

Pecyn Dogfen Gyhoeddus

Gareth Owens LL.B Barrister/Bargyfreithiwr

Chief Officer (Governance)

Prif Swyddog (Llywodraethu)



Swyddog Cyswllt:

Sharon Thomas 01352 702324

sharon.b.thomas@flintshire.gov.uk

At: Cyng Richard Jones (Cadeirydd)

Y Cynghorwyr: Bernie Attridge, Bill Crease, Chris Dolphin, Alasdair Ibbotson, Gina Maddison, Allan Marshall, Vicky Perfect, Kevin Rush, Jason Shallcross, Sam Swash a Linda Thomas

9 Rhagfyr 2022

Annwyl Gynghorydd,

RHYBUDD O GYFARFOD HYBRID
PWYLLGOR TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU ADNODDAU CORFFORAETHOL
DYDD IAU, 15FED RHAGFYR, 2022 10.00 AM

Yn gywir

Steven Goodrum
Rheolwr Gwasanaethau Democraidd

Sylwch: Gellir mynychu'r cyfarfod hwn naill ai wyneb yn wyneb yn Siambr y Cyngor, Cyngor Sir y Fflint, Yr Wyddgrug, Sir y Fflint neu ar-lein.

Bydd y cyfarfod yn cael ei ffrydio'n fyw ar wefan y Cyngor. Bydd y ffrydio byw yn dod i ben pan fydd unrhyw eitemau cyfrinachol yn cael eu hystyried. Bydd recordiad o'r cyfarfod ar gael yn fuan ar ôl y cyfarfod ar <https://flintshire.publici.tv/core/portal/home>

Os oes gennych unrhyw ymholiadau, cysylltwch ag aelod o'r Tîm Gwasanaethau Democraidd ar 01352 702345.

R H A G L E N

1 YMDDIHEURIADAU

Pwrpas: I dderbyn unrhyw ymddiheuriadau.

2 DATGAN CYSYLLTIAD (GAN GYNNWYS DATGANIADAU CHWIPIO)

Pwrpas: I dderbyn unrhyw ddatganiad o gysylltiad a chynghori'r Aelodau yn unol a hynny.

3 COFNODION (Tudalennau 5 - 14)

Pwrpas: I gadarnhau, fel cofnod cywir gofnodion y cyfarfod ar 17 Tachwedd 2022.

4 OLRHAIN GWEITHRED (Tudalennau 15 - 18)

Adroddiad Rheolwr Gwasanaethau Democraidaidd -

Pwrpas: Rhoi gwybod i'r Pwyllgor o'r cynnydd yn erbyn camau gweithredu o'r cyfarfod blaenorol.

5 RHAGLEN GWAITH I'R DYFODOL (Tudalennau 19 - 26)

Adroddiad Rheolwr Gwasanaethau Democraidaidd -

Pwrpas: Ystyried y flaenraglen waith Pwyllgor Craffu & Trosolwg adnoddau corfforaethol.

DEDDF LLYWODRAETH LEOL (MYNEDIAD I WYBODAETH) 1985 - YSTYRIED GWAHARDD Y WASG A'R CYHOEDD

Mae'r eitem a ganlyn yn cael ei hystyried yn eitem eithriedig yn rhinwedd Paragraff(au) 15 Rhan 4 Atodiad 12A o Ddeddf Llywodraeth Leol 1972 (fel y cafodd ei diwygio)

Mae budd y cyhoedd wrth beidio â datgelu'r wybodaeth yn drech na'r budd o ddatgelu'r wybodaeth, hyd nes y cwblheir yr ymgynghoriadau / trafodaethau hynny.

6 CYLLIDEB 2023/24 - CAM 2 (Tudalennau 27 - 46)

Adroddiad Prif Weithredwr, Rheolwr Cyllid Corfforaethol - Aelod Cabinet Cyllid, Cynhwysiant, Cymunedau Cryf gan gynnwys Gwerth Cymdeithasol a Chaffael, Aelod Cabinet Llywodraethu a Gwasanaethau Corfforaethol gan gynnwys lechyd a Diogelwch ac Adnoddau Dynol

Pwrpas: Bod y Pwyllgor yn adolygu a rhoi sylw ar bwysau cost a'r strategaeth gyffredinol ar gyfer y gyllideb, a chynghori ar unrhyw feysydd o effeithlonrwydd cost yr hoffent edrych arnynt ymhellach.

FE FYDD Y CYFARFOD YN PARHAU MEWN SESIWN GYHOEDDUS AR ÔL YSTYRIED EITEM 6 AR Y RHAGLEN

7 GWAITH SWYDDFA'R CRWNER (Tudalennau 47 - 50)

Adroddiad Prif Swyddog (Llywodraethu) - Aelod Cabinet Llywodraethu a Gwasanaethau Corfforaethol gan gynnwys lechyd a Diogelwch ac Adnoddau Dynol

Pwrpas: I dderbyn cyflwyniad gan John Gittins ar waith Swyddfa'r Crwner.

8 PECYNNAU GOFAL A ARIENNIR AR Y CYD - ADRODDIAD DIWEDDARU (Tudalennau 51 - 54)

Adroddiad Prif Swyddog (Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol), Rheolwr Cyllid Corfforaethol - Dirprwy Arweinydd y Cyngor a'r Aelod Cabinet Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol a Lles

Pwrpas: I rannu diweddariad llafar ar y sefyllfa bresennol o ran dyled hirdymor gyda Bwrdd lechyd Prifysgol Betsi Cadwaladr ers yr adroddiad diwethaf.

9 MONITRO CYLLIDEB REFENIW 2022/23 (MIS 7) (Tudalennau 55 - 74)

Adroddiad Rheolwr Cyllid Corfforaethol - Aelod Cabinet Cyllid, Cynhwysiant, Cymunedau Cryf gan gynnwys Gwerth Cymdeithasol a Chaffael

Pwrpas: I gyflwyno Adroddiad Monitro Cyllideb Refeniw 2022/23 (Mis 7) ac amrywiant sylweddol i'r Aelodau.

10 LLYTHYR BLYNYDDOL 2021-22 OMBWDSMON GWASANAETHAU CYHOEDDUS CYMRU A CHWYNION A WNAED YN ERBYN GWASANAETHAU CYNGOR SIR Y FFLINT YN HANNER CYNTAF 2022-23 (EBRILL-MEDI 2022) (Tudalennau 75 - 98)

Adroddiad Prif Swyddog (Llywodraethu) - Aelod Cabinet Llywodraethu a Gwasanaethau Corfforaethol gan gynnwys lechyd a Diogelwch ac Adnoddau Dynol

Pwrpas: Rhannu Llythyr Blynyddol 2021-22 Ombwdsmon Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus Cymru. Mae'r adroddiad hefyd yn rhoi trosolwg o'r cwynion a dderbyniwyd gan bob portffolio o'r Cyngor rhwng y cyfnod 1 Ebrill – 30 Medi 2022.

11 **YMGYNGHORIAD AR GYNLLUN LLES DRAFFT 2023-28 BWRDD
GWASANAETHAU CYHOEDDUS (BGC) SIR Y FFLINT A WRECSAM**
(Tudalennau 99 - 112)

Adroddiad Prif Swyddog (Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol), Prif Weithredwr -
Arweinydd y Cyngor a'r Aelod Cabinet Addysg, y Gymraeg, Diwylliant a
Hamdden

Pwrpas: Rhannu'r Cynllun Lles Drafft gyda'r Pwyllgor Trosolwg a Chraffu
Adnoddau Corfforaethol, sy'n cynnwys amcanion a champau
gweithredu lles pum mlynedd newydd mae'r Cyngor wedi
ymrwymo i'w cyflawni mewn cydweithrediad â'i sefydliadau
partner BGC.

***Sylwch, efallai y bydd egwyl o 10 munud os yw'r cyfarfod yn para'n hirach na
dwy awr.***

Eitem ar gyfer y Rhaglen 3

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE **17 NOVEMBER 2022**

Minutes of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held as a hybrid meeting on Thursday, 17 November 2022

PRESENT: Councillor Richard Jones (Chairman)

Councillors: Bernie Attridge, Bill Crease, Ron Davies, Chris Dolphin, Alasdair Ibbotson, Allan Marshall, Vicky Perfect, Kevin Rush, Jason Shallcross, Sam Swash and Linda Thomas

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Marion Bateman attended as an observer

APOLOGIES: Councillor Ian Roberts (Leader and Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure) and Councillor Christine Jones (Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Social Services and Wellbeing)

CONTRIBUTORS: Councillor Paul Johnson (Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion & Resilient Communities), Councillor Billy Mullin (Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services), Chief Executive, Chief Officer (Governance), Corporate Finance Manager, Strategic Finance Managers, Senior Manager (Safeguarding and Commissioning), Business Information and Compliance Adviser and Corporate Manager (Capital Programme and Assets)

IN ATTENDANCE: Democratic Services Manager and team

41. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

42. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2022 were approved, as moved and seconded by Councillors Bernie Attridge and Bill Crease.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be approved as a correct record.

43. ACTION TRACKING

The Democratic Services Manager presented an update on actions arising from previous meetings and agreed to re-issue an enlarged copy of the business and financial planning cycle to Councillor Bill Crease. The actions arising from the September meeting would be removed from the list as they were now completed.

On that basis, the recommendation was moved and seconded by Councillors Bernie Attridge and Bill Crease.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee notes the progress which has been made.

44. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Democratic Services Manager presented the current forward work programme for consideration. It was agreed that he would liaise with the Chairman to consider the possible deferral of some items scheduled for December to allow the budget item to be prioritised.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Bernie Attridge and seconded by Councillor Jason Shallcross.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Forward Work Programme be noted; and
- (b) That the Democratic Services Manager, in consultation with the Committee Chairman, be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises.

45. JOINT FUNDED CARE PACKAGES

As requested at the previous meeting, the Senior Manager (Safeguarding and Commissioning) provided an update on current long-term debt with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) in respect of the delivery of NHS Continuing Health Care (CHC) packages in Flintshire. A report with supplementary information on recent debt levels had been shared with the Committee in advance of the meeting.

Since the last report, good progress had been made to address 'pinch points' in the system to improve the flow of information and understanding of the process from the perspective of both sides. Regular meetings at all levels helped to reinforce the efficient processing of invoices and a clear escalation route had been established to refer any significant issues. Whilst work was continuing on longer term invoices, the main focus was on recent invoices with BCUHB working hard to ensure prompt payment. An overall unpaid invoice position of £141,917.51 was reported between 12 October and 11 November 2022.

The Chairman referred to comments made by Paul Carter (BCUHB) at the previous meeting that supporting information was missing to support payment of some long-term invoices. On the list, he welcomed the clearing of recent invoices but raised concerns that two of higher value remained outstanding which did not give assurance on addressing long-term debt.

In response, the Senior Manager explained that one of the higher amounts related to a combined package for three out of county placements. She clarified that the list showed the position for all outstanding invoices during the period and that work was ongoing to progress those as soon as possible.

Councillor Bernie Attridge said that the update did not allay his concerns about the outstanding debt, particularly given the Council's financial position. In questioning whether all the debts would be cleared, he said that leadership meetings should be held more frequently and that the matter should be escalated through a legal route.

Councillor Chris Dolphin agreed that this was a serious long-standing issue and suggested that including reference to the number of cases and associated costs in future updates would provide a clearer picture on the outstanding debt.

In acknowledging the progress made, Councillor Bill Crease said it was vital to establish reasons for the delays to payments. He said that issues on the Council's side should be resolved internally and that delays due to BCUHB should be pursued legally.

In response to the comments, the Chief Officer (Governance) referred to the complex judgements involved in CHC payments and advised against pursuing legal action. Whilst recognising the significance of this issue, he suggested that focus remain on regular high-level discussions to unblock issues and building upon in-house expertise to challenge BCUHB decisions where needed.

In reiterating the cashflow implications, the Chairman questioned whether the national protocol would clarify the process for resolving disputes. He thanked the officer for the information and the attention on resolving recent invoices, adding that more could be done to resolve long-standing debts and that the inclusion of categories for outstanding debt (eg under dispute, unknown invoice etc) in future updates would provide a clearer understanding.

This was proposed and seconded as an additional recommendation by Councillors Bernie Attridge and Bill Crease.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee notes the progress made on the proactive budget management of outstanding invoices raised by the Council for payment by Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board; and
- (b) That more work be undertaken to resolve long-standing invoices and that future updates include categories for the reasons for the outstanding debt.

46. EMPLOYMENT AND WORKFORCE MID-YEAR UPDATE

The Business Information and Compliance Adviser presented a mid-year update report on workforce statistics and analysis for 2022/23 including headcount, employee turnover and attendance.

An overview of key areas acknowledged national workforce pressures as seen across portfolios and work being done to address challenges in recruitment and retention within Social Services. The main reason for absences was reported

as mental health and a reminder was given of the range of support available to employees. An update on agency worker spend reflected increasing demand for specialist roles and collaborative work to develop a unified approach to workforce recruitment and retention.

In response to questions from Councillor Chris Dolphin, the Senior Manager (Safeguarding and Commissioning) provided information on the Council's links with ADSS Cymru and arrangements within Social Services to prioritise risk-based work particularly given the significant national increase in the volume of child protection investigations.

On a question from the Chairman, the Business Information and Compliance Adviser advised that cumulative agency spend was increasing year on year for the reasons set out in the report and was being closely monitored. He agreed to provide further detail on trend analysis dating back to 2019.

On that basis, the recommendation was moved and seconded by Councillors Bernie Attridge and Bill Crease.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the mid-year Workforce Information Report for 2022/23 be noted; and
- (b) That further detail be shared on the increase in cumulative agency spend over the past three years.

47. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND BUDGET 2023/24

The Corporate Finance Manager presented a report to update Members on the additional budget requirement for 2023/24 prior to the Overview & Scrutiny meetings in December and receipt of the Provisional Local Government Settlement from Welsh Government (WG) on 14 December 2022.

At the October meeting, the updated forecast reported a minimum budget requirement of an additional £24.348m of revenue resources for 2023/24. Further work to identify changes and significant risks had led to a further increase, as reported to the recent Member finance briefings and summarised in the report. Whilst work was continuing to establish the full impact, it was projected that the additional budget requirement could potentially rise to around £32m. There were a number of ongoing risks which could impact further and would be kept under continued review, including out of county placements and the teachers' pay award. The report also included an update on progress with budget solutions and the timeline leading up to the final budget setting. An overview of the position across portfolios would be provided at the Committee's meeting in January.

In conveying the seriousness of the situation, the Chief Executive said it was recognised that the scale of the current position would present significant challenges in setting a balanced budget.

The Chairman said that the recent reports and briefings provided no solutions on how to balance the budget and that values for mitigating options would need to be shared to enable Members to consider and make informed decisions.

The Corporate Finance Manager said that the work undertaken to date reflected the scale of financial challenge. He advised that details of portfolio efficiency proposals would be shared with respective Overview & Scrutiny committees in December, together with oversight of efficiencies across all portfolios. Whilst work on corporate financing continued, outcomes would be shared with Members and the receipt of the Provisional Settlement would provide clarity on the scale of the remaining budget gap and options available.

In response to the Chairman, the Chief Executive shared the concerns and said that all local authorities in Wales were in a similar position. He gave assurance that officers had taken every opportunity to review efficiencies and that work would continue to present a deliverable position.

His comments were endorsed by Cabinet Member Councillor Paul Johnson who said this was an unprecedented situation involving a number of issues outside the control of the Council. He hoped there would be clarity following a finance meeting with the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and all other local authorities in Wales.

Councillor Bill Crease expressed concerns about the time available to make significant challenging decisions to address the shortfall and the potential impact on residents.

Councillor Bernie Attridge agreed that this was an unprecedented position and was unable to identify what could be done to set a balanced budget, given that WG had already provided figures for an indicative Settlement. He went on to say that decisions to invest in capital projects should be put on hold given the current situation.

On the comments raised, Councillor Chris Dolphin referred to the financial benefits of the Council's bids for the Levelling Up Fund and the opportunity for Member input on budget considerations led by the Chief Executive and Chief Officers team. On budget solutions, he felt it was important for residents to be made aware of the implications including potential cuts to services.

The Chief Executive reminded the Committee that the 2.4% indicative settlement for 2024/25 would present even more significant challenges than the 3.5% for 2023/24 particularly in the context of a potential recession facing the UK.

The recommendation, which was amended to reflect the debate, was moved and seconded by Councillors Bernie Attridge and Bill Crease.

RESOLVED:

That the concerns raised by the Committee on the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget 2023/24 be reported back to the Cabinet when it considers the report.

48. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2022/23 (MONTH 6) AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23 (MONTH 6)

The Strategic Finance Managers (Corporate Finance) presented the 2022/23 month 6 position for the revenue budget monitoring for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the Capital Programme, prior to consideration by Cabinet.

Revenue Budget Monitoring

On the Council Fund, the projected year-end position was an operating deficit of £0.033m leaving a year-end contingency reserve balance of £8.071m which would reduce to £2.8m after meeting the current in-year additional cost of the 2022/23 pay award. An update was shared on the reduction in Covid-19 emergency reserves and continuing claims for Welsh Government (WG) Hardship Funding which were now subject to limited eligibility. A summary was given of significant variances across portfolios during the period including a positive movement within Central & Corporate Finance resulting from changes to bank interest rates. The tracking of in-year risks reported the current position on pay awards with the outcome of teachers' award under negotiation and the impact of changes to National Insurance to be reported in Month 7. Other tracked risks reflected continued high demand for out of county placements and support for homelessness which would be closely monitored. All planned in-year efficiencies were expected to be achieved in 2022/23.

On the HRA, projected in-year expenditure of £3.324m higher than budget would leave a closing un-earmarked balance of £3.150m, which was above the recommended guidelines on spend.

