2023/24

Flintshire County Council
Corporate Self-Assessment

Draft

What is the Purpose of this Document?

This document details the Council's Corporate Self-assessment and identifies areas of best practise and areas for further improvement. The document explains:

1.   What is the Corporate Self–Assessment?

The Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021 sets out a duty to report on performance and states 'A council must produce a self-assessment report in respect of each financial year. The report must set out its conclusions on the extent to which it met the performance requirements during that year, and any actions it intends to take, or has already taken, to increase the extent to which it is meeting the performance requirements.' This document aims to achieve the duty set out above for the act and for the use by the Council.

The Corporate Self-assessment is a comprehensive assessment of the corporate organisation and not a detailed assessment of the performance of each service portfolio, the assessment themes are designed in this way.

The self-assessment is meant to provide a platform for assurance and self-improvement and would lead to an improvement plan for the organisation.

The Self-assessment Model focused on nine themes and considered a number of core questions within each of these themes, outlined further in this document. As with all models there will inevitably be overlaps across themes however, the themes are sufficiently defined and demarked to avoid too much overlapping or duplication.

The Self-assessment Model followed three stages:

- Stage One - 'desk-based' analysis and evaluation of available documents and evidence, and some internal triangulation through review and moderation
- Stage Two - opinion sourcing, consultation and engagement and 'triangulation'
- Stage Three - production of a formal and final published assessment and improvement plan which will be led by the Cabinet and run through both the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Governance and Audit Committee for input and assurance.

The first stage was more evidential, this included the presence of strategies and evaluative reports e.g., regulatory reports, the Annual Governance Statement (AGS), the Annual Performance Report. The second stage, more qualitative through consultation with key stakeholders, whilst the third stage is the closing stage involving the production and publication of a formal and final assessment and action plan.

2.   Process of Review and Timeframe

A timeframe to complete each of the three stages of the Corporate Self-assessment was identified as follows:

Stage	Task	Timeline
One	Desk-based' analysis and evaluation of available documents and evidence, and some internal triangulation through review and moderation	January – April 2024
Two	Opinion sourcing, consultation and engagement and 'triangulation'	April – July 2024
Three	Closing stage, production of a formal and final published assessment and action plan. Led by the Cabinet and run through both the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Governance and Audit Committee for input and assurance	July - September 2024

The Corporate Self-assessment draws upon the Council's AGS model of evaluation, scoring and evidence capturing as this model was known to be effective. A Project Board was initially established in 2021, comprising of a Project Board Chair, a senior responsible officer, and officers from across portfolios that were either currently Performance Leads or officers who were previously part of the Governance Recovery Group during the Council's response phase to the pandemic. A report was initially shared at Governance and Audit Committee in July 2021 on the development of the Self-assessment model, the proposed model for the first Corporate Self-assessment was endorsed.

As this is the third year completing the Corporate Self-assessment, the Performance and Risk Management Team now lead on the self-assessment but continue to liaise with the officers who previously sat on the Project Board as they understand their portfolio services, whilst having sufficient seniority within the Council to take the Self-assessment forward.

This is the Council's third year completing the Corporate Self-assessment. For 2022/23, the model and approach were reviewed and adapted slightly to include an additional two questions within Theme A (Vision, Strategy and Performance Reports), to ensure that the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and Integrated Impact Assessments (IIA's) were incorporated. For 2023/24, the model and approach was reviewed and adapted to align with the Panel Performance Assessment Methodology, with existing questions amended slightly, a number of new questions and a new Theme (Theme I: Climate Change) added to the Corporate Self-assessment. The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 places a duty on councils to arrange for a panel to undertake and respond to a corporate, organisational level assessment, of the extent to which the council is meeting its performance requirements.

The results of Stage One were shared at a Senior Leadership Academi where some of the results were considered, challenged, and evaluated. During Stage Two, consultation was undertaken with Members from Cabinet, Governance and Audit Committee and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to further consider, challenge and evaluate the feedback and scores to ensure that we as a Council are continuously self-assessing our performance.

3.   Scoring Criteria:

The scoring criteria for the Corporate Self-assessment is detailed below;

Score 5 – Very best practice   **Score 4/5** – Very best practice / Good evidence
**Score 4** – Good evidence   **Score 3/4** – Good evidence / Further action may be required
Score 3 – Evidence but further action may be required   **Score 2/3** – Some evidence but lacking in key areas / Further action may be required
Score 2 – Some evidence but lacking in key areas/ action required   **Score 1** – No evidence

4.   Three Year Comparison (Summary of the Effectiveness of the Council's Corporate Self-Assessments)

Comparison between 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24 Corporate Self Assessments
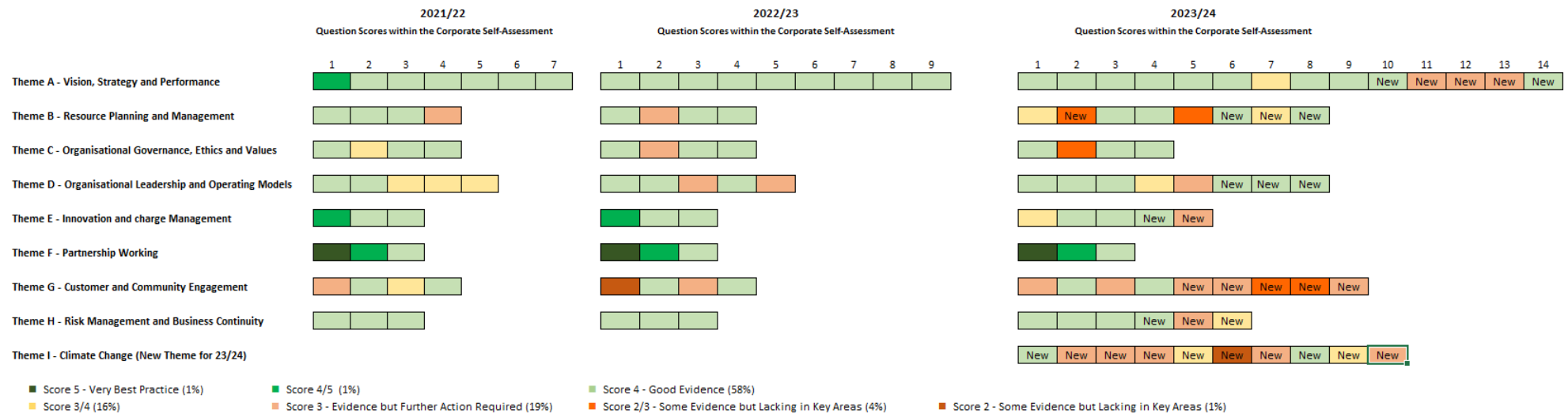
Note: Two additional questions were added to the 22/23 Corporate Self-assessment within Theme A
Note: A total of 32 new questions and a new theme (Theme I) were added to the 23/24 Corproate Self-assessment

An overall comparison of the scores between 2022/23 and 2023/24 for the 35 questions within Themes A-H (excluding the thirty-two new questions within the Themes) between the financial years of 2022/23 and 2022/24, shows that **27** scores have remained the same, **6** have decreased and **2** have increased.

