schools Delegated Budgets.

A decision was also required on the calculation of the Council Tax Base for 2022 to 2023 financial year, which Cabinet approved.

Approval of The Statement of Accounts

The council has a statutory duty to produce a statement of accounts that complies with approved accounting standards. 2020 to 2021 was the first year that the authority had to complete group accounts, incorporating the accounts from Denbighshire Leisure Limited.

The timetable for completion had been delayed because of the pandemic, and the final deadline for approval was November 30, 2021.

The financial statements for 2020 to 21 were first approved, subject to audit, by the Head of Finance and Property in August. The draft accounts were then presented to the Governance and Audit Committee in September, and opened to public inspection from September 2 to September 29. Finally, a report was returned to Governance and Audit in November for elected members to formally approve the audited accounts on behalf of the Council, confirming that they had been produced in compliance with the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting.

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 was completed in November, and results were shared with the Senior Leadership Team and Cabinet. The output of the Survey will help inform our Self-Assessment of Performance, which will be shared with managers and members for scrutiny in June, prior to approval by Council in July. In this next period, the Strategic Planning Team will evaluate what lessons have been learned from the survey and explore options for ongoing annual stakeholder engagement, particularly around the new statutory questions that are required under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

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

A report has been taken to the Corporate Executive Team outlining the priority developments for a first phase of the review of the Corporate Programme Office by June 2022. This includes:

- Reconfiguration of Verto, with a view to aligning with the Business Case requirements of the Strategic Investment Group (SIG);
- Horizon scanning with the Senior Leadership Team;

- Establish a procurement framework for Project Management;
- Develop a mentoring and advice service for project managers across the business;
- Establishing the project management forum.

Other developments in the last period

Customer Relationship Management

The council's Performance Scrutiny reviewed the council's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System in November. Broadly, the system has been in use since 2018, and though its function is evolving, it is felt to have simplified procedures within the council, improved reporting, and is beneficial by being accessible to councillors at any time. There has been a roll-out of training, of which 90% of identified staff have taken-up, but only 14% of councillors. At the time of reporting, for councillor queries only 10 were outstanding, and overall, 84% of queries are closed – a marked improvement from past performance. Nonetheless, areas for improvement have been identified:

- ICT capacity to develop the system.
- Service adoption and capacity to support the system.
- Further training for staff and councillors.
- Greater scrutiny of the system's reports by services.

Concerns were also raised by scrutiny members as to the accuracy of councillor reports, but also frustrations around enquiries being incorrectly responded to or prematurely closed. Councillors are encouraged to raise any deficiencies that they experience with their CRM queries to Customer Services so that improvements can be made or training put in place.

Embed interim Strategic Equality Plan

As reported previously, the council has published its interim [Strategic Equality Plan](#) to cover the period between October 2021 to October 2022. Subsequently, the Strategic Planning Team has built a performance framework to support the plan into our Performance Management System, Verto, and progress on the plan will be included in our end of year Self-Assessment of Performance.

Risk Management

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

Understanding Risk Appetite

To help the organisation's understanding, our last review in September gave the application of risk appetite a particular focus, sharing a case study on Ash Dieback. The Corporate Executive Team are also holding regular sessions to 'deep-dive' into particular risks where our current position has significant divergence from our desired appetite. This work has helped improve understanding of risk appetite among senior managers and members. Nonetheless, the Strategic Planning Team is keeping this under review, and will provide further training or support as required. Consideration will particularly need to be given to the training of new members after the May elections.

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

As was reported in the previous period, our corporate risk register includes the risk that "the council fails to become a net carbon zero and ecologically positive council by 2030". The risk is determined to be a "Critical risk", which is outside of our risk appetite.

A risk focus session took place with the Corporate Executive Team in November 2021, to explore what we could do to reduce the gap in our risk appetite. It was concluded that we should tolerate uncertainty around this the risk for the next two years, by the end of which time we should have sufficient information (about our costs, capacity and the results we have achieved to date), to determine whether we are likely to become net carbon zero.

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.

An update on the management of this risk will be available in the next period based on the timescales in relation to the commencement of the Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) for North Wales. The functions of the CJC must be operational from June 2022 and scrutiny arrangements have yet to be confirmed.

Other developments in the last period

Measuring our controls

We have been working with Internal Audit and all risk owners to outline indicators that can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of our controls in managing and reducing our risks. We are also specifying relevant recent or planned internal and external audit work that gives risk owners assurance around the effectiveness of our controls.

Communicating our Risks

A summary of our corporate risk register is being developed for use in internal communications.