In response to a question from the Chairman, Finance officers agreed to respond separately on the potential impact if the £1.14m outstanding debt from the Health Board on joint-funded care packages was received.

Councillor Bernie Attridge commented on continued significant underspends and overspends particularly within Social Services and asked what could be done to improve budget-setting. He said that the Community & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee had been informed that the increased net pressure for void properties was likely to be resolved.

In responding, the Strategic Finance Manager referred to the impact of late grants and gave assurance of regular liaison with service managers to carry out detailed reviews of budgets.

In respect of Social Services, the Senior Manager (Safeguarding and Commissioning) explained that recruitment issues in the independent care sector impacted on pressures for the Council's provider services.

Capital Programme

The revised programme for 2022/23 was £91.979m taking into account all carry forward sums and savings transferred back to the programme. Changes during the period were mainly due to the introduction of grant funding streams across portfolios and budget re-profiling. The projected outturn position totalled £87.416m leaving a £4.563m underspend recommended to be carried forward for the completion of schemes in 2023/24 as detailed. The update also reflected two additional allocations identified to be funded from within the current 'headroom' provision and one-off savings to be released back into the programme. The overall funding position of approved schemes indicated a surplus of £3.376m prior to the realisation of additional capital receipts and/or other funding sources.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Bernie Attridge and seconded by Councillor Linda Thomas.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That having considered the Revenue Budget Monitoring 2022/23 (month 6) report, the Committee confirms that there are no specific matters to be raised with Cabinet; and
- (b) That having considered the Capital Programme Monitoring 2022/23 (month 6) report, the Committee confirms that there are no specific matters to be raised with Cabinet.

49. CAPITAL STRATEGY INCLUDING PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2023/24 TO 2025/26

The Corporate Finance Manager presented the updated Capital Strategy prior to submission to Cabinet. The Strategy was an overarching document which brought together various strategies and policies, split into a number of sections incorporating details of the Council's Prudential Indicators for 2023/24 - 2025/26.

The Chairman shared his own concerns about being asked to recommend the report due to the impact of capital decisions upon the revenue account and without the associated figures. In the absence of further detail, he proposed that the recommendations be changed to reflect that they be noted by the Committee. His concerns were shared by Councillor Attridge who seconded the proposal.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was carried.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee notes the Capital Strategy; and

(b) That the Committee notes:-

- The Prudential Indicators for 2023/24 - 2025/26 as detailed within Tables 1, and 4-8 of the Capital Strategy, and
- Delegated authority for the Corporate Finance Manager to effect movements between the separately agreed limits within the authorised limit for external debt and the operational boundary for external debt (Table 6 of the Capital Strategy).

50. **CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2023/24 - 2025/26**

The Strategic Finance Manager presented a report on the proposed Capital Programme 2023/24 - 2025/26 which set out long-term investment in assets to enable the delivery of high quality and value for money public services split between three sections: Statutory/Regulatory, Retained Assets and Investment. He gave a presentation covering:

- Structure - Council Fund Capital Programme
- Current Programme 2022/23 - 2024/25
- Projected Funding 2023/24 - 2025/26
- Proposed allocations - Statutory/Regulatory, Retained Assets and Investment
- Summary generally funded Programme
- Specifically funded schemes
- Summary Capital Programme
- Potential future schemes
- Next steps

Councillor Bernie Attridge said that he was unable to support the programme given the revenue budget situation. On the redevelopment of Theatr Clwyd, it was clarified that the additional £1.5m was funded from the core Capital Programme with no additional borrowing requirement.

Councillor Chris Dolphin referred to the Levelling Up Fund which, if successful, would provide a range of benefits across the County. He said that the Council could lose out if it did not put forward bids for schemes.

In acknowledging the point, the Chairman reiterated his view that revenue pressures should not be increased without knowing where further efficiencies could be achieved. For that reason, he proposed an amendment to Recommendations 1, 2 and 4 for the Committee to consider and feedback, rather than support. He was seconded by Councillor Attridge.

The Corporate Manager (Capital Programme and Assets) explained that significant work had been undertaken to develop a Capital Programme that was deliverable and that the Committee was being asked to approve the principles. He advised that pressures were already built into the Medium Term Financial Strategy and would not increase the borrowing requirement. In addition,

representations were being made to increase Welsh Government intervention rates which if successful, would reduce revenue pressures.

Councillor Dolphin proposed an amendment that the Committee support the recommendations as set out in the report. He was seconded by Councillor Vicky Perfect.

The Senior Manager (Safeguarding and Commissioning) explained that the Croes Atti project would help to meet increasing high demand for social care as identified in a regional report and that if not progressed, there would still be revenue consequences from the purchasing of care commissioning.

Having been moved and seconded, the amendment was put to the vote and carried.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee:

- (a) Supports the allocations and schemes in Table 3 (paragraph 1.09) for the Statutory/Regulatory and Retained Assets sections of the Council Fund Capital Programme 2023/24-2025/26;
- (b) Supports the schemes included in Table 4 (paragraph 1.31) for the Investment section of the Council Fund Capital Programme 2023/24-2025/26;
- (c) Notes that the shortfall in funding of schemes in 2024/25 in Table 5 (paragraph 1.37) at this point in the approval process allows flexibility. Options including a combination of future capital receipts, alternative grants (if available), prudential borrowing or the re-phasing of schemes will be considered during 2023/24, and included in future Capital Programme reports;
- (d) Supports the schemes included in Table 6 (paragraph 1.41) for the specifically funded section of the Council Fund Capital Programme which will be funded in part through borrowing; and
- (e) Confirms that it has no comments for Cabinet to consider before the Capital Programme 2023/24-2025/26 report is considered by Council.

51. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

None.

(The meeting started at 10am and ended at 12.30pm)

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Chairman

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn bwrpasol

Eitem ar gyfer y Rhaglen 4



CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday, 15 th December 2022
Report Subject	Action Tracking
Report Author	Democratic Services Manager
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report shows the action points from previous meetings of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the progress made in completing them. The majority of the requested actions have been completed. Any outstanding will be reported back to the next monthly meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1.00	EXPLAINING THE ACTION TRACKING REPORT
1.01	<p>In previous meetings, requests for information, reports or actions have been made. These have been summarised as action points.</p> <p>Following the meeting of the committee in July 2018, it was recognised that there was a need to formalise such reporting back, as 'Matters Arising' is not an item which can feature on an agenda.</p>
1.02	<p>This paper summarises those points and where appropriate provides an update on the actions resulting from them.</p> <p>The Action Tracking details are attached in appendix 1.</p>

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	The creation of the Action Tracking report increases workflow but should provide greater understanding and efficiency.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	Not applicable.

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

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Corporate Resources OSC Action Points.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Minutes of previous meetings of the committee as identified in the report.

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: Steven Goodrum, Democratic Services Manager Telephone: 01352 702320 E-mail: Steven.Goodrum@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
	None.

ACTION TRACKING FOR THE CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting Date	Agenda item	Action Required	Action Officer(s)	Action taken
17.11.22	7. Employment and Workforce mid-year update	To provide further detail on trend analysis dating back to 2019 relating to cumulative agency spend increasing year on year.	Business Information and Compliance Adviser	Information being collated ready for distribution.
17.11.22	9. Revenue Budget Monitoring 2022/23 Month 6 and Capital Programme 2022/23 Month 6	To provide information about any impact if the £1.14m outstanding debt from the Health Board on joint-funded care packages was received.	Finance Officers	Information being collated ready for distribution.

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn bwrpasol

Eitem ar gyfer y Rhaglen 5



CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday, 15 th December 2022
Report Subject	Forward Work Programme
Report Author	Democratic Services Manager
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

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

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

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

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME
1.01	Items feed into a Committee's Forward Work Programme from a number of sources. Members can suggest topics for review by Overview & Scrutiny Committees, members of the public can suggest topics, items can be referred by the Cabinet for consultation purposes, or by County Council or Chief Officers. Other possible items are identified from the Cabinet Work Programme and the Improvement Plan.
1.02	In identifying topics for future consideration, it is useful for a 'test of significance' to be applied. This can be achieved by asking a range of questions as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Will the review contribute to the Council's priorities and/or objectives?2. Is it an area of major change or risk?3. Are there issues of concern in performance?4. Is there new Government guidance of legislation?5. Is it prompted by the work carried out by Regulators/Internal Audit?6. Is the issue of public or Member concern?

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

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	In some cases, action owners have been contacted to provide an update on their actions.

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

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Draft Forward Work Programme.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None.

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

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

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn bwrpasol

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME
CURRENT FWP

Date of meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report/Presentation	Scrutiny Focus	Responsible/Contact Officer	Submission Deadline
<p>Thursday 12th January, 2023</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tudalen 23</p>	<p>MTFS & Budget Setting 23-24</p>	<p>To look at budget in the round (in light of local government settlement) and to which all members are invited</p>	<p>Awareness</p>	<p>Chief Executive / Chief Officer (Governance)</p>	
	<p>Revenue Budget Monitoring 2022/23 (Month 8)</p>	<p>To provide the latest revenue budget monitoring position for 2022/23 for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account.</p>	<p>Performance monitoring</p>	<p>Corporate Finance Manager</p>	
	<p>North Wales Economic Ambition Board</p>	<p>To receive an update from the North Wales Economic Ambition Board.</p>	<p>Awareness</p>	<p>TBC</p>	
	<p>Employment and Workforce Quarterly Update</p>	<p>This report covers strategic updates in addition to the quarterly workforce statistics and their analysis</p>	<p>Assurance</p>	<p>Corporate Manager, People and Organisational Development</p>	
<p>Thursday 9th February, 2023</p>	<p>Social Value Performance</p>	<p>To provide a social value performance update</p>	<p>Assurance</p>	<p>Chief Officer (Social Services)</p>	
	<p>Revenue Budget Monitoring 2022/23 (Month 9) and Capital Programme Monitoring 2022/23 (month 9)</p>	<p>To provide Members with the Revenue Budget Monitoring 2022/23 (Month 9) Report and the Capital Programme 2022/23 (Month 9) Report and Significant Variances.</p>	<p>Performance monitoring</p>	<p>Corporate Finance Manager</p>	

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Date of meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report/Presentation	Scrutiny Focus	Responsible/Contact Officer	Submission Deadline
Tuesday 24 March, 2023	Council Plan 2022-23 Mid-Year Performance Reporting	To review the levels of progress in the achievement of activities and performance levels identified in the Council Plan.	Performance monitoring	Chief Executive	
	Delivering public services through outsourcing or shared services	To explore the financial benefits of outsourcing or sharing some Council services	Consultation	Corporate Manager, Corporate Property and Assets	
Thursday 9 th March, 2023	Revenue budget monitoring 2022/23 (month 10)	To provide the latest revenue budget monitoring position for 2022/23 for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account.	Performance monitoring	Corporate Finance Manager	
	Local Government Finance Act 1992, Section 13A (Sub-section 1C)	To review Flintshire County Council's policy on discretionary powers held by councils to discount or write-off the amount of Council Tax payable on a case-by-case basis.	Policy review	Corporate Finance Manager	
	NEWydd Business Plan 2023/24	To present the NEWydd Catering & Cleaning Ltd Business Plan 2023/24 for endorsement	Consultation	Corporate Manager, Corporate Property and Assets	
	Joint Procurement Service Annual Report 2021/22	To receive a performance update report on the Joint Procurement Service with Denbighshire County Council.	Performance monitoring	Chief Officer (Governance)	

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Date of meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report/Presentation	Scrutiny Focus	Responsible/Contact Officer	Submission Deadline
Thursday 20th April, 2023	Revenue budget monitoring 2022/23 (month 11) Employment and Workforce Quarterly Update	To provide the latest revenue budget monitoring position for 2022/23 for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account. This report covers strategic updates in addition to the quarterly workforce statistics and their analysis	Performance monitoring Assurance	Corporate Finance Manager Corporate Manager, People and Organisational Development	
Thursday 18th May, 2023 Tudalen	Revenue Budget Monitoring 2022/23 (Outturn) and Capital Programme Monitoring 2022/23 (Outturn)	To present the Revenue Budget Monitoring (Outturn) and Capital Programme Monitoring (Outturn) for 2022/23.	Performance monitoring	Corporate Finance Manager	
Thursday 15th June, 2023	Revenue budget monitoring 2023/24 (month 1) Council Plan 2022-23 Year-End Performance	To provide the latest revenue budget monitoring position for 2023/24 for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account. To review the levels of progress in the achievement of activities and performance levels identified in the Council Plan.	Performance monitoring Performance monitoring	Corporate Finance Manager Chief Executive	
Thursday 13th July, 2023	Revenue budget monitoring 2023/24 (month 2)	To provide the latest revenue budget monitoring position for 2023/24 for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account.	Performance monitoring	Corporate Finance Manager	

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Item(s) to be scheduled:

REGULAR ITEMS

Month	Item	Purpose of Report	Responsible / Contact Officer
Quarterly / Annual	Performance Reporting	To consider performance outturns for improvement targets against directorate indicators.	Chief Executive
Monthly	Revenue Budget Monitoring	To provide the latest revenue budget monitoring position for 2021/22 for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account.	Corporate Finance Manager
Quarterly	Employment and Workforce Quarterly Update	This report covers strategic updates in addition to the quarterly workforce statistics and their analysis.	Corporate Manager, People and Organisational Development
Annually	Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) Annual Letter and Complaints against Flintshire County Council	To share the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales Annual Letter and Complaints made against Flintshire County Council Services	Chief Officer (Governance)

Eitem ar gyfer y Rhaglen 6

Yn rhinwedd paragraff(au) 15 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A
o Ddeddf Llywodraeth Leol 1972.

Dogfen Gyfyngedig - Ni ddylid ei chyhoeddi

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn bwrpasol

Yn rhinwedd paragraff(au) 15 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A
o Ddeddf Llywodraeth Leol 1972.

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Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn bwrpasol

Eitem ar gyfer y Rhaglen 7



CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday 15 th December 2022
Report Subject	Work of the Coroner's Office
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources
Report Author	Chief Officer (Governance)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The position of coroner dates back to at least the 12th century. Its role is to hold inquests into the cause and manner of certain deaths within an area. Coroners are judicial office holders appointed locally subject to national scrutiny. Policy and coronial law are controlled by the Ministry of Justice but operational and financial responsibility sit with the local authority.

The role of the coroner is to establish the identity of a deceased person and the time, manner and cause of their death. They have investigatory powers including the powers to summon witnesses, and hold special court hearings call inquests.

The coroner's district of North East Wales covers the areas of Conwy, Denbighshire, and Flintshire and Wrexham Councils. The coroner, John Gittins, and his office are hosted by Denbighshire County Council on behalf of the other three Councils. We contribute to the cost of the office on a per capita basis.

The coroner will give a presentation to the Committee on his work on behalf of the four Councils.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That the Committee thanks the Coroner for his work and receives further reports on an annual basis.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE ROLE OF CORONER
1.01	<p>The office of coroner is one of the oldest judicial appointments in England and Wales dating back to at least the 12th century and possibly the 11th century (to just after the Norman Conquest in 1066). The role has evolved over the intervening 800+ years but its core function is still to identify the cause and manner of certain deaths within its coronial area (called a “coroner’s district”).</p>
1.02	<p>The office of coroner fulfils an important societal function in establishing the cause of death and can lead to recommendations on how to prevent other deaths occurring in the future. At a personal level, it is also an important service for families and friends who want to understand the loss of a loved one.</p>
1.03	<p>Responsibility for coroners is split between national and local government. The Ministry of Justice sets coronial law and policy, including, deciding on the size and extent of coroners’ districts. Recruitment is a local function subject to scrutiny and approval of the selected candidate at a national level. Operational and financial responsibility sits with the local authority. The coroner also receives support from the Police.</p>
1.04	<p>The North East Wales coroner’s district covers the four Councils of Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham. The Councils share the costs of the office on a per capita basis. Denbighshire County Council hosts the coroner on behalf of the other three Councils, and employs a small office to provide administration etc. It has recently constructed a coroner’s court within the Shire Hall buildings at Ruthin. This suite of rooms contains modern facilities for bereaved families and witnesses attending inquests.</p>
1.05	<p>The majority of deaths are not investigated by the coroner. The coroner will not investigate where the deceased has been under medical care or has been seen by a doctor within 28 days of death. However, if the deceased died without being seen by a doctor, or if the doctor is unwilling to make a determination, the coroner will investigate the cause and manner of death. The coroner will also investigate when a death is deemed violent or unnatural, where the cause is unknown, where a death is the result of poisoning or industrial injury, or if it occurred in police custody or prison.</p>
1.06	<p>The coroner holds hearings called inquests which receive evidence on the identity of the deceased (if not known), the time, manner and cause of death. The coroner has power to summons witnesses and to direct that investigations such as a physical post mortem or toxicology report are carried out. The coroner is assisted in these enquiries by the Police and his office.</p>
1.07	<p>A coroner’s investigation is different from a criminal investigation. If a coroner investigates, it does not mean there is suspicion of a criminal act or of any wrong doing. The coroner’s findings may be critical of what</p>

	<p>happened but the coroner cannot blame individuals or organisations or find them responsible for the death. That will be for the criminal or civil courts.</p> <p>The coroner can also write a report to help prevent future deaths. They will send this report to the organisations involved in the death for them to take action on the recommendations.</p>
1.08	There is published guidance on the role of the coroner and the process of investigating a death (here). There are expected standards of performance for coroners (e.g. how long it takes to conclude an inquest). Accountability for those standards is to the Ministry of Justice.
1.09	The coroner works with the local authorities within his district, and the Executive Office acts as the point of liaison. During the pandemic the coroner has a statutory role to ensure that there is adequate provision for the expected levels of mortality including mortuary space and interment provision. He was therefore closely involved in strategic planning meetings during the response phase.
1.10	The coroner, John Gittins, gave a presentation to the Committee in 2021 explaining his role and work. As the membership of the Committee has changed since then he will again give an overview of his role, and he will also address current issues facing the coroner's service and the four counties that he serves.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS								
2.01	<p>Our contribution towards the budget for the service is based on our population share across the coroner's area, which is 31%. There are core costs to the service (such as salaries, rooms, IT) and there are variable costs based on the number of deaths and investigations (e.g. post mortems, toxicology reports) that need to be undertaken. For Quarter 1 for 2022/23 is £40,379.</p> <p>The overall cost for previous years has been as follows:</p> <table> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Annual Cost</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2019/20</td> <td>£257,924</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2020/21</td> <td>£248,905</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2021/22</td> <td>£321,614</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Annual Cost	2019/20	£257,924	2020/21	£248,905	2021/22	£321,614
	Annual Cost								
2019/20	£257,924								
2020/21	£248,905								
2021/22	£321,614								

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	The role of coroner is statutory. The work of the coroner's office, amongst other things, helps to identify potential hazards that might lead to further deaths. It thereby helps to make society safer.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	None required.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None.