A further breakdown of the scoring within each of the Themes is outlined below;

- **Theme A** – eight questions remained with a score of 4 and one question reduced from a score of 4 to a 3/4. The five new questions for 2023/24; two scored 4 and three questions scored 3.
- **Theme B** – two questions scored 4; one question scored 3/4 and one question scored 2/3. The four new questions for 2023/24; two questions scored a 4, one question scored 3/4 and another score 2/3
- **Theme C** – three of the questions remained at a 4 and one question reduced to a 2/3.
- **Theme D** – two questions remained the same with a score of 4, one question increased from 3 to a 4 and one question decreased from a score of 4 to a 3/4. The three new questions for 2023/24; all three questions scored a 4.
- **Theme E** – two questions remained the same with a score of 4, and one questions decreased from 4/5 to a 3/4. The two new questions for 2023/24; one scored a 4 and the other scored a 3.
- **Theme F** – scoring for all three questions remained the same, one score of 5, one a 4/5 and one question scoring a 4.
- **Theme G** – scores for two questions remained a 4, one question increased from a 2 to a 3, and one question remained a score of 3. The five new questions for 2023/24; three questions scored 3 and two questions scored 2/3.
- **Theme H** – scoring for all three questions remained a 4. The three new questions for 2023/24; one question scored 4, one question scored 3/4 and the other question scored 3.
- **Theme I** – For 2023/24 Theme I was added to the Corporate Self-assessment to capture information specific to Climate Change, with 10 questions being added to this theme. Of the ten questions, two questions scored 4, two questions scored 3/4, five questions scored 3 and one question scored 2.

5.   External Assurance

A high-level focus of governance, risk, and control arrangements are in place for setting and monitoring actions in response to reports received from external regulators, including Estyn, Care Inspectorate Wales CIW) and Audit Wales. The Annual Audit Summary sets out the audit and regulatory work completed by Audit Wales of Flintshire County Council since the last annual report which was published in March 2023. Overall, the Auditor General for Wales has reached a positive conclusion. No formal recommendations have been made during the year and proposals for improvement have arisen from the national and local reviews undertaken. The Auditor General gave an unqualified true and fair opinion on the Council's financial statements on 12 April 2024, after the deadline agreed with the Welsh Government of 30 November 2023. The audit was delivered later than in previous years mainly due to the impact of new auditing standard requirements.

6.   Council Performance

The Council Plan is a detailed document which sets out the annual priorities of the Council. It is a requirement of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 for organisations to 'set out any actions to increase the extent to which the council is meeting the performance requirements.' The Council Plan 2023-28 was adopted by the Council in June 2023, and the end of year performance monitoring report highlighted that 74% of activities were making good progress and 65% of the performance indicators had met or exceeded their targets for the year.

7.   Annual Governance Statement

It has been clear when evaluating both the Corporate Self-assessment and the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) that there are some commonalities. The themes identified for Improvement from the AGS are:

- **Improvement in internal and external stakeholder engagement, consultation, and participation**
    - Enhanced decision making to ensure the most appropriate course of action is taken.*
    - The ability to receive and use feedback to shape service improvement, including improved complaints handling.*
    - Ensuring inclusivity with stakeholder groups and encouragement of public participation.*
    - Improved social media presence.

- **Development of the Integrated Impact Assessments (IIAs)**
    - This will ensure the Council assesses the impact of their decisions and policies on equality groups, the environment, the economy, and other areas of interest prior to policy / strategy changes.

- **Sustainability of Resources and Resilience of Workforce**
    - Effectively managing service expectations with the resources available with all stakeholders especially.
    - Developing and retaining the workforce capacity, recruitment and retention following a pay modelling review.*
    - Increase the use of the Welsh language within the workforce and members.

- **Training Opportunities**
    - Enhanced decision making and challenge process through focused training, facilitated sessions available to Members and Senior Officers.

- **Embedding of Risk Management**
  - Implementing robust and integrated risk management arrangements, within the Council's financial, social, and environmental position.
  - Increase level of awareness and understanding of risk management across the Council through the development and roll out of risk management e-learning module.*

Where an Asterix has been included to an area for improvement above, this an area for improvement which has also been identified in this year's Corporate Self-assessment (2023/24).

8.   Key Themes of the Corporate Self-Assessment

The nine key themes of the Corporate Self-assessment are listed below, with analysis on how we do this / how we achieve this is provided from page 9 to page 25:

Theme A   Vision, Strategy and Performance

Theme B   Resource Planning and Management

Theme C   Organisational Governance, Ethics and Values

Theme D   Organisational Leadership and Operating Models

Theme E   Innovation and Change Management

Theme F   Partnership Working

Theme G   Customer and Community Engagement

Theme H   Risk Management and Business Continuity

Theme I   Climate Change

Against these themes, the Council reviewed whether:

- It was exercising its functions effectively
- It was using its resources economically, efficiently, and effectively
- Governance was effective for securing the above

Theme A – Vision, Strategy and Performance

Questions		How we do this / How we achieve this?
A1	Does the Council have a set of corporate and service strategies in place which set out vision and ambition?	• Council Plan 2023-28 which sets out the Council's vision and ambition for the year and longer term. • A set of corporate and service strategies were in place which set out the Council's vision and ambition e.g., the Digital Strategy, Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and the Capital Programme and Capital Strategy 2024/25 – 2026/27
A2	Are these strategies locked-in to national and regional Government strategy, and collaborative planning with key partners?	• The Council Plan priorities are clearly defined and locked into national and regional priorities and strategies. • The Council Plan 2023-28 identifies clear linkages to national and regional policies/strategies which are captured in the document • School Modernisation Strategy and Strategic outline Programme for 21st Century school investment - Moving towards Net Zero Carbon for new schools builds, Youth Justice Plan
A3	Are these strategies being followed and are they achieving their aims and objectives?	• The Council Plan 2023-28 progress and performance is monitored through the Business Planning, Performance and Risk Management System • The MTFS was updated annually alongside the Council's budget process • Service Strategies were reviewed within their set timeframes (set timeframes varied between each of the strategies and the services) • Annual reporting on relevant strategies and plans ensures reviews of aims and objectives are being achieved
A4	Are these strategies sustainable, and dynamic, in adapting to change and the future?	• The Council Plan had an annual refresh in 2023/24 to ensure appropriateness. Engagement was conducted with stakeholders including Chief Officer Team, senior officers, employees, members of the Council to support the development of the plan • The review of our Digital Strategy including consultation ensures it remains fit for purpose and meets the needs of changing technologies
A5	Are these strategies supported by portfolio service business plans which are consistent with the overall aims and objectives of the Council?	• During the year each Portfolio had a business plan in place which supported the Council Priorities that align with the Council Plan 2023-28, with the aims and objectives of the Council and some priorities are reflected in the Council Plan, where appropriate • Portfolio Business Plans are in development and monitored through the Business Planning, Performance and Risk Management System
A6	Are these strategies compliant with the requirements of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015?	• Statutory guidance for Public Service Boards (PSBs) adhered to, for Well-being Assessment and Well-being Plan production. This includes demonstrable alignment to the well-being goals for Wales and five ways of working

Questions	How we do this / How we achieve this?
	• A requirement of Committee reports is to demonstrate how strategies are compliant with the Act • The Digital Strategy and Climate Change Strategy aims and objectives are well mandated under the Act and the five ways of working • Council Plan (2023-28) (and Portfolio Business Plans) are compliant with the requirements of the Act
A7 Are strategies and decisions made following the undertaking of Integrated Impact Assessments (where applicable)?	• Integrated Impact Assessments (IIAs) are carried out on all new strategies that assess against the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, including summary IIAs for Committee reporting on strategic reports.
A8 Are these portfolio service plans being followed and are they achieving their aims, objectives, and performance targets? (new to 22/23)	• Regular reviewing of Portfolio Business Plans, including monitoring and an escalation process in place • Annual Performance Report 2023/24 • End of year reporting 2023/24 against the priorities and measures within the Council Plan (2023-28) • Risk Registers were developed within the Business Planning, Performance and Risk Management System during 2023/24. Risks are monitored and updated monthly (or more frequently if required)
A9 Is there effective democratic oversight of portfolio service direction and performance? (new to 22/23)	• Performance reporting cycles that we had in place ensured that we had robust assurance and scrutiny in place • Performance reporting cycles have a thorough process for executive responsibility, scrutiny, and assurance • Portfolio performance has been reported through relevant Programme Boards
A10 Is there an integrated organisation cross-cutting approach to tackling issues such as climate change, poverty, regeneration / local economy, wellbeing etc? (new to 23/24)	• Climate change and carbon reduction is considered within the Asset Management Plan • Financial impacts are picked up across portfolios through programme boards, capital strategy and MTFS • Adult learning action plan linked to regeneration – place making groups e.g., Holywell area mapping sheltered housing; linking adult learning plan into community provision
A11 Is data used effectively to evaluate performance and drive improvement? (new to 23/24)	• External benchmarking is undertaking, and sources include Data Cymru, Housemark, APSE • Public Service Ombudsman for Wales Annual Letter and complaints report • Annual targets in Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) are reported to Welsh Government and used to update action plans
A12 Is there evidence of an embedded and continuous approach to performance management, which identifies required interventions that are acted upon promptly? (new to 23/24)	• Information and Data Management Strategy • Scrutiny committees • Programme Boards • Estyn and CIW inspections • Social Services annual report – identifies priorities

