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: Tina Claydon, David Coggins Cogan, Bill Crease, Ron Davies, Alasdair Ibbotson, Gina Maddison, Allan Marshall, Billy Mullin, Vicky Perfect, Jason Shallcross ac Arnold Woolley

7 Mehefin 2024

Annwyl Gynghorydd,

RHYBUDD O GYFARFOD RHITHIOL
PWYLLGOR TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU ADNODDAU CORFFORAETHOL
DYDD IAU, 13EG MEHEFIN, 2024 10.00 AM

Yn gywir

Steven Goodrum
Rheolwr Gwasanaethau Democrataidd

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 Democrataidd ar 01352 702345.

R H A G L E N

1 PENODI CADEIRYDD

Pwrpas: Yn ystod y cyfarfod blynyddol penderfynodd y Cyngor y bydd y Grwp Annibynnol yn cadeirio'r cyfarfod Hwn. Rhoddir gwybod i'r Pwyllgor mai'r Cynghorydd Richard Jones yw Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor ar gyfer blwyddyn y cyngor.

2 PENODI IS-GADEIRYDD

Pwrpas: Penodi Is-Gadeirydd ar gyfer y Pwyllgor.

3 YMDDIHEURIADAU

Pwrpas: I dderbyn unrhyw ymddiheuriadau.

4 DATGAN CYSYLLTIAD (GAN GYNNWYS DATGANIADAU CHWIPIO)

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

5 COFNODION (Tudalennau 5 - 10)

Pwrpas: I gadarnhau, fel cofnod cywir gofnodion y cyfarfod ar 7 Mawrth 2024.

6 OLRHAIN GWEITHRED (Tudalennau 11 - 14)

Adroddiad Rheolwr Gwasanaethau Democrataidd -

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

7 RHAGLEN GWAITH I'R DYFODOL (Tudalennau 15 - 24)

Adroddiad Rheolwr Gwasanaethau Democrataidd -

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

8 PECYNNAU GOFAL A ARIENNIR AR Y CYD - ADRODDIAD DIWEDDARU (Tudalennau 25 - 28)

Adroddiad Prif Swyddog (Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol) - Dirprwy Arweinydd y Cyngor ac Aelod Cabinet Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol a Lles

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

9 ADRODDIAD MONITRO BLYNYDDOL Y GYMRAEG 2023/24 (Tudalennau 29 - 56)

Adroddiad Prif Swyddog (Addysg ac Ieuenctid) - Aelod Cabinet Addysg, y Gymraeg a Diwylliant

Pwrpas: Cyflwyno drafft o Adroddiad Monitro Blynyddol y Gymraeg 2023/24 i'w gymeradwyo, a darparu sicrwydd bod y Cyngor wedi dangos cynnydd wrth fodloni gofynion statudol Hysbysiad Cydymffurfio - Iaith Gymraeg.

10 ARCHWILIO CYMRU: ASESIADAU O EFFAITH AR GYDRADDOLDEB: MWY NAG YMARFER BLWCH TICIO (Tudalennau 57 - 66)

Adroddiad Rheolwr Corfforaethol, Rhaglen Gyfalaf ac Asedau - Aelod Cabinet Gwasanaethau Corfforaethol

Pwrpas: Diweddaru ar gynnydd i fodloni argymhellion adroddiad "Asesiadau o Effaith ar Gydraddoldeb: mwy nag ymarfer blwch ticio" Archwilio Cymru ac argymell gwelliannau i sicrhau bod Asesiadau o Effaith Integredig yn cael eu cynnal yn fwy cyson yn y Cyngor.

11 DIWEDDARIAD DIWEDD BLWYDDYN AM GYFLOGAETH A'R GWEITHLU (Tudalennau 67 - 90)

Adroddiad Uwch Reolwr, Adnoddau Dynol a Datblygu Sefydliadol - Aelod Cabinet Gwasanaethau Corfforaethol

Pwrpas: I gyflwyno ystadegau gweithlu diwedd blwyddyn a'u dadansoddiad.

12 DEFNYDDIO GWYBODAETH AM BERFFORMIAD: PERSBECTIF A CHANLYNIADAU DEFNYDDWYR GWASANAETH (Tudalennau 91 - 124)

Adroddiad Prif Weithredwr - Aelod Cabinet Gwasanaethau Corfforaethol

Pwrpas: Adolygu'r Argymhellion ar gyfer Gwella, yn ogystal ag ymateb y Cyngor.

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

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn bwrpasol

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

7 MARCH 2024

Minutes of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held as a hybrid meeting on Thursday, 7 March 2024

PRESENT:	**Councillor Richard Jones (Chair)**
	Councillors: Bernie Attridge, Bill Crease, Alasdair Ibbotson, Gina Maddison, Allan Marshall, Vicky Perfect, Kevin Rush, Jason Shallcross, Sam Swash, Linda Thomas and Arnold Woolley
ALSO PRESENT:	Councillors: David Coggins Cogan, Dave Hughes, Christine Jones, Billy Mullin, Andrew Parkhurst and Ian Roberts attended as observers
APOLOGY:	Corporate Manager - Capital Programme and Assets
CONTRIBUTORS:	Councillor Paul Johnson (Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement); Chief Executive; Chief Officer (Governance), Corporate Finance Manager and Strategic Executive Officer
	Chief Officer (Social Services) and Social Value Development Officer for minute no. 81
	Customer Contact Service Manager and Matthew Harris, Head of Complaints Standards, Public Services Ombudsman for Wales for minute no. 82
	Strategic Finance Managers for minute nos. 84 and 86
	NEWydd Managing Director for minute no. 87
IN ATTENDANCE:	Democratic Services Manager and team

76. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

Following advice sought from the Chief Officer (Governance), Councillor Bernie Attridge declared a personal and prejudicial interest on agenda item 7 Information Rights Compliance report. He withdrew from the room for that item.

77. MINUTES

On minute number 74, the Chair asked that the comments made by the Corporate Manager (Human Resources and Organisational Development) on the Flintshire Trainee programme be included, namely that the proposal would have a minor impact as those trainees would have been under-resourced during the period.

RESOLVED:

That subject to the amendment, the minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2024 be approved as a correct record.

78. **ACTION TRACKING**

The Democratic Services Manager presented a report on progress with actions from previous meetings. The recommendation in the report was supported.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee notes the progress which has been made.

79. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee was asked to consider, and amend where necessary, the Committee's Forward Work Programme. The recommendations in the report were supported, subject to the inclusion of a report on the 2025/26 Medium Term Financial Strategy.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the Forward Work Programme be approved, as amended; and

(b) 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.

80. **VARIATION IN ORDER OF BUSINESS**

A change to the order of business was agreed to bring forward agenda item 8 (Social Value Update) to allow speakers to be present.

81. **SOCIAL VALUE UPDATE (Link to recording)**

The Chief Officer (Social Services) and Strategic Executive Officer presented a report which outlined performance data for the latter six months of 2022/23 and the first six months of 2023/24, together with a summary of areas of focus within the social value programme for 2024/25.

In response to questions from Councillors Sam Swash and Alasdair Ibbotson, a response would be shared with all Members present on whether social value work could be undermined by the North East Wales Investment Zone and tax incentives.

The recommendations in the report were supported.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the Committee notes the positive performance achieved in relation to generating social value for quarters three and four of the financial year 2022/23, as well as the first two quarters of 2023/24;

(b) That the Committee supports the next steps for the social value programme, as outlined in the report; and

(c) That to better align performance reporting to a financial year, the Committee supports a change in reporting timeline with annual social value performance reporting being presented in June of each year.

82. **PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES ANNUAL LETTER 2022-23 AND COMPLAINTS MADE AGAINST FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL DURING THE FIRST HALF OF 2023-24 (Link to recording)**

The Customer Contact Service Manager and Head of Complaints Standards, Public Services Ombudsman for Wales presented a report on the annual performance of the Council in relation to complaints received between 1 April 2022 - 31 March 2023, together with an overview of complaints received by each portfolio between 1 April 2023 - 30 September 2023. The recommendations in the report were supported.

As requested by Councillor Alasdair Ibbotson, further detail would be shared on the variations between the number of open and overdue complaints and those closed after ten days, to better understand the position.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the Committee notes the annual performance of the Council in respect of complaints made to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales during 2022-23;

(b) That the Committee notes the half year performance of the Council (2023-24) in respect of complaints made against services in line with the concerns and complaints procedure; and

(c) That the Committee supports the priorities outlined in paragraph 1.24.

83. **INFORMATION RIGHTS COMPLIANCE (Link to recording)**

The Chief Officer (Governance) introduced a report with performance information in respect of compliance with response targets for Freedom of Information and Individual Rights Requests covering the first six months of 2023/24.

As requested by Councillor Jason Shallcross, the data shown in paragraph 1.03 of the report would reflect percentages for each County. It was noted that the report would be scheduled twice yearly on the Committee's Forward Work Programme.

The recommendations in the report were supported.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the Committee notes the improvements made to date since 2020/21; and

(b) That the Committee notes the steps proposed to improve performance in those areas where response times are below the required 80% average.

84. **REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2023/24 (MONTH 10) (Link to recording)**

The Strategic Finance Manager presented a report on the 2023/24 month 10 position for the revenue budget monitoring for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account, prior to consideration by Cabinet.

As requested by Councillor Alasdair Ibbotson, further detail would be shared with Members on consultation with Trade Unions and Health & Safety representatives on reference to PPE equipment under Streetscene & Transportation (service delivery) shown as a budget variance on Appendix 2. It was also agreed that officers would bring the matter to the attention of the Chair of the Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The Corporate Finance Manager shared an update on the Final Local Government Settlement which would also be circulated to all Members.

The recommendation in the report was supported together with an additional motion.

RESOLVED:

(a) That having considered the Revenue Budget Monitoring 2023/24 (month 10) report, the comments be reported back to Cabinet when it considers the report; and

(b) That a letter be sent to the Home Office and Welsh Government to highlight the impact of sparce affordable accommodation in the private rental sector on the finances of local authorities.

85. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 - TO CONSIDER THE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED:

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting as the following item was considered to be exempt by virtue of paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

86. **CAMBRIAN AQUATICS**

The Strategic Executive Officer presented a report on the Community Asset Transfer, Cambrian Aquatics.

The recommendation was for the Committee to consider the content of the report and provide feedback to Cabinet as necessary.

RESOLVED:

That having considered the content of the report, the Committee provides the following feedback to Cabinet:

(a) That the Committee recognises the strategic value of the baths, given the proximity of Connah's Quay to the River Dee and its tidal estuary;

(b) That Cabinet considers how much has been saved throughout the lifetime of the asset transfer and whether a proportion of that should be made available to Cambrian Aquatics; and

(c) That a further period be allowed for Local Members to work with Cambrian Aquatics to see whether its financial performance can be improved and if there is an alternative solution to closure.

87. **NEWYDD BUSINESS PLAN 2024/25**

The NEWydd Managing Director and Strategic Executive Officer presented a report to seek endorsement of the NEWydd Catering & Cleaning Ltd Business Plan 2024/25. The recommendation in the report was supported.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee considers and comments on the content of the NEWydd Business Plan 2024/25, which includes financial projections, potential business opportunities, and strategic objectives and business priorities, along with identified risks and mitigation.

88. **ARRANGEMENTS WITH NEWYDD CATERING & CLEANING LTD**

The Strategic Executive Officer presented a report to seek endorsement of a proposal in relation to future arrangements between the Council and NEWydd Catering & Cleaning Ltd. The recommendations were to consider and comment on the proposals.

As requested, details of the new Board members would be shared with Members following the meeting.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the Committee considers and comments on the proposal for a new contract between the Council and NEWydd Catering & Cleaning Limited;

(b) That the Committee considers and comments on the proposed terms of such a new contract, as outlined in the report;

(c) That consideration be given in contract negotiations to the possibility of transferring across any commercial entities that the Council has dealings with; and

(d) Prior to longer term contract being awarded, to undertake analysis of the costs and benefits of moving the service in-house.

89. **MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE**

None.

(The meeting started at 10am and ended at 1.52pm)

Chair

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

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday, 13 June 2024
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.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE ACTION TRACKING REPORT
1.01	In previous meetings, requests for information, reports or actions have been made. These have been summarised as action points. 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.

| 1.02 | This paper summarises those points and where appropriate provides an update on the actions resulting from them.

The Action Tracking details are attached in appendix A. |
|------|------|

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

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

4.00	**RISK MANAGEMENT**
4.01	Not applicable.

5.00	**APPENDICES**
5.01	Appendix A – CRO&SC 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**
8.01	None.

ACTION TRACKING FOR THE CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting Date	Agenda item	Action Required	Action Officer(s)	Action taken	Status
14.12.2023	8. Council Plan 2023-24 Mid-Year Performance Reporting	A question was asked about the benefits of outsourcing calls to the Council's customer service number.	Chief Officer (Governance)	It was agreed to liaise with the service manager to request costings of this compared with the enhanced Contact Centre service with AI technology.	Closed – moved to Forward Work Programme
08.02.2024	7. Revenue Budget Monitoring 2023/24 (Month 9) and Capital Programme Monitoring 2023/24 (Month 9)	A question was asked about the carry-forward request for Planning, Environment & Economy: whether the Council could retain its ability to issue local by-laws or enforce previous ones in excess of the standards for Special Procedures.	Strategic Finance Manager	Awaiting response from Portfolio.	Open
07.03.2024	9. Revenue Budget Monitoring 2023/24 (Month 10)	The Committee resolved that a letter be sent to the Home Office and Welsh Government to highlight the impact of sparce affordable accommodation in the private rental sector on the finances of local authorities.	Democratic Services Manager	Draft response prepared.	Open

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Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn bwrpasol

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday 13 June 2024
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.

RECOMMENDATION	
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	The Forward Work Programme (FWP) is intended to set out the Committee's schedule of work for the coming months. It is a 'working document' that remains under constant review to ensure that the Committee is carrying out the proper level of scrutiny and is focussing on the appropriate areas in accordance with its current Terms of Reference (included as Appendix 2).
1.02	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.
1.03	The Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee will assume an oversight role of the 'Transformation Programme' that is currently being developed. It is anticipated that this role will commence from September 2024. Ahead of that, and for consideration at the Committee's July meeting, the Committee's Terms of Reference will be reviewed by the Democratic Services Manager in conjunction with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee. This review, along with the 'Transformation Programme' will then inform the Forward Work Programme from September. Dependent on the outcome of the review referred to in paragraph 1.03, a number of 'themed' topics and reports will then be scheduled in the next work cycle from September. These will include: ➢ Corporate Self-assessment 2023/24. ➢ Capital Programme and Assets 'themed' meeting. ➢ Corporate Services 'themed' meeting. ➢ Strategic and Partnership Working 'themed' meeting. ➢ Community Safety Partnership Annual Report. ➢ North Wales Economic Ambition Board. ➢ Organisational Design & Change Programme. ➢ Update on Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs). ➢ Alternative Delivery Models.

1.04	As well as the 'targeted' work items, there are standard, regular reports that follow a 'pattern'. These are included in Appendix 1 under 'Regular Items and will be scheduled on the FWP accordingly.
1.05	Members are also encouraged to consider and propose items for inclusion on the FWP, noting the guidance at paragraph 1.06. The Committee's 'Terms of Reference' is included as Appendix 2 to help with this. Though this is subject to review – as per paragraph 1.03.
1.06	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: 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	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	Publication of this report constitutes consultation.

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

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Draft Forward Work Programme Appendix 2 - CROSC 'Terms of Reference'

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None.

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

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Current FWP (June 2024)

Date of meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report / Presentation	Scrutiny Focus	Responsible / Contact Officer
10am – 19th July 2024	**Interim Revenue Budget Monitoring 2023/24 Report.**	To provide the latest revenue budget monitoring position for 2024/25 for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account.	Performance monitoring	Corporate Finance Manager
	Revenue Budget Monitoring 2023/24 (Outturn) and Capital Programme Monitoring 2023/24 (Outturn)	To present the Revenue Budget Monitoring (Outturn) and Capital Programme Monitoring (Outturn) for 2023/24.	Performance monitoring	Corporate Finance Manager
	Annual Performance Report 2023/24	To review the performance of the against our Well-being Objectives, Priorities and Sub-priorities at the end of the financial year 2023/24 of our Council Plan (2023-28).	Performance monitoring	Chief Executive

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Items to be scheduled when the Committee's Terms of Reference has been completed

- **Transformation Programme**

  To receive updates and progress reports in relation to projects included in the Transformation Programme.

- **Joint Procurement Service Annual Report 2022/23**
  To receive a performance update report on the Joint Procurement Service with Denbighshire County Council.

- **Council Tax Collections, Discretionary (s13a) Discounts/Write Offs**
  That a report is brought back to committee following a Cabinet review and the production of a comprehensive policy on s13a discretionary discounts, taking into account the comments raised and consultation with Overview & Scrutiny.

- **Delivering public services in the 21st century: Shared Services**
  That officers liaise with the Chairman in order to schedule presentations on various themes at future meetings.