Recruitment and Retention

During the last review, recruitment and retention of staff were highlighted as a particular risk area for the council. The need to drive up recruitment of housing, health and social care personnel, and waste and recycling staff were identified as key controls:

- A recruitment event to attract housing, health and social care staff to work in Denbigh and the south of Denbighshire took place in November at Denbigh Town Hall. This was organised by Denbighshire County Council and Grŵp Cynefin. It offered information on jobs currently available and support for those wishing to apply on the day. There was information about other benefits for working or volunteering for the organisations attending. Stallholders included Grŵp Cynefin offering information on roles at their extra care housing schemes, primarily Awel y Dyffryn, in Denbigh; Working Denbighshire; Community Navigators, Denbighshire Voluntary Services Council and the Locality Volunteer's Project; Denbighshire County Council social care providers; and Independent care home providers currently providing care and support in the south of the county to include Cartref Ni and Abacare.
- The council hosted another recruitment event in December that focussed on waste and recycling. This was again hosted at Denbigh Town hall, and over two sessions gave an opportunity to discover available training and career opportunities. Our aim was to attract individuals aged 17 and over who enjoy working outdoors within a friendly team environment. Staff were available on the day to highlight the variety of

posts available, from entry level right through to LGV driver level, and to support people with their applications.

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.

The strategy and action plan to support the new ways of working project and emerging leadership, learning and development programme, have been developed. Induction, policies, guidance and training have been assessed and work has commenced to make the changes required.

The mental health action plan is approximately 70% complete. It has been agreed that Mental Health Champions will also be recruited for all services through the staff council. During the period, we have been preparing a well-being survey, which will be launched in the Spring of 2022.

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

The council's Scrutiny Coordinator has reviewed the scrutiny requirements of the Socio-Economic Duty to ensure scrutiny arrangements comply with obligations under that Duty. We have also been working across services to make it easier for people to find our well-being impact assessments.

We have an annual measure (Percentage of staff for whom we have equality monitoring information) that was introduced in 2015 to measure our progress in improving the equality monitoring information that we hold. We will update on progress in our next report. Our next Public Sector Duty report is due to be published in March 2022.

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

During the period, we undertook and completed our annual workforce planning review with all services. Our approach was informed by discussions about the new corporate risk around recruitment and retention, and the escalated risk about pressures in social care and health. Over the next period we will be consulting on the corporate workforce plan and developing a delivery plan to address corporate and service actions.

A report will also be presented to the Senior Leadership Team during 2022 with a proposal about how we can best plan for posts requiring a specific level of Welsh above Level 1, and how implementation could work in practice.

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.

The staff resource pressures have been corporately acknowledged and additional funding made available in the new budget. It is expected that two new posts will be created to support democratic governance activities in January and April 2022.

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.

In our last updated, we reported that a 6-month temporary post was being created to address the issue of compliance with DBS checks and risk assessment (except for employees under Social Care Wales or CSIW), due to capacity issues. During this period, we have faced difficulties recruiting to the temporary post and so we have been addressing the backlog by allowing overtime within the HR team. Compliance is now at over 90 % across the council.

Other developments in the last period

Audit Wales Study

We have supported Audit Wales with their national review of asset management and workforce planning. A report is expected by Spring 2022.

Community Support Services

Following the retirement of Phil Gilroy, Head of Community Support Services, two new interim posts have been created and appointed to: David Soley, Interim Head of Service, Operational Services, and Ann Lloyd, Interim Head of Service, Business Support Services.

Assets

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

Asset Management strategy

A Corporate Five-year Asset Management Strategy has been drafted. The strategy will be presented to the council's Asset Management Group in the new financial year, along with new Terms of Reference that will reflect the impending restructure of the Senior Leadership Team and any changes to Lead Member responsibilities following the election.

Carbon Minimum Standards

In [December](#), Cabinet adopted minimum standards to which all council non-domestic new build and major extension or refurbishment construction projects must adhere to, which includes targets for in-use and embodied carbon. Our Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically Positive Action Plan provides a route map to achieve the net carbon zero goal which requires a reduction in carbon emissions from non-domestic council buildings by at least 60% by 2030, compared to 2019 to 2020 baseline.

While concerted efforts are being made to tackle the council's existing non-domestic building stock, it is likely that existing regulatory standards will be insufficient to ensure any new buildings or major extensions adequately contribute to achieve the council's net carbon zero goal. Introducing our own enhanced standard will avoid the potential need for retrofit carbon reduction measures at a later stage within non-domestic new builds and major extension / refurbishments.