Questions	How we do this / How we achieve this?
A13	Do service plans include an evaluation of service performance (including audit and complaints/compliments) to identify areas of improvement and are these aligned to corporate improvement objectives? (new to 23/24)	• Complaints/compliments • Social Services Annual Report • Annual self-evaluation report undertaken in Education and Youth portfolio • Alignment between Portfolio Business Plans and Council Plan (2023-28)
A14	Does the Council adopt a category management approach to procurement? (new to 23/24)	• The Council's Procurement Strategy has been recently reviewed and aims to align with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and reference Flintshire's own Corporate Well-being Objectives • The category management approach is considered best practice • The Collaborative Procurement Service reports to a Joint Management Board

Score 4 – Good Evidence

- Each Portfolio ensures that their business plans align with the Council Plan 2023-28 and other strategies / plans (where applicable)
- Digital Strategy aims and objectives are well mandated under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the five ways of working
- A new Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) is developed every four years and annually reviewed; fulfils statutory responsibility and promotes equality and demonstrates our ambition in relation to this
- Cross cutting collective corporate approach in place – climate analysis and equality analysis

Score 3/4 – Good evidence / Action may be required

- (A7) Consistently undertake an IIA, where required, will improve, and better inform decision making

Score 3 – Evidence but Further Action Required

- (A11) This is undertaking but has limitations. As a Council need to use data to drive and further enhance performance
- (A12) There is much data capturing across the organisation undertaking but need to consider how this captured at a strategic level
- (A13) Ongoing development of Portfolio Business Plans within the Business Planning, Performance and Risk Management System

Theme B – Resource Planning and Management

Questions	How we do this/how we achieve this?
B15 Does the Council have comprehensive and maintained strategies for workforce, finance, procurement, and assets in place, that are aligned to the statutory budget planning cycle (which demonstrates how the Council will sustain service delivery)? (amended 23/24)	• The Council had a number of comprehensive and maintained strategies in place which included; the Medium Term Financial Strategy, Market Stability Report, Dementia Strategy, Code of Corporate Governance, Procurement Strategy, a Capital Asset Strategy, Workforce Strategy and Digital Strategy
B16 Does the Council have comprehensive and maintained strategies for workforce, finance, procurement, and assets in place, that are being managed to support wider agendas (spending for community benefit, social value, place shaping, housing shortages, and regeneration)? (new to 23/24)	• Number of strategies that support wider agendas, including inclusion of social value within procurement activities • Housing Strategy - includes a five year financial programme of works to build additional social homes to address shortages in the County • Community Asset Transfer process • Sustainable Learning Communities Investment Programme
B17 Are these strategies achieving their aims and objectives at a corporate level?	• These strategies act as a framework within the Council and underpin all activities operated. Updates were provided to Cabinet and/or Overview and Scrutiny Committees on the progress of the strategies
B18 Are these strategies achieving their aims and objectives at a portfolio level?	• These strategies act as a framework within the Council and underpin all activities operated. Updates were provided to Cabinet and/or Overview and Scrutiny Committees on the progress of the strategies
B19 Are these strategies sustainable, and dynamic, in adapting to change and the future?	• These strategies act as a framework within the Council and underpin all activities operated. However, there were some areas between Portfolios and Corporate that doesn't always respond to changing needs
B20 Are there effective budget monitoring arrangements in place that offer value for money? (new to 23/24)	• MTFS – comprehensive assessment of budget • Committed Finance Team • Budget monitoring between Corporate Finance and Portfolio Service Managers allowing early identification and intervention • Member involvement of budget monitoring
B21 Does the Council consider staff retention, current and future skills needs and gaps? (new to 23/24)	• Hybrid Working Policy • Flexible Working Policy • Employee Assistance Programme • Adapting to meeting service changes needs

B22	Is there a positive organisational culture (respect, transparency, co-operation, challenge, commitment to continuous improvement, equality of staff and organisational health)? (new to 23/24)	• Welsh in the Workplace Policy • Supervision and Well-being appraisal process / policy • Code of Practice on Ethical Employment in Supply Chains • Diversity and Equality policy • Learning and Development opportunities • Access to VivUp – Employee Benefits Support Platform

Score 4 – Good Evidence

- Strategies act as a framework within the Council and underpin all activities operated, at a portfolio and corporate level
- Positive organisational culture – Open and honest culture of transparency and co-operation
- Undertaking of Workforce Survey during June 2023

Score 3/4 – Good Evidence / Action May be Required

- (B21) Review and implementation of a compliant and sustainable pay model
- (B15) Timeliness of reviewing and monitoring of key strategies

Score 2/3 - Some Evidence but Lacking in Key Areas / Further Action Required

- (B16) and (B19) There are areas that need be improved upon, this includes the timeliness of reviewing and monitoring key strategies and plans, ensuring corporate oversight of all policies and strategies, and determining the effectiveness of such policies and strategies

Theme C – Organisational Governance, Ethics and Values

Questions	How we do this/how we achieve this
C23 Does the Council have comprehensive, clear, robust and maintained frameworks and codes in place for governance, ethics and values that welcomes scrutiny and constructive challenge? (new to 23/24)	• The Council's Code of Corporate Governance was reviewed and updated by the Corporate Governance Working Group which comprised of senior officers from the relevant portfolios. Their assessments were subject to challenge by statutory officers • IA Report (ethics) - We ensured that the seven principles of public life were central to decision making • Code of Conduct - Good conduct was of paramount importance and adherence to the code was ensured by the Council having a robust Standards Committee, the membership of which was refreshed through stringent recruitment of new lay members • We upheld Principle A of our Corporate Governance Arrangements, which requires us to behave with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law • Our Annual Governance Statement (AGS) was subject to Member challenge • Risk Management Framework was reviewed in December 2023 and presented to Governance and Audit Committee January 2024
C24 How well are these frameworks and codes applied and observed?	• The AGS is a self-assessment of our Code of Corporate Governance based on the evidence and knowledge we have within the organisation and was reviewed by Audit Wales
C25 Is the application of ethics and values evident in the way the Council appraises options and makes decisions?	• Strong corporate values are evidenced in the continued delivery of discretionary services/decisions made for the benefit of our residents despite financial pressures to cut such services
C26 Does the Council work productively with its external regulators and demonstrate sound compliance?	• A robust ethical framework was in place - mapped through to monitoring and reporting structures • The ethical framework was visible in the Constitution and supporting policies and protocols

Score 4 – Good Evidence
• Strong corporate values which are evidence in the continued delivery of services, especially those that are discretionary • Annual Governance Statement and Code of Corporate Governance • Frameworks and codes presented to Governance and Audit Committee
Score 2/3 - Some Evidence but Lacking in Key Areas / Further Action Required
• (C24) Develop a clear set of values which are clearly defined and it is consistently applied across the Council (including employees and Members). All policies, strategies, and processes to align with the Council's values