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

- **Community Asset Transfers**
  To provide an update on the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) process.

- **Acquisition of land for Flintshire cemeteries**
  To provide details of how Flintshire County Council provided value for money in its land acquisition for cemeteries.

- **Review of Industrial Estates**
  To review the Council's business/commercial units, further to Paragraph 1.30 of agenda item 7 Capital Programme 2024/25 – 2026/27 from the County Council meeting of 6 December 2023.

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME
Regular Items

Month	Subject	Purpose of Report / Presentation	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 the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account.	Corporate Finance Manager
Twice-Yearly	**Employment and Workforce 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)

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn bwrpasol

Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference

<u>Main Contributors</u>

- Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure
- Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement
- Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources
- Chief Executive
- Chief Officer (Governance)
- Corporate Finance Manager

<u>Scope</u>

To fulfil all the functions of an Overview & Scrutiny committee, including Performance, Improvement and Policy Development as they relate to the list below.

Corporate Management and Governance

- Council strategic and improvement planning (Council Plan)
- Council performance and performance systems
- Customer Services and contact
- Finance Strategy
- Revenue and capital strategic planning Revenue and capital budget monitoring

Clwyd Pension Fund

ICT and Digital Strategies

People Strategy

- Organisational Design & Change Programme

Corporate Services

- Corporate Communications
- Financial services
- ICT Services
- Information and Business Services Procurement
- HR Business Partnering
- Occupational Health and Wellbeing Employment Services
- Legal Services
- Democratic Services
- Revenues

Strategic and Partnership Working

- Partnership and collaborative working frameworks

- Public Service Board
- Civil Contingencies
- Emergency Planning

Crime and Disorder

- Community Safety Partnership
- North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority & Service
- North Wales Police & Crime Commissioner North
- Wales Police Service
- North Wales Probation Service

Capital Programme and Assets

- Corporate Property Maintenance Service
- Property and Design Consultancy
- Valuation and Estates Service
- Community Assets
- Community Asset Transfer Programme
- NEWydd

Note. Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny is also the designated 'crime & disorder scrutiny' committee.

CYNGOR
Sir y Fflint
Flintshire
COUNTY COUNCIL

Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee	

Date of Meeting	Thursday, 13 June 2024
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)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As discussed in previous Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committees, officers within the Social Services portfolio continue to work closely with the Finance and Continuing Health Care (CHC) teams in Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) to put in place a number of processes and monitoring actions to address long standing CHC invoices. Processes are now in place to ensure current invoices are raised and paid in a timely manner.

RECOMMENDATIONS
1   To update Members on the current position regarding outstanding Continuing Health Care invoices raised by the Council for payment by Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	**PROGRESS UPDATE**
1.01	Regular meetings continue to take place between Council officers and health board staff, in these meetings officers concentrate on filling the information gaps that have previously prevented payment and as a result reduced the numbers of outstanding invoices.
1.02	Processes are now 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.
1.04	Meetings to support arbitration between Council officers and health board staff continue every 2 months – 4 individuals remain under discussion, with high level of activity continuing to resolution to these outstanding invoices.
1.05	**Debt Levels**
1.06	

Outstanding CHC Invoices 12/10/2022	Outstanding CHC Invoices 31/01/2023	Outstanding CHC Invoices 27/09/2023	Outstanding CHC Invoices 20/12/23	Outstanding CHC Invoices 31/05/2024
£ 1,285,005.01	£666,102.57	£455,850.09	£470,206.79	£716,615.00

1.07	Whilst the overall figure for outstanding invoices has increased to £0.717m, this is due to a high level of short-term debt of £0.294m which will be paid imminently. By comparison, the short-term debt level in December '23 was £0.047m. Of the remaining debt, £0.162m are invoices 1 year and over, and this figure has reduced slightly since the last report. And the remaining £0.261m relates to four individuals who continue to be progressed through arbitration. As discussed in previous meetings, this work is moving forward, but progress is difficult due to the historic nature of these invoices. We are confident positive progress will be made on all 4 cases. When taking into account the increased short-term debt figure, the overall position remains constant.
1.08	Monthly operational meetings continue and the outcome from this work is reported to the Director of Social Services and the Senior Management Team monthly.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	None 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	None

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

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	None

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn bwrpasol

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday 13th June 2024
Report Subject	Welsh Language Standards Annual Monitoring Report 2023/24
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language and Culture
Report Author	Chief Officer Education and Youth
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Flintshire County Council is required to adhere to Welsh Language Standards, as set out in a Compliance Notice that was served on the Council in 2015.

The Welsh Language Standards Compliance Notice for Flintshire County Council places a statutory duty on the Council to publish an annual report that sets out how it has met the Welsh Language Standards.

The purpose of this report is to present the Welsh Language Standards Annual Monitoring Report 2023/24, providing an overview of the Council's progress in complying with the Welsh Language Standards and identifying areas for further progress and improvement.

RECOMMENDATIONS	
1	To present the draft Welsh Language Standards Annual Monitoring Report for 2023/24 for consideration and endorsement.
2	To be assured that the Council has been making progress to meeting the statutory requirements of the Welsh Language Compliance Notice.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	**EXPLAINING THE WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2023/24**
1.01	**Background Information** The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 enables the Welsh Ministers to specify standards for the Welsh language. The aims of the Standards are to: • Improve the services Welsh speakers can expect to receive from organisations in Welsh. • Increase the use people make of Welsh language services. • Make it clear to organisations what they need to do in terms of the Welsh language. • Ensure that there is an appropriate degree of consistency of the duties placed on bodies in the same sectors.
1.02	The Welsh Language Commissioner (WLC) served Compliance Notices on each of the 22 local authorities in Wales in September 2015, identifying the Standards by which they must comply. Compliance Notices are unique to each organisation and specify what each organisation is expected to implement in Welsh and the date by which to comply.
1.03	The Welsh Standards Compliance Notice for Flintshire County Council lists 171 standards for service delivery, policy making, operational matters, promotion, and record keeping. The standards also require the Council to publish an annual report setting out how the standards have been met. The WLC has set out guidance on the format and content of the annual report. The Welsh Language Standards Annual Monitoring Report provides an opportunity to show what the Council has done to meet the standards and to facilitate and promote the use of Welsh. The Council's Welsh Language Standards Annual Monitoring Report 2023/24 can be found at Appendix 1 of this report.
1.04	**Flintshire County Council's Welsh Language Standards Annual Monitoring Report 2023/24** Increased Initiatives During 2023/24 there has been an increase in initiatives to promote the use of Welsh, including:

	• Participating in Bangor University's ARFer project, which aims to increase the use of incidental Welsh between employees. • An increase in the number of employees learning Welsh; 174 registered to learn Welsh during 2023/24 compared to 110 employees in 2022/23. • Recordings of words and phrases to support employees to use Welsh on the telephone. The recordings also contain the written word/phrase and the phonetics, this means that there are visual prompts so they can be seen as well as heard.
1.05	**Recruitment of Welsh speakers** In partnership with Menter Iaith Fflint a Wrecsam, Wrexham County Borough Council, Coleg Cambria and other organisations in North East Wales, a promotional video has been produced to show potential job applicants how organisations provide support to employees who wish to use Welsh at work. The aim is to reassure prospective job applicants who are unsure whether their Welsh is "good enough" of the support available to develop their skills. Two Flintshire County Council employees participated in this video.
1.06	The North Wales Public Services Boards commissioned IAITH: the Welsh centre for language planning to investigate the issues and solutions in the recruitment of Welsh speaker*s,* as all public bodies in North Wales are facing similar difficulties recruiting Welsh speaking employees. This "Recruitment and Welsh Language Project" started in 2023/24. The final report and recommendations will be published during 2024/25.
1.07	**Areas for further improvement** Although there are positive areas of progress, some issues remain as areas in which to progress and improve. Given the challenges recruiting to vacant posts, and filling Welsh essential posts, key areas for improvement include: • Developing our employees' Welsh language skills, particularly those in public facing posts, to support services to be delivered bilingually. This will be addressed by developing and implementing a Welsh Language Skills Strategy. • Supporting employees to use Welsh, naturally, in the workplace, to increase the audibility of the language and opportunities to use Welsh. More initiatives will take place to encourage employees to use Welsh, whatever their level of skill.

1.08	<u>Complaints</u> During 2023/24, we received one complaint directly from a customer who received an English only version of a form to book the Chair of the Council to attend events. An apology was issued to the customer and a Welsh form was sent to the complainant. To prevent this happening again the form is now bilingual.
1.09	Five complaints were made directly to the WLC, details of the complaints are provided on page 17 of the Welsh Language Standards Annual Monitoring Report. Of the five complaints, the WLC decided not to undertake a full investigation into three complaints as corrective action had been taken for two complaints and the WLC was investigating similar issues raised in another complaint and did not feel another investigation was needed. The WLC imposed Enforcement Action for the other two complaints requiring the Council to undertake specified action to prevent recurrence.
1.10	**Next steps** During the next 12 months, as a Council, we aim to: • Develop a Welsh Language Skills Strategy to increase the number of employees using Welsh to be able to deliver bilingual services. • Reduce the number of employees who report that they do not have any Welsh language skills. • Continue completing self-assessments against the Welsh language standards to ensure services continue to comply.

2.00	**RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**
2.01	**Human Resources**: A training programme is required to ensure employees have the skills and knowledge to meet these statutory duties. A budget for Welsh language training is held by the Learning and Development Team. **Revenue/Capital**: There are no revenue / capital implications.

3.00	**IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT**
3.01	A full integrated impact assessment is not required for this report, as it is a report on progress and compliance with the Welsh language standards.

3.02	**Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact**	
	Long-term	Positive - safeguarding the Welsh language for future generations and increasing access to services through the medium of Welsh.
	Prevention	Positive - increasing the number of people using and speaking Welsh.
	Integration	No change
	Collaboration	Positive - through supporting other plans and strategies such as the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and "More than Words" Framework which aims to increase the use of Welsh in health and social care services.
	Involvement	No change

3.03	**Well-being Goals Impact**	
	Prosperous Wales	No impact
	Resilient Wales	No impact
	Healthier Wales	No impact
	More equal Wales	Positive - through increasing access to bilingual services and ensuring that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language.
	Cohesive Wales	No impact
	Vibrant Wales	Positive - through promoting the Welsh language
	Globally responsible Wales	No impact

4.00	**CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT**
4.01	No formal consultations were required for this report, but key officers and services have contributed to the content of the report.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Welsh Language Standards Annual Monitoring Report 2023/24

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Welsh Language Standards Compliance Notice

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	**Contact Officer:** Fiona Mocko, Strategic Policy Advisor **Telephone:** **English** 01352 702122 **Welsh** 01267 224923 **E-mail**: Fiona.mocko@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS These are provided corporately on the Infonet and maintained by the Executive Office
	Compliance Notice: specifies the exact Welsh language standards with which each organisation should comply and the date by which they are required to comply with a standard. **Menter Iaith Fflint a Wrecsam**: an organisation funded by Welsh Government to support and promote the Welsh language in the county. **Welsh Language Measure**: Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 confirms the official status of Welsh, creates a new system of placing duties on bodies to provide services through the medium of Welsh and creating the post of Language Commissioner with enforcement powers. **Welsh language standards**: specify standards of conduct in relation to the Welsh language.

Welsh Language Standards

Annual Report

Cymraeg

April 2023 - March 2024

Mae'r cyhoeddiad hwn ar gael yn Gymraeg

CYNGOR Sir y Fflint Flintshire COUNTY COUNCIL

Welsh Language Standards
Annual Monitoring Report
April 2023 – March 2024

Executive Summary

Welsh Language Standards Annual Monitoring Report April 2023 - March 2024
Executive Summary

The Welsh language standards came into force on 30 March 2016 and the Council was required to comply with 146 standards by this date. Further standards came into force at a later date, totalling 171 in all. Many of the standards that apply to the Council reflect the commitments in our previous Welsh Language Scheme and our existing practice and commitments to Welsh language.

This Welsh Language Standards Annual Monitoring Report covers the period 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024. It shows actions we have been taking to comply with the standards and includes data that we are required to publish.

We are pleased to report that we have continued to support Menter Iaith Fflint a Wrecsam to celebrate Dydd Gŵyl Dewi and promote and share our Welsh heritage. Activity packs were provided to all care homes in the county, including to those within the independent sector, supporting older people to participate in the celebrations.

Several teams are participating in Bangor University's ARFer project which aims to increase the use of incidental Welsh amongst employees, which is just one of the initiatives we have in place to increase the use of Welsh amongst employees.

To help increase the use of Welsh in the workplace during 2024/25 we asked employees to complete a Welsh language attitude survey. We will use the information from this survey to develop initiatives to promote the Welsh language and evaluate the success of these by reviewing attitudes to Welsh language.

Neal Cockerton   Councillor Mared Eastwood

Chief Executive   Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh
                                   Language, Culture and Leisure

Welsh Language Standards
Annual Monitoring Report 2023/24

1.0   Introduction

1.1   The Welsh Language Commissioner (WLC) served a Compliance Notice on the Council in 2016, identifying the 171 standards with which we must comply. These standards set out what the Council is expected to do and deliver in Welsh. Compliance Notices are unique to each organisation reflecting the linguistic profile of the local community and organisational capacity to meet the standards.

1.2   The Council is required to publish an annual report by 30th June each year, as set out in standards 158, 164 and 170. The full list of standards with which we are required to comply is available here. This report is also received annually by the Council's Cabinet for approval prior to publication.

1.3   This annual report is our eighth annual report and covers the period 1st April 2023 to 31 March 2024, setting out actions we have been taking to comply with the standards and the areas where we need to improve.

2.0   Background

2.1   The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 confirms the official status of Welsh in Wales, alongside the English language, and established a legal framework to impose a duty on public bodies in Wales to comply with the new Welsh standards. The introduction of the Welsh language standards builds on the commitment previously made by the Council within our former Welsh language scheme.

2.2   The aims of the standards are to:

- Improve the services Welsh speakers can expect to receive from organisations in Welsh.

- Increase the use people make of Welsh language services.

- Make it clear to organisations what they need to do in terms of the Welsh language.

- Ensure that there is an appropriate degree of consistency in terms of the duties placed on bodies in the same sectors.

2.3   The WLC has powers to investigate and take action against those organisations who fail to comply with the standards. This includes imposing financial penalties for non-compliance.

2.4   The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with the standards. The Strategic Policy Advisor is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Welsh language standards. Our Welsh Language Network, Rhwydwaith yr Iaith, provides strategic leadership and is chaired by the Chief Officer for Education and Youth. The Welsh language champion is the Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure.

2.5   Complaints about failure to meet the Welsh language standards can be made by using our Complaints Procedure. Employees can raise concerns through the Council's Grievance Procedure.

3.0   Complying with the standards during 2023/24

3.1   We are required to report on our arrangements for complying with the following standards:

- Service delivery standards
- Policy making standards
- Operational standards

Actions we have taken to comply with the standards are available on the Council website and within previous annual reports. This report sets out additional actions we have taken during 2023/24.

3.2   **Compliance with Service delivery Standards**

3.2.1   Employees are reminded periodically about the Welsh language standards and their responsibilities. New employees are made aware of the standards during induction and are asked to complete the Welsh language awareness e-learning module.

3.2.2   During 2023/24, Portfolios have continued to complete self-assessment against the Welsh language standards to identify areas for improvement. The self-assessments form part of our priorities set out in the Council Plan 2023-28.

3.2.3   During 2022/23, a mystery shopper exercise was completed on a sample of telephone numbers published on the Council website to ensure a bilingual greeting was offered and initial calls were held in Welsh. The results were reviewed by the Council's Welsh Language Network, Rhwydwaith yr Iaith. Several mystery shopper exercises were completed again during 2023/24. It has been agreed that this exercise will be completed regularly to ensure initial calls in Welsh are held in Welsh when making calls to direct dial numbers, which are available to the public.

3.2.4   During 2022/23 there was a drop in visits to the Welsh pages and an increase to the English pages, with 25,133 page views to the Welsh pages of the

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website and 4,556,364 page views to the English version. However, during 2023/24 there was an increase in visits to the Welsh pages and a decrease to the English pages, with 27,218 page views to Welsh pages of the website, and 3,814,574 page views on the English version. Reviews of our website take place regularly through Rhwydwaith yr Iaith and by the Customer Services Team making regular checks of content to ensure Welsh is equal to English. Additional guidance has been produced for web editors to support them to comply with the Welsh language standards when uploading content onto the website.

3.2.5   We also monitor visits to our social media sites. The results are set out below.

Twitter/X	Welsh	English
Views	15937	699300
Engagement rate	1.7%	2.8%
Link clicks	62	7800
Retweets (without comments)	55	1021
Likes	93	1578
Replies	16	373

3.2.6   Since launching our Facebook page in January 2024, there were:-

Welsh
50 inbound messages (total number of comments, mentions, and private messages) – most of these are other organisations (e.g. Menter Iaith, Tai Teg, Addysg Gymru).

English
478 inbound messages.