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: Gareth Owens, Chief Officer (Governance) Telephone: 01352 702344 E-mail: Gareth.legal@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	None.

Eitem ar gyfer y Rhaglen 8



CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday, 15 December 2022
Report Subject	Joint Funded Care Packages – Update Report
Cabinet Member	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Social Services
Report Author	Chief Officer (Social Services) and Corporate Finance Manager
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As discussed in the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the 13 October and 17 November 2022, the process of funding is complex. Much work has been done over the past month to process outstanding invoices and work continues to improve processes. This has seen a significant reduction in the number of long standing outstanding invoices and high value invoices.

Members have requested regular, an update report to give assurance that outstanding invoices are being processed and that the position continues to improve.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	To update Members on the proactive budget management of outstanding invoices raised by the Council for payment by Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	PROGRESS UPDATE
1.01	Regular meetings continue between Council officers and health board staff to reduce the number of outstanding invoices and resolve any gaps in information which have prevented payment to date.
1.02	Processes have been put in place to ensure current and future invoices are raised in a timely manner and supported by appropriate information to allow for payment within invoicing terms.
1.03	Meetings continue to be held at operational, strategic and Leader/Chief Executive level and the management of outstanding invoices is a standing item on all meeting agendas. BCUHB Strategic Leaders attended Social and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting on the 30 November 2022 where the matter was raised by Members. The health board's Executive Director of Finance, Sue Hill assured Members that significant payments had been made to resolve a number of invoices. She also gave assurance that the health board would be working closely with the Council to bring the outstanding invoice payment figure down.
1.04	<p>The following actions have been taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where the total value of the invoice is queried, the BCUHB Finance Team have paid the agreed funding level, leaving a much reduced outstanding amount.• The Council officers have provided documentation to confirm the funding decision for a Mental Health/Learning Disability invoice which has been promptly paid.• A number of long-standing invoices have been reviewed and whilst information to understand the discrepancies is difficult to obtain, it is agreed that they are approved care packages and the health board have made payments to resolve those invoices.• Two invoices relating to children to the value of c.£0.210m have ongoing queries and these are being actively worked by both partners.
1.05	There will be a number of invoices where both partners are unable to resolve remaining queries or discrepancies over funding levels and the health board proposed bringing in an independent agency to review these cases and arbitrate a settlement. This approach has been accepted by the Council and will take place in the new year.
1.06	A dedicated email account has been established for all CHC communication between the Council and health board officers.

1.07	Debt Levels			
1.08		Outstanding CHC Invoices 12/10/2022	Outstanding CHC Invoices 11/11/2022	Outstanding CHC Invoices 06/12/2022
	Total	£ 1,285,005.01	£ 1,143,087.50	£834,664.00
	<p>Of the £0.835m outstanding CHC Invoices as at 6 December 2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £0.094m will have been paid on account by 15 December 2022 • £0.022m are being reconciled by the Council and will be paid within then new few weeks • £0.441m are unresolved and will be discussed at independent arbitration 			
1.09	Next Steps			
1.10	Continue with monthly operational meeting, strategic meetings and escalation pathways through the FCC and BCUHB Strategic meetings.			
1.11	Arbitration for £0.441m to be undertaken in the new year.			

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	As this report is the provision of financial information only.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	Debt levels are monitored monthly and an escalation route has been established.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	None required at this stage.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	-

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Jane Davies – Senior Manager Safeguarding and Commissioning</p> <p>Telephone: 01352 704503 and 01352 702503</p> <p>E-mail: jane.m.davies@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	None

Eitem ar gyfer y Rhaglen 9



CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

Date of Meeting	Thursday 15th December, 2022
Report Subject	Revenue Budget Monitoring 2022/23 Month 7
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement
Report Author	Corporate Finance Manager
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with the Revenue Budget Monitoring 2022/23 (Month 7).

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That the committee considers and comments on the Revenue Budget Monitoring 2022/23 (Month 7) report. Any specific matters for attention will be noted and reported back to the Cabinet when it considers the report.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING POSITION 2022/23 (MONTH 7)
1.01	The Revenue Budget Monitoring 2022/23 (Month 7) report will be presented to Cabinet on Tuesday 20th December, 2022. A copy of the report is attached as Appendix A to this report.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	As set out in Appendix A; Revenue Budget Monitoring 2022/23 (Month 7).

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	As set out in Appendix A; Revenue Budget Monitoring 2022/23 (Month 7).

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
4.01	None required.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix A; Revenue Budget Monitoring 2022/23 (Month 7).

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None required.

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

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	<p>Revenue: a term used to describe the day to day costs of running Council services and income deriving from those services. It also includes charges for the repayment of debt, including interest, and may include direct financing of capital expenditure.</p> <p>Budget: a statement expressing the Council's policies and service levels in financial terms for a particular financial year. In its broadest sense it includes both the revenue budget and capital programme and any authorised amendments to them.</p> <p>Capital Programme: The Council's financial plan covering capital schemes and expenditure proposals for the current year and a number of future years. It also includes estimates of the capital resources available to finance the programme.</p>

CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 20th December, 2022
Report Subject	Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2022/23 (Month 7)
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement
Report Author	Corporate Finance Manager
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This monthly report provides the latest detailed overview of the budget monitoring position in 2022/23 for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account for the financial year and presents the position, based on actual income and expenditure as at Month 7.

This report projects how the budget would stand at the close of the financial year, without new actions to reduce cost pressures and/or improve the financial return on efficiency planning and cost control is:

Council Fund

- An operating deficit of £0.094m (excluding the impact of the pay award which will need to be met by reserves), which is an adverse movement of £0.061m from the deficit figure reported at Month 6.
- A projected contingency reserve available balance as at 31 March 2023 of £4.055m (after the impact of final pay awards)

Housing Revenue Account

- Net in-year revenue expenditure forecast to be £3.321m higher than budget
- A projected closing balance as at 31st March, 2023 of £3.153m

Hardship Funding from Welsh Government helped secure £16m of direct financial help last year and we have continued to claim payments in 2022/23 for Self-isolation and Statutory Sick Pay Enhancement, along with Free School Meals direct payments within their eligible periods.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	To note the report and the estimated financial impact on the 2022/23 budget.
2	To approve the carry forward requests included in paragraph 1.07

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2022/23
1.01	<p>Council Fund Projected Position</p> <p>The projected year end position, without mitigation to reduce cost pressures and improve the yield on efficiency planning, is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An operating deficit of £0.094m (excluding the impact of the pay award which will need to be met by reserves), which is an adverse movement of £0.061m from the figure reported at Month 7. • A projected contingency reserve available balance as at 31 March 2023 of £4.055m (after the impact of pay awards) <p>To assist with managing risks and mitigating the overall projected overspend, the review of non-essential spend and a vacancy management process continues.</p>
1.02	<p>Hardship Funding from Welsh Government helped secure over £16m direct financial help last year and we have continued to claim payments in 2022/23 for Self-isolation and Statutory Sick Pay Enhancement, along with Free School Meals direct payments within their eligible periods. From the end of September, Winter Fuel Payments are also eligible to be claimed.</p>

1.03 **Table 1. Projected Position by Portfolio**

The table below shows the projected position by portfolio:

Portfolio/Service Area	Approved Budget	Projected Outturn	In-Year Over / (Under) spend
	£m	£m	£m
Social Services	77.969	78.641	0.672
Out of County Placements	15.101	16.207	1.105
Education & Youth	9.953	9.472	(0.481)
Schools	108.401	108.401	0.000
Streetscene & Transportation	38.466	39.538	1.072
Planning Env & Economy	6.797	6.240	(0.557)
People & Resources	4.324	4.259	(0.065)
Governance	10.772	10.152	(0.620)
Strategic Programmes	6.116	6.111	(0.005)
Assets	0.333	0.282	(0.051)
Housing & Communities	14.662	14.663	0.001
Chief Executive	2.235	2.152	(0.083)
Central & Corporate Finance	31.552	30.659	(0.893)
Total	326.682	326.778	0.094

1.04 The reasons for the projected variances are summarised within Appendix 1 and shows the detail of all variances over £0.050m and a summary of minor variances for each portfolio.

Significant Movements from Month 6

1.05 **Out of County Placements (£0.116m)**

- Children's Services (£0.020m) – minor movements
- Education & Youth (£0.096m) – due to the impact of over provision for accruals of costs relating to the 2021/22 financial year payable to a Local Authority.

1.06 **Governance (£0.098m)**

Revenues (£0.090m)

- Further increase (£0.050m) to the projected potential surplus on the Council Tax Collection Fund; revised projected income for fines and enforcement fees (£0.040m).

Minor variances across the Portfolio account for the remainder (£0.008m).

1.07	<p>Housing & Communities £0.232m</p> <p>The movement relates to a request for projected underspend of £0.240m on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) in the Benefits Service be carried forward to reserves to provide resilience against expected service budget pressures in future years.</p> <p>Minor movements across the Portfolio account for the remainder (£0.008m)</p> <p>In addition, a request for the carry forward of £0.093m which relates to unbudgeted amounts for the administration of grants received in respect of the Winter Fuel Support Scheme, self -isolation support and unpaid carers. This would provide further cover for the expected future pressures arising from overpayments of Benefits and the need to make an appropriate provision for bad debts.</p>
1.08	<p>There are a number of minor variances across the other Portfolios each below £0.030m that account for the remainder of the overall movement (£0.079m).</p>
1.09	<p>Tracking of In-Year Risks and Emerging Issues</p> <p>Members were made aware when setting the budget that there were a number of open risks that would need to be kept under close review. An update on these is provided below.</p>
1.10	<p>Council Tax Income</p> <p>'In-year' Council Tax collection levels, up to October 2022, are 66.4% compared to 66.5% in the previous year. Collections remain challenging as the rising costs-of-living are impacting on the ability of some households to make payment of council tax on time. The marginal 0.1% drop in collection levels is also consistent with other Welsh local authorities who are also seeing similar trends.</p>
1.11	<p>Pay Award (Teacher and Non-Teacher)</p> <p>The offer from the National employers for NJC employees of £1,925 on all spinal column points has now been accepted with back pay made to employees in November. This equates to an increase of 2.54% on the highest scale point to 10.5% on the lowest point.</p> <p>The Minister for Education has confirmed the pay award for teachers at 5%.</p> <p>The Council has provided for an uplift of 3.5% for Teaching and Non-Teaching staff – the increase above this level requires the Council to utilise reserves to fund the difference in the current financial year.</p> <p>The impact on 2022/23 is as follows:</p> <p>The in-year additional cost of the 2022/23 pay awards that will need to be met from reserves in-year has been recalculated to £3.955m after taking into account the reversal of the additional 1.25% rate of National Insurance (NI) from November.</p>

	<p>The above will also impact on the MTFs with the full year impact of the teachers' pay award increasing the impact for 2023/24 to £6.107m.</p> <p>There will also be an additional efficiency in 2023/24 for the full year NI reduction of £1.331m.</p>
1.12	<p>Other Tracked Risks</p> <p>In addition, there are a number of risks being tracked which may be subject to change and these are summarised below.</p>
1.13	<p>Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Impact</p> <p>An update on the latest budget position was reported in November prior to the formal Overview and Scrutiny Process in December which showed a potential increase in the additional budget requirement for 2023/24 to around £32m. An update to the overall position and feedback from the overview and scrutiny meetings will be reported elsewhere on the agenda.</p> <p>All Portfolios consider their financial position, the risks within their service and the impacts on the Medium Term on a monthly basis as part of their Portfolio Management Team meetings.</p>
1.14	<p>Out of County Placements</p> <p>The risks include continued high demand for placements where children and young people cannot be supported within in-house provision, and market supply limitation factors and inflationary pressures leading to higher costs.</p> <p>There is a projected overspend of £1.105m for the current cohort of placements, however, this is likely to increase if demand for new placement remains at the current levels. There have been 48 new placements in the year to date with costs totaling £3.3m within the total projected spend for the year of £16.3m, which amounts to over 20%.</p> <p>The service areas within this pooled budget will continue to do everything possible to manage these risks and additional investment has already been made to further develop in-house provision to help to mitigate against such financial pressures.</p>
1.15	<p>Benefits</p> <p>Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) – Based on current demand, costs are currently projected to be £0.610m below budget, although this will be monitored closely throughout the year due to the potential for growth.</p> <p>There is continued high demand across the whole of the Benefits service which is expected to remain the case for the foreseeable future. There is a significant pressure on recovery of overpayments which is a combination of a shortfall of recovery against the level of income target budget which is partly influenced by lower number of overpayments occurring, and also the need to increase the bad debt provision on historic debt.</p>

	<p>The increased staffing levels are still required, and those costs are now being met in full from the additional funding of £0.300m previously approved to provide the service with the additional flexibility needed to adapt to and meet the sustained increase in customer demand.</p>
1.16	<p>Homelessness</p> <p>The risk is a consequence of the cessation of funding support from the Welsh Government COVID-19 Hardship Fund at the end of 2021/22.</p> <p>Although, there is continued support via the new Homelessness – No One Left Out grant, this still falls well below the amount of support we received via the Hardship Fund in 2020/21 and 2021/22.</p> <p>Although it has been possible to contain some of the expected pressure through prepaid accommodation to the end of September 2022, which has been funded by the COVID-19 Hardship Fund, the expected continued high demand for temporary accommodation including short term Bed & Breakfast provision will continue to present significant challenges.</p> <p>We continue to strategically use increased allocations of Housing Support Grant working with external partners, but there remains a risk that the costs of statutory provision of support for Homelessness may exceed existing funding provision from base budget and available grant funding.</p>
1.17	<p>Achievement of Planned In-Year Efficiencies</p> <p>The 2022/23 budget contains £1.341m of specific efficiencies which are tracked and monitored throughout the year. The Council aims to achieve a 95% rate in 2022/23 as reflected in the MTFs KPI's and fully achieved all efficiencies in the previous financial year</p> <p>It is projected that all efficiencies will be achieved in 2022/23 and further details can be seen in Appendix 3.</p>
1.18	<p>Unearmarked Reserves</p> <p>The final level of Council Fund Contingency Reserve brought forward into 2022/23 was £7.098m as detailed in the 2021/22 outturn report (subject to Audit). In addition, the Council has set-aside a further £3.250m to the carried forward £2.066m COVID-19 Emergency Reserve being a total of £5.316m as a safeguard against the continuing impacts of the pandemic (additional costs and lost income).</p> <p>Some claims for March 2022 were disallowed by WG and Internal claims for Quarter 1 and 2 have been made in 2022/23 relating to additional costs in Schools, Streetscene & Transportation and for income losses within AURA. These total £0.991m and the balance on the COVID-19 Emergency Reserve is currently £4.325m.</p> <p>After taking into account all of the above there is a projected contingency reserve available balance as at 31 March 2023 of £4.055m (after the impact of final pay awards totalling £3.955m).</p>

1.19	Housing Revenue Account The 2021/22 Outturn Report to Cabinet on 12 July 2022 showed an un-earmarked closing balance at the end of 2021/22 of £3.616m and a closing balance of earmarked reserves of £1.622m.
1.20	The 2022/23 budget for the HRA is £37.755m which includes a movement of £2.858m to reserves.
1.21	The monitoring for the HRA is projecting in year expenditure to be £3.321m higher than budget and a closing un-earmarked balance as at 31 March 2023 of £3.153m, which at 8.35% of total expenditure satisfies the prudent approach of ensuring a minimum level of 3%. Appendix 4 attached refers.
1.22	The monthly movement from Month 6 totalled £0.003m, being net minor variances.
1.23	The budget contribution towards capital expenditure (CERA) is £10.898m with the actual contribution projected to be £13.755m at outturn.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	As set out within the report.