Theme D – Organisational Leadership and Operating Models

Question		How we do this/how we achieve this
D27	Is there strong and effective political leadership and influence (locally, regionally and nationally)? (amended 23/24)	• The AGS, Principle A evidence identified a number of documents which set out Codes of Conduct along with the Code of Corporate Governance and also set out a standard to achieve • Regular Group leaders' meetings were held between the leaders of each of the Council's political groups and attended by the statutory officers (Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service, Chief Officer (Governance)/Monitoring Officer, Corporate Finance Manager/Section 151 Officer and Head of Democratic Services)
D28	Is there strong and effective professional leadership and influence (locally, regionally and nationally)? (amended 23/24)	• The AGS Principle A evidence identified a number of documents which set out Codes of Conduct along with the Code of Corporate Governance which also sets out a standard to achieve • Strong and professional leadership was provided through the Chief Officer Team (COT) and the portfolio Department Management Teams, supported by the senior Leadership Academy, comprising of Chief Officers and their portfolio Service Managers
D29	Does the Council have an adopted organisational operating model and a preferred working culture?	• The Council's 'flat structure' operating model was adapted in 2014, following an extensive review. The original structure of Chief Executive and nine Chief Officers moved to one of a Chief Executive and six Chief Officers as a result of adapting to change within the Council • Continuously looking at ways to improve service delivery • Collaborative working
D30	As an organisation do we operate as a one Council?	• The structure was effective, and this was demonstrated by the performance of the organisation at corporate performance level and the performance across a number of various projects in which the different areas worked in a collaborative way
D31	Is it evident that the preferred working culture is pre-dominant and effective?	• The working culture was collegiate with officers from different portfolios working together on projects
D32	Does the Council show commitment to working with partners to reduce inequality and delivering services that are inclusive and accessible to a diverse community? (new to 23/24)	• North Wales Public Sector Equality Network work with the Regional Community Cohesion Team • Armed Forced Covenant • Partnership working for alternative education delivery models • Regional School Improvement service • Development of Digital Hub in partnership with Digital Communities Wales to ensure digital services can be accessed for all

D33	Are councillors and officers supported in their leadership roles, including learning and development? (new to 23/24)	• Retaining Professional Body status/accreditation • Career Professional Development • WLGA Leadership courses • Elected Members detailed induction training package
D34	How do political and managerial leaders at all levels demonstrate leadership and commitment to reducing inequality and challenging discrimination within the Council? (new to 23/24)	• Corporate Equalities Board • Anti Racist Wales action plan • Strategic Equality Plan • Learning and Development opportunities • Pride events within secondary schools

Score 4 – Good Evidence
• Strong collaborative working across portfolios and continuously looking at ways to improve delivery • Range of learning and development opportunities • Annual Governance Statement / Code of Corporate Governance • Regular group leader's meetings
Score 3/4 – Good Evidence / Action May be Required
• (D30) The completion of the Council's Vision and Values work needs to be finalised. It will help define and reinforce the Council's goals
Score 3 - Evidence but Further Action Required
• (D31) Resilience amongst the workforce is an emerging issue and therefore, to address this work is underway on a compliant and sustainable pay model and the approval of the Workforce Planning Framework (this is also relates to Theme B)

Theme E – Innovation and Change Management

Question		How we do this/how we achieve this
E35	Does the Council have a proven appetite for innovation and change management?	• The Council Plan (2023-28) is a five-year plan and is an ambitious document. Target dates, measures and actions were stretched/ambitious but realistic in nature. Within the Council Plan 2023-28 there are number of examples that demonstrate innovation and change management with a number of additional actions and measures evident throughout the duration of the plan • Digital Strategy, Sustainable Learning Communities Strategy, Housing Strategy • Net Zero of new building projects
E36	How well has the Council implemented its chosen innovation and change programmes and projects against time, budget, risk identification, transition and performance objectives and targets? (amended 23/24)	• Successful at securing external funding to deliver innovative projects including within the Energy Services, Regeneration and Countryside • Adult community Learning Partnership- significant expansion of provision – positive Estyn inspection. • Council Plan (2023-28)
E37	How well does the Council compare to its peers in being an innovator?	• Lead authority on Wales Government Mutual Investment Model (MIM) on school capital projects • Engage with a number of networks to share ideas and identify best and work practice, including the successful Multi-Systemic Therapy project, Micro-care, Project Search
E38	Is there a clear commitment to prevention with suitable resources deployed to prevention or resolving issues (root cause) over treating and managing issues? And has consideration been given to collaboration with other services / partners to provide an integrated solution? (new to 23/24)	• Trauma Informed Practices with Training Officers and Schools to be become trauma informed practitioners / organisations to support a more preventative approach • Housing Support Grant • Advocacy services for adults and children are commissioned on a regional or sub-regional basis • North Wales Construction Framework and Partnership • North East Wales Sensory Support Service • Digital Surgeries
E39	Does the Council use digital tools, data, and strategies to facilitate transformation, support corporate objectives and continuously drive improvement? (new to 23/24)	• Digital Strategy 2021-2026 - Governed by the Digital Strategy Board • Capital Programme / Asset Management Plan • Utilised digital solutions, including social media and google ads advertising, to support with the recruitment of social workers

Score 4 – Good Evidence
- Digital Strategy 2021-26 sets a clear vision demonstrating the Council's appetite for innovation and change in a modern digital world   - Hybrid working model has supported the adapt to change management and provides continuity of services delivery. Extensive use of virtual meetings that allows collaboration with a range of organisations successfully
Score 3/4 – Good Evidence / Action May be Required
(E35) Generate an environment where innovative thinking is encouraged to generate a positive impact
Score 3 - Evidence but Further Action Required
(E39) To improve ease of access to data and digital tools that facilitate more efficient and effective working resulting in increased productivity

Theme F – Partnership Working

Question		How we do this/how we achieve this
F40	Does the council engage well in local, regional, and national partnerships and collaborations?	• There was a wide amount of evidence throughout a number of documents which demonstrated engagement locally, regionally, and nationally. Examples of these documents included the Public Services Board – Well-being Plan, Joint Public Service Board Plan, Council Plan (2023-28), AGS - Principle B, Code of Corporate Governance and Regional Emergency Planning, Welsh Language promotion work with Wrexham
F41	Where in partnerships do, we have good and robust governance partnerships arrangements?	• Clear terms of reference were agreed where necessary to ensure clarity of the governance arrangements. For example, the Public Service Board Terms of Reference set out the Governance arrangements for the Board • Adult Learning Partnership • Youth Justice Service Executive Management Board
F42	Do partners achieve their objectives / outcomes?	• Performance of key partnerships and collaboration was strong • Establishments of new groups to manage emerging issues • Success in achieving a number of grant funding

Score 5 – Very Best Practice
• Engagement in local, regional, and national partnerships and collaborations
Score 4 / 5 – Very Best Practice / Good Evidence
• Portfolios representing the Council on a number of boards, locally, regionally and nationally including Youth Justice Service Executive Management Board
Score 4 – Good Evidence
• Regional Integration Funding clearly identifies the success achieved against its aims and objectives

Theme G – Customer and Community Engagement

Question	How we do this/how we achieve this
G43 Does the Council have comprehensive and maintained plans and policies for customer and community engagement in place?	- Core principles for public engagement and consultation were adopted in 2012 to underpin the Welsh National Principles for Public Engagement - Regional School Improvement Service - Social Services Annual Report provides evidence of engagement with individuals and communities
G44 Does the Council use customer and community feedback effectively in reviewing performance and shaping services?	- Services engaged with customers and communities to gain feedback on performance and drive improvements to help shape services - Survey for Tenants and Residents (STAR Survey) undertaken - Concerns and Complaints Policy
G45 How well does the Council perform in meeting its customer services standards and targets?	Performance against Corporate Complaints was monitored and reported to Cabinet, Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Governance and Audit Committee as well as annually to the PSOW annual letter and half yearly update. The Chief Officers Team received monthly performance reports
G46 How well does the Council engage with stakeholders in framing policy and in the making of key service policy decisions?	- Engagement with key stakeholders such as partners had been identified in the AGS as working well. There was strong evidence of partnership working, relationship management and formal and informal partnerships - Workshops with external partners to inform policy and strategy development regarding Housing Strategy and Welsh Quality Housing Standard - Climate Change Programme Communication And Engagement Plan
G47 Are there mechanisms in place to ensure that under-represented groups are communicated and engaged with effectively? (new to 23/24)	- Regional Community Cohesion Team - Strategic Equality Plan - Youth Service Consultation – What Matters - Childrens Commissioner Consultation – Bullying Serious Violence and Organised Crime – local/national consultation
G48 Do underrepresented groups have opportunities to be involved in decision making and the design and delivery of services? (new to 23/24)	- Youth Council and Youth Service Young Leaders - Use of service users in interviews, e.g., Progression Service - Development of the Consultation and Engagement hub - STAR Rent Survey - Surveys undertaken at a service level