3.2.7   Customers' language preference is captured at the first point of contact with services. Social Services provide an "Active Offer" which means providing a service in Welsh without someone having to ask for it. Out of 6,779 adult Social Services assessments completed during 2023/24, 58% of those were given an Active Offer (3,948) and 45 people accepted the offer.

3.2.8 Services offered in Welsh:

Births and Marriages

	2022/23		2023/24	
	English (number)	**Welsh (number)**	**English (number)**	**Welsh (number)**
Birth registrations	31	2	28	2
Notices of Marriage	1286	6	1233	22
Marriage ceremonies	471	5 (with a Welsh element e.g., bilingual introduction and ending, bilingual legal vows or bilingual certificates but the actual ceremony is in English).	472	3 (with a Welsh element e.g., bilingual introduction and ending, bilingual legal vows or bilingual certificates but the actual ceremony is in English).

Telephone calls

	2022/23		2023/24	
Contact Centre	**Number of Calls offered in English**	**Number of calls offered in Welsh**	**Number of Calls offered in English**	**Number of calls offered in Welsh**
Main Contact Centre (01352 752121)	28,685	337	25,358	333
Council Tax	35,849	52	35,502	49
Business Rates	2,480	15	2,318	7
Enforcement	4,699	8	4,237	15
Sundry Debts	4,820	57	5,735	53

3.2.9 The Council uses Microsoft Teams to host virtual meetings and events. Licences have also been purchased for Zoom. This means that employees who facilitate virtual meetings or events can access Zoom when an interpretation service is needed, ensuring the relevant Welsh language standards are met.

3.2.10 Following the WLC's annual review of the Council's compliance with the standards, arrangements to ensure Welsh translation is offered at committee meetings open to the public have been strengthened.

3.2.11 Guidance for contractors and employees, setting out how to comply with the standards for signage, was developed. This has been published on the Council procurement system so that contractors can access these when submitting tenders.

3.2.12 We have continually experienced challenges recruiting Welsh speakers, which have been exacerbated with the current recruitment difficulties for all posts. The Contact Centre successfully recruited more Welsh speakers to their Team.

3.2.13 We have worked with Wrexham County Borough Council and partners, including Menter Iaith Fflint a Wrecsam, Mudiad Meithrin and Coleg Cambria, to look at solutions to attracting and recruiting more Welsh speakers to our organisations. This has involved employees being involved in promotional videos to show how we support employees to use Welsh at work.

3.2.14 The North Wales Regional Public Services Board (PSB) has commissioned Iaith, the Welsh centre for language planning, to look at issues and solutions to recruiting and retaining Welsh speaking employees. This work started in 2023 and will be completed during 2024.

3.3 Compliance with Policy making standards

3.3.1 We worked with our colleagues from other public bodies in North Wales to develop a regional Impact Assessment template which includes Welsh language. This template was forwarded to the Welsh Language Commission for comments which have been incorporated within the template.

3.3.2 We provide various grants which are managed by other organisations on our behalf. Application forms and criteria are bilingual and include a statement to say that there will not be a delay in responding to applications submitted in Welsh.

3.3.3 The number of grant applications made through the medium of Welsh during 2023/24 is set out below:

Grant	20021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
	Total number of applications	Number of applications made in Welsh	Total number of applications	Number of applications made in Welsh	Total number of applications	Number of applications made in Welsh
Community Endowment Fund	9	1	16	1	11	0
Welsh Church Act Fund	7	1	9	0	11	1
Community Chest	58	0	27	0	40	1

3.3.4 Details of how we comply with the Policy making standards is available on our website. Advice and guidance for employees is published on the Council intranet.

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3.4   Compliance with Operational standards

3.4.1 Full details of how we are complying with the Operational standards are available on our website.

3.4.2 Welsh taster courses are now being offered to employees. These have proven to be popular from which employees are opting to attend further Welsh language training.

3.4.3 The Welsh in the Workplace Policy, which was adopted in 2017, will be refreshed and updated during 2024/25. This policy applies to the use of Welsh internally and aims to increase the number of Welsh speaking employees and encourage our employees to use Welsh both in work and at work. We are participating with Bangor University's ARFer pilot project. The ARFer project, based on behaviour change principles, supports employees to use Welsh at work, whatever their level of skill. Teams participating in the pilot project include:

- Contact Centre;
- Children's Residential Care;
- Fostering Team; and
- Families First.

3.4.4   New employees are asked in which language they would like their employment contract to be issued. Employees can choose to receive business correspondence in Welsh. Of contracts issued to new employees during 2023/24, 14 were provided in Welsh.

3.4.5   Appraisal documentation is published on the intranet in Welsh. Employees have the option of disciplinary and grievance interviews/meetings being held in Welsh. No grievance or disciplinary hearings were held in Welsh during 2023/24.

3.4.6 The following policies are published in Welsh:

- Attendance Management Policy
- Benefits of Working at Flintshire County Council
- Capability Policy
- Corporate Safeguarding Policy
- Disclosure and Barring Service Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Diversity and Equality Policy
- Flexible Working application form
- Flexible Working Hours Policy
- Foster for Flintshire Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Welsh in the Workplace Policy

3.4.7 We asked employees to complete a Welsh language attitude survey to develop a baseline assessment of where we are as an organisation in our journey to becoming a bilingual organisation. The outcome of the survey will contribute towards identifying initiatives to promote the Welsh language.

3.5   Monitoring arrangements

3.5.1 Our Welsh Language Network, Rhwydwaith yr Iaith, includes representatives from all portfolios. The Network meets quarterly. Standing items on the agenda include Welsh language training, the profile of employees' Welsh language skills, Welsh language promotion and complaints. Calls to the Welsh and English Contact Centre telephone lines are also reviewed at these meetings to identify any difference in waiting times.

3.5.2 Reports on compliance with the standards are presented monthly to the Chief Officer for Education and Youth (as lead for Welsh language) and quarterly to our Chief Officer Team. The annual report is presented to Cabinet for approval prior to being adopted.

4.0 Promoting and facilitating the use of Welsh

4.1   Employees are encouraged to develop their Welsh language skills through attending training provided by the local college. Employees are supported to attend lessons within worktime. "Panad a Sgwrs" sessions are also held once a week to support learners to practise their Welsh in a safe environment, these sessions are facilitated by Welsh speakers.

4.2   Cysgliad (Welsh grammar, spellchecker and dictionary) has been uploaded on to all employee devices available for employees. This is uploaded automatically on devices for new employees.

4.3   Resources to support Welsh learners and Welsh speakers are available on the intranet on a dedicated page for Welsh learners. Activities to support learners which take place in the community are promoted to the workforce.

4.4   A series of recordings, comprising phrases and words that can be used in meetings by councillors and officers has been produced. The recordings include the phonetics of each word and phrase, so they can be seen as well as heard. A series of recordings have also been made of phrases to use on the telephone, with phonics, to help employees with pronunciation.

I will call back tomorrow - Byddaf yn galw yn ôl yfory

4.5   The Youth Service and Play Development Team

4.5.1   Flintshire's Youth Service and Play Development's commitment to promoting the Welsh language within delivery remains steadfast. Flintshire Play Development continues its efforts to encourage Welsh language usage in community provisions, fostering an environment that embraces bilingualism. Through initiatives such as the PlayPals project, which educates children on the benefits of play in child development while promoting Welsh language advocacy, we aim to empower young individuals to embrace the Welsh language in informal settings.

4.5.2   Flintshire Youth Clubs continue to deliver activities that promotes both Welsh language and Culture to young people. Efforts extend beyond their delivery, as they actively recruit Welsh speakers and foster a Welsh ethos within their team. This ethos instils confidence and passion among staff, enabling them to actively support Welsh language initiatives throughout the county.

4.5.2   The appointment of a Welsh Language Officer in the Youth Service marks a significant milestone in our efforts to promote Welsh language usage among young people. This role, which emphasises front-facing delivery in schools, youth clubs, and community settings, aims to address the challenge of integrating Welsh language into informal social and leisure environments.

4.5.3   The Officer will spearhead new projects within Flintshire Youth Service, enhancing the breadth of bilingual youth work offerings. Collaborating closely with a fully bilingual Welsh Language youth worker, the Officer ensures a consistent approach to bilingual delivery across all aspects of service.

4.5.4   Flintshire Youth Service collaborates with external partners such as the URDD and Ysgol Maes Garmon (Welsh medium secondary school) to facilitate Welsh language transition activities and clubs.

4.5.5   We provided playschemes to 15,389 children during 2023/24. In addition to our 57 Summer Playscheme sites, we also extended our outreach through community provisions during school term-time, the PlayPals project in schools, and we even delivered winter and spring provisions. During all our provisions including open access, we made a concerted effort to encourage more conversational Welsh among the team, using the language patterns children are taught in school.

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4.5.6 The Welsh language has now been ingrained into the service delivery and all team members are encouraged to use as much incidental Welsh as they are comfortable to use. We also, support our team with using Welsh in our office and during meetings and other correspondence. As a result, the team became much more at ease greeting children in Welsh utilising the Welsh resources provided.

4.6 Social Services

4.6.1 The Presbyterian Church of Wales/Eglwys Bresbyteraidd Cymru have produced a CD of Welsh medium Hymns and Readings to support those living with Dementia under their "Golud" Programme. We have shared this resource with our Residential Care Homes. Welsh Medium Schools are still visiting schools to care homes to sing and perform for residents.

4.7 Siarter Iaith and Cymraeg Campus

4.7.1 Siarter Iaith and Cymraeg Campus frameworks introduced by Welsh Government aim to promote the Welsh language in schools, encourage pupils to improve their Welsh language skills and increase the use of Welsh outside of school. The Siarter Iaith framework focuses on Welsh medium schools and Cymraeg Campus framework has been developed for English medium schools in Wales.

4.7.2 Primary schools in Flintshire continue to embrace the Siarter Iaith and Cymraeg Campus objectives to increase the social use of Welsh. In total, one school has been awarded the Aur Cymraeg Campus award, six schools have been awarded the Arian Cymraeg Campus award and 35 schools have been awarded the Bronze Cymraeg Campus award. Since April 2023, 10 schools have been awarded the Bronze award and one school has been awarded the Arian (Gold) Cymraeg Campus award. The 'Criwiau Cymraeg' in all schools work actively to determine the school priorities and help to decide on activities for their schools and some are effective in involving the wider school community.

4.8 Welsh Medium Education Strategic Plan (WESP)

4.8.1 As part of ongoing commitment to supporting the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) Flintshire Cabinet has approved significant capital investment for Ysgol Croes Atti, Flint. The proposed new Welsh medium school will replace the existing Ysgol Croes Atti, located on Chester Road, in Flint and is a significant project supporting the WESP, as this will be the first new Welsh medium school build by the Council since its inception in 1996. The Project will also be a Net Zero Carbon (NZC) school.

4.8.2 Included in the Project is a standalone facility that will provide a wraparound childcare provision, a space for adult community learning and an immersion resource to support newcomers to Welsh medium provision, including

transition from primary school to Welsh medium secondary school. Construction commenced in early 2024 and is due to be completed in Autumn 2025.

4.9 Events

Throughout the year we have participated in key activities and events to promote the Welsh language. These include:

- Diwrnod Shw'mae/Sumae – we encouraged all our employees to say something in Welsh and use Welsh in meetings.
- Diwrnod Hawliau'r Gymraeg – we participated in this event , posting social media messages to encourage Wlesh speakers to contact us in Welsh.
- Dydd Miwsig Cymru – we played Welsh language music on the IT Help Desk hold line.
- Dydd Gŵyl Dewi- this was celebrated in our care homes and extra care schemes as well as community events held in Holywell, Mold and Buckley town centres.

5.0 Welsh language skills and training

5.1   Welsh language skills are self-assessed against the Welsh Language Proficiency Framework. (Appendix 1). The profile of employee Welsh language skills by Portfolio is set out in Table 1. The tables show that the number and percentage of employees who state that they do not have any Welsh language skills has slightly increased since March 2023. 1,109 (36.94%) employees reported that they do not have any Welsh language skills in March 2024, compared to 1,061 (35.97%) employees who reported that they did not have any Welsh language skills in March 2023.

5.2   There have been slight increase in the number and percentage of employees who report that their Welsh language skills are at levels 4 and 5. 102 (3.06%) employees reported that they were at level 4 and 101 (3.36%) employees reported that they were at level 5 in March 2024 compared to 101 (level 4) and 89 (level 5) employees respectively in March 2023.

Table 1: Profile of Welsh language skills of the workforce as at March 31st 2024

Portfolio	Headcount	Level 0		Level 1		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4		Level 5		Not Recorded	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Chief Executives	64	19	29.69%	24	37.50%	10	15.63%	4	6.25%	4	6.25%	3	4.69%	0	0.00%
Education and Youth	309	69	22.33%	114	36.89%	44	14.24%	21	6.80%	19	6.15%	21	6.80%	21	6.80%
Governance	211	46	21.80%	100	47.39%	40	18.96%	6	2.84%	10	4.74%	8	3.79%	1	0.47%
Housing and Communities	339	128	37.76%	133	39.23%	39	11.50%	13	3.83%	11	3.24%	10	2.95%	5	1.47%
People and Resources	200	54	27.00%	82	41.00%	37	18.50%	9	4.50%	9	4.50%	7	3.50%	2	1.00%
Planning, Environment and Economy	215	49	22.79%	88	40.93%	30	13.95%	9	4.19%	10	4.65%	8	3.72%	21	9.77%
Social Services	1,134	463	40.83%	406	35.80%	158	13.93%	35	3.09%	33	2.91%	33	2.91%	6	0.53%
Streetscene and Transportation	530	281	53.02%	168	31.70%	39	7.36%	8	1.51%	6	1.13%	11	2.08%	17	3.21%
Grand Total	3,002	1,109	36.94%	1,115	37.14%	397	13.22%	105	3.50%	102	3.40%	101	3.36%	73	2.43%

5.3 Activities to develop a bilingual workforce include initiatives to enhance the skills within our existing workforce and to attract and recruit more Welsh speakers.

For existing employees, we have been:

- Encouraging employees to attend Welsh language training.
- Offering Welsh language taster sessions through Coleg Cambria, two-hour sessions for a six week period. These courses are for employees who do not have any Welsh language skills.
- Offering Panad a Sgwrs weekly sessions to provide learners with the opportunity to speak and practice Welsh language skills within an informal and supportive environment and within worktime.
- Targeting employees who do not have any Welsh language skills to ensure they complete the Work Welsh e-learning taster course provided by the National Centre for Learning Welsh Cymraeg Gwaith/Work Welsh.
- Continuing to release employees to attend Welsh language skills training.
- Providing Welsh language training as part of the Play Leaders' training.
- Providing Welsh language training to our cohort of Apprentices.
- We have embarked on project to ensure all employees complete their language skills assessment.
- We have plans, during 2024/25, to target those who describe themselves as having zero skills with face to-face workshops to ensure everyone has skills at level 1 as a minimum.
- We have developed and delivered, with our colleagues, from Iaith a new programme called "Welsh matters for everyone" and a follow on for managers called "Welsh matters for managers". The aim of the programmes is to demonstrate the importance of using the language in the workplace and how to encourage others to do so.

5.4 **Welsh language skills training.**

Promotion of Welsh language training has continued across the workforce. Paid time to attend Welsh courses is provided to employees. There has been a significant increase in the number of employees attending basic Welsh language skills training. We have also seen an increase in those progressing from Entry level to Foundation level.

Table 2: Number of employees attending Welsh language skills training.

Level	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
Basic Language Skills	48	1	15	11	4	64	129
Entry	50	34	22	28	28	29	28
Foundation	7	12	6	10	8	7	13
Intermediate	23	3	2	1	6	9	2
Advanced	1	9	7	6	3	1	2
Proficient	10	5	5	3	0	0	0
Total	139	64	57	59	49	110	174

5.5   To comply with the Welsh language standards we are required to report:

   i)   the number of employees who attended courses through the medium of Welsh.
   ii)   ii) if a Welsh version of a course was offered – the number and % of   employees who attended the Welsh version.

5.6   There is information on the Council's intranet pages to inform employees that if they wish to complete any of the courses in Welsh to contact the Corporate Learning and Development Team. The Council has an informal agreement with Gwynedd County Council which means that employees can attend their Welsh medium courses.

   The number of employees who attended specific courses in Welsh is set out in the following table:

Table 3: Profile of training provided through the medium of Welsh

Type of training	2022/23		2023/24	
	Number who attended the Welsh version	Number who attended the English version	Number who attended the Welsh version	Number who attended the English version
Complaints and disciplinary procedures	0	129	0	153
Dealing with the public	0	0	0	0
Health and safety	0	34	0	136
Induction	0	0	0	24
Performance Management	0	0	0	9
Recruiting and interviewing	0	0	0	0

5.7   Welsh language awareness - our e-learning course has seen 715 employees complete the module.

5.8 A process to assess the linguistic skills required for new posts is in place. A method to record the number of posts that have been assessed as desirable or essential has been developed. The Council is required to report the number of new and vacant posts which were categorised as posts where:

     i) Welsh language skills were essential.
     ii) Welsh needed to be learnt when appointed.
     iii) Welsh desirable.
     iv) Welsh language skills were not necessary.