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

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	None specific.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1: Council Fund – Movement in Variances from Month 6 Appendix 2: Council Fund – Budget Variances Appendix 3: Council Fund – Programme of Efficiencies Appendix 4: Council Fund – Movement on Un-earmarked Reserves Appendix 5: Housing Revenue Account Variances

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
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6.01	Various budget records.
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7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Dave Ledsham Strategic Finance Manager</p> <p>Telephone: 01352 704503</p> <p>E-mail: dave.ledsham@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	<p>Budget: a statement expressing the Council's policies and service levels in financial terms for a particular financial year. In its broadest sense it includes both the revenue budget and capital programme and any authorised amendments to them.</p> <p>Council Fund: the fund to which all the Council's revenue expenditure is charged.</p> <p>Financial Year: the period of twelve months commencing on 1 April.</p> <p>Housing Revenue Account: the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is a local authority account showing current income and expenditure on housing services related to its own housing stock. The account is separate from the Council Fund and trading accounts and is funded primarily from rents and government subsidy.</p> <p>Intermediate Care Fund: Funding provided by Welsh Government to encourage integrated working between local authorities, health and housing.</p> <p>Projected Outturn: projection of the expenditure to the end of the financial year, made on the basis of actual expenditure incurred to date.</p> <p>Reserves: these are balances in hand that have accumulated over previous years and are held for defined (earmarked reserves) and general (general reserves) purposes. Councils are required to regularly review the level and purpose of their reserves and to take account of the advice of the Chief Finance Officer.</p> <p>Revenue: a term used to describe the day-to-day costs of running Council services and income deriving from those services. It also includes charges for the repayment of debt, including interest, and may include direct financing of capital expenditure.</p> <p>Variance: difference between latest budget and actual income or expenditure. Can be to date if reflecting the current or most up to date position or projected, for example projected to the end of the month or financial year.</p>

<p>Virement: the transfer of budget provision from one budget head to another. Virement decisions apply to both revenue and capital expenditure heads, and between expenditure and income, and may include transfers from contingency provisions. Virements may not however be approved between capital and revenue budget heads.</p>
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MONTH 7 - SUMMARY

Service	Movement between Periods (£m)	Narrative for Movement between Periods greater than £0.025m
Social Services		
Older People		
Localities	-0.075	Domiciliary and Direct Payment costs decreased by £0.091m based on recent activity. The residential care budget reduced by £0.083m. The Localities staffing costs increased by £0.059m mostly as a result of the requirement to extend some agency contracts. The Minor Adaptations budget increased by £0.038m due to activity based spend.
Regional Integration Fund	0.079	The Step Down Regional Integration Fund (RIF) scheme which enables quicker discharges from hospitals by placing people into short term care before it is safe for them to return home is already fully spent. Currently it is unlikely that slippage from other RIF schemes will be able to offset this additional pressure and any additional step down costs will increase this overspend unless Welsh Government provide additional funding.
Minor Variances	0.010	
Adults of Working Age		
Children to Adult Transition Services	-0.056	These are the costs for young adults who are transferring from Children's Services to Adult Social Care this financial year. Care costs are estimated early on, but once services are agreed actual costs may vary. This month has seen a reduction on expected spend for care packages.
Residential Placements	0.073	The increase in expenditure is as a result of net changes to care packages and an additional agreed care package.
Minor Variances	-0.027	
Children's Services		
Minor Variances	0.013	
Safeguarding & Commissioning		
Charging Policy income	-0.025	Income received through the charging policy is expected to increase
Management & Support	0.033	Deferment to 2023/24 of the in-year reduction to the Regional Collaboration Team contribution
Minor Variances	0.012	
Total Social Services (excl Out of County)	0.037	
Out of County		
Children's Services	-0.020	
Education & Youth	-0.096	Mainly due to the impact of over provision for accruals of costs relating to 2021/22 payable to another Local Authority which had been overstated within the recharge schedule
Total Out of County	-0.116	
Education & Youth		
Minor Variances	-0.040	Cumulative net movements across the portfolio
Total Education & Youth	-0.040	
Schools	0.000	
Streetscene & Transportation		
Service Delivery	0.029	Additional Security costs and Agency costs Increase
Transportation	0.033	School Transport costs increased due to capacity issues on a commercial bus service
Regulatory Services	-0.027	Vacancy savings due to delayed recruitment.
Other Minor Variances	-0.003	
Total Streetscene & Transportation	0.033	
Planning, Environment & Economy		
Impact of Covid-19	0.021	Costs now projected to the end of the financial year.
Minor Variances	0.001	
Total Planning & Environment	0.022	
People & Resources		
HR & OD	0.006	
Corporate Finance	-0.001	
Total People & Resources	0.005	
Governance		
Legal Services	0.024	Additional locum/agency costs
Revenues	-0.090	At Month 7 a further revision to the potential surplus on the Council Tax Collection Fund £0.050m; revised projection in income from fines £0.023m
Minor Variances	-0.031	
Total Governance	-0.098	
Strategic Programmes		
Minor Variances	0.003	
Total Strategic Programmes	0.003	
Assets		
Caretaking & Security	-0.013	
Industrial Units	-0.008	
Minor Variances	-0.012	
Total Assets	-0.033	
Housing and Community		
Benefits	0.241	Underspends which are being requested to be carried forward to reserves to provide resilience against expected service budget pressures in future years
Minor Variances	-0.009	
Total Housing and Community	0.232	
Chief Executive's	0.002	
Central & Corporate Finance	-0.010	
Centralised Costs	0.025	
Grand Total	0.061	

Budget Monitoring Report

Service	Approved Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Annual Variance (£m)	Impact of Covid-19 (£m)	Last Month Variance (£m)	Cause of Major Variances greater than £0.050m	Action Required
Social Services							
Older People							
Localities	20.679	20.088	-0.591		-0.516	The commissioned Older Peoples domiciliary and Direct Payment budget is expected to underspend by £0.848m based on recent months activity. There are recruitment and retention challenges within this service which is limiting the amount of care which can be purchased. The residential care budget is projecting a £0.241m overspend due to the cost of placements net of income such as Free Nursing Care, Regional Integration Fund contributions and property income. The Localities staffing budget is expected to overspend by £0.009m. There is an underspend of £0.033m for day services and the Minor Adaptations budget is expected to overspend by £0.038m.	
Regional Integration Fund	0.000	0.165	0.165		0.086	The Step Down Regional Integration Fund (RIF) scheme which enables quicker hospital discharges by placing people into short term residential care until it is safe for them to return home, has already fully spent. At this moment it seems unlikely slippage from other RIF schemes will be able to offset the additional pressure.	
Minor Variances	10.190	10.213	0.023		0.013		
Adults of Working Age							
Resources & Regulated Services	29.481	29.732	0.251		0.258	The PDSI (Physical Disability and Sensory Impairment) budget is reporting a £0.125m overspend due to net costs of care packages. The in-house Supported Living service is £0.163m overspent and will likely increase as it continues agency cover is required. The Learning Disability Daycare and Workscheme budget is £0.077m overspent due mostly to inflationary pressures. The care package costs for independently provided care for Learning Disability Services is £0.114m underspent.	
Children to Adult Transition Services	0.951	1.100	0.149		0.205	These are the costs of care for young adults who are transferring to Adult Social Care from Childrens Services this financial year. Care costs are initially estimated but once servicees have been agreed the actual cost may be different.	
Professional and Administrative Support	0.367	0.315	-0.052		-0.029	Some temporary vacancies are resulting in in year savings.	
Residential Placements	1.956	2.409	0.453		0.380	Cost of currently commissioned care packages within the Mental Health Service.	
Professional Support	0.774	0.834	0.060		0.040	Increased contributions to the North East Wales emergency duty team and some staffing overspends.	
Minor Variances	2.892	2.826	-0.066		-0.050		
Children's Services							
Family Placement	2.862	2.809	-0.052		-0.047	Due to current in-house fostering and special guardianship order placement costs.	
Grants	0.236	0.287	0.051		0.037	There are a few smaller variances which are contributing to the overspend on the integrated working budget. These include a £0.010m additional cost for advocacy and some variation for staff costs.	
Family Support	0.375	0.513	0.137		0.137	Costs are based upon the current activity levels over the last few months and projected forward for the rest of the year. Workforce costs, primarily seasonal staff are the primary cost driver for the service.	
Legal & Third Party	0.232	0.717	0.485		0.509	Legal costs are overspent by £0.239m due to the number of cases going through the courts and some use of legal professionals. Direct Payments also continue to increase in demand and are overspent by £0.246m	

Budget Monitoring Report

Service	Approved Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Annual Variance (£m)	Impact of Covid-19 (£m)	Last Month Variance (£m)	Cause of Major Variances greater than £0.050m	Action Required
Residential Placements	1.312	0.981	-0.331		-0.336	The in-year operating of some Childrens Residential care settings will mean that there will be one off savings, in addition it is expected that there will be non-recurring grant from Welsh Government to support start up costs.	
Professional Support	6.173	6.438	0.265		0.243	To support adequate levels of child protection the established staffing structure needs to be at a sufficient level to meet mandatory safeguarding standards. Vacancies are minimised and additional temporary posts are sometimes required to meet the challenges and demands of Childrens Services. There is an assumption that Welsh Government will allow for flexible use of Childrens Services grants as in previous years which results in some cost pressures being offset.	
Minor Variances	0.440	0.441	0.001		-0.001		
Safeguarding & Commissioning							
Business Systems & Financial Assessments	0.831	0.908	0.077		0.063	There are additional one off costs of £0.018m for an IT system upgrade. In addition there are temporary uplifts in hours which have increased staff costs. These additional costs are funded from underspends within the Business Support Service.	
Business Support Service	1.195	1.140	-0.055		-0.054	The underspend is due to a decrease in staff costs from vacancies which are unlikely to be filled this year.	
Safeguarding Unit	1.291	1.096	-0.194		-0.214	A consultation for the updated Liberty Protection Safeguard legislation continues to be undertaken. Due to the implementation delay for this legislation there will be an in-year saving.	
Commissioning	0.679	0.628	-0.051		-0.027	Vacancies have resulted in in-year cost reductions	
Minor Variances	-4.947	-4.999	-0.052		-0.064		
Total Social Services (excl Out of County)	77.969	78.641	0.672	0.000	0.635		
Out of County							
Children's Services	10.097	11.600	1.502		1.523	The projected overspend reflects significant additional demands on the service in the year to date with 31 new placements having been made in the year to date - most of which are high cost residential placements - there is provision for a contingency sum of £0.250m, for net impacts of further new placements and other placement changes, but this may not prove to be enough.	
Education & Youth	5.004	4.607	-0.397		-0.301	The latest underspend reflects projected costs for the current cohort of placements and there have been 23 new placements in the year to date with further new placements also likely to emerge as the year progresses, for which contingency provision of £0.050m has been made.	
Total Out of County	15.101	16.207	1.105	0.000	1.222		
Education & Youth							
Inclusion & Progression	5.251	5.174	-0.077		-0.055	The latest underspend position reflects further savings within the ALN (Additional Learning Needs) by maximising grants and long term staff sickness. Also savings identified within EAL (English as an Additional Language) service, also by maximising grants against core staff. Part of the service savings have been captured as part of Plas Derwen, due to part year vacancies for senior staff.	
Integrated Youth Provision	1.035	0.978	-0.057		-0.046	The projected underspend is mainly due to staffing savings	

Budget Monitoring Report

Service	Approved Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Annual Variance (£m)	Impact of Covid-19 (£m)	Last Month Variance (£m)	Cause of Major Variances greater than £0.050m	Action Required
School Improvement Systems	1.889	1.736	-0.154		-0.142	Payments to NMS (Non Maintained Settings) and MS (Maintained Settings) projected similar to those in 21/22. Welsh Government have announced continuation of top-up funding to £5 p/hour so give the Early Entitlement budget increasing financial capacity. Alongside this, RRRS (Recruit, Recover and Raise Standards) and Early Years Pupil Development grant increases announced allow core budget to be released. Proposed efficiency savings currently under review.	
School Planning & Provision	0.671	0.580	-0.091		-0.076	Projected underspend on insurance liability claims costs and some salary savings	
Minor Variances	1.106	1.004	-0.103		-0.123		
Total Education & Youth	9.953	9.472	-0.481	0.000	-0.442		
Schools	108.401	108.401	0.000		0.000		
Streetscene & Transportation							
Service Delivery	9.277	9.486	0.209		0.180	The service has a recurring revenue pressure of £0.100m for security costs at the Household Recycling Centres. Street lighting is also incurring a £0.070m revenue pressure on the Community Council income budget. Additional £0.100m overspend is attributable to high sickness levels/agency costs. The overall overspend is partially offset by additional income achieved through in-house construction work.	
Highways Network	8.096	8.582	0.486		0.489	Highways is incurring a revenue pressure of £0.400m in Fleet Services as a result of rising fuel costs. Also additional £0.050m increase in weed spraying contractor costs following concerns raised in Scrutiny, which cannot be covered by our existing budget.	
Transportation	10.031	10.482	0.451		0.418	Local bus subsidy is incurring an overspend of £0.100m due to the Park and Ride Service and Service 5. School Transport is incurring a revenue pressure of £0.090m, due to a shortfall in budget for 3 additional school days driven by Easter timelines in this financial year. At Period 5 there was an additional pressure of £0.200m identified in School Transport due to additional demand (PRUs/ALN) 6 routes in total equating to £270.00 per day. School transport is also facing an additional revenue pressure of £0.030m in Period 7 due to capacity issues on a commercial bus service. There may be further cost increases towards the end of this financial year due to rising transport operator costs (fuel, driver wages, insurance, energy etc).	
Regulatory Services	11.062	10.988	-0.074		-0.048	Regulatory Services has an underspend of £0.053m due to vacancies within the service. Increased rebate rates for the sale of electricity and improving car parking income has increased income by £0.020m.	
Total Streetscene & Transportation	38.466	39.538	1.072	-0.000	1.039		
Planning, Environment & Economy							
Community	0.890	0.964	0.074		0.073	Fee income shortfalls in Licensing and Pest Control and historic business planning efficiency £0.024m not realised	
Development	0.146	-0.438	-0.584		-0.589	Favourable variance following receipt of two high value one off Planning Fee each approx £0.300m	
Management & Strategy	1.385	1.293	-0.092		-0.095	Staff savings from vacant posts	
Impact of Covid-19	0.000	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.054	COVID-19 related additional cleaning costs for Countryside Service and Environmental Health Officer costs	
Minor Variances	4.376	4.346	-0.029		-0.022		

Budget Monitoring Report

Service	Approved Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Annual Variance (£m)	Impact of Covid-19 (£m)	Last Month Variance (£m)	Cause of Major Variances greater than £0.050m	Action Required
Total Planning & Environment	6.797	6.241	-0.557	0.075	-0.579		
People & Resources							
HR & OD	2.284	2.246	-0.037		-0.043		
Corporate Finance	2.041	2.006	-0.035		-0.034		
Impact of Covid-19	0.000	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008		
Total People & Resources	4.324	4.260	-0.065	0.008	-0.069		
Governance							
Legal Services	0.884	0.940	0.056		0.033	Additional costs for locum services covering vacant posts	
Democratic Services	2.374	2.299	-0.074		-0.079	Variance as a result of the Members Allowances new rate not being implemented until May, 2022 and lower than anticipated take up of both Broadband and Pension Allowances (£0.108m) ; mitigated by the inception of the new Climate Change Committee Chair person Allowance plus minor variances across Service	
ICT	4.960	4.893	-0.068		-0.051	Vacancy savings together with a reduced contribution to DCC for procurement	
Customer Services	1.018	0.856	-0.162		-0.160	Registrars Fee Income higher than anticipated and savings from vacant posts	
Revenues	0.201	-0.113	-0.314		-0.223	The variance results from the projected potential surplus on the Council Tax Collection Fund (£0.250m) based on current information; minor variance across the service	
Impact of Covid-19	0.000	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001		
Minor Variances	1.336	1.277	-0.059		-0.043		
Total Governance	10.772	10.152	-0.620	0.001	-0.523		
Strategic Programmes							
Minor Variances	6.116	6.111	-0.005		-0.008		
Total Strategic Programmes	6.116	6.111	-0.005	0.000	-0.008		
Assets							
Caretaking & Security	0.264	0.170	-0.094		-0.080	Savings on staffing due to vacancies	
Minor Variances	0.069	0.112	0.043		0.062	Cumulative minor variances across the service	
Total Assets	0.333	0.282	-0.051	0.000	-0.019		
Housing and Community							
Minor Variances	14.662	14.663	0.001		-0.231		
Total Housing and Community	14.662	14.663	0.001	0.000	-0.231		
Chief Executive's	2.235	2.152	-0.083		-0.085	Variance relates to vacant post and not all staff at top of scale	
Central & Corporate Finance	28.769	27.828	-0.941		-0.931	Over recovery of planned pension contributions recouperment against actuarial projections based on the current level of contributions together with a revised projection on the Central Loans & investment Account (CLIA) reported at Month 6	
Centralised Costs	2.783	2.778	-0.005		-0.030		
Soft Loan Mitigation	0.000	0.053	0.053		0.053		
Grand Total	326.682	326.778	0.094	0.084	0.033		

2022/23 Efficiencies Outturn Tracker - Month 7

Efficiency Description	Accountable Officer	Efficiency Target	Projected Efficiency	(Under)/Over Achievement	Efficiency Open/Closed (O/C)	Confidence in Achievement of Efficiency - Based on (see below) R = High Assumption A = Medium Assumption G = Figures Confirmed
		2022/23 £m	2022/23 £m	2022/23 £m		
Portfolio						
Corporate						
Increase in Reserves	Rachel Parry Jones	0.471	0.471	0.000	C	G
Utility Inflation	Rachael Corbelli	0.085	0.085	0.000	C	G
Efficiency from Restructure	Corporate Policy Rachel Parry Jones	0.025	0.025	0.000	C	G
Recharge to HRA	Chief Executive post to HRA 50% Rachel Parry Jones	0.027	0.027	0.000	C	G
Total Corporate Services		0.608	0.608	0.000		
Housing & Assets						
Connahs Quay Power Station	Neal Cockerton	0.290	0.290	0.000	C	G
Rent Newydd	Neal Cockerton	0.020	0.020	0.000	C	G
Total Housing & Assets		0.310	0.310	0.000		
Social Services						
Sleep in Pressure not Required	Neil Ayling	0.123	0.123	0.000	C	G
Total Social Services		0.123	0.123	0.000		
Governance						
Single Person Discount Review (One Off)	Gareth Owens	0.300	0.300	0.000	O	G
Total Governance		0.300	0.300	0.000		
Total 2022/23 Budget Efficiencies		1.341	1.341	0.000		

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	%	£
Total 2022/23 Budget Efficiencies	100	1.341
Total Projected 2022/23 Budget Efficiencies Underachieved	0	0.000
Total Projected 2022/23 Budget Efficiencies Achieved	100	1.341
Total 2022/23 Budget Efficiencies (Less Previously agreed Decisions)	100	0.000
Total Projected 2022/23 Budget Efficiencies Underachieved	0	0.000
Total Projected 2022/23 Budget Efficiencies Achieved	0	0.000