G49	How satisfied with services are residents including under-represented groups and how is this measured? (new to 23/24)	• Development of the Consultation and Engagement hub is now live so this will see improvements to gain an understanding how satisfied with services are residents including under-represented groups and how is this measured
G50	Does the Council collect, share, and publish relevant Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) data and information about its communities? (new to 23/24)	• Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) data • Strategic Equality Plan • Use of external sources (Data Cymru)
G51	How is Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) information regularly updated and used to identify priorities for the local area? (new to 23/24)	• Updated in the Strategic Equality Plan annual reports and Plans (every 4 years) and when the wellbeing assessment is updated • Captured via Upshot in the Youth Service and used for targeting provision/projects • Equality, Diversity and Inclusion information is used in service planning and regional strategies within Social Services

Score 4 – Good Evidence
• EDI information used within Youth Justice for targeted provision and includes identifying protected characteristics and data relating to communities • Engagement and consultation at services levels frequently undertaken to support and inform reviewing performance and shaping services
Score 3 – Evidence but Further Action Required
• (G43) and (G45) To develop a corporate Consultation and Engagement Strategy to improve consultation, involvement and engagement across the Council • (G47) and (G48) Develop quality assurance process for IIAs which ensures under represented engaged and consulted to inform decision making • (G51) Ensure equality data is made more easily accessible so Officers are able to access what they need, when they need it
Score 2 / 3 – Some Evidence but Lacking in Key Areas / Further Action Required
• (G49) and (G50) Ensure services have processes in place to capture and use equality monitoring data and Establish mechanism to share equality data across the Council

Theme H – Risk Management and Business Continuity

Question	How we do this/how we achieve this
H52 Does the Council have comprehensive and maintained strategies for risk management and business continuity in place, which inform decision making? (amended 23/24)	• Risk Management Framework is reviewed annually, updated accordingly, and was last reviewed in December 2023 and endorsed at Governance and Audit Committee January 2024. Risk Procedure is a live document and frequently reviewed and updated • Development of Risk Registers for each portfolio within the Business Planning, Performance and Risk Management System has enabled the monitoring and reporting of risks to be centralised and co-ordinated • Risk reports produced monthly for Portfolios and Chief Officer Team
H53 Have these strategies proved effective in real-time and/or test scenario settings?	• Recovery risk registers are no longer a requirement since coming out of the pandemic, but portfolio risk registers continued to be managed and maintained throughout 2022/23
H54 Are these strategies dynamic in adapting to change and ensuring resilience for the future?	• The Risk Management Framework was reviewed and shared with Governance and Audit Committee for review and agreement of the framework. Development takes place yearly to ensure the latest trends and best practice is being upheld • An E-learning Risk Management module has been developed and finalised. Roll out of the E-learning module to commence September 2024
H55 Is there sufficient assurance from Internal Audit, Audit Wales, and other regulators on performance against statutory duties and achievement of objectives? (new to 23/24)	• Social Services positive inspection from Care Inspectorate Wales 2023/24 • Audit Wales reports • Annual external regulation report • Estyn • Internal audit reports • Frequent reporting to Governance and Audit Committee regarding regulatory reports
H56 Is data used effectively to identify risks and drive improvement? (new to 23/24)	• Information and Data Management Strategy • The use of organisations to assist with benchmarking, i.e., Data Wales • Data collected to support and evidence achievement of portfolio objectives is also used to monitor strategic and operational risks
H57 Is there a shared understanding and collective view of risks and risk appetite? (new to 23/24)	• Risk Management Framework / procedure considers risk appetite • Frequent reporting of risks to ensure shared understanding and collective view of risks

Score 4 – Good Evidence
• Risk Management Framework was approved by Governance and Audit Committee • Development of Risk Registers for each portfolio within the Business Planning, Performance and Risk Management System has enabled the monitoring and reporting of risks to be centralised and co-ordinated
Score 3/4 – Good Evidence / Action May be Required
• (H57) Increase level of awareness and understanding of risk management / risks / risk appetite across the Council through the development and roll out of risk management e-learning module
Score 3 – Evidence but Further Action Required
• (H56) To further enhance use of data (internal and external) to identify risks to support with driving improvement across the Council

Theme I – Climate Change (New Theme 23/24)

Question		How we do this/how we achieve this
I58	How does the Council champion and direct action on climate change?	• The Council published its Climate Change Strategy in February 2022, which details how it will reduce its carbon emissions, aiming to become Net Zero by 2030 • Training and awareness events • Working groups to support themes detailed within the Climate Change Strategy
I59	How is the Council working with partners and the community to reduce the impact of climate change?	• Energy efficient technology • Engaging with tenants and primary schools • E-learning module • Clear direction and engagement with partners and stakeholders
I60	What is the Council's approach to climate change mitigation measures relating to its own operations?	• People Strategy, Digital Strategy contribute and has actions aligned to the Council's approach to climate change • The Council's Climate Change Strategy contains an action plan that details how emissions are to be reduced across five themes; Buildings, Mobility and Transport, Procurement, Land Use and Behaviour
I61	Are the Council's 2030 net zero commitments in Net Zero Wales understood and owned across the Council?	• Council wide development of the development of the Climate Change Strategy • Structured training programme developed • Members and senior leaders have received carbon literacy training to increase awareness
I62	How is the Council contributing to the target of net zero by 2050 across its whole community?	• The Council works with other public sector organisations as well as private sector businesses, to engage, empower and influence carbon reduction • The Climate Change programme maintains a communication and engagement plan which ensures key stakeholder groups are engaged and provided information and support to reduce their carbon impacts • Climate Toolkits to inform and empower launched in 2023/24
I63	What is the approach to adaptation and building local resilience to climate change?	• Climate Strategy Review including climate risk and resilience to inform new strategy • Able to work hybrid • Adverse Weather Policy • Climate risk and adaptation measures are carried out across the Council
I64	To what extent have planned mitigation and adaptation actions relating to climate change been prioritised and aligned to the Council's financial strategy?	• Climate Change Strategy • Climate Change training and awareness events • Established reporting and scrutiny processes in place • Programmes built into MTFS

I65	Is the Council able to evidence from its reporting to date of its own emissions, in accordance with the Public Sector Net Zero reporting guide?	• The Council calculates its emissions aligned with the Public Sector Net Zero Reporting Guide and reports annual Carbon Footprint updates to Climate Change Committee, Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet
I66	Are any steps being taken to record, monitor and report on progress with emissions reductions in the wider community?	• Participation in national working groups to explore development of Social Care Carbon Reporting tools for use with social care providers • Climate toolkit • Keep Britain Tidy inform the Council, of the Schools using their carbon calculator tool 'Count Your Carbon' and what the emissions are
I67	Is climate change integrated into medium- and longer-term planning and are planned actions on climate change mitigation and adaptation sufficiently resourced, which will have the most significant impact?	• Climate Change Strategy and action plan details short, medium, and long term actions to achieve Net Zero Carbon • Action plans are monitored by working groups, and reported on annually to Climate Change Committee, Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet

Score 4 – Good Evidence
• Climate Change Strategy • Climate Change training and awareness events • Programme built into MTFS
Score 3/4 – Good Evidence / Action May be Required
• (I62) and (I66) Facilitate both accredited and non-accredited training for Members and Officers to improve their knowledge and understanding of the impacts of climate change. Monitoring and reporting emissions reductions within the wider community
Score 3 – Evidence but Further Action Required
• (I59), (I60), (I61), (I64 and (I67) – Review of Climate Change Strategy. Review the Council's current commitments. Council to utilise real data and progress from the last 2-5 years to plan medium and long term goals
Score 2 - Some Evidence but Lacking in Key Areas
• (I63) Consider how we can better work with our partners and community to reduce the impact of climate change, as well as mitigation measures for the Council's own operations

9. Progress on Opportunities for Improvement from 2022/23

Opportunity for Improvement 2022/23	Target Completion Date	Theme and Question it Contributes to	Owner	Progress RAG	Review of Progress 2023/24
1) Look at workforce strategies to allow for more flexibility in resource planning and responding to recruitment challenges 2) Corporate oversight of all policies and strategies for each Portfolio, creating a structured work programme that details the reviewing period of the policies and strategies 3) Determining the effectiveness of policies and strategies by aligning them with the 'Theme' question (B13)	March 2024 September 2024 September 2024	B) Planning and Resource Management - *Are these strategies and supporting action plans sustainable, and dynamic, in adapting to change and the future? (B13 now B19 as of 23/24)*	Corporate Manager, People and Organisational Development Internal Audit, Performance and Risk Manager / Strategic Performance Advisor Internal Audit, Performance and Risk Manager / Strategic Performance Advisor	**Amber**	1) As advised in Section 7, within the Council Plan 2023-28, recruitment and retention is a key area of focus as part of the priority 'People'. A Workforce Planning Framework is in draft – once finalized and implemented this will provide a consistent approach. In the meantime, Portfolios are provided with their establishment report (people data) monthly and EDI reports quarterly which enables managers to look at employee data including age breakdown and positively compare our demographics as a Council with census information. The development of a compliant and sustainable is progressing positively. A new target date for implementation needs to be agreed with Cabinet 2) A draft Policy Framework has been developed. A structured forward work programme to develop corporate oversight of strategies and polices is at the initial stages 3) As this area of work is still at initial stages, ensuring that strategies / policies are sustainable and dynamic in adapting to change and the future, will commence at the review /

Opportunity for Improvement 2022/23	Target Completion Date	Theme and Question it Contributes to	Owner	Progress RAG	Review of Progress 2023/24
					development stages of a strategy / policy. Also has links to the use of IIA's
1) Establish clear ethics and values for the organisation 2) Engage with the workforce to determine the Council's ethics and values 3) All policies, strategies, and process to align with the Council's ethics and values (this is also related to Theme B, question B13)	December 2023 December 2023 (completed) September 2024	C) Organisational Governance, Ethics and Values - *How well are these frameworks and codes applied and observed? (C15 now C24 as of 23/24)*	Corporate Manager, People and Organisational Development Corporate Manager, People and Organisational Development Internal Audit, Performance and Risk Manager / Strategic Performance Advisor	**Amber**	1) The Council's ethics and values have been developed and now require final approval and adoption 2) Engagement with the workforce during the summer months of 2023 provided positive feedback which endorsed the proposed organisational values 3) A structured forward work programme to develop corporate oversight of strategies and polices is at the initial stages but as part of this work alignment with the Council's ethics and values will form part of this
1) Embedding the ethics and values within the organisational and working structure 2) The implementation of a compliant and sustainable new pay model (this is also related to Theme B, question B13) 3) Finalisation of the Workforce Planning Framework (this is also related to Theme B, question B13) 4) Preferred working culture needs to be defined through consultation and review of policy	September 2024 March 2024 December 2023 December 2024	D) Organisational Leadership and Structure - *Does the Council have an adopted organisational structure and a preferred working culture? (D20 now D29 as of 23/24)*	Corporate Manager, People and Organisational Development Corporate Manager, People and Organisational Development Corporate Manager, People and Organisational Development	**Amber**	1) Review of relevant policies including Hybrid Working policy 2) Work commenced in October 2023 and has continued into 2024. A preferred model is emerging but requires further work to ensure it is fit for purpose and meets the tests of legal, sustainable and affordable 3) A draft Workforce Planning Framework has been developed. As advised in Section A employee data is available to managers to undertake workforce planning (including succession planning)

Opportunity for Improvement 2022/23	Target Completion Date	Theme and Question it Contributes to	Owner	Progress RAG	Review of Progress 2023/24
				Amber	4) Engagement with the workforce during the summer months of 2023 provided positive feedback which endorsed the proposed organisational values. Enabling relevant policies, including the Hybrid Working Policy to be affective will require continuous review and monitoring
1) Improve and embed a performance culture through the development of a Performance Management Framework	March 2024	D) Organisational Leadership and Structure - *Is it evident that the preferred working culture is pre-dominant and effective? (D22 now D31 as of 2023/24)*	Internal Audit, Performance and Risk Manager / Strategic Performance Advisor	Red	1) The development of Performance Management Framework has fallen behind schedule. Initial research and structure of the Performance Management Framework has been undertaken but drafting of the framework is still required
1) Establish a corporate Facebook page and develop use of social media as a means of communication 2) A Charter for communication detailing customer expectations of the Council and vice versa. Establish realistic and manageable response times as well as standard of civility 3) Create corporate policy on consultation and engagement with annual plans of intended consultations	March 2024	G) Customer and Community Engagement - *Does the Council have comprehensive and maintained plans and policies for customer and community engagement in place? (G29 now G43 as of 23/24)*	Customer Contact Service Manager / Customer Service and Communications Manager	Amber	1) The Council's corporate Facebook page was launched in early 2024 and is used frequently to share information including news, events, and emergency information. A Welsh and English account is managed by Customer Service and has gained over 4,000 followers 2) A review of the Customer Service Policy and charter for communication is in progress. The outcome of this review will be published on the newly

Opportunity for Improvement 2022/23	Target Completion Date	Theme and Question it Contributes to	Owner	Progress RAG	Review of Progress 2023/24
4) Review of customer standards guidelines corporately					launched Consultation & Engagement Hub to invite feedback from customers 3) A corporate policy on consultation and engagement has been drafted and is due to be shared on the newly launched Consultation & Engagement Hub to invite feedback from customers 4) A review of corporate customer standards links to point 2 and is to be reviewed
1) Customers engagement and involvement as part of the reviewing process 2) Develop a single system for oversight of customer engagement 3) Enhance service delivery through data collection, feedback and benchmarking	March 2024	G) Customer and Community Engagement - *How well does the Council perform in meeting its customer services standards and targets? (G31 now G45 as of 23/24)*	Customer Contact Service Manager / Customer Service and Communications Manager	**Amber**	1) Customers to be consulted on a draft corporate consultation and engagement policy via the consultation and engagement hub 2) Capital secured in 2023/24 to procure a third-party solution to host the Council's consultation and engagement but work on hold due to MTFS. Local solution developed and launched on the Council's website as an alternative 3) Improved complaint performance data shared with portfolios to review trends and learn from complaints and learn from complaints

10.   Opportunities for Improvement in 2023/24

The Performance and Risk Management Team engaged with Portfolios in the completion of the Self-Assessment. Based on the range of questions asked against the nine Themes it is considered that the Council:

a)   Does exercise its functions effectively,
b)   Uses its resources economically, efficiently, and effectively, and
c)   Governance is effective for securing the matters set out in points (a) and (b).

This is consistent with the Council's Annual Governance Statement and the Annual Performance Report for the year 2023/24.   There are always areas where we strive for improvement and the following list of opportunities were identified for improvement in 2023/24.

During 2023/24, consultation was undertaken with the Senior Management Team and members of Cabinet, the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Governance and Audit Committee. This enabled each of the Themes to be critically reviewed and as a result the Council have identified eleven areas for improvement, broken down into specific actions for each area. Some of these areas were also Opportunities for Improvement for 2022/23 with them being more medium and/or longer-term goals.