The data for 2023/24 is set out below:

Category	Number of posts categorised	Percentage of posts categorised
Welsh language essential	5	11.11%
Welsh desirable	27	60.00%
Need to learn Welsh	0	0
No Welsh language skills required	13	28.89%

In comparison with previous years:

Category	Number							
	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24
Welsh language essential	17	8	14	2	3	4	1	5
Welsh desirable	9	40	42	12	2	2	0	27
Need to learn Welsh	0	0	0	0	9	0	0	0
No Welsh language skills required	277	185	207	66	46	46	40	13

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6.0 Complaints

6.1 The Council's website advises people that the Complaints policy also applies to complaints about Welsh language, and any such complaints are routinely copied to the Strategic Policy Advisor for monitoring. The Complaints procedure can be found here.

6.2   Complaints about Welsh language is a standing item at Rhwydwaith yr Iaith meetings.

6.3   During 2023/24, we received one complaint directly from a customer who received an English only version of a form to book the Chair of the Council to attend an event. An apology was issued to the customer and a Welsh form was sent to the complainant. To prevent this happening again the form is now bilingual.

6.4   Five complaints were made directly to the Welsh Language Commissioner. The detail of these complaints is set out below:

Complaints made directly to the Welsh Language Commissioner		
Complaints Service Delivery	Details	Outcome and action taken
Governance – website, forms and receipts	A customer found that Welsh was not equal to English on the Council Tax e-form and that the Welsh receipt was not fully in Welsh.	The WLC issued Enforcement Action and instructed the Council to amend the e-form and provide evidence of the Welsh receipt being fully in Welsh. We have complied with all instructions.
Streetscene/ Governance – correspondence and telephones	A customer complained about the quality of Welsh in a letter sent from Streetscene. A Welsh speaker was not available when the complainant contacted the Contact Centre and nobody returned call within 10 working days.	The WLC decided not to proceed to a full investigation: • There was not an obvious error in the Welsh translation of the letter. • There were already two on-going investigations into telephone calls. • The length of time to return telephone calls was not subject to the Welsh language standards.
Governance - website	A customer complained about the My Councillor page on the website. The toggle button to switch between Welsh and English was not taking customers to the correct pages. The information on councillors was not correct.	The WLC decided not to proceed to a full investigation as the errors had been corrected and evidence to demonstrate this had been provided.
Governance - correspondence	An English only letter was sent to a customer.	The WLC decided not to investigate as corrective action had already been taken, including reminding contractors about complying with the Welsh language standards.

Governance- website	A complaint was made about the My Councillor page of the website - Welsh place names were incorrect, English page was in English only, Welsh page was in English and Welsh.	The WLC has investigated and will issue an Enforcement Action with which the Council must comply. All the pages have been corrected.

7.0 Conclusion and Future Actions

7.1   Moving forward during 2024/25 we will be updating the Welsh in the Workplace Policy and Welsh Language Promotion Strategy. These will contribute to raising the visibility and audibility of the Welsh language.

7.2   We will be developing a Welsh Language
 Skills Strategy to develop a proactive approach to develop the Welsh language skills of our employees. We will be working with the National Centre for Learning Welsh to support implementation of this strategy.

7.3   We will be contacting all employees who report that they do not have any Welsh language skills to offer them basic courtesy level Welsh. This will ensure we reduce the number and percentage of employees who do not have any Welsh language skills.

7.4   We will continue to complete self-assessments against the Welsh language standards to provide assurance services are complying and identify further areas for improvement.

Appendix 1 WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

	LISTENING / SPEAKING	READING / UNDERSTANDING	WRITING
LEVEL 0	● No appreciable ability	● No appreciable ability	● No appreciable ability
LEVEL 1	**I Can:** ● Pronounce Welsh words, place names, department names, etc. ● Greet and understand a greeting. ● Use basic every day words and phrases, e.g. thank you, please, excuse me, etc. ● Understand / pass on simple verbal requests of a routine / familiar / predictable kind using simple language, e.g. 'May I speak to…'. ● State simple requests and follow up with extra questions / requests in a limited way	**I Can:** ● Understand simple key words and sentences on familiar / predictable matters relating to my own job area, e.g. on signs, in letters.	**I Can:** ● Fill in simple forms, note down simple information, e.g. date and venue of a meeting, Welsh address, etc.
LEVEL 2	**I Can:** ● Understand the gist of Welsh conversations in work ● Respond to simple job-related requests and requests for factual information ● Ask simple questions and understand simple responses ● Express opinions in a limited way as long as the topic is familiar ● Understand instructions when simple language is used	**I Can:** ● Understand factual, routine information and the gist of non-routine information on familiar matters related to my own job area , e.g. in standard letters, leaflets, etc.	**I Can:** ● Write short simple notes / letters / messages on a limited range of predictable topics related to my personal experiences or my own job area
LEVEL 3	**I Can:** ● Understand much of what is said in an office, meeting, etc. ● Keep up a simple conversation on a work related topic, but may need to revert to English to discuss / report on complex or technical information ● Answer predictable or factual questions ● Take and pass on most messages that are likely to require attention ● Offer advice on simple job-related matters	**I Can:** ● Scan texts for relevant information ● Understand a fair range of job-related routine and non-routine correspondence, factual literature, etc. when standard language is used.	**I Can:** ● Write a detailed / descriptive letter relating to my own job area, but will need to have it checked by a Welsh speaker ● Make reasonably accurate notes while someone is talking
LEVEL 4	**I Can:** ● Keep up an extended casual work related conversation or give a presentation with a good degree of fluency and range of expression but may need to revert to English to answer unpredictable questions or explain complex points or technical information ● Contribute effectively to meetings and seminars within own area of work ● Argue for/against a case	**I Can:** ● Read and understand information fairly quickly as long as no unusual vocabulary is used and no particularly complex or technical information is involved	**I Can:** ● Prepare formal letters of many familiar types such as enquiry, complaint, request and application ● Take reasonably accurate notes in meetings or straightforward dictation ● Write a report / document relating to my own job area, but will need to have it checked by a Welsh speaker
LEVEL 5	**I Can:** ● Advise on / talk about routine, non-routine, complex, contentious or sensitive issues related to own experiences ● Give a presentation/demonstration ● Deal confidently with hostile or unpredictable questions ● Carry out negotiations using complex / technical terms ● Give media interviews	**I Can:** ● Understand complex ideas and information expressed in complex or specialist language in documents, reports correspondence and articles, etc.	**I Can:** ● Write letters on any subject ● Write full / accurate notes of meetings while continuing to follow discussions and participate in them ● Write reports / documents with confidence but they may need to be checked for minor errors in terms of spelling and grammar

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CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	

Date of Meeting	Thursday, 13th June 2024
Report Subject	Audit Wales Report "Equality Impact Assessments: More Than a Tick Box Exercise?"
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services
Report Author	Corporate Manager – Capital Programme and Assets
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In September 2022, Audit Wales published a report on its findings of the use of Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) in Wales. The aim of the audit was to provide insight about the approach to EIAs undertaken across the public sector in Wales.

The report "Equality Impact Assessments: more than a tick box exercise?" sets out four recommendations and seven key improvement areas for Welsh Government and public bodies.

This report provides an update on actions being taken to meet the recommendation that applies to public bodies.

RECOMMENDATIONS	
1.	To update Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on progress to meet the recommendations of Audit Wales "Equality Impact Assessments: more than a tick box exercise?"

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	**EXPLAINING THE AUDIT WALES REPORT "EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS: MORE THAN A TICK BOX EXERCISE?"**
1.01	In September 2022, Audit Wales published a report on its audit of the use of Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) in Wales; "Equality Impact Assessments: more than a tick box exercise?" The aim of the audit was to provide insight about the approach to EIAs undertaken across the public sector in Wales.
1.02	EIAs are an important part of the approach to reducing inequality in Wales, supporting public services to meet their legal duties to avoid discrimination in decision making.
1.03	Audit Wales state in the summary of their findings: "…what we have seen and heard tells us that public bodies in Wales tend to use their EIAs defensively. Too often, they seem like a tick box exercise to show that the body has thought about equality issues in case of challenge. While legal challenge is of course an important risk to manage, this approach means public bodies are not using EIAs to their full potential, especially in terms of promoting equality and cohesion".
1.04	The Audit Wales report sets out four recommendations and seven key improvement areas for Welsh Government and public bodies. These are set out in Appendix 1, along with the Council's response having considered them. Three of the four recommendations are for Welsh Government to implement. The fourth recommendation applies to public bodies: *Public bodies should review their overall approach to EIAs considering the findings of this report and the detailed guidance available from the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the NHS Practice Hub.*
1.05	Audit Wales also made a similar recommendation in their report "'Time for Change' – Poverty in Wales", which was published in November 2022. To ensure effective compliance with the Socio-economic Duty, the report includes a recommendation (Recommendation 8) that applies to local authorities: *We recommend that councils review their integrated impact assessments or equivalent to:* • *ensure that they draw on relevant, comprehensive and current data (nothing over 12 months old) to support analysis;* • *ensure integrated impact assessments capture information on:*

	○ *involvement activity setting out those the service has engaged with in determining its strategic policy such as partners, service users and those it is coproducing with;*
	  ○ *the cumulative impact/mitigation to ensure the assessment considers issues in the round and how it links across services provided across the council;*
	  ○ *how the council will monitor and evaluate impact and will take corrective action; and*
	  ○ *an action plan setting out the activities the Council will take as a result of the Integrated Impact Assessment.*

1.06	The recommendation made by Audit Wales in their report "Equality Impact Assessments: more than a tick box exercise?", and which applies to the Council, has been considered. The Council agrees with the recommendation and work had already commenced to review the mechanism and approach taken locally to completing Assessments. Further information on a pilot project which is due to complete in 2024, and that will demonstrate the Council's approach to implementing Audit Wales recommendation in relation to EIAs, is provided below.
1.07	**Update on actions being taken within Flintshire County Council** The University of Manchester, working in collaboration with Greater Manchester Combined Authority, had developed a Carbon and Co-Benefits Decision Support Tool. The Tool aims to support a holistic approach to decision-making through a process that embeds review and assessment of all policies, initiatives, or services against statutory impact assessments.
1.08	The Tool was being piloted in the Greater Manchester and Greater London authority areas and the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) was supportive of this tool being piloted in Wales. Flintshire County Council is the only local authority in Wales piloting this Tool.
1.09	The Council pilot has been overseen by the Corporate Equalities Board since June 2023, with an initial workshop with users facilitated by the University of Manchester in September 2023. The workshop sought to identify any issues or concerns so that final amendments to the Tool could be made before it was available to pilot.
1.10	For the Tool to be piloted in Wales amendments were made by the University of Manchester and Flintshire County Council to ensure compliance with the statutory impact assessments including equality, the Socio-economic Duty and Welsh language, as these assessments do not apply in England.

	Amendments were also made to encompass the recommendations from the two Audit Wales reports, which were published after discussions had started with the University about the potential use of this Tool within the Council.
1.11	As part of the evaluation of the Tool, the University of Manchester are interviewing users and decision makers during April and May 2024. The evaluation will look at not just the usability of the Tool but also how it helps inform decision making. The outcomes of the evaluation will be reported to Cabinet so that consideration can be given as to if the Council should adopt the Tool and approach for conducting impact assessments.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	Completing impact assessments effectively requires additional time from officers, which means there are resource implications for employees responsible for impact assessments. Further costs associated with implementing impact assessments will be identified in the evaluation report being completed by the University of Manchester.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	An Impact assessment is not required as this a report on an Audit Wales report and action being taken to implement recommendations.

Ways of Working	Impact
Long-term	Positive - creating long term change to ensure decisions made reduce inequalities.
Prevention	Positive - through reducing inequalities.
Integration	No change.
Collaboration	No change.
Involvement	No change.

Well-being Goals Impact

Well-being Goal	Impact
Prosperous Wales	No change.
Resilient Wales	No change.
Healthier Wales	No change.
More equal Wales	Positive – through reducing inequalities.
Cohesive Wales	Positive - through tackling hate crime and discrimination.
Vibrant Wales	No change.
Globally responsible Wales	No change.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	A small number of officers involved in writing impact assessments have been, and will continue to be, consulted on the revised approach to EIAs.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1: Recommendations and response to Audit Wales report "Equality Impact Assessments: more than a tick box exercise?"

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Equality Impact Assessments: More than a tick box exercise?. Audit Wales

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	**Contact Officer:** Fiona Mocko - Strategic Policy Advisor **Telephone:** **English:** 01352 702122 **Welsh:** 01267 224923 **E-mail:** fiona.mocko@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	**Equality Impact Assessment**: An equality impact assessment (EIA) is an evidence-based approach designed to help organisations ensure that their policies, practices, and decision-making processes are fair, promote equality and do not present barriers to participation or disadvantage people with protected characteristics. **Socio-economic Duty:** The socio-economic duty is part of the Equality Act 2010. It aims to reduce inequality for people who experience socio-economic disadvantage. Public bodies must pay due regard to the socio-economic duty when making strategic decisions.

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Appendix 1

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Audit Wales

Equality Impact Assessments: more than a tick box exercise?

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Recommendation 1 (Welsh Government)

Clarifying the scope of the duty to impact assess policies and practices.

There is scope for confusion about which type of policies and practices must be subject to an assessment for their impact on the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The Welsh Government should clarify its interpretation of the duty, including whether and how it expects public bodies to apply any test of proportionality and relevance.

Recommendation 2 (Welsh Government)

Building a picture of what good integrated impact assessment looks like.

Many public bodies carry out integrated impact assessments that include consideration of the PSED alongside other duties. However, practice is inconsistent and often involved collating multiple assessments in one place, rather than being truly integrated, to help maximise the intended benefits of integrated impact assessments. The Welsh Government should work with key stakeholders with an interest in the areas commonly covered by integrated impact assessments and those with lived experiences, to share learning and work towards a shared understanding of what good looks like for an integrated impact assessment.

Recommendation 3 (Welsh Government)

Applying the equality duties to collaborative public bodies and partnerships.

The public sector landscape has changed since the introduction of the PSED and the Welsh specific duties, with an increasing focus on collaborative planning and delivery. The Welsh Government should review whether it needs to update the Wales specific regulations to cover a wider range of collaborative and partnership arrangements. These include public services boards, regional partnership boards and other service specific partnerships.

Recommendation 4 (Public Bodies)

Reviewing public bodies' current approach for conducting EIAs.

While there are examples of good practice related to distinct stages of the EIA process, all public bodies have lessons to learn about their overall approach. Public bodies should review their overall approach to EIAs considering the findings of this report and the detailed guidance available from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and the Practice Hub. We recognise that developments in response to our other recommendations and the Welsh Government's review of the

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PSED Wales specific regulations may have implications for current guidance in due course.

Response: This recommendation has been considered and we agree to this. We are reviewing the approach to completing EIAs through a pilot project with Manchester University, which is due to be completed in 2024. The guidance from the EHRC and the Practice Hub is provided to our employees and available on the Infonet.

Key Improvement Areas

Area 1: Greater clarity over which type of policies and practices must be impact assessed.

Response: This has been considered and we agree with the recommendation. We would appreciate greater clarity from Welsh Government and will implement their guidance when available.

Area 2: Greater clarity about the arrangements for assessing the impact of collaborative policies and practices.

Response: This has been considered and we agree with the recommendations. There is currently no defined process for assessing the impact of collaborative policies and practices and guidance from Welsh Government is welcomed. Locally, in North Wales public bodies have worked together to produce a Tool to assess the impact of collaborative policies.

Area 3: Greater clarity about expectations to consider the Public Sector Equality Duty as part of an integrated impact assessment.

Response: This has been considered and we agree with the recommendation. We have already brought together the statutory impact assessments into one Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) tool. We would welcome further guidance from Welsh Government.

Area 4: Better and more timely identification of the practical impacts of decisions on people and how different protected characteristics intersect.

Response: We have considered this recommendation and agree with it. We have been piloting an IIA Tool with Manchester University. More training and support will be available for IIA authors, which should lead to more timely identification of impacts. There needs to be more guidance and support on how to deal with intersectionality from the Equality and Human Rights Commission and Welsh Government.

Area 5: More engagement and involvement of people with protected characteristics

Response: We have considered this recommendation and agree with it. We are currently working with the Regional Community Cohesion Team and with the North Wales Public Sector Equality Officer's Network to look at how we can improve engagement with people with protected characteristics.

Area 6: Better monitoring of the actual impacts of policies and practices on people.

Response: We have considered this recommendation and agree with it. As Audit Wales have identified very few organisations do this. Further guidance and support is needed from Welsh Government.

Area 7: A shift in the mindsets and cultures to move EIA away from being seen as an add-on 'tick box' exercise.

Response: This has been considered and we agree with the recommendation. The Tool used by the Council provides IIA authors the opportunity to record the data, research and consultation outcomes that will impact on equality and cohesion.