Flood Risk Investigations

A [Section 19 Flood Investigation Report](#) has been considered by Communities Scrutiny and full Council, reviewing the extensive flooding that occurred across Denbighshire as a

result of Storm Christoph in January 2021. The investigation was to understand the reason why the flooding occurred, the likelihood of it happening again, and to assess whether measures could be put in place to reduce flooding in future. The main sources of flooding event were the River Clwyd, River Ystrad, and River Alyn. There were five separate locations affected by main river flooding. These ranged from large communities, such as Ruthin and Denbigh (Brookhouse), to individual isolated properties within the Llandyrnog, Llanrheadr and Llanarmon yn Iâl Communities. There was also some localised surface water flooding experienced at Llanynys, Llanfair D.C, St. Asaph, Bodelwyddan and Dyserth Communities; and the latter community also experienced flooding from the section of ordinary watercourse known as Afon Ffyddion. The report identified a number of key actions to be taken forward by the council and its partners to alleviate any potential flood events. Additionally, a Flood Task and Finish Group has been set up, which includes representation from Denbighshire County Council, Natural Resources Wales, Welsh Water and the Farmers Union. The Task and Finish Group are due to submit their formal report to full Council prior to April 2022.

[A flood risk management](#) report was also presented to Communities Scrutiny in October, outlines the conclusions of the joint study, led by Natural Resources Wales (NRW), into whether improvements could be made to the management of the Rhyl Cut and Prestatyn Gutter, and adjacent drains and sewers. The report also outlined each organisation's responsibilities in relation to flood management and flood mitigation. Following the flooding that affected parts of Rhyl and Prestatyn in July 2017, NRW commenced a review of the hydrology, management and maintenance of Rhyl Cut and Prestatyn Gutter. DCC and Welsh Water agreed to support NRW with the project, which will also hopefully provide a better understanding of how each organisation's assets interact, particularly during times of heavy rainfall.

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

The proposal has been to the budget board to begin the process of rebuilding capacity within ICT to deal with the issues raised, this has also been presented to the Corporate Executive Team and we are awaiting an outcome.

Fibre delivery across the county is progressing through the Local Full Fibre Network (LLFN), which still has some delivery issues, and Openreach commercial fibre

improvements in Prestatyn, Rhyl and Denbigh. Delivery in our rural areas is still proving to be tough, particularly as some areas are trying to work through Openreach's Community Fibre Partnerships. Discussions are underway with the Lead Officer, Strategic Assets concerning a location for a second data suite in either Rhyl or Denbigh to expand resilience.

Digital Security remains a significant threat to the council and remains on the council's Corporate Risk Register. ICT and Digital Services are actively involved with both local and national groups to mitigate, and 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 the County's ICT and Digital Services function. There is still a very volatile environment around 3rd Party Schools ICT support provision. The Director of Education and Chief Digital Officer have repeatedly recommended that schools subscribe to the service offered by the council's corporate ICT and Digital Services team to mitigate the risk to schools directly. We have also highlighted the responsibility on the Head Teacher should they choose external provision or indeed have no support arrangements in place.

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

The Local Fibre Network project should have officially been completed in September, however, some work is still required, and we are waiting for official confirmation of the project extension from the North Wales Economic Ambition Board. Corporate sites have mainly been completed, however, there are a small number of sites requiring additional work to be migrated to a high speed fibre.

Community Town Council sites have been more problematic due to no existing services or infrastructure. Despite these issues, a number of buildings have been fully fibred and are currently waiting for further services and hardware to be ordered, installed and configured. Openreach have removed a number of Town Council sites from the scope, due to various geographical and project time constraints. Therefore, there may be implications raised around customer expectation and the reality of Openreach's actual delivery.

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. However, this action is dependent on intervention from Microsoft.

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 public events were held in November, including a Business Breakfast. 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. This will be supported by 1.5 full-time equivalent members of staff requested in the budget for dedicated roles within the Communication Team.

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

This action continues to remain on target with the plan for it to be seen as business as usual. The property team are also looking to review the acquisition process to ensure that we capture any asbestos issues as early as possible.

Procurement

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.

The Legal Services Manager continues to provide interim managerial support to the Procurement team, in the absence of a Procurement Manager being in post. There are still capacity issues and these are affecting pace of progress in relation to these actions. For example, the updated procurement strategy is delayed.

From a community benefits perspective, discussions with suppliers around simple actions are continuing. For example, discussions about connection to grid electric rather than diesel generators, around the use of electric / hybrid vehicles and so on.