Opportunity for Improvement 2023/24	Target Completion Date	Theme and Question it Contributes to	Owner	Progress RAG	Progress Comment
1) Improve and embed a performance culture through the development of a Performance Management Framework. (Links to D31)	December 2024	A) Vision, Strategy and Performance *A11 Is data used effectively to evaluate performance and drive improvement?* *A12 Is there evidence of an embedded and continuous approach to performance management, which identifies required*	Internal Audit, Performance and Risk Manager / Strategic Performance Advisor	**Red**	1) The development of Performance Management Framework has fallen behind schedule due to available resources and conflicting priorities. Initial research and structure of the Performance Management Framework has been undertaken but drafting of the framework is still required
2) Offer training sessions provided by DataCymru to all elected Members in order to improve the understanding of how data can be used in committee	March 2025		Democratic Services Manager		2) Training opportunities are provided to Members and where applicable the Council will continue to liaise with Data Cymru for further training

Opportunity for Improvement 2023/24	Target Completion Date	Theme and Question it Contributes to	Owner	Progress RAG	Progress Comment
work to facilitate improvements. Provide training to all (ordinary) members of OSC's, to ensure they understand their role and the committee's role, to include effective questioning skills (performance, risk, data). 3) Review the committee reporting template to ensure risk management is a key element of the report. 4) Develop an Information and Data Management Group, to improve The Council's use of data and to further implement and embed the Information and Data Management Strategy	January 2025 December 2024	*interventions that are acted upon promptly?* *A13 Do service plans include an evaluation of service performance (including audit and complaints/compliments) to identify areas of improvement and are these aligned to corporate improvement objectives?* D) Organisational Leadership and Structure *D31) Is it evident that the preferred working culture is pre-dominant and effective?* H) Risk Management and Business Continuity *H56) Is data used effectively to identify risks and drive improvement?*	Democratic Services Manager Information Governance Manager		opportunities. Effective Chairing skills training is provided to all Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Committees, to include facilitating debate and challenge. There will be separate sessions in due course for Chairs and Vice-Chairs of OSC to focus on risk and performance. Continue to ensure elected Members challenge and support the Council appropriately as part of the Overview & Scrutiny process. 3) This is a new opportunity for improvement in this year's Corporate Self-assessment, therefore is at the initial stages. However, each OSC committee do monitor identified risks as part of their normal working practice, and perhaps maintain a record as part of their Forward Work element. 4) A terms of reference is being drafted for the Information and Data Management Group but aims and objectives of the group will consist of: • We will treat information and data as a key corporate asset to support improved decision make and best use of resource • We will use information and data more effectively and innovatively to deliver better,

Opportunity for Improvement 2023/24	Target Completion Date	Theme and Question it Contributes to	Owner	Progress RAG	Progress Comment
		E) Innovation and Change Management *E35) Does the Council have a proven appetite for innovation and change management?* *E39) Does the Council use digital tools, data, and strategies to facilitate transformation, support corporate objectives and continuously drive improvement?*		**Red**	seamless services with improved outcomes • For people and organisations to have full confidence that their information and data is being treated responsibly, securely, and ethically, in line with appropriate legislation and industry best practice • To improve the services provided to customers by working together and ensuring that the Council's information and data is used effectively well organized, protected, and gets to where it needs to go
1) Update Guidance for report writing and Committee report template with refreshed information on IIAs 2) Put in place process to ensure committee reports on policies/plans/projects include impact assessments	January 2025 January 2025	A) Vision, Strategy and Performance *A7) Are strategies and decisions made following the undertaking of Integrated Impact Assessments (IIA's) (where applicable)?*	Democratic Services Manager Democratic Services Manager	**Red**	1) This is a new opportunity for improvement in this year's Corporate Self-assessment, therefore is at the initial stages. 2) A review of the committee reporting template and guidance to ensure IIA's are a key element of the reporting process will be undertaken. Each OSC committee to monitor IIA's as part of their normal working practice, and perhaps maintain a record as part of their Forward Work element. Provide committees with

Opportunity for Improvement 2023/24	Target Completion Date	Theme and Question it Contributes to	Owner	Progress RAG	Progress Comment
					training on IIA's – e.g. what they are, why they are included, what to look for.
1) Look at workforce strategies to allow for more flexibility in resource planning and responding to recruitment challenges	A new target date for implementation needs to be agreed with Cabinet.	B) Resource Planning and Management *B15) Does the Council have comprehensive and maintained strategies for workforce, finance, procurement, and assets in place, that are aligned to the statutory budget planning cycle (which demonstrates how the Council will sustain service delivery)?* *B16) Does the Council have comprehensive and maintained strategies for workforce, finance, procurement, and assets in place, that are being managed to support wider agendas (spending for community*	Corporate Manager, People and Organisational Development	**Amber**	1) As advised in Section 7, within the Council Plan 2023-28, recruitment and retention is a key area of focus as part of the priority 'People'. A Workforce Planning Framework is in draft – once finalized and implemented this will provide a consistent approach. In the meantime, Portfolios are provided with their establishment report (people data) monthly and EDI reports quarterly which enables managers to look at employee data including age breakdown and positively compare our demographics as a Council with census information. The development of a compliant and sustainable is progressing positively. A new target date for implementation needs to be agreed with Cabinet
2) Corporate oversight of all policies and strategies for each Portfolio, creating a structured work programme that details the reviewing period of the policies and strategies	December 2024		Internal Audit, Performance and Risk Manager / Strategic Performance Advisor		
3) Determining the effectiveness of policies and strategies by aligning them with the 'Theme' question (B19	December 2024		Internal Audit, Performance and Risk Manager / Strategic Performance Advisor		2) A draft Policy Framework has been developed. A structured forward work programme to develop corporate oversight of strategies and polices is at the initial stages
4) Establish clear ethics and values for the organisation. Completion of the Council's Vision and Values work will help define and reinforce the Council's goals	December 2024		Corporate Manager, People and Organisational Development		3) As this area of work is still at initial stages, ensuring that strategies /

Opportunity for Improvement 2023/24	Target Completion Date	Theme and Question it Contributes to	Owner	Progress RAG	Progress Comment
5) All policies, strategies, and process to align with the Council's ethics and values (this is also related to Theme B, question B19)	December 2024	*benefit, social value, place shaping, housing shortages, and regeneration)?* *B19) Are these strategies and supporting action plans sustainable, and dynamic, in adapting to change and the future?* C) Organisational Governance, Ethics and Values *C24) How well are these frameworks and codes applied and observed?* D) Organisational Leadership and Structure *D30) As an organisation do we operate as a one Council?*	Internal Audit, Performance and Risk Manager / Strategic Performance Advisor		policies are sustainable and dynamic in adapting to change and the future, will commence at the review / development stages of a strategy / policy. Also has links to the use of IIA's (Theme A) 4) The Council's ethics and values have been developed and now require final approval and adoption 5) A structured forward work programme to develop corporate oversight of strategies and polices is at the initial stages but as part of this work alignment with the Council's ethics and values will form part of this
1) Look at workforce strategies to allow for more flexibility in resource planning and responding to recruitment challenges through the review of pay model	A new target date for implementation needs to	B) Resource Planning and Management	Corporate Manager, People and	**Amber**	1) Due to existing budget pressures and vacancy management, which impacts sustainability (Five Ways of Working, Well-being of Future Generations