Corporate Efficiencies Remaining from Previous Years

Income Target Remaining		£m	
Income Target Efficiency remaining from Previous Years	All Portfolios	0.041	
Fees and charges increase 1st October, 2022	Full Year effect 1st April 2023	(0.026)	
Total Income Efficiency Remaining		0.015	(0.015)

Movements on Council Fund Unearmarked Reserves

	£m	£m
Total Reserves as at 1 April 2022	18.438	
Less - Base Level	(5.769)	
Total Reserves above base level available for delegation to Cabinet		12.669
Less - COVID-19 Emergency Funding Allocation		5.316
Less - Childrens Services Social Work Costs (approved 21/22)		0.157
Less - Children's Services front door service - agency workers (approved by Cabinet on 28th June)		0.300
Add - Total Balances Released to Reserves (Month 5)		1.208
Less - impact of the final pay awards		3.955
Less - Month 7 projected outturn		0.094
Total Contingency Reserve available for use		4.055

Budget Monitoring Report
Housing Revenue Account Variances

MONTH 7 - SUMMARY

Service	Revised Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Variance (£m)	Last Month Variance (£m)	Cause of Major Variance	Action Required
Housing Revenue Account						
Income	(37.755)	(37.278)	0.477	0.454	We are currently projecting a variance of £0.477m due to loss of rental income in relation to void properties. Of this, £0.371m relates to void properties, £0.092m relates to utilities costs on void properties and £0.029m relates to void garages. The remaining (£0.015m) relates to other minor variances.	
Capital Financing - Loan Charges	6.723	6.723				
Estate Management	2.263	2.067	(0.197)	(0.162)	Additional cost of agency positions of £0.160m, which is offset by vacancy savings of (£0.196m) and additional funding from the Housing Support Grant of (£0.120m). Other minor variances of (£0.041m).	
Landlord Service Costs	1.265	1.327	0.062	0.061	Salary savings of (£0.044m) are currently being projected within the service which offset agency costs of £0.024m. There is a forecasted pressure on utilities costs of £0.062m. The remaining variance of £0.020m is down to other minor movements.	
Repairs & Maintenance	10.908	10.985	0.077	0.079		
Management & Support Services	2.716	2.762	0.045	0.035	Savings of (£0.072m) have been projected based on current vacancies within the service and a further (£0.100m) efficiency has been identified through a review of central support recharges. Costs of legal advice in respect of the Renting Homes Wales Act £0.017m. Pressure in relation to insurance costs currently forecasted to be £0.169m. Other minor variances of £0.031m.	
Capital Expenditure From Revenue (CERA)	10.898	13.755	2.857	2.857		
HRA Projects	0.122	0.122	(0.000)	(0.000)		
Contribution To / (From) Reserves	2.858	2.858				
Total Housing Revenue Account	(0.000)	3.321	3.321	3.324		

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn bwrpasol

Eitem ar gyfer y Rhaglen 10



CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday 15 th December 2022
Report Subject	Public Services Ombudsman for Wales Annual Letter 2021-22 and complaints made against Flintshire County Council during the first half of 2022-23
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources
Report Author	Chief Officer (Governance)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to share the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) Annual Letter 2021-22 for Flintshire County Council.

The Ombudsman's Annual Letter provides an overview of the annual performance of the Council in relation to complaints investigated in 2021-22.

This report also provides an overview of complaints received by each portfolio of the Council between 1 April – 30 September 2022.

RECOMMENDATIONS

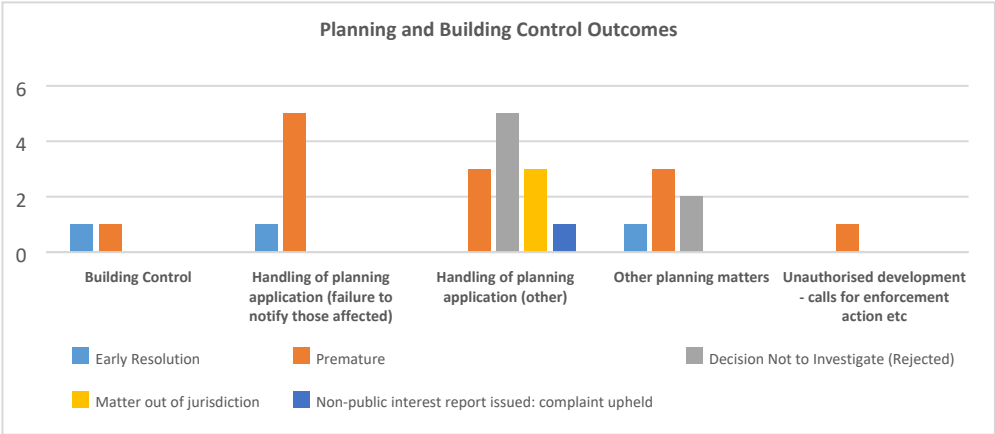
1	That the Committee notes the annual performance of the Council in respect of complaints made to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales during 2021-22.
2	That the Committee notes the 2022-23 half year performance of the Council in respect of complaints made to services in line with its complaints procedure.
3	That the Committee supports the actions outlined in paragraph 1.15 to further improve complaints handling across the Council.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES ANNUAL LETTER 2021-22																								
1.01	Michelle Morris, the new Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (“Ombudsman”) published her first Annual Letter on performance as part of her Annual Report and Accounts in August 2022. The letter shares information from the past year where public bodies in Wales and the Ombudsman are still dealing with the effects of the pandemic.																								
1.02	The number of new complaints against local authorities in Wales increased by 47% in 2021-22 compared to the previous year. This is a record number of cases to the Ombudsman over the last two years and well above pre pandemic levels. It is likely that complaints to the Ombudsman, and public services in general, were suppressed during the pandemic, and we are now starting to see a ‘rebound’ effect.																								
1.03	The Ombudsman intervened (upheld, settled or resolved at an early stage) in a similar proportion of complaints about public bodies, 18%, when compared with recent years. Intervention rates (where the Ombudsman has investigated complaints) for local authorities also remained at a similar level – 14% compared to 13% in recent years.																								
1.04	Appended to this report is a link to the Annual Letter detailing Flintshire’s performance and comparative data. The following paragraphs provide a summary of performance and additional context in response to the findings.																								
1.05	Section A – 99 complaints were made against Flintshire in 2021-22, an increase on the previous year (59). This figure reflects the Ombudsman’s findings that complaints against local authorities increased by 47%.																								
1.06	<p>Whilst a higher than average figure, this should not be viewed unfavourably because 80% of complaints to the Ombudsman were closed because they were out of jurisdiction, premature or closed after initial consideration. The table below illustrates the higher than average figures compared to North Wales and Wales as a whole:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="306 1496 1347 1792"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Wales Average</th> <th>North Wales Average</th> <th>Flintshire Actual</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Number of complaints</td> <td>52</td> <td>50</td> <td>99</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Out of jurisdiction complaints</td> <td>9</td> <td>10</td> <td>14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Premature complaints</td> <td>15</td> <td>15</td> <td>37</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Closed after initial consideration</td> <td>19</td> <td>18</td> <td>28</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total complaints after "no further action cases"</td> <td>10</td> <td>8</td> <td>20</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Wales Average	North Wales Average	Flintshire Actual	Number of complaints	52	50	99	Out of jurisdiction complaints	9	10	14	Premature complaints	15	15	37	Closed after initial consideration	19	18	28	Total complaints after "no further action cases"	10	8	20
	Wales Average	North Wales Average	Flintshire Actual																						
Number of complaints	52	50	99																						
Out of jurisdiction complaints	9	10	14																						
Premature complaints	15	15	37																						
Closed after initial consideration	19	18	28																						
Total complaints after "no further action cases"	10	8	20																						
1.07	It should also be noted that a number of complaints made against Flintshire from a person who repeats their complaint to the Ombudsman despite not exhausting Flintshire’s process, or not accepting decisions. For example, Ms. X complained to the Ombudsman on six occasions in 2021-22 and all complaints were rejected. This is one case to Flintshire, but the Ombudsman records six complaints.																								

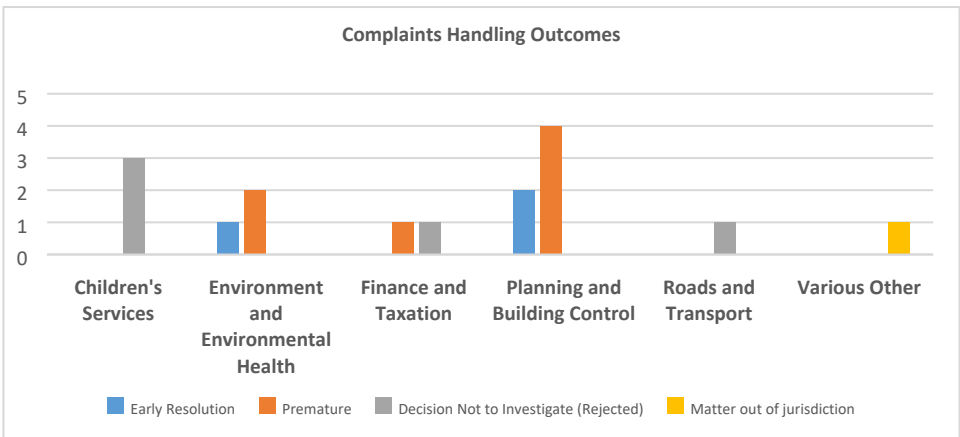
1.08 It is difficult to control how and when complainants access the Ombudsman service, but it is reassuring that the percentage of premature complaints fell from 59.32% in 2020-21 to 37.37% which may be attributed to improvements in promoting Flintshire’s complaints procedure and keeping complainants informed.

1.09 Section B – Planning and Building Control received the highest volume of complaints in 2021-22 (31) accounting for 31% of all cases against Flintshire. The table below provides a breakdown about the nature of these complaints and it also illustrates that a high percentage were premature or rejected.



Flintshire’s performance reflects the trend across Wales with Planning and Building Control being the most common complaint to the Ombudsman in relation to local authorities.

1.10 In terms of volume, “complaints handling” was the next highest number of complaints to the Ombudsman (17). The cases relate to various services and the table below illustrates that the majority of these cases were premature or rejected.



1.11 Section C - of the complaints that were made against Flintshire there were improvements compared to the previous year:

- 54% of complaints were out of jurisdiction or premature (66% the previous year) ↗
- 30% of complaints were closed after initial consideration (18% the previous year) ↗

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13% of complaints were resolved through early resolution (15% the previous year) ↗ <p>97% of Flintshire’s complaints to the Ombudsman were closed at their “assessment” stage. Three complaints went to investigation and resulted in a non-public interest report because the complaint was upheld:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="317 383 1367 701"> <tr> <td data-bbox="317 383 644 495">Planning and Building Control</td> <td data-bbox="644 383 968 495">Handling of planning application (other)</td> <td data-bbox="968 383 1367 495">Redress - other action by listed authority (excluding financial redress)</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="317 495 644 595">Children’s Social Services</td> <td data-bbox="644 495 968 595">Safeguarding</td> <td data-bbox="968 495 1367 595">Redress - apology</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="317 595 644 701">Adult Social Services</td> <td data-bbox="644 595 968 701">Other</td> <td data-bbox="968 595 1367 701">Financial redress alone or financial redress plus apology</td> </tr> </table>	Planning and Building Control	Handling of planning application (other)	Redress - other action by listed authority (excluding financial redress)	Children’s Social Services	Safeguarding	Redress - apology	Adult Social Services	Other	Financial redress alone or financial redress plus apology
Planning and Building Control	Handling of planning application (other)	Redress - other action by listed authority (excluding financial redress)								
Children’s Social Services	Safeguarding	Redress - apology								
Adult Social Services	Other	Financial redress alone or financial redress plus apology								
1.12	Section D – 16% of Flintshire’s complaints required intervention by the Ombudsman, which is slightly higher than the Welsh average (14%), which means they were dealt with through early resolution or a voluntary settlement. This is a reduction on the previous year (18%).									
1.13	Sections E and F of the Annual Letter are the remit of the Standards Committee.									
1.14	<p>During 2021-22 Flintshire achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed public information about Flintshire’s complaints procedure to help reduce the number of premature complaints to the Ombudsman; Refreshed website for making a complaint; Scheduled a programme of mandatory complaints training for Team Leader+ roles in collaboration with the Ombudsman; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 386 employees to attend 70 (18%) attended in 2021 61 (16%) attending in 2022 Introduced a refreshed Managing Customer Contact Policy to take in to consideration unacceptable behaviour on social media; New toolkit for employees on how to manage unacceptable behaviour on social media; Introduced Social Media House Rules to explain how we expect everyone to behave when contacting us through social media channels; Continued collective work with Councils across Wales and the Ombudsman to record complaints performance data to drive improvement in public services for citizens in Wales. 									
1.15	The following actions will be taken forward in 2022-23 to further improve complaints handling:									

- Continue a programme of complaints training to support and enhance complaint handling by considering best practice from multiple sectors from around the world;
- Explore the option to deliver complaints training in house to accelerate the programme of mandatory training for Team Leader+ roles – so far 131 out of 386 have been booked on to complaints handling courses;
- Develop a toolkit for Schools and elected Members on how to manage unacceptable behaviour on social media;
- A review of the electronic system used to record complaints to ensure it is fit for purpose;
- Implementation any recommendations following an internal audit inspection in quarter 3 of 2022-23.

1.16 Flintshire County Council Complaints 1 April – 30 September 2022

1.17 The Council received 421 complaints in the first half of 2022, up by 22 compared to the same period in 2021. 65% of complaints were considered within 10 working days which is an improvement of 8% compared to 2021. Encouragingly 86% of all complaints were considered within 20 working days which is another improvement of 6% on the previous year.

1.18 The charts below illustrate the overall number of complaints received in the first half of 2022 and the distribution of complaints by portfolio:

Chart 1 – Half Year Statistics 2022

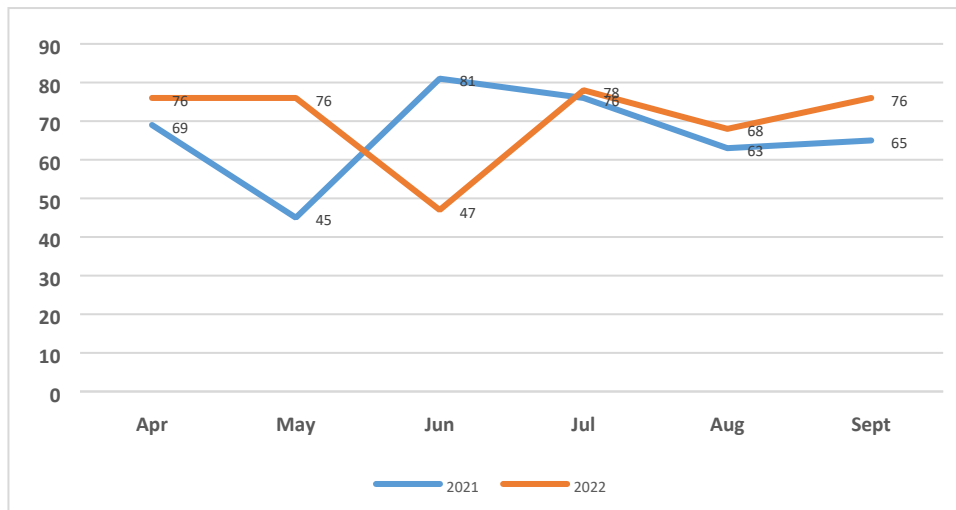
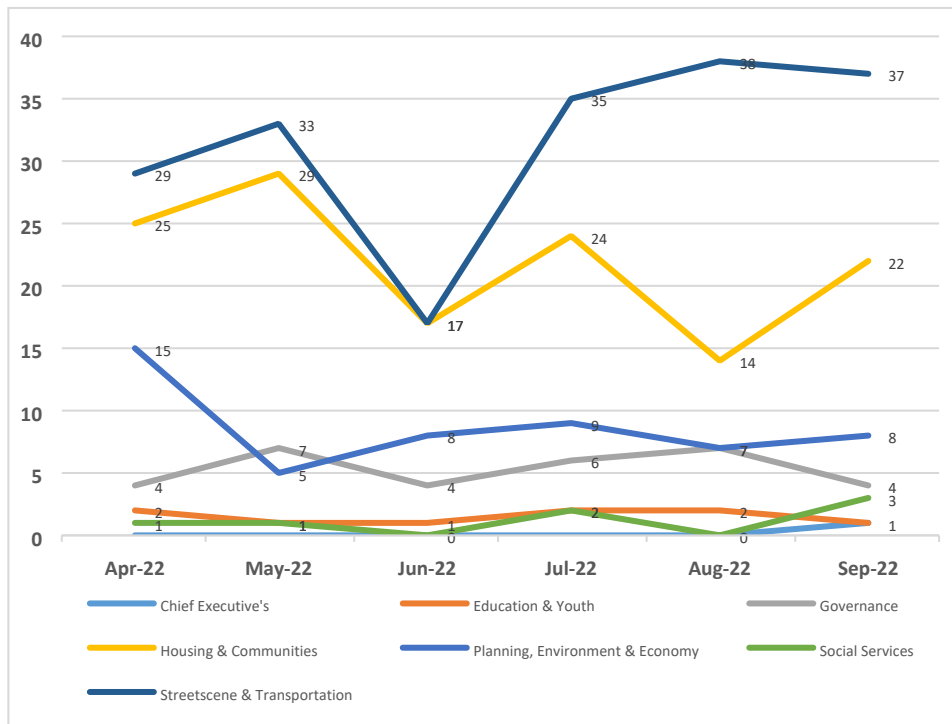


Chart 2 – Complaints by Portfolio 2022



1.19 Complaints were quite evenly spread throughout the first half of 2022, and those areas providing frontline services such as Streetscene and Housing received the most complaints which is a trend across local authorities in Wales.