Our procurement team has been working with the Climate Change Team on all matters relating to De-Carbonisation in Procurement, but as yet they have not been involved with working with business and suppliers in Denbighshire to encourage lower carbon practices. A paper (De-Carbonisation in Procurement) will be presented to the Climate Change Board in February 2022.

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

We have developed some training slides that our business partners will discuss with the services that they support. Business partners will also continually remind services, as part of their role, of procurement process and policy.

Ensure staff involved with managing contracts are suitably trained. Training will be rolled out across the council to all staff who are involved in contract management

Contract management training on the use of Proactis, the procurement management system, will be rolled out again. A new System's Officer will be in post from January 2022, and this post holder will lead on the delivery of the training programme.

Internal Audit Action: Procurement forward work plans to be compiled by each Service to include existing and horizon scanning of projects and activities

This new activity will support the Procurement team to support services to manage procurements effectively and proactively. Work is expected to commence on this activity in the next period.

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

Development of the future model for the Community Benefits Hub has started, but progress has been affected by the current workload of the Hub. A contractual contribution to the Hub is being agreed in relation to the procurement of the Conwy and Denbighshire Child Assessment Centre. A successful Community Renewal Fund project also includes the potential to contribute activities undertaken by Hub.

Print Procurement

At its [meeting in October](#), Cabinet approved the addition of new suppliers to its Dynamic Purchasing System Framework. This was to ensure that the council receives excellent quality design and print services; and, through increased competition, provide the best possible value for money. Our Graphic Design and Print Framework is shared with Flintshire County Council, and had not been updated since 2017, so it was timely to revisit this to include new suppliers that had been evaluated. This update will also provide opportunities for more local companies to be included in our framework. Work is also ongoing by the Economic and Business Development Team to proactively engage with local companies with a view to including them on the new framework.

Annual or biennial measures

2019 to 2021 data

Title	2019 to 2020	2020 to 2021	Status
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	15	Next report March 2022	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
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Stakeholder Survey 2018 to 2022

Title	2018 to 2019	2021 to 2022	Status
Overall satisfaction with the council (%) – Benchmarked Locally	40	32	Priority for Improvement
Partners that agree the council works well with them (%) – Benchmarked Locally	New to 2021	62	Good
Councillors and council employees who agree that there is a good working relationship between political leaders and senior management (%) – Benchmarked Locally	New to 2021	60	Acceptable
Stakeholders who agree that the council manages its performance well (%) – Benchmarked Locally	New to 2021	28	Priority for Improvement
Stakeholders who agree that the council manages it risks and challenges well (%) – Benchmarked Locally	New to 2021	30	Priority for Improvement
Stakeholders who agree that the council manages its finances well (%) – Benchmarked Locally	New to 2021	26	Priority for Improvement

Title	2018 to 2019	2021 to 2022	Status
Stakeholders who agree that the council has long-term plans in place (%) – Benchmarked Locally	New to 2021	31	Priority for Improvement
Stakeholders who agree that the council treats its workforce well (%) – Benchmarked Locally	New to 2021	35	Priority for Improvement
Stakeholders who agree that the council makes best use of its assets and resources (%) – Benchmarked Locally	New to 2021	20	Priority for Improvement
Stakeholders who agree that the council purchases its goods and services in a fair and efficient way (%) – Benchmarked Locally	New to 2021	25	Priority for Improvement

Quarterly or biannual measures

Title	Quarter 3 2020 to 2021	Quarter 4 2020 to 2021	Quarter 1 2021 to 2022	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Quarter 3 2021 to 2022	Status
The percentage of Corporate Plan Measures showing as 'Priority for Improvement' – Benchmarked Locally	49	49	41	45	43	Acceptable

Title	Quarter 3 2020 to 2021	Quarter 4 2020 to 2021	Quarter 1 2021 to 2022	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Quarter 3 2021 to 2022	Status
The number of projects on the project register showing as 'compromised' – Benchmarked Locally	0	1	2	2	2	Acceptable
The percentage of projects whose delivery confidence was updated in the last three months – Benchmarked Locally	90	94	96	90	84	Acceptable
The percentage of corporate risks inconsistent with the council's risk appetite statement – Benchmarked Locally	No data Six-monthly	55	No data Six-monthly	62	No data Six-monthly	Priority for Improvement