Opportunity for Improvement 2023/24	Target Completion Date	Theme and Question it Contributes to	Owner	Progress RAG	Progress Comment
2) Development of Workforce Planning Framework	be agreed with Cabinet. December 2024	*B21) Does the Council consider staff retention, current and future skills needs and gaps?*	Organisational Development Corporate Manager, People and Organisational Development		(Wales) Act 2015) work remains ongoing regarding review of pay model. Workshops have been undertaken with Members to review pay model options and costing associated 2) As advised in Section 7, within the Council Plan 2023-28, recruitment and retention is a key area of focus as part of the priority 'People'. A Workforce Planning Framework is in draft – once finalised and implemented this will provide a consistent approach
1) A Charter for communication detailing customer expectations of the Council and vice versa. Establish realistic and manageable response times as well as standard of civility 2) Create corporate policy on Consultation and Engagement with annual plans of intended consultations 3) Review of customer standards guidelines corporately	December 2024 January 2025 January 2025	G) Customer and Community Engagement *(G43) Does the Council have comprehensive and maintained plans and policies for customer and community engagement in place?* *(G45)How well does the Council perform in meeting its customer services*	Customer Contact Service Manager / Customer Service and Communications Manager	**Amber**	1) A review of the Customer Service Policy and Charter for Communication is in progress. The outcome of this review will be published on the newly launched Consultation & Engagement Hub to invite feedback from customers 2) A corporate policy on Consultation and Engagement has been drafted and is due to be shared on the newly launched Consultation & Engagement Hub to invite feedback from customers 3) A review of Corporate Customer Standards links to point 2 and is to be reviewed

Opportunity for Improvement 2023/24	Target Completion Date	Theme and Question it Contributes to	Owner	Progress RAG	Progress Comment
		standards and targets?		🟧	
1) Work with Regional Community Cohesion Officer to commission regional workshop on how to engage/consult with people with protected characteristics	March 2025	G) Customer and Community Engagement *(G7)Are there mechanisms in place to ensure that under-represented groups are communicated and engaged with effectively?*	Strategic Policy Advisor	**Red**	1) This is a new opportunity for improvement in this year's Corporate Self-assessment, therefore, this is at the initial stages
2) Develop quality assurance process for IIAs which ensures under represented engaged and consulted to inform decision making	Further approval required at Corporate Equality Board		Corporate Equality Board and IIA Quality Assurance Subgroup		2) Actions which relate to the Corporate Equality Board will be discussed at the next meeting in September for approval and to set timeframes
3) Update guidance on equality monitoring and ensure services have processes in place to capture and use equality monitoring data	Further approval required at Corporate Equality Board	*(G48) Do underrepresented groups have opportunities to be involved in decision making and the design and delivery of services?*	Corporate Equality Board and Data Subgroup		3) Actions which relate to the Corporate Equality Board will be discussed at the next meeting in September for approval and to set timeframes
4) Establish mechanism to share equality data across the Council	Further approval required at Corporate Equality Board	*(G49) How satisfied with services are residents including under-represented groups and how is this measured?* *(G50) Does the Council collect, share, and publish relevant*	Corporate Equality Board and Data Subgroup		4) Actions which relate to the Corporate Equality Board will be discussed at the next meeting in September for approval and to set timeframes

Opportunity for Improvement 2023/24	Target Completion Date	Theme and Question it Contributes to	Owner	Progress RAG	Progress Comment
5) Ensure more robust and comprehensive evidence of the profile of the Council's employees and customers is available for analysis. Ensure equality data is made more easily accessible so users are able to access what they need, when they need it	Further approval required at Corporate Equality Board	*Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) data and information about its communities?* *(G51) How is Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) information regularly updated and used to identify priorities for the local area?*	Corporate Equality Board and Data Subgroup Corporate Equality Board and Data Subgroup	**Red**	5) Actions which relate to the Corporate Equality Board will be discussed at the next meeting in September for approval and to set timeframes
1) Roll out of Risk Management e-learning module	October 2024	(H) Risk Management and Business Continuity *(H57) Is there a shared understanding and collective view of risks and risk appetite?*	Strategic Performance Advisor	**Amber**	1) The e-learning module has been developed and is in its final stages of product testing. Once finalised it be rolled out to the workforce and Members
1) To review the Climate Change Strategy during 2024-25	March 2025	(I) Climate Change *(I59) How is the Council working with partners and the community to reduce the impact of climate change?*	Programme Manager, Climate Change & Carbon Reduction		1) This gives us an opportunity to review our current commitments and consider how we can better work with our partners and community to reduce the impact of climate change, as well as mitigation measures for the Council's own operations

Opportunity for Improvement 2023/24	Target Completion Date	Theme and Question it Contributes to	Owner	Progress RAG	Progress Comment
2) The Public Service Boards in the region have agreed to develop a climate risk assessment as a regional approach. The Council will ensure it feeds into this process as a key stakeholder	March 2025	*(I60) What is the Council's approach to climate change mitigation measures relating to its own operations?* *(I62) How is the Council contributing to the target of net zero by 2050 across its whole community?* *(I63) What is the approach to adaptation and building local resilience to climate change?*	Programme Manager, Climate Change & Carbon Reduction	**Amber**	2) The Council will ensure it feeds into this process as a key stakeholder
1) Improve communications internally with Officers and Members to ensure all are familiar and understand the Council's commitments and progress	March 2025	(I) Climate Change *(I61) - Are the Council's 2030 net zero commitments in Net Zero Wales understood and owned across the Council?*	Programme Manager, Climate Change & Carbon Reduction	**Amber**	1) Ownership of the Council's net zero commitments has been adopted throughout the organisation. Work is still underway to improve knowledge and understanding of climate change and its impacts, as part of an ongoing behaviour change programme. Communications internally are improving with more frequent use of the Workforce news and employee engagement 2) Carbon Literacy and e-learn training are available to both officers and

Opportunity for Improvement 2023/24	Target Completion Date	Theme and Question it Contributes to	Owner	Progress RAG	Progress Comment
2) Facilitate both accredited and non-accredited training for Members and Officers to improve their knowledge and understanding of the impacts of climate change 3) Building condition surveys for the Council's schools to enable a baseline to be determined 4) To keep abreast of best practice in costing other carbon actions	March 2025 March 2025 March 2025	*(I64) To what extent have planned mitigation and adaptation actions relating to climate change been prioritised and aligned to the Council's financial strategy?*	Programme Manager, Climate Change & Carbon Reduction Programme Manager, Climate Change & Carbon Reduction Programme Manager, Climate Change & Carbon Reduction		Members, and 'Carbon' is now a mandatory subject within the Member training programme 3) The current Welsh Government funded building condition surveys for the Council's schools will allow a baseline to be determined from which more accurate costings and phased plans of work can be established for our building stock 4) The Council will continue to keep abreast of the latest best practice in costing other carbon actions to ensure the programme of work is realistic and achievable
1) Monitoring and reporting emissions reductions	March 2025	(I) Climate Change *(I66) Are any steps being taken to record, monitor and report on progress with emissions reductions in the wider community?*	Programme Manager, Climate Change & Carbon Reduction	**Amber**	1) Monitoring and reporting emissions reductions within the wider community will be reviewed as part of the Climate change strategy review, to ensure the Council is able to use its influence as a public sector organisation to drive wider carbon reduction outside of its own operations
1) Utilise real data and progress from the last 2-5 years to plan medium and long-term goals that are both achievable and ambitious	March 2025	(I) Climate Change *(I67) Is climate change integrated into medium- and longer-term planning and are planned*	Programme Manager, Climate Change & Carbon Reduction	**Amber**	1) Again, this year's Climate Change strategy review will allow the Council to utilise real data and progress from the last 2-5 years to plan medium and long term goals that are both achievable and ambitious

Opportunity for Improvement 2023/24	Target Completion Date	Theme and Question it Contributes to	Owner	Progress RAG	Progress Comment
		actions on climate change mitigation and adaptation sufficiently resourced, which will have the most significant impact?		🟧	

11. Certification

The Corporate Self-Assessment undertaken provides a comprehensive assessment of the organisation and provides a platform of assurance.

Opportunities to improve have been identified through this review. We pledge our commitment to addressing these issues over the coming year and we will monitor their implementation and operation as part of our next annual review.

Signed on behalf of Flintshire County Council

Neal Cockerton – Chief Executive   **Cllr. Ian B Roberts – Leader of the Council**