1.20 The Council aims to respond to complaints within 10 working days. The table below provides data on the number of complaints received between 1 April – 30 September 2022 and the timeliness of responses:

Chart 3

Portfolio	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22
Chief Executive's	0	0	0	0	0	1
Education & Youth	2	1	1	2	2	1
Governance	4	7	4	6	7	4
Housing & Communities	25	29	17	24	14	22
Planning, Environment & Economy	15	5	8	9	7	8
Social Services	1	1	0	2	0	3
Streetscene & Transportation	29	33	17	35	38	37
Total Number of Complaints	76	76	47	78	68	76
% Closed Within 10 Working Days	74%	80%	62%	59%	66%	78%
% Closed Within 20 Working Days	18%	11%	30%	28%	19%	16%

Chart 4

Portfolio	Number of Complaints	% of Complaints	% Within Target	% Within 20 Working Days
Chief Executive's	1	0.24%	0%	100%
Education & Youth	9	2.14%	89%	11%

Governance	32	7.60%	88%	12%
Housing & Communities	131	31.12%	66%	24%
Planning, Environment & Economy	52	12.35%	44%	23%
Social Services	7	1.66%	86%	0%
Streetscene & Transportation	189	44.89%	73%	21%

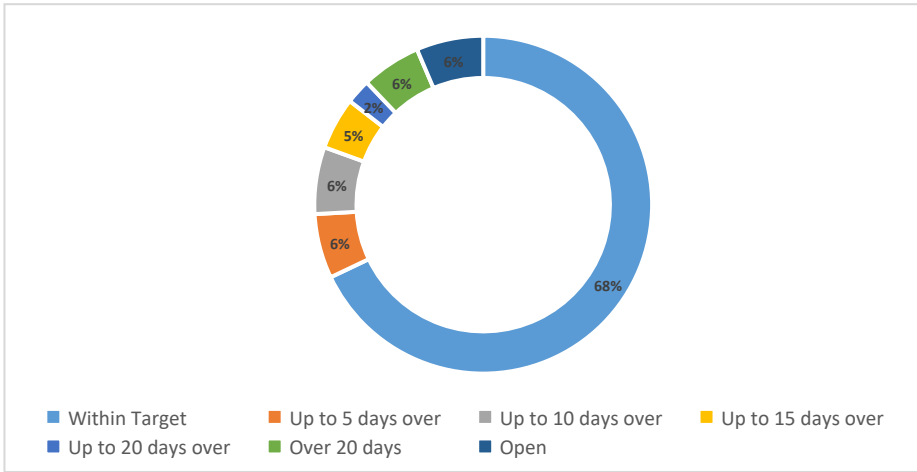
Chart 5

Portfolio	% Within Target 2021	% Within Target 2022	Improved	
Chief Executive's	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Education & Youth	75%	89%	14%	↗
Governance	55%	88%	33%	↗
Housing & Communities	57%	66%	9%	↗
Planning, Environment & Economy	36%	44%	8%	↗
Social Services	78%	86%	8%	↗
Streetscene & Transportation	60%	73%	13%	↗

The timeliness of complaint responses vary across portfolios but it is encouraging to note an improvement in complaint performance across all portfolios (see Chart 5). Performance reports are now routinely shared with Chief Officers on a monthly basis to drive improvements in the timeliness of complaint responses. Whilst there will be occasions where complaints cannot be dealt with within 10 working days, customers will be kept informed and a high percentage are resolved shortly after the 10 day timescale unless they are complex cases (see Chart 4).

1.21 The chart below illustrates the average time taken to respond to complaints in the first half year of 2022:

Chart 6 – Timeliness of complaint responses



1.22 Appendix 2 provides an illustration of what people complained about, and the outcome reached by portfolios.

1.23	The Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014 and Social Services Complaints Procedure Regulations 2014, requires Local Authorities to maintain a separate representations and complaints procedure for social services functions. Social Services' complaints report for 2021-22 is reported to the Social and Health Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
1.24	<p>Performance across portfolios remains under regular review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designated portfolio leads for escalating issues; • Sharing monthly performance data with Chief Officers and portfolios leads; • Portfolio management teams regularly reviewing their performance; • Staff guidance defining requests for service and complaints; • Guide to Good Complaints Handling available on InfoNet.
1.25	<p>Conclusion and priorities</p> <p>The Council will continue to engage positively with the Ombudsman and the Complaints Standards Authority to learn more about the complaints landscape in Wales to help us drive improvement in services. For the year ahead we are committed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor public information about Flintshire's complaints procedure to ensure complainants follow the correct procedure thus reducing the number of premature complaints to the Ombudsman; • Continue a programme of complaints training to support and enhance complaint handling –mandatory for roles at Team Leader level and above; • New toolkit for Schools and elected Members on how to manage unacceptable behaviour on social media; • A review of the electronic system used to record complaints to ensure it is fit for purpose; • Ongoing support to all services through regular sharing of performance data to help manage casework and keep complainants informed where targets are not achievable; • Implement the recommendations of an internal audit report as necessary.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	None.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	This report provides details of the annual performance of the Council in relation to complaints. At this point there are no proposed change or actions and as such no impact or risks have been identified.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	None.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Public Services Ombudsman for Wales Annual Letter.
5.02	Appendix 2 - Flintshire County Council complaint categories by portfolio.


6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	A copy of the Annual Letter is published on the Ombudsman's website - https://www.ombudsman.wales/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Flintshire-Eng.pdf

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: Rebecca Jones, Customer Contact Service Manager Telephone: 01352 702413 E-mail: rebecca.jones@flintshire.gov.uk


8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	Public Services Ombudsman for Wales – investigates complaints against public service providers in Wales where people believe they have suffered an injustice through maladministration on the part of the public service provider e.g. a local authority. Complaints Standards Authority – a team within the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales' office focused on ensuring the procedures to complain to public service providers in Wales are complainant focused, simple, fair and objective, timely and effective, accountable and committed to continuous improvement.

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn bwrpasol

Ask for: Communications

 01656 641150

Date: August 2022

 communications@ombudsman.wales

Cllr. Ian Roberts
Flintshire County Council
By Email only: ian.b.roberts@flintshire.gov.uk

Annual Letter 2021/22

Dear Councillor Roberts

I am pleased to provide you with the Annual letter (2021/22) for Flintshire County Council which deals with complaints relating to maladministration and service failure, complaints relating to alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct for Councillors and the actions being taken to improve public services

This is my first annual letter since taking up the role of Public Services Ombudsman in April 2022, and I appreciate that the effects of the pandemic are still being felt by all public bodies in Wales. Our office has not been immune from this, with records numbers of cases being referred to us over the last two years. The strong working relationships between my Office and local authorities continues to deliver improvements in how we are dealing with complaints and ensuring that, when things go wrong, we are learning from that and building stronger public services.

Complaints relating to Maladministration & Service Failure

Last year the number of complaints referred to us regarding Local Authorities increased by 47% (compared to 20/21 figures) and are now well above pre-pandemic levels. It is likely that complaints to my office, and public services in general, were suppressed during the pandemic, and we are now starting to see the expected 'rebound' effect.

During this period, we intervened in (upheld, settled or resolved at an early stage) a similar proportion of complaints about public bodies, 18%, when compared with recent years. Intervention rates (where we have investigated complaints) for Local Authorities also remained at a similar level – 14% compared to 13% in recent years.

Complaints relating to the Code of Conduct for Councillors

We also received a high number of Code of Conduct complaints last year, relating to both Principal Councils and Town and Community Councils. A record number (20) were referred to either the Adjudication Panel for Wales or local standards committees, due to evidence of a breach of the Code.

Supporting improvement of public services

In addition to managing record levels of complaints, we also continued our work using our proactive powers in the Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Act 2019. Specifically undertaking our first Own Initiative Investigation and continuing our work on the Complaints Standards Authority.

October 2021 saw the publication of the first own initiative investigation in Wales: [Homelessness Reviewed](#). The investigation featured three Local Authorities and sought to scrutinise the way Homelessness assessments were conducted. The report made specific recommendations to the investigated authorities, as well as suggestions to all other Local Authorities in Wales and Welsh Government. Some of these recommendations will bring about immediate change – updating factsheets and letter and assessment templates to ensure that key equality and human rights considerations are routinely embedded into processes for example – all the recommendations were designed to bring about tangible change to people using homelessness services in Wales.

The Complaints Standards Authority (CSA) continued its work with public bodies in Wales last year. The model complaints policy has already been adopted by local authorities and health boards in Wales, we have now extended this to an initial tranche of Housing Associations and Natural Resources Wales. The aim being to implement this work across the Welsh public sector.

In addition to this, the CSA published information on complaints handled by local authorities for the [first time](#) – a key achievement for this work. The data for 21/22 showed:

- Over 15,000 complaints were recorded by Local Authorities
- 4.88 for every 1000 residents.
- Nearly half (46%) of those complaints were upheld.
- About 75% were investigated within 20 working days.
- About 8% of all complaints closed ended up being referred to PSOW.

The CSA has now implemented a model complaints policy with nearly 50 public bodies, and delivered 140 training sessions, completely free of charge, during the last financial year. The feedback has been excellent, and the training has been very popular - so I would encourage Flintshire County Council to engage as fully as possible.

Complaints made to the Ombudsman

A summary of the complaints of maladministration/service failure received relating to your Council is attached, along with a summary of the Code of Conduct complaints relating to members of the Council and the Town & Community Councils in your area.

In light of the new duties on political leaders and standards committees to promote and maintain high standards of conduct of their members, we look forward to working with you, your Monitoring Officer and standards committees to share any learning from the complaints we receive and to support your authority's work.

I would also welcome feedback on your Governance & Audit Committee's review of your authority's ability to handle complaints effectively so that we can take this into account in our work and support its work on the handling of complaints.

Finally, can I thank you and your officials for the positive way that local authorities have engaged with my Office to enable us to deliver these achievements during what has been a challenging year for everyone. I very much look forward to continuing this work and collaboration to ensure we further improve public services across Wales.

Further to this letter can I ask that your Council takes the following actions:

- Present my Annual Letter to the Cabinet and to the Governance & Audit Committee to assist members in their scrutiny of the Council's performance and share any feedback from the Cabinet and the Governance & Audit Committee with my office.
- Continue to engage with our Complaints Standards work, accessing training for your staff, fully implementing the model policy, and providing complaints data.
- Inform me of the outcome of the Council's considerations and proposed actions on the above matters by 30 September.

This correspondence is copied to the Chief Executive of your Council and to your Contact Officer. Finally, a copy of all Annual Letters will be published on my website.

Yours sincerely,



Michelle Morris

Public Services Ombudsman

cc. Neal Cockerton, Chief Executive, Flintshire County Council.

By Email only: chief.executive@flintshire.gov.uk

Factsheet

Appendix A - Complaints Received

Local Authority	Complaints Received	Received per 1000 residents
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	14	0.20
Bridgend County Borough Council	55	0.37
Caerphilly County Borough Council	60	0.33
Cardiff Council*	182	0.50
Carmarthenshire County Council	54	0.29
Ceredigion County Council	52	0.72
Conwy County Borough Council	27	0.23
Denbighshire County Council	34	0.36
Flintshire County Council	99	0.63
Gwynedd Council	39	0.31
Isle of Anglesey County Council	29	0.41
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	27	0.45
Monmouthshire County Council	20	0.21
Neath Port Talbot Council	45	0.31
Newport City Council	40	0.26
Pembrokeshire County Council	39	0.31
Powys County Council	55	0.42
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	51	0.21
Swansea Council	71	0.29
Torfaen County Borough Council	18	0.19
Vale of Glamorgan Council	61	0.46
Wrexham County Borough Council	71	0.52
Total	1143	0.36

* inc 17 Rent Smart Wales

Appendix B - Received by Subject

Flintshire County Council	Complaints Received	% Share
Adult Social Services	7	7%
Benefits Administration	1	1%
Children's Social Services	8	8%
Community Facilities, Recreation and Leisure	1	1%
Complaints Handling	17	17%
Covid19	1	1%
Education	0	0%
Environment and Environmental Health	9	9%
Finance and Taxation	2	2%
Housing	11	11%
Licensing	0	0%
Planning and Building Control	31	31%
Roads and Transport	10	10%
Various Other	1	1%
Total	99	

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Appendix C - Complaint Outcomes (* denotes intervention)

County/County Borough Councils	Out of Jurisdiction	Premature	Other cases closed after initial consideration	Early Resolution/ voluntary settlement*	Discontinued	Other Reports- Not Upheld	Other Reports Upheld*	Public Interest Report*	Total
Flintshire County Council	14	37	28	12	0	0	3	0	94
% Share	15%	39%	30%	13%	0%	0%	3%	0%	

Appendix D - Cases with PSOW Intervention

	No. of interventions	No. of closures	% of interventions
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	0	13	0%
Bridgend County Borough Council	7	54	13%
Caerphilly County Borough Council	7	58	12%
Cardiff Council	45	159	28%
Cardiff Council - Rent Smart Wales	1	16	6%
Carmarthenshire County Council	7	49	14%
Ceredigion County Council	13	46	28%
Conwy County Borough Council	2	24	8%
Denbighshire County Council	4	33	12%
Flintshire County Council	15	94	16%
Gwynedd Council	6	41	15%
Isle of Anglesey County Council	3	28	11%
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	2	26	8%
Monmouthshire County Council	2	21	10%
Neath Port Talbot Council	5	45	11%
Newport City Council	4	36	11%
Pembrokeshire County Council	2	40	5%
Powys County Council	7	55	13%
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	3	45	7%
Swansea Council	10	76	13%
Torfaen County Borough Council	2	20	10%
Vale of Glamorgan Council	9	62	15%
Wrexham County Borough Council	4	67	6%
Total	160	1108	14%

Appendix E - Code of Conduct Complaints

County/County Borough Councils	Discontinued	No evidence of breach	No action necessary	Refer to Adjudication Panel	Refer to Standards Committee	Withdrawn	Total
Flintshire County Council	1	2	0	0	0	0	3

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Appendix F - Town/Community Council Code of Complaints

Town/Community Council	Discontinued	No evidence of breach	No action necessary	Refer to Adjudication Panel	Refer to Standards Committee	Withdrawn	Total
Broughton & Bretton Community Council	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Buckley Town Council	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Connah's Quay Town Council	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Gwaenysgor & Trelawnyd Community Council	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Gwernaffield and Pantymwyn Community Council	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Hawarden Community Council	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Holywell Town Council	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Llanfynydd Community Council [Flintshire]	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Mostyn Community Council	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Saltney Town Council	0	1	0	0	0	0	1

Information Sheet

Appendix A shows the number of complaints received by PSOW for all Local Authorities in 2021/2022. These complaints are contextualised by the number of people each health board reportedly serves.

Appendix B shows the categorisation of each complaint received, and what proportion of received complaints represents for the Local Authority.

Appendix C shows outcomes of the complaints which PSOW closed for the Local Authority in 2021/2022. This table shows both the volume, and the proportion that each outcome represents for the Local Authority.