Title	Quarter 3 2020 to 2021	Quarter 4 2020 to 2021	Quarter 1 2021 to 2022	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Quarter 3 2021 to 2022	Status
The cumulative number of negative reports from external regulators – Benchmarked Locally	0	0	0	0	0	Excellent
The cumulative number of Internal Audit low assurance reports, financial year to date – Benchmarked Locally	4	4	0	1	2	Good
Corporate and Service Budget Variance (£k)	2,242	-718	708	2,445	2,731	Does not apply Count only
Council reserves (£k)	7,135	7,135	7,135	7,135	7,135	Does not apply Count only

Title	Quarter 3 2020 to 2021	Quarter 4 2020 to 2021	Quarter 1 2021 to 2022	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Quarter 3 2021 to 2022	Status
Negative news stories as a percentage of all news stories about the council – Benchmarked Locally	12	24	10	6	8	Acceptable
The percentage of external complaints upheld or partly upheld over the last quarter – Benchmarked Locally	52	57	62	67	52	Good
The rolling average number of working days / shifts per full time equivalent (FTE) local authority employee lost due to sickness absence – Benchmarked Locally	6.61	6.47	7.12	7.54	9.03	Priority for improvement

Title	Quarter 3 2020 to 2021	Quarter 4 2020 to 2021	Quarter 1 2021 to 2022	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Quarter 3 2021 to 2022	Status
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	45	44	42	36	Priority for Improvement
The percentage of spend with suppliers based within Denbighshire – Benchmarked Locally	34	36	33	38	40	Excellent
The cumulative percentage of Denbighshire contracts over £25k and under £1,000k containing community benefits – Benchmarked Locally	No data New to quarter 1 2021 to 2022	No data New to quarter 1 2021 to 2022	75	88	88	Excellent

Title	Quarter 3 2020 to 2021	Quarter 4 2020 to 2021	Quarter 1 2021 to 2022	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Quarter 3 2021 to 2022	Status
The cumulative number of work experience placements offered within the council	28	36	64	110	134	Does not apply Count only

Improvement Actions

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

- Chief Executive to review the structure of the Senior Leadership Team and implement interim arrangements until approval of a new structure following the election.
- Revise one-to-one measures for Highways and Environment Services and Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services.
- Develop training programme for newly elected councillors.

Equality and Diversity

Armed Force Veterans Support

Working Denbighshire offers support for Armed Force Veterans. The service provides access expert advice, guidance and support to help to remove the barriers that hinder veterans when it comes to them accessing Employment, Education and Training. All of their services are free of charge. The service also signposts to a wide range of services that veterans may benefit from, such as mental health services and support groups.

The support offered by Working Denbighshire, alongside the council's Covenant for the Armed Forces work in Denbighshire will directly benefit the protected characteristics of **Age, Disability, Marriage and Civil Partnership** and those at a **socio-economic**

disadvantage. This work shows **collaborative** working, **long-term** thinking and an **integration** of ideals to support and protect veterans. It also seeks to **involve** interested stakeholders and **prevent** loneliness and isolation.

Safeguarding

In November, council personnel were invited to renew their understanding of safeguarding by completing the revised Safeguarding E-Learning module. Denbighshire County Council is required to ensure that all personnel refresh their safeguarding training every three years. This is vital in ensuring that personnel can recognise the signs of abuse or neglect and are confident in being able to take the correct action. This also enables personnel to be clear and aware of their safeguarding duty under the Wales Safeguarding Procedures, and awareness of their designated safeguarding lead in their service in Denbighshire.

As part of National Safeguarding Week in Wales (November), the North Wales Safeguarding Board arranged a number of safeguarding workshops and safeguarding information materials for professionals and the general public to access. The week saw opportunities for us all to come together to raise awareness of important safeguarding issues, facilitate conversations and share examples of best practice.

Council training and **collaborative** initiatives such as this are about taking the correct actions to **prevent** harm to our communities in the **long-term**, and seeks to inform us and **involve** us to identify safeguarding issues. **Integrating** with the National Safeguarding campaign in Wales will ultimately help communities.

Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment

[In December, Cabinet approved the draft Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment for submission to Welsh Government.](#) The assessment was accepted as robust and in-line with Welsh Government guidance. Cabinet also accepted the statutory requirement to undertake an assessment of accommodation needs every five years and to subsequently meet those needs. The draft document concludes that eight residential pitches are required to meet the identified needs of three households and their extended family groups in the county, but that there was no evidence for the need for a permanent transit site due to the low numbers of unauthorised encampments, the short-term nature of encampments, and the lack of demand for such facilities locally. It was recommended that

a management based approach be applied to unauthorised encampments based on best practice from across the UK, balancing the needs of both travelling communities and local communities. Elected members and the travelling community will be engaged in developing that approach in Denbighshire to reflect local requirements.

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**.