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CYNGOR
Sir y Fflint
Flintshire
COUNTY COUNCIL

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

Date of Meeting	Thursday, 13 June 2024
Report Subject	Employment and Workforce End of Year Update
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services
Report Author	Corporate Manager, People and Organisational Development
Type of Report	Operational.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To provide Members with a review of the organisational workforce data for 2023/24. This report provides details of the following:

- Headcount and Full Time Equivalent (FTE)
- Organisation Age Profile (Non –Schools and Schools)
- Employee Turnover and Stability (Including Redundancies and Early Retirements)
- Attendance
- Equality and Diversity
- Achievements made by Human Resources and Organisational Development within the period.

The report is intended to provide a focus on organisational performance and trends and provides a brief narrative on the overall performance against a number of indicators. A more detailed explanation is provided on an exceptional basis where performance is falling below organisational performance indicators or where there has been a significant movement, either upwards or downwards, in the reported trends. The narrative will include an explanation for the movement in trend and details of any proposed actions to improve or maintain performance.

The performance information is provided for the whole organisation but split to show Schools and Non-Schools data separately.

On a periodic basis, this report will highlight key achievements or projects undertaken in support of the People Strategy and/or Council Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS	
1	Members note and provide their comments on the year-end Workforce Information Report for 2023/24.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE WORKFORCE INFORMATION REPORT
1.01	**Headcount and Full Time Equivalent (FTE)** The headcount and FTE figures during at mid-year shows an overall decrease of 46 FTE across the Council when compared to last year. Non-schools show an increase of 34 FTE, Schools show a decrease of 80 FTE. The school year ending August 2023 and the present school year have required some schools to adjust staffing structures and levels. Aside from not filling vacancies, 39 school-based posts were made redundant in Flintshire schools during the period 1st April to 31st December 2023 and several fixed term contracts ceased as some (albeit long term) temporary funding streams ended.
1.02	**Age Profiling** Age profiling the organisation is an important part of understanding the age demographics of our workforce and where we may need to focus attention. Understanding our workforce profile, enables the Council to assess supply and potential problem areas within a given service/portfolio and aids succession planning by identifying any skill gaps that may arise. Without an analysis of age profile (and skills profile), no workable long-term planning can be made. As of 31 March 2024, most employees across Portfolios and Schools are within the age ranges of 35-44 (20.25%) followed by 25-34 (15.57%), 50-54 (15.54%) and 55–59 (15.27%).
1.03	**Employee Turnover and Stability (Including Redundancies and Early Retirements)** The year-end cumulative turnover percentage for 2023/24 is 13.36%. This shows an increase when compared to the previous year (11.46%) and the previous year (10.53% in 2021/22).

| | Of the 819 employees that have left during 2023/24, 51% have left voluntarily or moved onto alternative employment (420 employees).

106 (13.06%) left due to normal retirement and 122 (15%) left because of the end of a fixed term contract.

In addition to exit questionnaires and interviews, we have introduced an online leaver survey is sent by employment services to all leavers which employees are encouraged to complete. These can be completed anonymously. The additional information gained from the survey will enable HR and Portfolios to understand the reasons for and put measures in place to reduce the level of turnover. |
|---|---|
| 1.04 | **Attendance**

The year-end cumulative turnover percentage for 2023/24 is 10.99%. This shows an improvement when compared to the previous year (11.78%). Long term sickness (absence over four weeks) accounts for 6.56 days lost per FTE, with the remainder (4.43 days lost per FTE) attributed to short-term absence.

26% of all absences across the Council are related to mental health, 21% musculoskeletal, and 11% due to infections. This is consistent with national reports which identify Mental ill health and musculoskeletal as being two of the top causes of both short-term and long-term absence.

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) Health and Wellbeing at Work report in September 2023 reports that employee sickness absence is at the highest level they have reported for over a decade. It further reports that the average rate of employee absence (7.8 days per employee or 3.4% of working time lost, per year) has risen considerably since before the pandemic in Oct/Nov 2019 (5.8 days per employee) and identifies that average absence levels remain higher in the public sector (10.6 days per employee) than in other sectors, particularly private sector services (5.8 days), although the upsurge in average levels of absence is observed across all sectors.

Attendance continues to be managed closely, with Managers, Occupational Health (OH) and HR working together to provide additional support, including offering preventative training to help reduce absence, namely:

Title	No of Sessions	No of Delegates
Managing Stress at Work for employees	2	20
Mental Health First Aiders	3	25
Mental Health Champions	3	20
Introduction to Wellbeing/ Resilience and Mindfulness	2	12
Manual Handling	2	18
Vicarious Trauma	3	33
Menopause Awareness	3	29

During the year, we have also delivered 3 attendance management policy to practice workshops to 25 delegates. The workshops are designed to enable participants to apply Flintshire County Council's Attendance Management |

Policy effectively and consistently by confidently managing employee's absence.

Vivup our Employee Assistance (EAP) provider also remains available 24/7, 365 day a year.

Occupational Health colleagues have identified several factors which they consider are affecting attendance at work. These are:

Aging workforce

There is an increase in the number of employees referred to OH who have musculoskeletal concerns associated with aging.

Portfolios work with HR and OH colleagues to try and accommodate a range of short and long-term restrictions which are necessary to support the employees return to work, or to remain at work with restricted duties.

Occupational Health also provide physiotherapy. Often this is a preventative measure to provide support and reduce the likelihood of absence. In other cases, rapid access to physiotherapy reduces the duration of absence.

Changes to Cohort of service users in social care setting

Employees are reporting that in some settings, the cohort of service users have shown to have increased needs which are complex and often physically challenging, for example, an increase in moving and positioning which has potential to exacerbate musculoskeletal issues.

Delays in employees having appointments with consultants, investigations, scans, x rays etc.

We have a number of employees whose absence from work has and continues to be impacted due to waiting for diagnostics and initial assessment which impacts on the timescale for effective treatment to begin and results in employees remaining absent from work longer than anticipated.

Delays in receiving treatment.

As above, the delay in initial investigations have a knock-on effect in that treatment cannot start, and conditions worsen whilst waiting. This results in the employee remaining absent from work longer than the initial timeframes indicated in their treatment plan or remaining in work with restricted duties.

Delays obtaining reports form consultants and GPs in relation to Ill Health Retirement
There is an increase in the number of employees who are applying for ill health retirement. Historically, these requests have been straightforward to progress in that employees have had investigations and reports from consultants about the pathway or prognosis of their illness. In the absence of reports or medical evidence with which we can predict a return to work (or

	not), reaching the criteria for ill-health retirement is proving a challenge, is time-consuming and costly. Recruitment challenges The knock-on effect of vacant positions is having an impact on some parts of our workforce. Non-work factors, such as health issues and relationships/family, are also. common causes of stress-related absence. Flexible support and reasonable adjustments are put into place to help people experiencing challenges to manage personal issues as well as long-term health conditions with the demands of their role.
1.05	**Resource Management (Agency Workers)** As of 31 March 2024, there were 110 active agency placements on Matrix across all portfolios. At the time of running the report, 71 placements exceeded 12 weeks (37 Streetscene and Transportation, 18 Housing and Communities, 9 in Social Services, 3 in Chief Executives, 2 in Governance and 1 each in Education and Youth, and Planning, Environment and Economy). The number of active placements is a snapshot at a point in time and refers to open placements, it does not mean they are all engaged and working. The cumulative agency expenditure (via Matrix and 'Off Contract') for 2023/24 is £5.30m. The largest agency spend is within Social Services at £3.07m. The second largest spend is within Steetscene and Transportation at £1.37m. The 'Off-contract' spend for 2023/24 is £2.96m, which equates to 56% of the overall agency spend. The main reasons for 'off-contract' spend is where there is a need to fill specialist, hard to fill roles such as Social Workers. Between them Social Services and Streetscene and Transportation have had a considerable number of posts vacant sometime during the year which results in an underspend of salary, the majority of which is used to fund agency spend. Agency use is a legitimate recruitment pipeline for several of our services. It enables prospective employees to determine if the role available is right for them and us to determine if those workers are suitable. Managed well this is less risk for the workers and for us. Other than in exceptional cases, where there is a compelling business need, agency workers are engaged on the same evaluated rate of pay as if they were engaged directly. This is a day one right we provide which is over and above our obligations under the Agency Worker Regulations and ensures a level playing field.

1.06	**Equality and Diversity Workforce Monitoring** It is important to us that we recruit and retain the best workforce that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve. We monitor our workforce to find out whether it broadly reflects our local communities and to ensure our practices are free from discrimination, helping us to deliver appropriate and accessible services to all our communities. The Council collects diversity information on recruitment and the make-up of our workforce to help us meet our obligations under the Single Equality Act 2010, and the Public Sector Equality Duty. Information gathered can, if analysed regularly, help us to identify barriers that prevent access to employment and career development for certain groups of people, and to develop solutions, such as positive action plans or alternative policies and practices.
1.07	**Specific achievements / initiatives during the reporting period** **Vivup EAP** In October 2023, our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) provider CareFirst was replaced by Vivup. Vivup is an exciting modern user-friendly service which offers confidential support when our employees need it most including but not limited to the following: • 24/7 365 days a year telephone help and support with personal or work-related problems • Face to face and virtual counselling • Downloadable self-help workbooks • Debt and financial advice • Podcasts, blogs • Health and lifestyle support and so much more The EAP is designed to complement not replace our Occupational Health offer. Whilst the initial uptake and feedback to date has been positive. Occupational Health colleagues will continue to seek feedback and meet regularly with the provider to ensure we get the best possible service. **Learning@Wales** In March 2024 Flintshire Academi transferred to Learning@Wales eLearning platform. This replaced the previous platform – Learning Pool. The project began in November 2023, following previous testing. During the project, the Flintshire pages were designed, and 10 course categories added. The mandatory eLearning modules were prioritised, along with a certification page to enable users to check course completion. In total 46 courses were made available for the launch and over 6100 users were uploaded. Over 28,000 historical mandatory course completion records were also uploaded to enable users to retain previous completion data. A reporting function was added and evaluated to ensure accuracy.

OPAS-G2

Flintshire County Council's Occupational Health Department manage employee clinical data in compliance with both the Data Protection Act 2018 and GMC guidelines. The OH Department's existing 'OPAS Express' software which was hosted by the Flintshire's IT department had been in place since 2012 and was being withdrawn by the supplier having been deemed obsolete with no support.

The ideal solution to the problem was with OPAS-G2, a new intuitive web-based portal which provides the facility for managers to access and electronically submit referrals directly to the OH. Employees are now able to view the content of their referrals and reports on their own devices. Appointment reminders are sent automatically from the system via text or email.

In addition, Employment Services have a facility to submit e-forms to new recruits from OPAS-G2 to ensure all appropriate questionnaires are submitted and that all relevant pre-employment medicals are undertaken by Occupational Health in a timely manner.

After 9 months of bespoke configuring, programming, and testing, the new OPAS-G2 system went live on the 7th of February 2024 which brought across 14,800 employee records for current employee and former retained records across five business units.

Flintshire's ageing IT server which supported the old system for years was finally decommissioned a week later.

The journey has been a long one, yet Occupational Health have strived to provide an intuitive and seamless transition for all managers, HR users and employees.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	None arising directly from this report.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	None arising directly from this report.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	None arising directly from this report.

5.00	**APPENDICES**
5.01	Appendix 1 – Employment Workforce Report Dashboard

6.00	**LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**
6.01	None.

7.00	**CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS**
7.01	**Contact Officer:** Sharon Carney, Corporate Manager, People and Organisational Development. **Telephone:** 01352 702139 **E-mail:** sharon_carney@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	**GLOSSARY OF TERMS**
	None.

CORPORATE DASHBOARD REPORTS

(FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL)

YEAR END 2023/24

CYNGOR
Sir y Fflint
Flintshire
COUNTY COUNCIL

Table of Contents

CYNGOR
Sir y Fflint
Flintshire
COUNTY COUNCIL

2023/24 DASHBOARD
FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL CUMULATIVE TOTALS

TOTAL HEADCOUNT

6,126

TOTAL FTE

4,955

LEAVERS / TURNOVER

819/13.36%

AGENCY SPEND 2023/24

£5.30m

TARGET 2023/24

£1.70m

DAYS LOST PER FTE 2023/24

10.99

TARGET 2023/24

8.00

Tudalen 77

CYNGOR
Sir y Fflint
Flintshire
COUNTY COUNCIL

YEAR END 2023/24 DASHBOARD
HEADCOUNT AND FULL TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE) - NON SCHOOLS

TOTAL HEADCOUNT

2,973

31/03/2023	Decrease of 11 people (-0.37%)	31/03/2024
2,984		2,973

TOTAL FULL TIME EQUIVALENT

2,666

31/03/2023	Increase of 34 FTE (+1.29%)	31/03/2024
2,632		2,666

HEADCOUNT AND FTE - 12 MONTH TREND

Tudalen 78

Headcount: Apr-23: 2938, May-23: 2930, Jun-23: 2906, Jul-23: 2893, Aug-23: 2889, Sep-23: 2973, Oct-23: 2952, Nov-23: 2958, Dec-23: 2971, Jan-24: 2969, Feb-24: 2975, Mar-24: 2973

FTE: Apr-23: 2638, May-23: 2631, Jun-23: 2615, Jul-23: 2600, Aug-23: 2604, Sep-23: 2630, Oct-23: 2639, Nov-23: 2648, Dec-23: 2650, Jan-24: 2659, Feb-24: 2664, Mar-24: 2666

CYNGOR
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Flintshire
COUNTY COUNCIL

YEAR END 2023/24 DASHBOARD
AGE PROFILE - NON-SCHOOLS

Tudalen 79

Age Group	Count
16 - 24	149
25 - 34	463
35 - 44	602
45 - 49	334
50 - 54	462
55 - 59	454
60 - 64	360
65 - 69	113
70 - 75	27
75 and over	9

CYNGOR
Sir y Fflint
Flintshire
COUNTY COUNCIL

YEAR END 2023/24 DASHBOARD
ATTENDANCE - NON-SCHOOLS

DAYS LOST PER FTE 2023/24
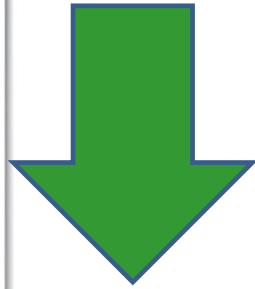
31/03/2023
13.40

12.50

31/03/2024
12.50

Improvment of 0.90

TOP 4 REASONS

1. STRESS, DEPRESSION, ANXIETY
2. MUSCULOSKELETAL
3. INFECTIONS
4. STOMACH, LIVER, VOMITING

Tudalen 80

CYNGOR
Sir y Fflint
Flintshire
COUNTY COUNCIL

YEAR END 2023/24 DASHBOARD
TURNOVER AND STABILITY - NON SCHOOLS

LEAVERS - 2023/24

343

LEAVER REASON - 2023/24

Tudalen 81
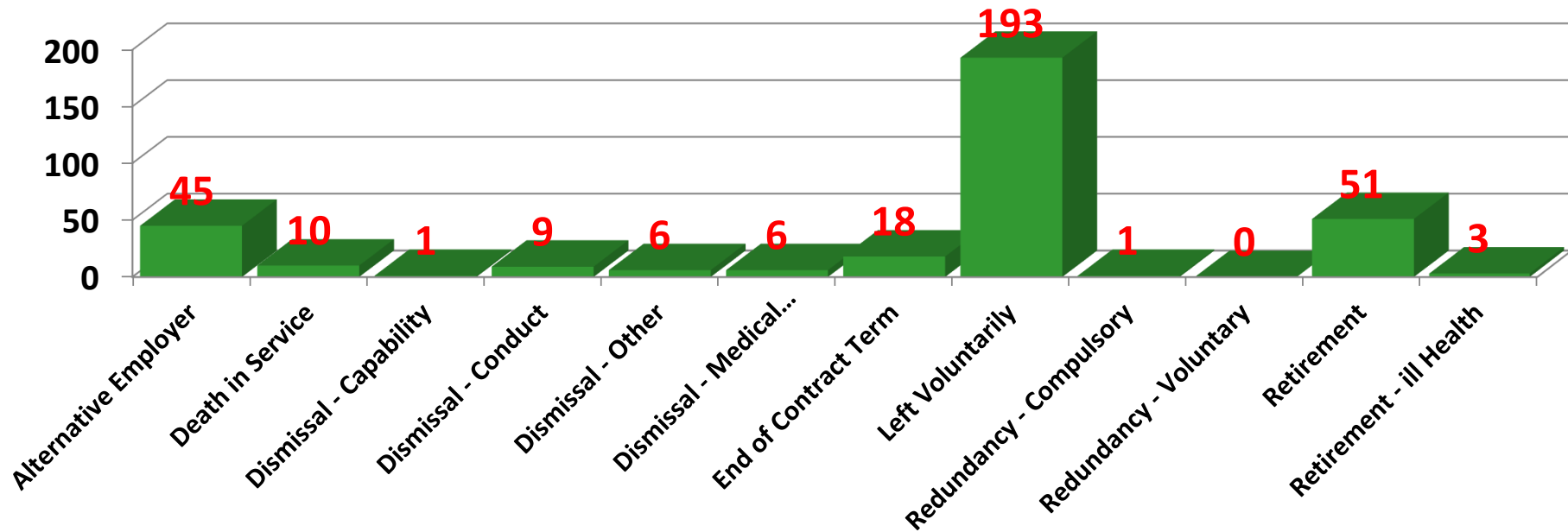
Category	Value
Alternative Employer	45
Death in Service	10
Dismissal - Capability	1
Dismissal - Conduct	9
Dismissal - Other	6
Dismissal - Medical...	6
End of Contract Term	18
Left Voluntarily	193
Redundancy - Compulsory	1
Redundancy - Voluntary	0
Retirement	51
Retirement - ill Health	3