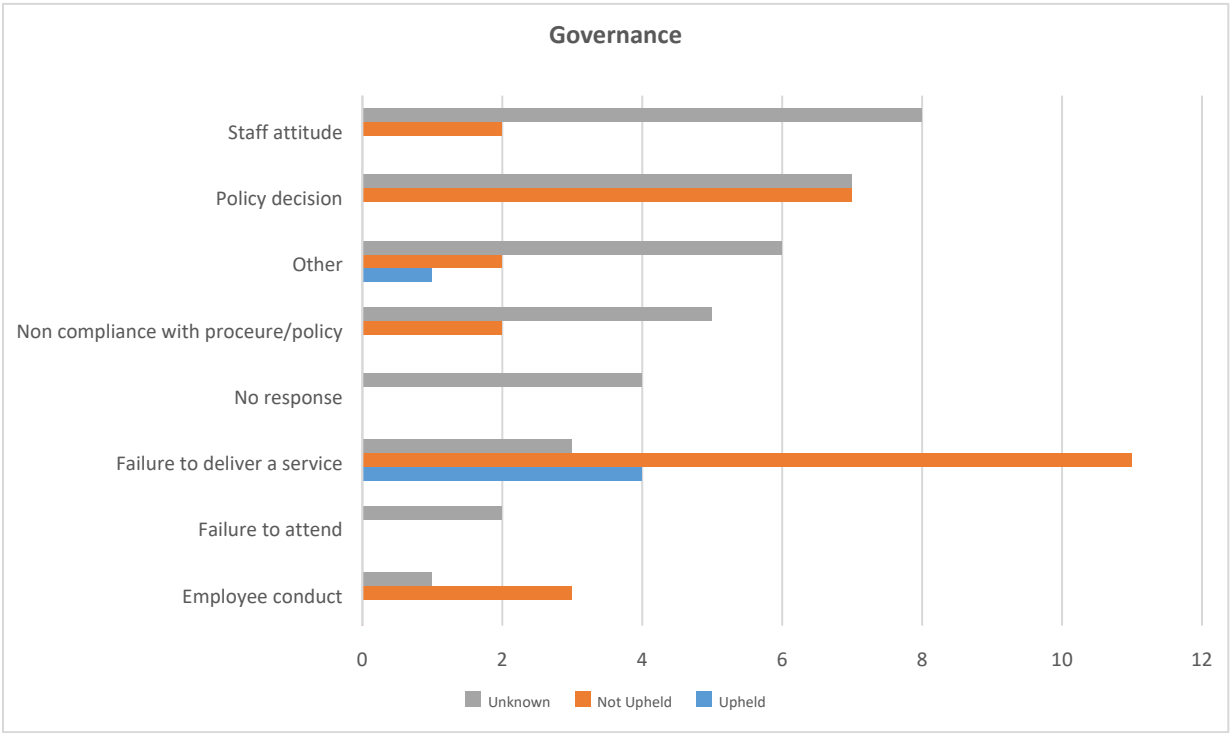
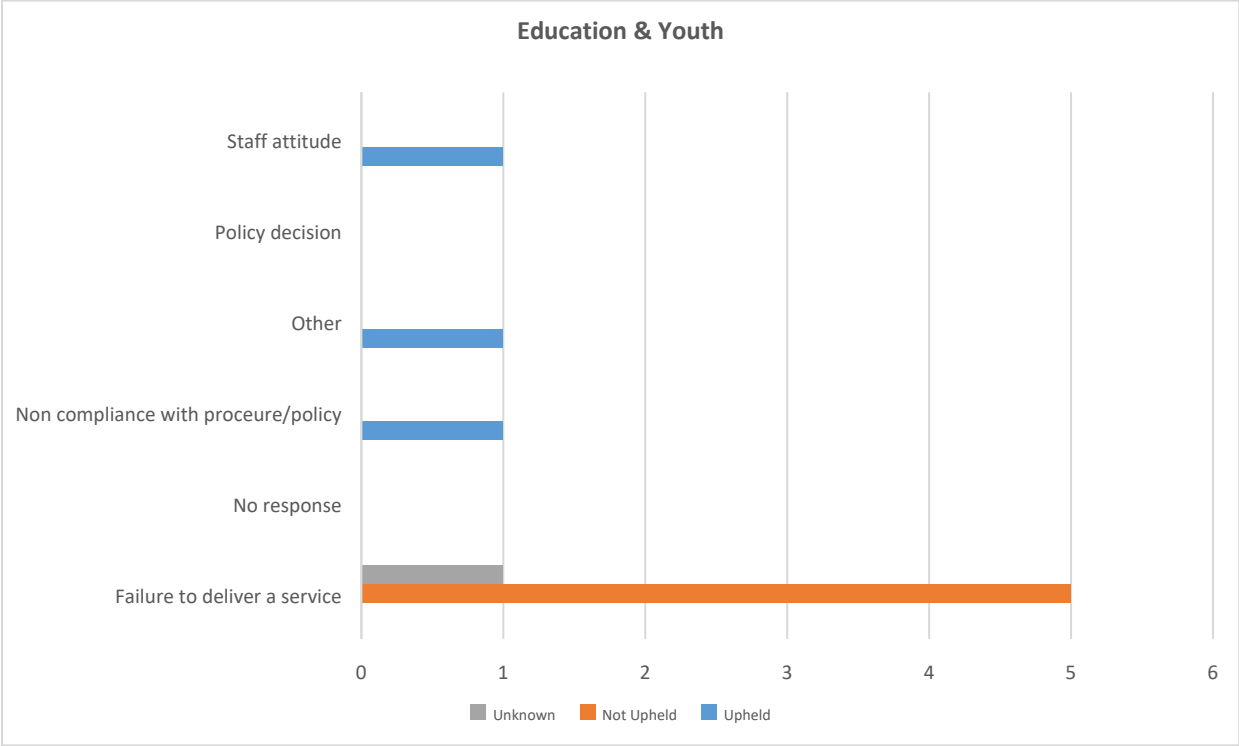
Appendix D shows Intervention Rates for all Local Authorities in 2021/2022. An intervention is categorised by either an upheld complaint (either public interest or non-public interest), an early resolution, or a voluntary settlement.

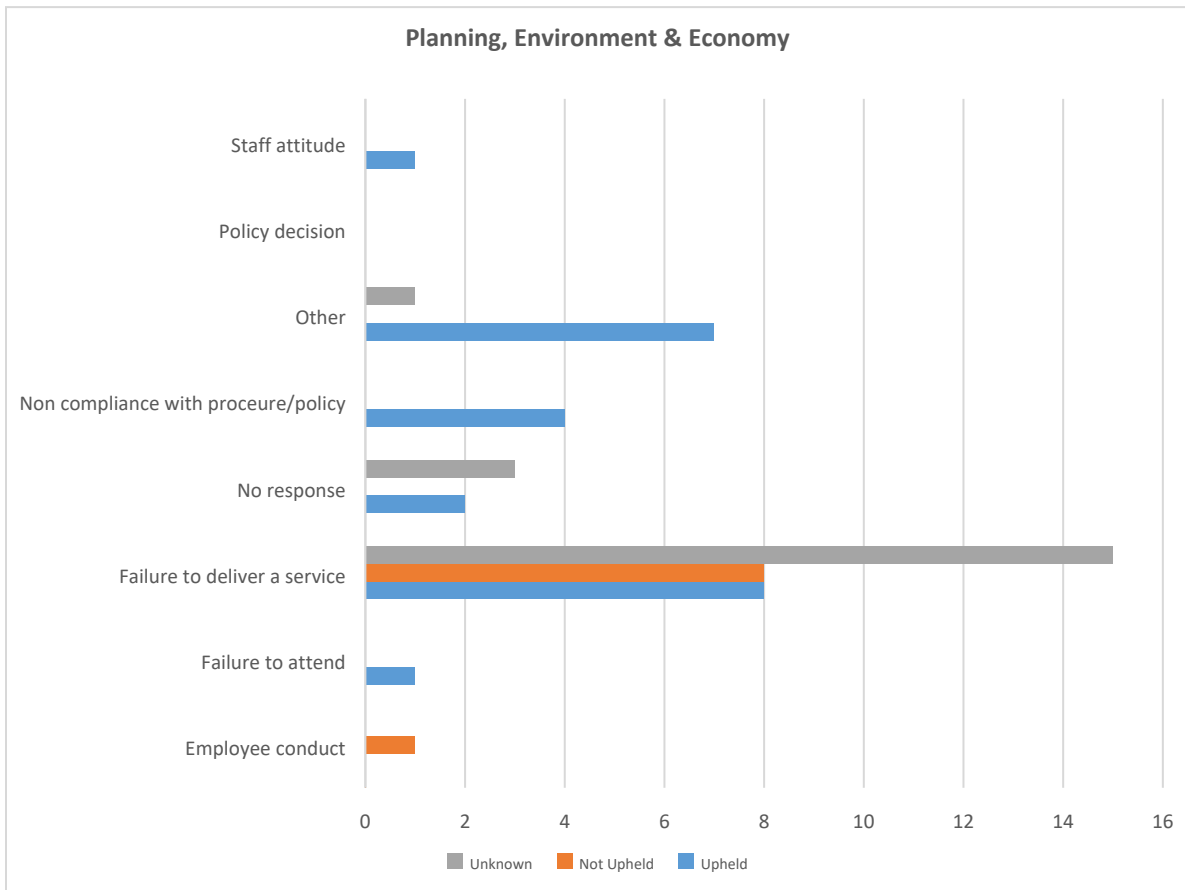
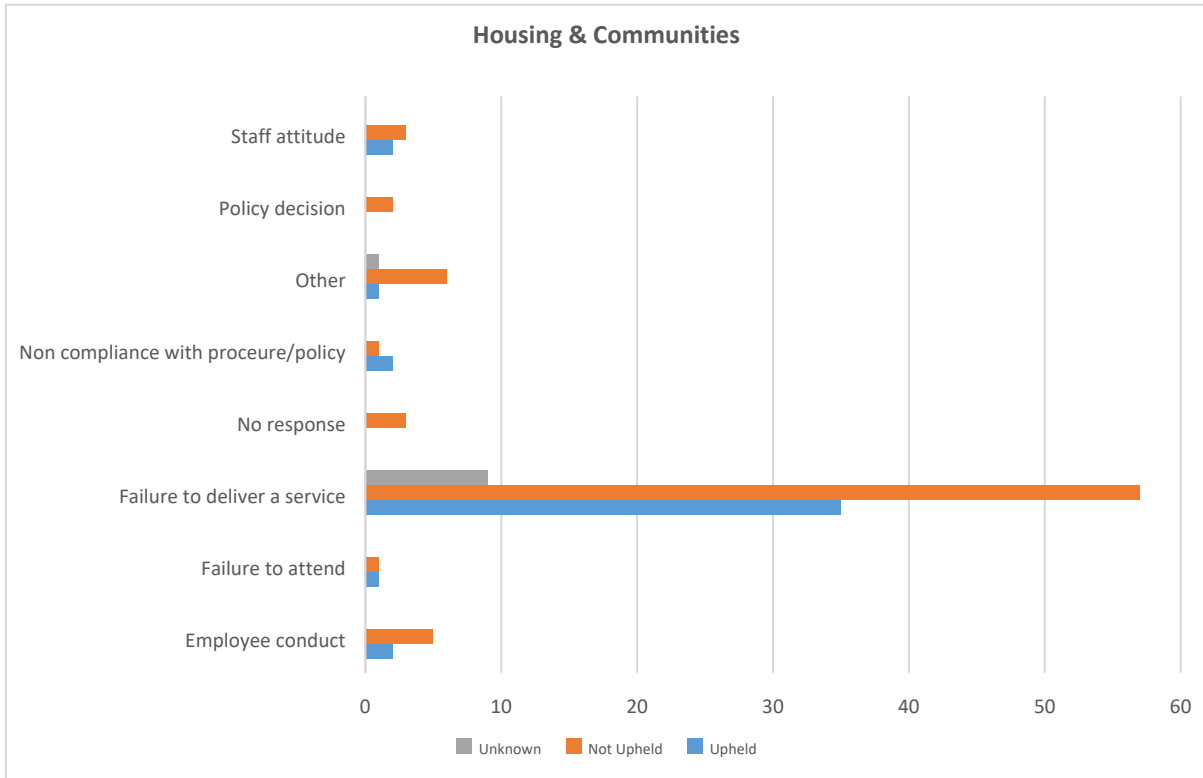
Appendix E shows the outcomes of Code Of Conduct complaints closed by PSOW related to Local Authority in 2021/2022. This table shows both the volume, and the proportion that each outcome represents for the Local Authority.

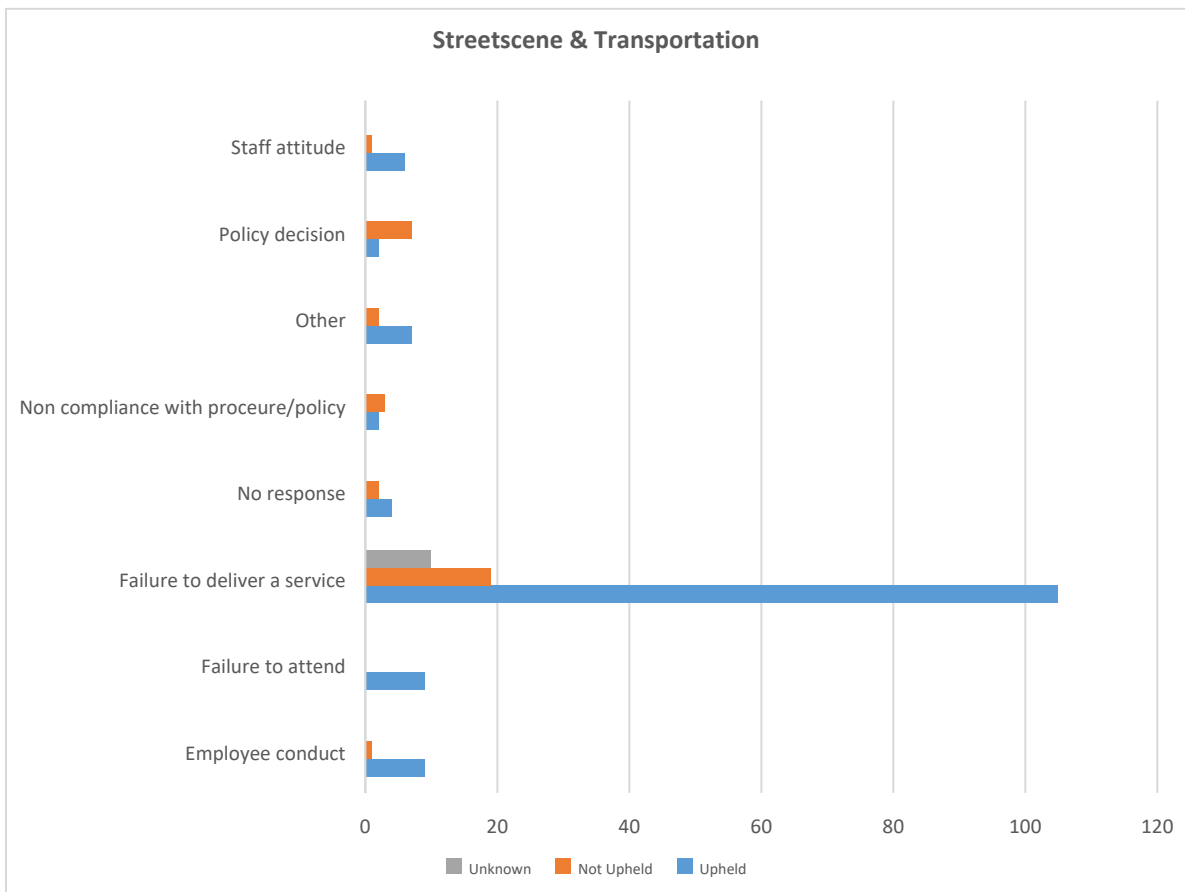
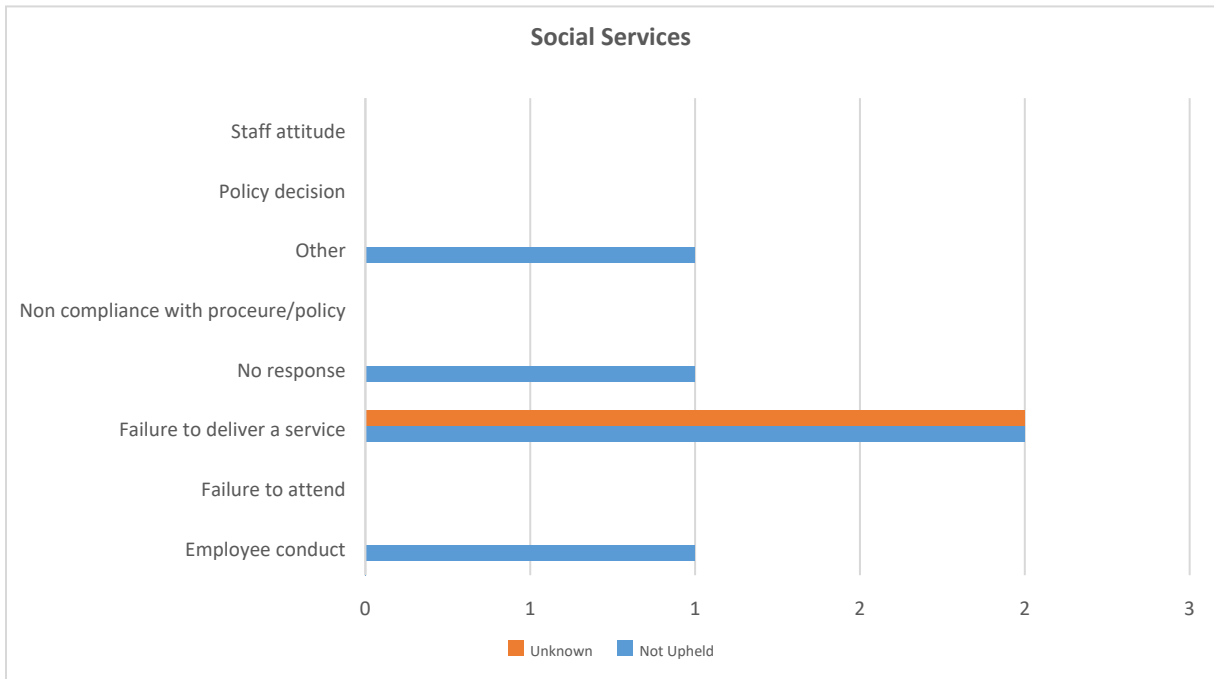
Appendix F shows the outcomes of Code of Conduct complaints closed by PSOW related to Town and Community Councils in the Local Authority's area. This table shows both the volume, and the proportion that each outcome represents for each Town or Community Council.

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn bwrpasol

Flintshire County Council Complaint Categories by Portfolio







Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn bwrpasol

Eitem ar gyfer y Rhaglen 11



CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	15 th December 2022
Report Subject	Consultation on the Flintshire and Wrexham Public Services Board (PSB) draft Well-being Plan 2023-28
Cabinet Member	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure
Report Author	Chief Executive Chief Officer (Social Services)
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires specific public bodies to work together under a Public Services Board (PSB) to improve local economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being.

Responsibilities of PSBs include periodically preparing and publishing an assessment of local well-being, which is used to inform the setting of local well-being objectives that are contained within a five year local Well-being Plan.

Prior to publishing a new Well-being Plan, the PSB is required to consult a number of statutory consultees, including the Local Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The draft Well-being Plan 2023-28 is presented at Appendix A for consideration and feedback.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers and comments on the draft Flintshire and Wrexham Well-being Plan for 2023-28.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE WELL-BEING PLAN 2023-28
1.01	<p>The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places a well-being duty on designated public bodies. This requires them to act jointly under a Public Services Board (PSB) to improve local economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being and thus support the achievement of the seven well-being goals for Wales.</p>
1.02	<p>A PSB is required to periodically prepare and publish an assessment of local well-being. The assessment should be published within the 12 months preceding each ordinary local government election.</p> <p>Flintshire PSBs most recent Well-being Assessment was published in May 2022.</p>
1.03	<p>A PSB is also required to periodically prepare and publish a Well-being Plan that sets out the PSBs local well-being objectives and the action the PSB will take to meet them.</p> <p>A PSB should publish a Well-being Plan no later than 12 months after each local government ordinary election.</p> <p>Flintshire PSBs first Well-being Plan was published in 2017 and covered the period 2017 to 2023. The next Well-being Plan, covering the period 2023 to 2028, is due to be published before 4th May 2023.</p>
1.04	<p>A team of officers drawn from partner organisations involved in the work of both Flintshire and Wrexham’s PSBs have worked together to produce a draft Well-being Plan for 2023-28.</p> <p>Based on the evidence and insight highlighted by the well-being assessment; existing priorities of the PSB; and the learning and reflection from joint PSB working on community resilience over the last two years, this team of officers have produced a draft Well-being Plan that identifies the key actions needed to deliver two well-being objectives for 2023-2028:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build flourishing communities by reducing inequalities across environment, education, employment, income and housing. • Improve community well-being by enabling people of all ages to live healthy and independent lives.
1.05	<p>The draft Well-being Plan has been produced so that partners, stakeholders and communities can be engaged to co-produce ways to improve well-being and build resilience now and over the long term.</p>
1.06	<p>The purpose of the Well-being Plan 2023-28 is to identify a small number of shared objectives, focused around improving local well-being, that public sector organisations work on together to add value to the work of individual organisational plans and enhance outcomes through collaborative working.</p>

1.07	The draft Well-being Plan 2023-28 can be found at Appendix A and is open for feedback and comments under a period of statutory consultation.
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
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2.01	In recognition of shared local well-being priorities, and to enhance effective collaborative working to achieve the outcomes in the Well-being Plan 2023-28, the Public Services Boards of Flintshire and Wrexham have agreed to come together as a single body from January 2023. This is in line with other PSBs within the region.
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2.02	<p>The local authority must provide administrative support to the PSB, this includes arranging meetings, preparing the agenda and papers for meetings and working on the annual report, amongst others.</p> <p>This function is fulfilled by an Officer of the Council, with appropriate management support and supervision.</p>
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2.03	<p>The PSB is supported regionally by the North Wales Insight Partnership (NWIP), which consists of officers across the public sectors, connecting organisations and communities across the region.</p> <p>The NWIP is encouraging regional partnership working to align priorities and identify opportunities across the PSBs, the Regional Partnership Board, and the North Wales Economic Ambition Board.</p>
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2.04	Welsh Government has provided a regional support grant for 2022/23. This grant is allowing the development of some innovative approaches to engagement and co-production, which have already helped to shape the draft Well-being Plan. Welsh Government is considering making this support funding available for a longer period to enable sustainable collaborative working.
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2.05	<p>Working with partner organisations and communities, the Wales Cooperative Network is providing long term support for engagement and co-production.</p> <p>The PSB is utilising the support of this Network to help engage the local communities in well-being work.</p>
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3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
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3.01	<p>A full Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) for the Well-being Plan has not yet been completed. This work will be undertaken alongside the consultation period of the draft Well-being Plan and presented at full Council with the final Well-being Plan 2023-28 in spring 2023.</p> <p>In the interim, an overview of the likely impact the Well-being Plan will have is provided below.</p>
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	Long-term	Positive – the Well-being Plan is for a period of five years but will continue to build on the previous Well-being Plan objectives and have mechanisms to ensure continuity beyond the life of this Plan.
	Prevention	Positive – the Well-being Plan looks to address factors that may be detrimental to local well-being both now and in the future.
	Integration	Neutral
	Collaboration	Positive – the Well-being Plan will contain shared objectives which the PSB partners will commit to achieving in collaboration, including involving wider stakeholders as appropriate.
	Involvement	Positive – stakeholders will actively be encouraged to help co-produce ways to improve local well-being and enhance outcomes.
Well-being Goals Impact		
	Prosperous Wales	Positive – the well-being objectives have been selected to support the achievement of the well-being goals for Wales
	Resilient Wales	Positive – the well-being objectives have been selected to support the achievement of the well-being goals for Wales
	Healthier Wales	Positive – the well-being objectives have been selected to support the achievement of the well-being goals for Wales
	More equal Wales	Positive – the well-being objectives have been selected to support the achievement of the well-being goals for Wales
	Cohesive Wales	Positive – the well-being objectives have been selected to support the achievement of the well-being goals for Wales
	Vibrant Wales	Positive – the well-being objectives have been selected to support the achievement of the well-being goals for Wales
	Globally responsible Wales	Neutral
3.03	To comply with Welsh Language Standards, and to ensure the Well-being Plan can be read by all potential consultees, the draft Well-being Plan 2023-28 is available in both Welsh and English.	

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	The draft Well-being Plan is now open for a statutory 12 week period of consultation. The consultation period will close in early February 2023.
4.02	When developing a Well-being Plan the PSB is required to consult fully with a number of statutory consultees. The local authority's overview and scrutiny committee is a statutory consultee and the Well-being Plan is being presented to the Corporate Resources and Overview Scrutiny

	<p>Committee on 15th December 2022 to fulfil this requirement. The scrutiny committee are invited to provide their comments on the draft Well-being Plan.</p> <p>It is also proposed to share the draft Well-being Plan with the Council's Cabinet, inviting them to provide comments as part of the consultation process at their meeting on 20th December 2022.</p>
4.03	Copies of the draft Well-being Plan have been shared with other statutory consultees via email and the draft Well-being Plan is also available on the Council's website.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Flintshire and Wrexham PSB draft Well-being Plan 2023-28

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>Further information on the PSB, along with links to <i>An Assessment of Well-being in Flintshire 2022</i> and the current <i>A Well-being Plan for Flintshire 2017-23</i> can be found online:</p> <p>https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Council-and-Democracy/Flintshire-Public-Services-Board.aspx</p>

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Nicola McCann – Strategic Partnerships Advisor</p> <p>Telephone: 01352 702740</p> <p>E-mail: Nicola.McCann@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
	<p>Public Services Board (PSB)</p> <p>The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 established statutory PSB's which replaces the voluntary Local Service Boards in each local authority area. The role of the Board is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the state of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in its area • Set objectives that are designed to maximise the PSB's contribution to the well-being goals <p>Each PSB must prepare and publish a plan setting out its objectives and the steps it will take to meet them. This is called a Local Well-being Plan. It must state:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why the PSB feels their objectives will contribute within their local area to achieving the well-being goals

- How it has had regard to the assessment of Local Well-being in setting its objectives and steps to take

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act requires public bodies in Wales to think about the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other, and to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change.

Consultation on Flintshire and Wrexham's draft wellbeing plan

November 2022

Croeso!

Welcome to the latest stage on our journey to help improve local well-being across Flintshire and Wrexham. For a few years now, public sector organisations across our area have been working more closely with the third sector, businesses and communities. As we rebuild our resilience after COVID-19, and face the cost of living crisis together, we want to co-produce a long-term plan to look at issues such as climate change and mental health and wellbeing.

The Flintshire and Wrexham Public Services Board has to publish a five year plan on how we will work to improve local well-being by May the 4th 2023. This won't be set in stone. Circumstances may change and as more people get in involved, bringing their passion, energy and vitality, we will make sure the plan evolves.

We will make sure that our culture and language are clearly embedded in everything we do, as we continue to build proud and resilient communities.

We see this consultation stage as an opportunity for you to give your thoughts on where we have got to so far, and where we are heading. Please let us know what you think before the 5th February 2023. Details of how you can get in touch are provided at the end of this document.



FLINTSHIRE PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD
BWRDD GWASANAETHAU CYHOEDDUS SIR Y FFLINT



Who are we?

The Public Service Boards are where the public sector organisations across Flintshire and Wrexham come together. It is a strategic partnership with a strong focus on taking a collective approach to planning, decision-making and action. Every member of the PSB is an anchor organisation working in our area, looking at how they use their resources more effectively to build improvements in well-being. Crucial to this work is the relationship with our communities, and how we work with them to add value and transform people’s lives.

We’re proud that in North Wales we are embracing the five ways of working (prevention, long term, collaboration, integration & involvement) in everything we do.

We want to change things for the better. The PSB will do this by bringing the magic of shared commitment by testing ideas, challenging impacts, undoing blockages and enabling co-production with our communities.

Based on what we have learned over the last few years throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and using evidence and data to guide us we have produced two broad objectives, which we feel, will help us all to work together to tackle inequality and improve well-being:

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

To support these broad objectives we have identified three areas to focus on: children and young people, communities and our workplaces.

Build flourishing communities by reducing inequalities across environment, education, employment, income and housing.	Improve community well-being by enabling people of all ages to live healthy and independent lives.
Ensure children and young people will thrive through making the most of new skills, training and learning opportunities	Ensure there is an effective approach to prevention and early intervention for children and families across the public sector
Mobilise everyone’s skills and talents to tackle climate change and build a strong, fair sustainable local economy	Innovate with communities to build good mental health and well-being through feelings of community safety, security and belonging.
Strengthen the connection between PSB organisations and their staff who work and live in communities	Ensure that PSB deeply understands the needs and resources of their communities

What do we know?

We know that our well-being assessments are a line in the sand of where we were in January 2022. Life has already moved on with people in Wales now facing a cost of living crisis and economic turmoil across the world. As a PSB, we are committed to assessing the needs of our population on an ongoing basis. This will ensure we improve the data we are gathering about the wellbeing of our communities and the information reflects the most up-to-date needs of citizens.

There are four pillars of well-being – environment, culture, society, and economy. These are intertwined, they are not separate. Across these four pillars, there are common challenges of inequalities and social determinants of health. Unless we commit as a society to tackling these common challenges across all four pillars, we will continue to risk a decline in population well-being.

A key aspect of our well-being assessment was to understand the big trends and drivers that are likely to shape the future in Flintshire and Wrexham and to provide insight into how we can best prepare for the future, around people and population, planetary health and limits, inequalities and technology. We used a range of resources to shape our thinking, including the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales' [Future Generations Report](#), Welsh Government's [Well-being of Wales](#) and [Future Trends Reports](#), and Natural Resources Wales' [North East Wales Area Statement](#).

[New Approaches to designing and delivering well-being with communities](#)

Working with all Public Services Boards across North Wales, we are planning a variety of regional engagement and involvement strands of work with partner organisations and community groups. Each strand is funded through the North Wales Regional Support Grant 2022-23, which is enabled by Welsh Government. This funding will allow us to work closely with community groups, listening to what really matters to them and designing services together. This work will be continual through the life of our Well-being Plan, and community services may change, as community needs change.

This approach to shared planning and equal decision-making with the PSB, wider partners and communities all working together and at the same time, is called **co-production**. We are learning about co-production and the positive difference it brings to service design and delivery, by being part of an exciting network of practitioners, trainers and facilitators: **The Co-production Network for Wales**.

The Flintshire and Wrexham PSB is committed to embedding co-production with communities into the service design and delivery of all well-being planning in future, so that resources and services are accessible and in the heart of our communities, for all to enjoy.

Examples of co-produced regional engagement and involvement work happening now, or starting soon, in North Wales includes:

- **Community Narratives** – creative methods such as storytelling to record voices and experiences of diverse communities
- **Diverse Together Community Chats** – community engagement with a diverse range of community groups with the Community Cohesion team, and facilitating their input on themes of safety, equality and wellbeing.
- **The Future Leaders Programme** – will give young people the opportunity to become 'co-producers' in well-being planning, and test the concept of a Future Leaders Programme with the potential for scale across the whole of North Wales, and beyond.
- **Citizens' Jury for North Wales** – This method of inquiry is where a small group of people come together to assess evidence and deliberate on an issue, and these views help the PSB co-produce their Well-being Plans.

- **Trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (TrACE) Community of Practice** – bringing together people and organisations across North Wales engaging in ‘trauma informed practice’ to learn, share and innovate. It will help build strategic capacity and capability across the region and allow PSBs to understand many types of lived experience and actively support community resilience.

Research evidence, community stories, techniques and training for community engagement are shared at the **North Wales Insight Partnership (NWIP)** which is a collaborative working space for the PSBs, partners and community voices.

Our objectives

This section gives more detail about the two objectives that we are proposing will be at the heart of our well-being plan, the evidence that has informed each one, and some of the projects that the public sector organisations will work together on in partnership with communities and other stakeholders.

[Build flourishing communities by reducing inequalities across environment, education, employment, income and housing.](#)

Children and Young People

Ensure children and young people will thrive through making the most of new skills, training and learning opportunities.

Our assessment found that for four key social determinants (employment, education, and community safety) and health outcomes were poorer for those living in low-income area. Whilst the overall qualification profile is increasing, inequality in educational attainment remains and households with a disabled person in the household, and people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups are at risk of income poverty. It is critical that we invest in innovation and preparing young people for their future, and that there is a good range and quantity of well-paid, stable employment opportunities available.

What we could do...

Education

- Improve learning opportunities for children and young people through the Children’s University for Wrexham and Flintshire

Employment

- Support the Future Leaders programme and align with Future Generations Leadership Academy

Communities – prosperity and fairness

Mobilise everyone's skills and talents to tackle climate change and build a strong, fair sustainable local economy.

Climate change **is the defining issue of our time**. We have a real opportunity to work together to engage with our natural environment to build positive health outcomes, including improved physical and mental health, and reduced risk of cardiovascular disease and other chronic conditions. We must take the opportunity to develop a sustainable local economy, growing local business and focusing on developing green infrastructure to help to mitigate the effects of climate change and support improved well-being outcomes.

What we could do...

Place

- Work together to enable a climate change social movement
- Sign-up to the North Wales Healthy Travel Charter
- Create access to affordable, good quality, healthy food
- Work together to build resilient and cohesive communities, reducing discrimination and building opportunity.

Employment

- Implement a volunteering policy to provide opportunities for those currently excluded from the workplace to build their experience
- Take a joined up approach to training and recruitment of Welsh speakers to promote the benefits of speaking and using our Welsh language more regularly
- Actively build career pathways at all levels, prioritising those from the most deprived communities and publish progress

Where we work

Strengthen the connection between PSB organisations and their staff who work and live in communities.

Our assessment identified the key role that the public sector has to build strong communities, through its spending power, and role as anchor institutes. Co-producing projects with communities and stakeholders will encourage a diversity of voices from our communities. Employees who work for PSB organisations already invest their time in their communities, for example as school governors or organising local Eisteddfodau. By working together the PSB organisations will do much more to co-ordinate and support colleagues to develop a sense of belonging for all communities, reinforcing our Welsh culture.

What we could do...

- Commit to a staff volunteering policy that allows individuals and teams to commit a proportion of their work time to supporting local organisations, and encourages secondments, joint posts and collaboration

- Identify where organisations can change systems so that recruitment practices enable diverse and thriving workplaces.

Improve community well-being by enabling people of all ages to live healthy, safe and independent lives.

Children and Young People

Ensure there is an effective approach to prevention and early intervention for children and families across the public sector.

Preventing the need for people to require health and social care support and intervening early when help and support is required is the most effective way to improve the wellbeing of our population. Taking this approach is particularly important at a time when NHS and social care services are overwhelmed with demand. We can ensure that we respond to the changing profile of Wrexham and Flintshire, areas where the age profile of the population is growing increasingly older. All PSB members will need to work with the wider system to ensure that prevention is embedded across everything they do, with a strong focus on early years where we know investment will achieve the biggest return in long-term health and wellbeing outcomes. This will also balance the needs of our older population and creating an environment for healthy ageing.

Adverse Childhood Experiences are stressful experiences that children can be directly or indirectly exposed to while growing up, and these are connected to all the social determinants of health (well-being). Our assessment has identified that we need to focus on reducing these negative experiences otherwise they will continue to affect our population throughout their lives, leading to poor health, social problems and early death.

Community Safety

Community Safety is about reducing and tackling crime and disorder within the county. It relies upon working in partnership with our agencies and communities to make the areas in which we live safer. As a Public Services Board we work in partnership to implement strategies that are in line with legislation and wider priorities.

What we could do...

Prevention and Early Intervention

- Work towards a system wide approach to prevention and early intervention for children and families

Healthy Weight

- Commit to taking a leadership role in the Whole System Approach to Healthy Weight. Obesity, unhealthy diet and inactivity are some of the biggest risk factors for years lived with disability in Wales.

Communities – prosperity and fairness

Innovate with communities to build good mental health and well-being

For North Wales, there is a higher rate of mental health problems than for the rest of Wales, and this is without us fully understanding the impacts of COVID-19. In particular, we know from Wrexham’s population needs assessment that the current medical model of mental health service delivery in Wrexham may be preventing further opportunity to co-produce community based and accessible mental health services. So there is a real opportunity to ensure that access across Flintshire and Wrexham is better designed to ensure accessible, integrated, and seamless services for citizens.

What we could do...

Mental Health and Wellbeing

- Support the Good Mental Health social movement across Wrexham and Flintshire that promotes the active use of the 5-ways to wellbeing

Green Health

- Optimise green health opportunities through social prescribing in Wrexham and Flintshire

Where we work

Ensure that the PSB understands the needs and resources of their communities

Our assessment found a mixed picture of engagement with our communities and stakeholders. We found that by committing to better, open conversations and actively seeking out seldom heard voices and stories and lived experience that the PSB must work with communities and services users on the design, delivery and ownership of the services they need.

What we could do...

- Work with communities and the Adverse Childhood Experiences hub, to become trauma informed organisations
- Address barriers to using public services faced by disabled people
- Commit to becoming Foster Friendly organisations to improve opportunities for our looked after children

What next?

We will reflect on comments, challenges and ideas we receive in this consultation stage as we continue to co-produce our well-being plan. To deliver sustainable change for Flintshire and Wrexham we have to be bold – we need to think about what will success look like in 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 years and how do we get there.

We're proud that in North Wales we have use the five ways of working to shape how we do things. As we go forward it will be job of the Public Services Board to work with communities, stakeholders and businesses to bring the magic.

Get Involved

PSB organisations, partners and communities are coming together to change our ways of working and co-create better outcomes with communities. In the future we will continue to use and share our evidence, intelligence and insight to inform well-being planning. Join us.

If you'd like to comment on our shared objectives, and the actions we are shaping with communities, then please get in touch with the team before 5th February 2023.

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corporatebusiness@flintshire.gov.uk