Tudalen 83
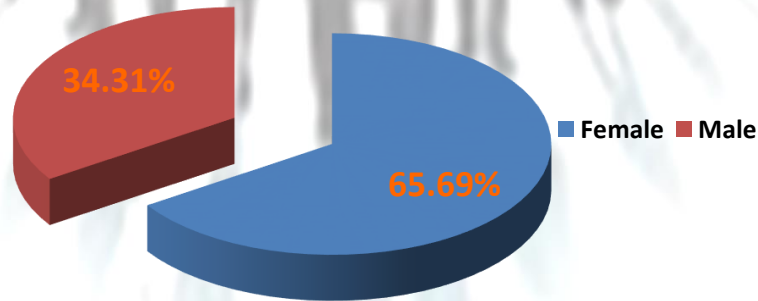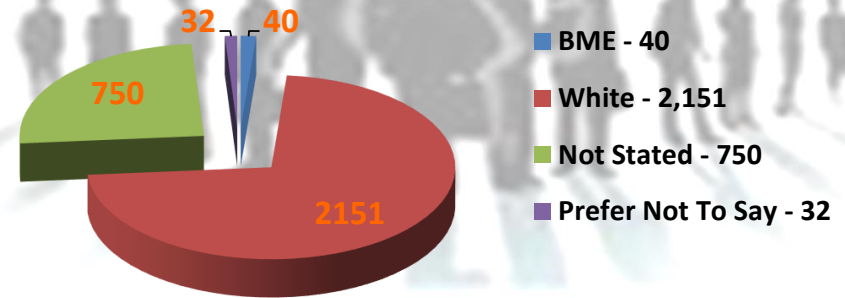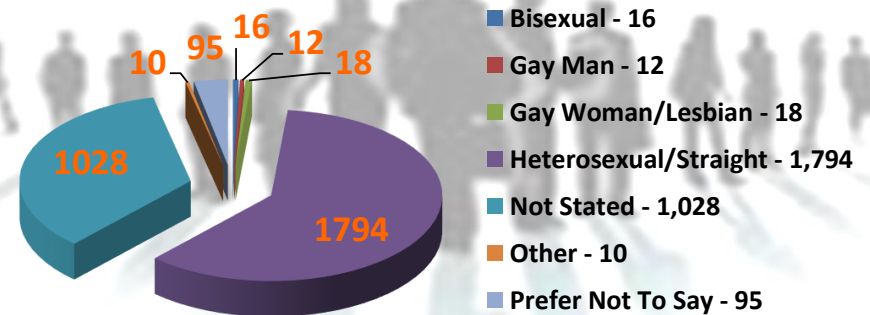
MARITAL STATUS
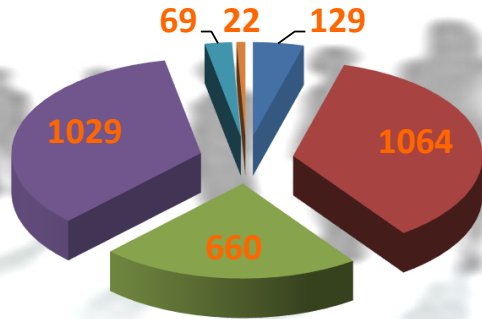
- Divorced / Dissolved Civil Partnership - 129
- Married / Civil Partnership - 1,064
- Not Married or in Civil Partnership - 660
- Not Stated - 1029
- Prefer Not To Say - 69
- Widowed / Surviving Civil Partner - 22

Pie chart values: 69, 22, 129, 1029, 1064, 660

DISABILITY
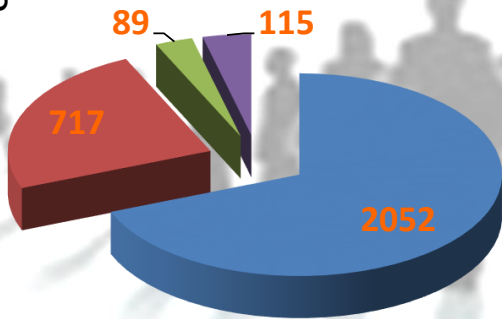
- No - 2,052
- Not Stated - 717
- Prefer Not To Say - 89
- Yes - 115

Pie chart values: 89, 115, 717, 2052

RELIGION OR BELIEF
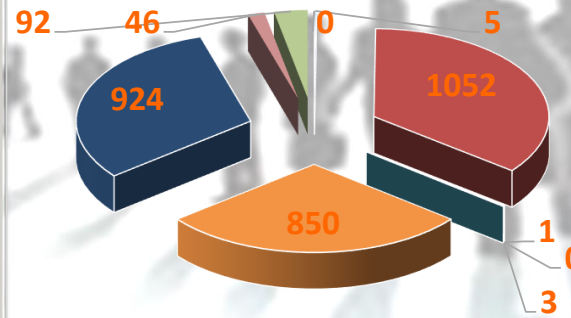
- Buddhist - 5
- Christian - 1,052
- Hindu - 1
- Jewish - 0
- Muslim - 3
- None - 850
- Not Stated - 924
- Other - 46
- Prefer Not To Say - 92
- Sikh - 0

Pie chart values: 92, 46, 0, 5, 924, 1052, 850, 1, 0, 3

CYNGOR
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Agency Tenure Management

Tudalen 84

Placements as at 31/03/2024 (Matrix)

Category	Value
0-12 weeks	39
13-26 weeks	24
27-52 weeks	27
1 - 2 years	15
2 - 3 years	5
3 - 4 years	0
4 - 5 years	0
5+ years	0
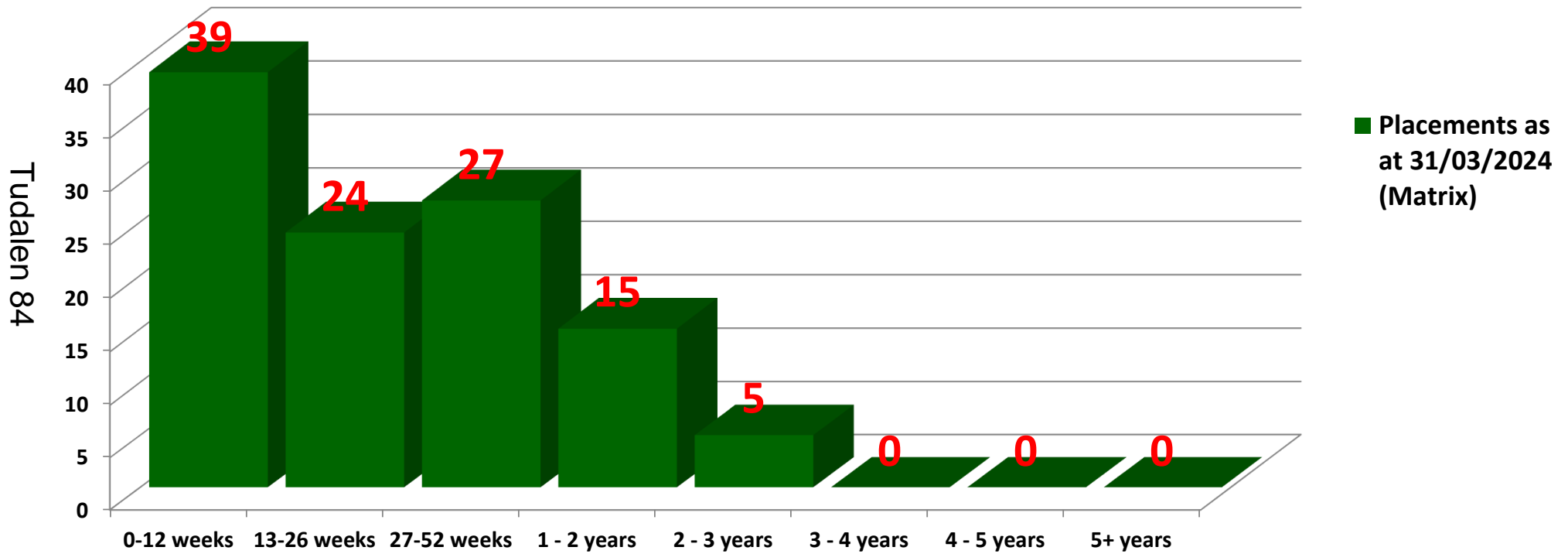
YEAR END 2023/24 DASHBOARD
HEADCOUNT AND FULL TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE) - SCHOOLS

TOTAL HEADCOUNT

3,153

31/03/2023 3,254	Decrease of 101 people (-3.10%)	31/03/2024 3,153

TOTAL FULL TIME EQUIVALENT

2,289

31/03/2023 2,369	Decrease of 80 FTE (-3.38%)	31/03/2024 2,289

HEADCOUNT AND FTE - 12 MONTH TREND

Headcount: Apr-23 3241, May-23 3235, Jun-23 3228, Jul-23 3209, Aug-23 3198, Sep-23 3135, Oct-23 3150, Nov-23 3163, Dec-23 3156, Jan-24 3165, Feb-24 3166, Mar-24 3153

FTE: Apr-23 2369, May-23 2365, Jun-23 2357, Jul-23 2343, Aug-23 2337, Sep-23 2302, Oct-23 2300, Nov-23 2301, Dec-23 2303, Jan-24 2299, Feb-24 2297, Mar-24 2289

Tudalen 85

CYNGOR Sir y Fflint Flintshire COUNTY COUNCIL
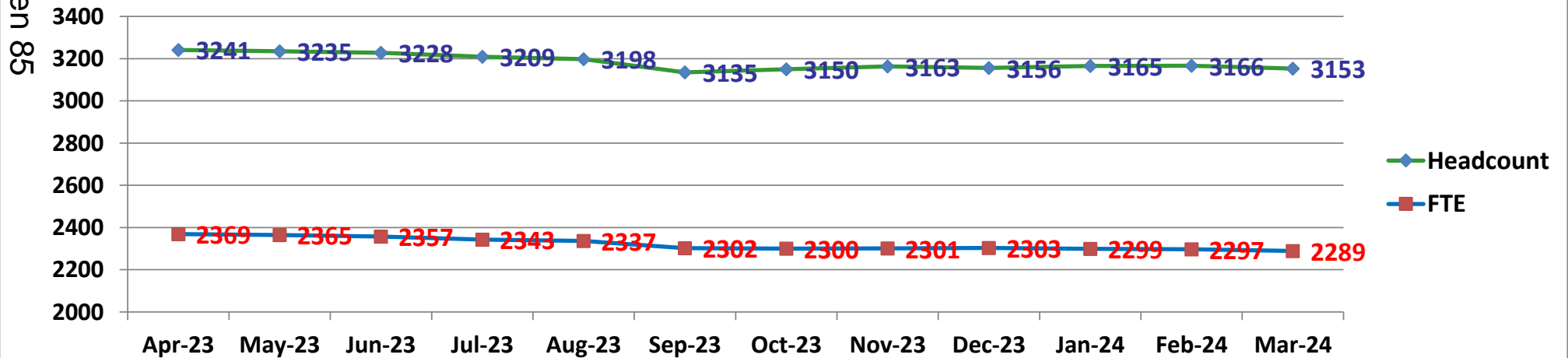
YEAR END 2023/24 DASHBOARD
AGE PROFILE - SCHOOLS

Tudalen 86

Age	Value
16 - 24	85
25 - 34	580
35 - 44	818
45 - 49	430
50 - 54	465
55 - 59	404
60 - 64	232
65 - 69	105
70 - 74	24
75 and Over	10

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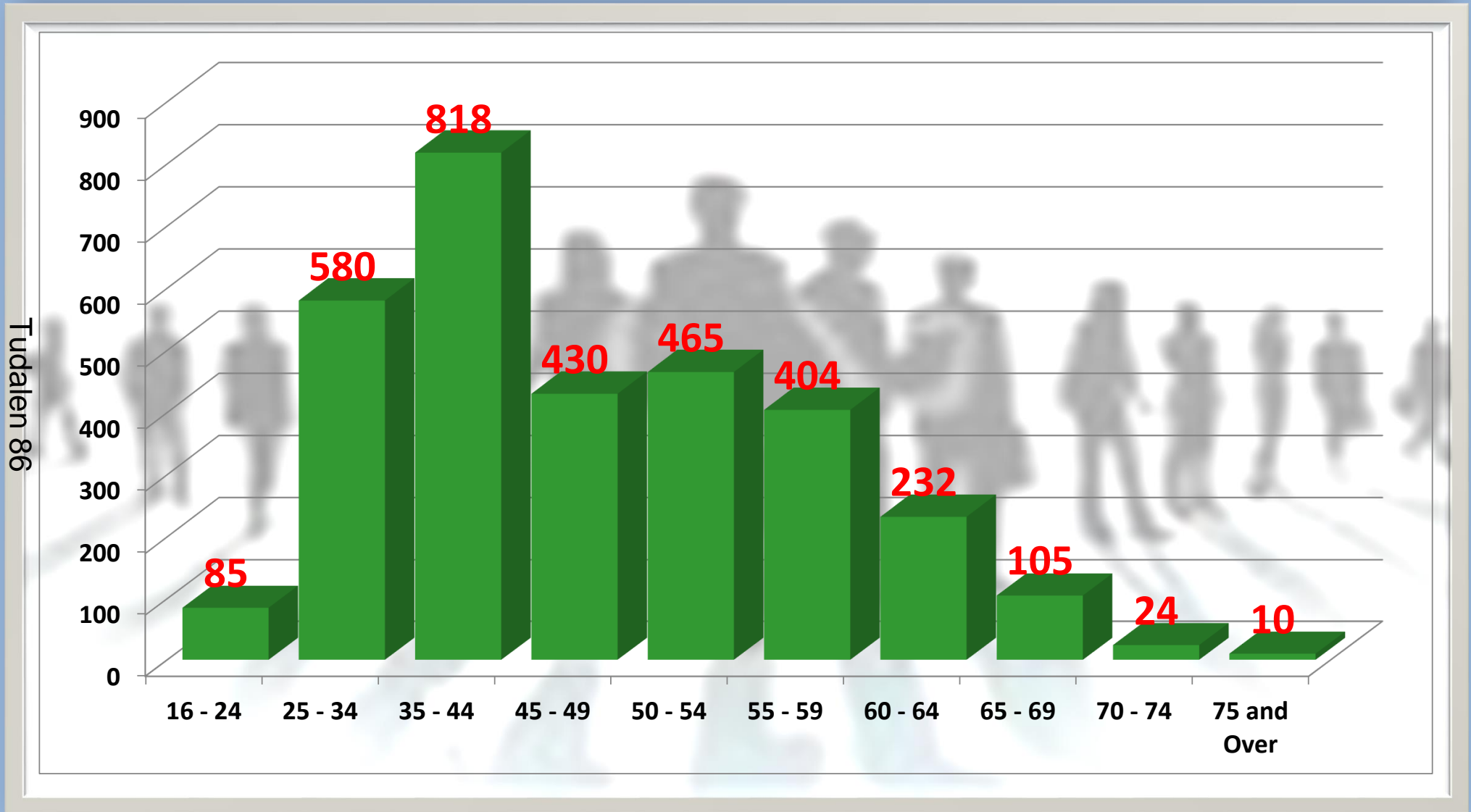
DAYS LOST PER FTE 2023/24

31/03/2023
10.06

9.08

31/03/2024
9.08

Improvement of 0.98

Tudalen 87

TOP 4 REASONS

1. STRESS, DEPRESSION, ANXIETY
2. INFECTIONS
3. MUSCULOSKELETAL
4. STOMACH, LIVER, VOMITING

CYNGOR
Sir y Fflint
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YEAR END 2023/24 DASHBOARD
TURNOVER AND STABILITY - SCHOOLS

LEAVERS - 2023/24

476

LEAVER REASON - 2023/24

Tudalen 88

Leaver Reason	Count
Alternative Employer	79
Death in Service	3
Dismissal - Conduct	3
Dismissal - Other	3
Dismissal - Medical...	9
End of Contract Term	124
Left Voluntarily	168
Redundancy - Compulsory	23
Redundancy - Voluntary	11
Retirement	51
Retirement - ill Health	2

CYNGOR
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Flintshire
COUNTY COUNCIL

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY - SCHOOLS

GENDER BREAKDOWN

MALE
477
(15.13%)

FEMALE
2,676
(84.87%)

GENDER BREAKDOWN (%)

15.13%

84.87%

- Female
- Male

ETHNICITY

38 14

1240

1861

- BME - 14
- White - 1,861
- Not Stated - 1,240
- Prefer Not To Say - 38

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

16
52   7 8
5

1264

1801

- Bisexual - 16
- Gay Man - 7
- Gay Woman/Lesbian - 8
- Heterosexual/Straight - 1,264
- Not Stated - 1.801
- Other - 5
- Prefer Not To Say - 52

Tudalen 89

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COUNTY COUNCIL
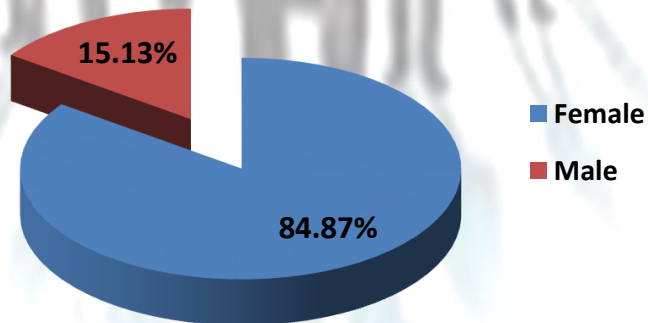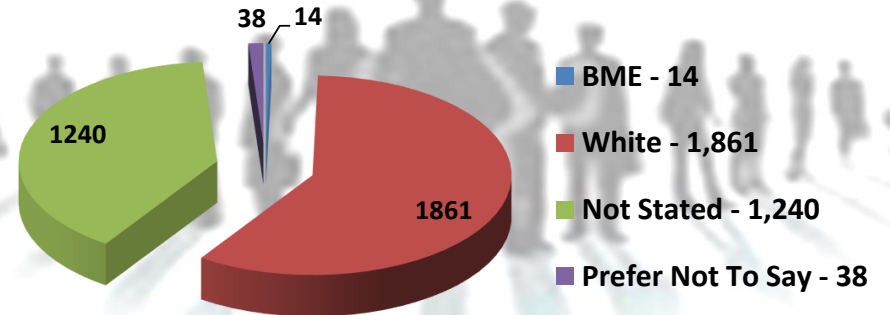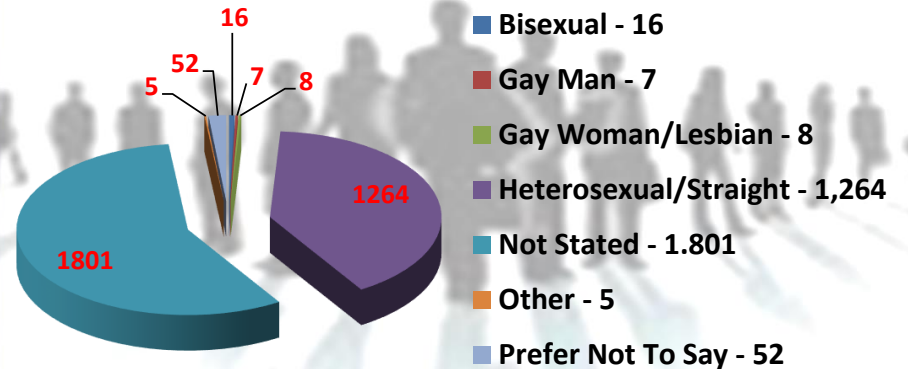
YEAR END 2023/24 DASHBOARD
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY - SCHOOLS

MARITAL STATUS
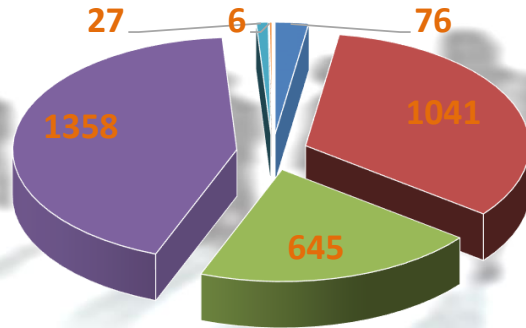
- Divorced / Dissolved Civil Partnership - 76
- Married / Civil Partnership - 1,041
- Not Married or in Civil Partnership - 645
- Not Stated - 1,358
- Prefer Not To Say - 27
- Widowed / Surviving Civil Partner - 6

DISABILITY
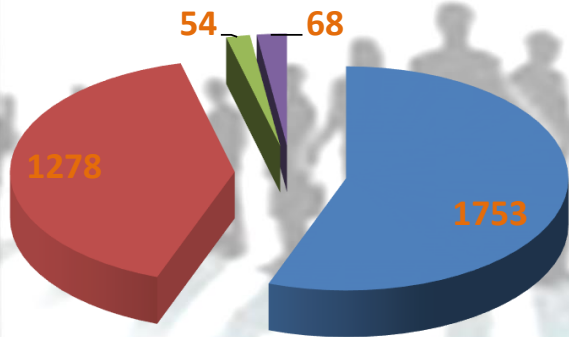
- No - 1,703
- Not Stated - 1,440
- Prefer Not To Say - 58
- Yes - 58

RELIGION OR BELIEF
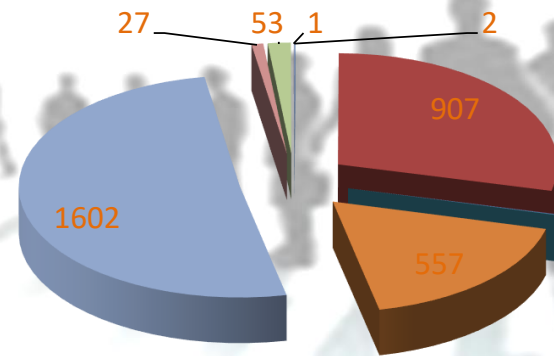
- Buddhist - 2
- Christian - 907
- Hindu - 0
- Jewish - 2
- Muslim - 2
- None - 557
- Not Stated - 1,602
- Other - 27
- Prefer Not To Say - 53

CYNGOR
Sir y Fflint
Flintshire
COUNTY COUNCIL

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday, 13 June 2024
Report Subject	Use of Performance Information: Service User Perspective and Outcomes
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services
Report Author	Strategic Performance Advisor
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Use of Performance Information: Service User Perspective and Outcomes audit was undertaken to help fulfil the Auditor General's duties under Section 17 of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 (the 2004 Act) and Section 15 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. This was a national study and Audit Wales undertook this work at Flintshire County Council during July and September 2023 and report was issued in December 2023.

The audit sought to:
- Gain assurance that the performance information the Council provides to senior officers and elected members enables them to understand the service user perspective and the outcome of its activities;
- Gain assurance that this information forms part of the Council's arrangements to secure value for money in the use of its resources and its application of the sustainable development principle; and
- Identify opportunities for the Council to strengthen its arrangements.

No formal recommendations were identified and three recommendations for improvement have arisen from this audit, with the Council providing a planned action in response to the recommendations for improvement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	To endorse the Council's planned action in response to the recommendations for improvement.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	**EXPLAINING THE USE OF PERFORMANCE INFORMATION: SERVICE USER PERSPECTIVE AND OUTCOMES REPORT**
1.01	The scope of the audit focused on the performance information provided to senior officers and senior members (senior leaders) about service user perspective and outcomes, and how this information is used. Audit Wales did not undertake a full review of the Council's performance management arrangements or an in-depth review of the quality of the data that the Council collects. Neither did the review focus on engagement with service users on specific service changes or the development of policies and strategies.
1.02	The scope of the audit was to answer the question 'Does the Council's performance data enable senior leaders to understand the service user perspective and the outcomes of its activities to effectively manage its performance?' This was done by exploring the following questions: • Does the performance information provided to senior leaders include appropriate information on the perspective of service users? • Does the performance information provided to senior leaders include appropriate information on the outcomes of the Council's activities? • Does the Council have robust arrangements to ensure that the data provided is accurate? • Does the Council use the information to help it achieve its outcomes? • Does the Council review the effectiveness of its arrangements?
1.03	Audit Wales focused on the Council's key performance reporting mechanisms: The Council's Cabinet, Chief Officer Team and Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive six monthly performance reports that include details of service performance, progress towards wellbeing objectives and financial monitoring information. These forums also receive various annual performance reports. These include the Council's Annual Self-assessment, complaints report and the Director of Social Services' report.
1.04	Audit Wales found that limited performance information is provided to senior leaders to enable them to understand the service user perspective and the outcomes of the Council's activities. This audit confirms what the Council are already aware of and these are highlighted within the Corporate Self-assessment findings (questions within Theme G – Customer and Community Engagement), and actions were already in development to address these findings.
1.05	The three recommendations for the Council following the audit: • Recommendation One: Information on the perspective of the service user The Council should strengthen the information it provides to its senior leaders to enable them to understand how well services and policies are meeting the needs of service users. • Recommendation Two: Outcomes information The Council should strengthen the information provided to senior leaders to help them

evaluate whether the Council is delivering its objectives and the intended outcomes.
- Recommendation Three: Arrangements to check the quality and accuracy of data The Council needs to assure itself that it has robust arrangements to check the quality and accuracy of the data it provides to senior leaders relating to service user perspective and outcomes.

The Council's response and action plan to the Audit Wales report and the three recommendations is attached at Appendix C (Organisational Response Form). These actions were already under development in relation to the Corporate Self-Assessment findings (as mentioned above).

Additionally, Flintshire County Council also asked Audit Wales if they could identify another Council to liaise with for best practice or provide examples of what this looked like and Audit Wales are currently reaching out to England for this.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	There are no specific resource implications to Recommendations One and Two, however, it has been identified that for Recommendation Three, arrangements to check the quality and accuracy of data beyond existing arrangements would require additional capacity and resources that the present financial environment would not allow.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	An Impact Assessment is not required as this report is summarising the work already completed by Audit Wales when undertaken their audit. Findings from the Audit have been risk managed and considered when providing a response to the three recommendations and will be monitored ongoing.

It has been identified for Recommendation Three, that it is the responsibility of service area to review the accuracy of their data and the information it provides to senior leaders. Arrangements to check the quality and accuracy of data beyond existing arrangements would require additional capacity that the present financial environment would not allow.

All audits, regulatory and inspection work carried out by Audit Wales, including this report considers the:

- Sustainable Development Principle and the Well-being Goals as part of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact

Long-term	The development of a Consultation and Engagement Strategy will further enhance that services are inclusive for all. Strengthening and evaluating the Council is

	delivering its objective and the intended outcomes will deliver, short, medium and long-term benefit to our citizens and communities.
Prevention	The development of a Consultation and Engagement Strategy will further enhance the opportunities for the Council to consider the needs of the citizens of Flintshire and undertake preventative measures.
Integration	Consultation and Engagement Strategy, and as part of the development of this strategy a key focus will be to consider the needs of citizens of Flintshire and how we gather and use this information and the Council's intended outcomes.
Collaboration	Portfolios already use the opportunity to work collaboratively (also share data and information), where possible. However, an opportunity to further improve collaboration will be through the development of a Consultation and Engagement Strategy.
Involvement	The development of a Consultation and Engagement Strategy will further enhance that services are involving the relevant persons, are inclusive for all and will help to shape services.

Well-being Goals Impact

Prosperous Wales	To use current resources efficiently and proportionately.
Resilient Wales	Creating services that are prevention focused and support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change, using perspective of service users / citizens of Flintshire to inform decision making and supporting change.
Healthier Wales	Consultation and Engagement Strategy will further enhance that the Council considers and enables the citizens / service user of Flintshire to benefit future health.
More equal Wales	Services are delivered in a way that are inclusive for all. Consideration given to local and regional gaps in provision.
Cohesive Wales	Developing a Consultation and Engagement Strategy and using data to identify gaps for service improvement to ensure communities are well-connected.

Vibrant Wales	Developing a Consultation and Engagement Strategy and using data to identify gaps for service improvement to enhance a vibrant Wales.
Globally responsible Wales	Actions proposed to the recommendations of the audit will support with future improvements to the well-being of the citizens of Flintshire.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	Audit Wales engaged with Cabinet Members, Senior Leaders and Officers as part of their audit. Governance and Audit Committee, Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet will receive this report. In response to the Recommendation One, a key focus will be to develop a Consultation and Engagement Strategy to strengthen how we consult and use this information.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix A: Use of Performance Information: Service User Perspective and Outcomes (Welsh) Appendix B: Use of Performance Information: Service User Perspective and Outcomes (English) Appendix C: Organisational Response Form

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	A number of accessible background documents and information is available on Audit Wales' website.

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	**Contact Officer:** Emma Heath (Strategic Performance Advisor) **Telephone:** 01352 702 744 **E-mail:** emma.heath@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
	Audit Wales: Work to support the Auditor General as the public sector watchdog for Wales. They aim to ensure that the people of Wales know whether public money is being managed wisely and that public bodies in Wales understand how to improve outcomes.

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn bwrpasol

Defnyddio gwybodaeth am berfformiad: persbectif defnyddwyr gwasanaeth a chanlyniadau– Cyngor Sir y Fflint

Cynnwys

Crynodeb o'r adroddiad

1 Gwnaethom ystyried persbectif defnyddwyr y gwasanaeth a'r wybodaeth am ganlyniadau a ddarparwyd i uwch swyddogion ac uwch aelodau (uwch arweinwyr), a sut y defnyddir y wybodaeth hon.

2 Yn gyffredinol, canfuom fod gwybodaeth perfformiad gyfyngedig yn cael ei darparu i uwch arweinwyr yng Nghyngor Sir y Fflint (y Cyngor) i'w galluogi i ddeall safbwynt defnyddwyr gwasanaeth a chanlyniadau ei weithgareddau.

3 Rydym wedi gwneud tri argymhelliad i gryfhau'r wybodaeth a roddir i uwch arweinwyr.

Yr hyn yr edrychom arno – cwmpas yr archwiliad hwn

4 Gwnaethom ganolbwyntio ar y wybodaeth perfformiad a ddarparwyd i uwch swyddogion ac uwch aelodau (uwch arweinwyr) ynghylch persbectif a chanlyniadau defnyddwyr gwasanaeth, a sut y defnyddir y wybodaeth hon. Ni wnaethom gynnal adolygiad llawn o drefniadau rheoli perfformiad y Cyngor nac adolygiad manwl o ansawdd y data y mae'r Cyngor yn ei gasglu. Ni chanolbwyntiodd yr adolygiad ychwaith ar ymgysylltu â defnyddwyr gwasanaeth ar newidiadau gwasanaeth penodol na datblygu polisïau a strategaethau.

5 Rydym wedi nodi ein cwestiynau archwilio a'n meini prawf archwilio yn **Atodiad 1**. Mae'r meini prawf archwilio yn y bôn yn nodi sut beth yw da a sut y byddem yn disgwyl dod o hyd iddo.

6 At ei gilydd, roeddem yn chwilio am rannu gwybodaeth perfformiad gydag uwch arweinwyr i'w helpu i ddeall pa mor dda y mae gwasanaethau a pholisïau yn diwallu anghenion defnyddwyr gwasanaeth a pha mor dda y maent yn helpu'r Cyngor i gyflawni'r canlyniadau y mae'n gweithio tuag atynt. Roeddem hefyd yn edrych i weld bod uwch arweinwyr yn defnyddio'r wybodaeth hon i fonitro cynnydd a gweithredu lle bo angen i wella canlyniadau.

7 Mae hyn yn rhan bwysig o drefniadau i sicrhau bod cynghorau'n sicrhau gwerth am arian wrth ddefnyddio eu hadnoddau. Mae hefyd yn ffordd bwysig y gall y Cyngor sicrhau ei hun ei fod yn gweithredu yn unol â'r ffordd 'ymgysylltiad' o weithio wrth gymryd camau i gyflawni ei amcanion llesiant. Heb y wybodaeth hon, mae'n anodd gweld sut y gall uwch arweinwyr ddeall a yw eu polisïau a'u gweithredoedd yn cael yr effaith a fwriedir a gwneud newidiadau lle nad ydynt.

8 Mae ein canfyddiadau'n seiliedig ar adolygiadau o ddogfennau a chyfweliadau gydag Aelod y Cabinet ac uwch swyddogion sy'n gyfrifol am drefniadau rheoli perfformiad y Cyngor. Mae'r dystiolaeth a ddefnyddiwyd gennym i lywio ein canfyddiadau wedi'i chyfyngu i'r ffynonellau hyn. Gwnaethom y gwaith hwn yn ystod mis Gorffennaf a mis Medi 2023.

9 Aethom ati i ateb y cwestiwn: '**A yw data perfformiad y Cyngor yn galluogi uwch arweinwyr i ddeall safbwynt defnyddwyr y gwasanaeth a chanlyniadau ei weithgareddau i reoli ei berfformiad yn effeithiol?** Rydym wedi gwneud hyn drwy archwilio'r cwestiynau canlynol:

- A yw'r wybodaeth perfformiad a ddarperir i uwch arweinwyr yn cynnwys gwybodaeth briodol am safbwynt defnyddwyr gwasanaeth?

- A yw'r wybodaeth perfformiad a ddarperir i uwch arweinwyr yn cynnwys gwybodaeth briodol am ganlyniadau gweithgareddau'r Cyngor?

- A oes gan y Cyngor drefniadau cadarn i sicrhau bod y data a ddarperir yn gywir?
- A yw'r Cyngor yn defnyddio'r wybodaeth i'w helpu i gyflawni ei ganlyniadau?
- A yw'r Cyngor yn adolygu effeithiolrwydd ei drefniadau?

Pam yr ymgymerwyd â'r archwiliad hwn

10 Cynhaliwyd yr archwiliad hwn i helpu i gyflawni dyletswyddau'r Archwilydd Cyffredinol o dan adran 17 o Ddeddf Archwilio Cyhoeddus (Cymru) 2004 (Deddf 2004) ac adran 15 o Ddeddf Llesiant Cenedlaethau'r Dyfodol (Cymru) 2015.

11 Rydym yn ceisio:
- cael sicrwydd bod y wybodaeth perfformiad y mae'r Cyngor yn ei darparu i uwch swyddogion ac aelodau etholedig yn eu galluogi i ddeall safbwynt defnyddwyr gwasanaeth a chanlyniad ei weithgareddau;
- cael sicrwydd bod y wybodaeth hon yn ffurfio rhan o drefniadau'r Cyngor i sicrhau gwerth am arian wrth ddefnyddio ei adnoddau a'i gymhwyso'r egwyddor datblygu cynaliadwy; a
- nodi cyfleoedd i'r Cyngor gryfhau ei drefniadau.

Trefniadau adrodd perfformiad y Cyngor

12 Mae Cabinet, Tîm Prif Swyddogion y Cyngor a'r Pwyllgor Trosolwg a Chraffu yn derbyn adroddiadau perfformiad chwe mis sy'n cynnwys manylion perfformiad gwasanaethau, cynnydd tuag at amcanion llesiant a gwybodaeth fonitro ariannol. Mae'r fforymau hyn hefyd yn derbyn adroddiadau perfformiad blynyddol amrywiol. Mae'r rhain yn cynnwys Hunanasesiad Blynyddol y Cyngor, adroddiad cwynion ac adroddiad y Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol.

13 Canolbwyntiodd ein hadolygiad ar y mecanweithiau adrodd perfformiad allweddol hyn.

Yr hyn a ganfuom

Darperir gwybodaeth perfformiad gyfyngedig i uwch arweinwyr i'w galluogi i ddeall safbwynt defnyddwyr gwasanaeth a chanlyniadau gweithgareddau'r Cyngor

Darperir gwybodaeth perfformiad gyfyngedig i uwch arweinwyr i'w helpu i ddeall safbwynt defnyddwyr gwasanaeth

14 Nid yw'r Cyngor yn cynnwys gwybodaeth am safbwynt defnyddwyr gwasanaeth o fewn y wybodaeth perfformiad a gyflwynir i uwch arweinwyr fel mater o drefn. Gwelsom rai enghreifftiau cyfyngedig lle mae uwch arweinwyr y Cyngor yn cael gwybodaeth sy'n rhoi cipolwg ar safbwynt defnyddwyr gwasanaeth. Roedd y rhain yn cynnwys yr arolwg o denantiaid tai a'r arolwg cyfiawnder ieuenctid. Mae tystiolaeth bod y Cyngor yn dadansoddi'r adborth y mae'n ei dderbyn ar y gwasanaethau hyn yn ôl grwpiau sy'n rhannu nodweddion gwarchodedig.

15   Mae gan dempledi adroddiad Cabinet a Chraffu y Cyngor adran o'r enw 'ymgynghori gofynnol / a gynhaliwyd', ond ar wahân i un achos, defnyddir hyn i nodi y bu ymgynghoriad yn unig, yn hytrach na darparu gwybodaeth i helpu uwch arweinwyr i ddeall yr hyn y mae hyn yn ei ddweud wrthynt am safbwynt defnyddwyr gwasanaeth.

16   Mae'r Cyngor wedi drafftio dogfen 'Sut y bydd Cyflawniadau'n cael eu Mesur' i gyd-fynd â'i Gynllun Cyngor 2023-28. Fodd bynnag, dim ond un o'r 154 mesur yn y ddogfen hon sy'n ymwneud â safbwynt defnyddwyr gwasanaeth. Mae hyn yn dangos y gallai'r mewnwelediad cyfyngedig barhau yn rhan o'r trefniadau adrodd newydd ar gyfer amcanion llesiant diweddaraf y Cyngor.

17   At ei gilydd, mae'r wybodaeth y mae'r Cyngor yn ei darparu i uwch arweinwyr ynghylch safbwynt defnyddwyr y gwasanaeth yn gyfyngedig. Felly, mae'n anodd gweld sut y byddai uwch arweinwyr yn gallu deall o'r wybodaeth hon pa mor dda y mae gwasanaethau a pholisïau yn diwallu anghenion defnyddwyr gwasanaeth.

Mae'r wybodaeth a ddarperir mewn adroddiadau perfformiad i uwch arweinwyr yn canolbwyntio'n bennaf ar weithgareddau, gan gyfyngu ar eu gallu i ddeall canlyniadau'r gweithgareddau hyn

18   At ei gilydd, mae'r wybodaeth a ddarperir i uwch arweinwyr yn canolbwyntio'n bennaf ar weithgareddau yn hytrach na chanlyniadau. Mae hyn yn cyfyngu ar allu uwch arweinwyr i ddeall effaith gweithgareddau'r Cyngor ac a yw'n cyflawni ei amcanion.

19   Mae'r mesurau y mae'r Cyngor wedi'u drafftio i fonitro cynnydd gyda'i gynllun Cyngor newydd yn cynnwys gwybodaeth gyfyngedig yn unig a allai helpu uwch arweinwyr i ddeall canlyniadau ei weithgareddau.

20   Gwelsom rai enghreifftiau cyfyngedig lle darperir gwybodaeth am ganlyniadau. Fel y nodwyd ym mharagraff 16, mae adroddiad perfformiad gwasanaeth cyfiawnder ieuenctid y Cyngor yn rhoi cipolwg manwl i uwch arweinwyr ar effaith ei weithgareddau. Mae'r Cyngor hefyd yn rhannu canlyniadau o ymchwiliadau ac ymyriadau cwynion gydag uwch arweinwyr.

Nid oes gan y Cyngor drefniadau i wirio fel mater o drefn bod data am bersbectif a chanlyniadau defnyddwyr gwasanaeth yn gywir

21   Mae gan y Cyngor drefniadau cyfyngedig i sicrhau bod y data a ddarperir i uwch arweinwyr yn gywir. Mae meysydd gwasanaeth unigol yn gyfrifol am eu trefniadau cywirdeb data eu hunain, ond ni roddodd y Cyngor unrhyw enghreifftiau i ddangos bod y trefniadau hyn yn cynnwys gwirio cywirdeb gwybodaeth am safbwynt defnyddwyr gwasanaeth. Er enghraifft, mae tîm corfforaethol y Cyngor yn gwirio bod data yn gwneud synnwyr, i ddeall unrhyw anghysondebau mewn perfformiad, ond nid yw hyn yn gwirio bod y wybodaeth a ddarperir i uwch arweinwyr yn gywir.

22   O ganlyniad, mae perygl y gall y Cyngor wneud penderfyniadau, cymryd camau, a dyrannu adnoddau yn seiliedig ar wybodaeth anghywir.

Gan fod y wybodaeth a ddarperir am ganlyniadau a safbwynt defnyddwyr gwasanaeth yn gyfyngedig, mae i ba raddau y gall y Cyngor ddefnyddio'r wybodaeth hon i'w helpu i gyflawni ei ganlyniadau hefyd yn gyfyngedig

23   Fel y nodwyd uchod, ein prif ganfyddiad yw nad yw'r wybodaeth berfformiad a ddarperir i uwch arweinwyr yn eu galluogi i ddeall safbwynt defnyddwyr y gwasanaeth a chanlyniadau gweithgareddau'r Cyngor. O ganlyniad, mae'n rhesymegol yn dilyn bod y graddau y mae'r Cyngor yn defnyddio'r wybodaeth hon i'w helpu i gyflawni ei ganlyniadau hefyd yn gyfyngedig.

24   Gallem weld bod y Cyngor wedi gwneud newidiadau ar lefel weithredol yn dilyn gwybodaeth a rannwyd yn ei adroddiadau cwynion, ond mae hon yn enghraifft gyfyngedig.

Nid yw'r Cyngor yn adolygu effeithiolrwydd ei drefniadau adrodd perfformiad mewn perthynas â phersbectif a chanlyniadau defnyddwyr gwasanaeth

25   Er bod y Cyngor wedi nodi yn ei Ddatganiad Llywodraethu Blynyddol diweddar a'i Hunanasesiad Blynyddol fod ganddo fewnwelediad cyfyngedig i safbwynt defnyddwyr gwasanaeth, nid yw wedi adolygu'r wybodaeth a ddarparwyd i uwch arweinwyr i sicrhau ei bod yn briodol ac yn berthnasol.

26   Nid yw'r Cyngor yn cymharu'r math o wybodaeth y mae'n ei chasglu na dulliau casglu ar bersbectif neu ganlyniadau defnyddwyr gwasanaeth gyda'r wybodaeth a gesglir gan sefydliadau tebyg. Nid ydym yn golygu cymharu perfformiad y Cyngor fel y cyfryw, ond i'w helpu i ddysgu sut mae sefydliadau eraill yn darparu gwybodaeth am safbwyntiau a chanlyniadau defnyddwyr gwasanaeth i helpu i gryfhau ei drefniadau ei hun. Mae hon yn elfen bwysig o drefniadau i sicrhau gwerth am arian.

Argymhellion

Arddangosyn 1: argymhellion

Gwybodaeth am safbwynt defnyddiwr y gwasanaeth

A1   Dylai'r Cyngor gryfhau'r wybodaeth y mae'n ei darparu i'w uwch arweinwyr i'w galluogi i ddeall pa mor dda y mae gwasanaethau a pholisïau yn diwallu anghenion defnyddwyr gwasanaeth.

Gwybodaeth am ganlyniadau

A2   Dylai'r Cyngor gryfhau'r wybodaeth a ddarperir i uwch arweinwyr i'w helpu i werthuso a yw'r Cyngor yn cyflawni ei amcanion a'r canlyniadau a fwriadwyd.

Trefniadau i wirio ansawdd a chywirdeb data

A3 Mae angen i'r Cyngor sicrhau ei hun bod ganddo drefniadau cadarn i wirio ansawdd a chywirdeb y data y mae'n ei ddarparu i uwch arweinwyr sy'n ymwneud â phersbectif defnyddwyr gwasanaeth a chanlyniadau.

Atodiad 1

Cwestiynau allweddol a'r hyn yr ydym yn chwilio amdano

Arddangosiad 2: cwestiynau allweddol a'r hyn yr ydym yn chwilio amdano

Mae'r tabl isod yn nodi'r cwestiwn yr oeddem yn ceisio ei ateb wrth gynnal yr archwiliad hwn, ynghyd â'r meini prawf archwilio a ddefnyddiwyd gennym i gyrraedd ein canfyddiadau.

Lefel 1
A yw data perfformiad y Cyngor yn galluogi uwch arweinwyr i ddeall safbwynt defnyddwyr y gwasanaeth a chanlyniadau ei weithgareddau i reoli ei berfformiad yn effeithiol?

Lefel 2	Meini prawf archwilio[1] (yr hyn yr ydym yn chwilio amdano)
2.1 A yw'r wybodaeth perfformiad a ddarperir i uwch arweinwyr yn cynnwys gwybodaeth briodol am safbwynt defnyddwyr gwasanaeth?	• Y wybodaeth yw: – berthnasol i'r amcanion y mae'r Cyngor wedi'u gosod ei hun; – yn ddigon i alluogi dealltwriaeth o safbwynt defnyddwyr y gwasanaeth; – yn ddigon i ddarparu dealltwriaeth o gynnydd tuag at y canlyniadau y mae'r Cyngor yn bwriadu eu cyflawni; – yn deillio o amrywiaeth defnyddwyr gwasanaeth gan gynnwys grwpiau sy'n rhannu nodweddion gwarchodedig; a – defnyddir i lywio cymariaethau â pherfformiad cyrff tebyg lle bo hynny'n berthnasol. • Mae'r Cyngor wedi cynnwys defnyddwyr gwasanaeth wrth benderfynu pa wybodaeth i'w chasglu.

[1] Mae ein meini prawf archwilio wedi cael eu llywio gan ein gwybodaeth gronnol o waith archwilio blaenorol, yn ogystal â'r hierarchaeth gwestiynau a'r dangosyddion cadarnhaol yr ydym wedi'u datblygu i gefnogi ein harchwiliadau egwyddor datblygu cynaliadwy.

Lefel 1
A yw data perfformiad y Cyngor yn galluogi uwch arweinwyr i ddeall safbwynt defnyddwyr y gwasanaeth a chanlyniadau ei weithgareddau i reoli ei berfformiad yn effeithiol?

Lefel 2		Meini prawf archwilio[1] (yr hyn yr ydym yn chwilio amdano)
2.2	A yw'r wybodaeth perfformiad a ddarperir i uwch arweinwyr yn cynnwys gwybodaeth briodol am ganlyniadau gweithgareddau'r Cyngor?	• Mae'r wybodaeth yn defnyddio amrywiaeth o ffynonellau tystiolaeth i roi golwg gyfannol ar gynnydd. • Mae'r wybodaeth yn galluogi uwch arweinwyr i fonitro cynnydd yn y tymor byr, canolig a hir. • Mae'r wybodaeth yn galluogi uwch arweinwyr i fonitro darpariaeth canlyniadau sy'n cwmpasu sawl maes gwasanaeth a/neu sefydliad.
2.3	A oes gan y Cyngor drefniadau cadarn i sicrhau bod y data a ddarperir yn gywir?	• Mae gan y Cyngor drefniadau clir i wirio ansawdd a chywirdeb y data y mae'n ei ddarparu i uwch arweinwyr. • Lle nodir gwendidau o ran ansawdd data, mae'r Cyngor yn mynd i'r afael â nhw.
2.4	A yw'r Cyngor yn defnyddio'r wybodaeth i'w helpu i gyflawni ei ganlyniadau?	• Lle nodir perfformiad gwael, mae'r Cyngor yn defnyddio'r wybodaeth i wneud newidiadau/ymyriadau. • Mae tystiolaeth bod y Cyngor yn gwella ei gynnydd tuag at ei ganlyniadau o ganlyniad i ymyriadau.
2.5	A yw'r Cyngor yn adolygu effeithiolrwydd ei drefniadau?	• Mae'r Cyngor yn adolygu'r wybodaeth a ddarperir i uwch arweinwyr er mwyn sicrhau ei bod yn briodol ac yn berthnasol. • Mae'r Cyngor yn cymharu'r wybodaeth y mae'n ei chasglu gyda'r wybodaeth a gesglir gan sefydliadau tebyg i nodi cyfleoedd i gryfhau ei drefniadau.

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Use of performance information:
service user perspective and outcomes
– Flintshire County Council

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Report summary

1   We considered the service user perspective and outcome information provided to senior officers and senior members (senior leaders), and how this information is used.

2   Overall, we found that limited performance information is provided to senior leaders at Flintshire County Council (the Council) to enable them to understand the service user perspective and the outcomes of its activities.

3   We have made three recommendations to strengthen the information given to senior leaders.

What we looked at – the scope of this audit

4   We focused on the performance information provided to senior officers and senior members (senior leaders) about service user perspective and outcomes, and how this information is used. We did not undertake a full review of the Council's performance management arrangements or an in-depth review of the quality of the data that the Council collects. Neither did the review focus on engagement with service users on specific service changes or the development of policies and strategies.

5   We have set out our audit questions and audit criteria in **Appendix 1**. The audit criteria essentially sets out what good looks like and what we would expect to find.

6   Overall, we were looking for performance information to be shared with senior leaders to help them understand how well services and policies are meeting the needs of service users and how well they are helping the Council to achieve the outcomes it is working towards. We were also looking to see that senior leaders use this information to monitor progress and take action where necessary to improve outcomes.

7   This is an important part of arrangements to ensure that councils are securing value for money in the use of their resources. It is also an important way in which the Council can assure itself that it is acting in accordance with the 'involvement' way of working in taking steps to meet its well-being objectives. Without this information, it is difficult to see how senior leaders can understand whether their policies and actions are having the intended impact and make changes where they are not.

8   Our findings are based on document reviews and interviews with the Cabinet Member and senior officers with responsibility for the Council's performance management arrangements. The evidence we have used to inform our findings is limited to these sources. We undertook this work during July and September 2023.

9   We set out to answer the question '**Does the Council's performance data enable senior leaders to understand the service user perspective and the outcomes of its activities to effectively manage its performance?**' We did this by exploring the following questions:

- Does the performance information provided to senior leaders include appropriate information on the perspective of service users?

- Does the performance information provided to senior leaders include appropriate information on the outcomes of the Council's activities?

- Does the Council have robust arrangements to ensure that the data provided is accurate?
- Does the Council use the information to help it achieve its outcomes?
- Does the Council review the effectiveness of its arrangements?

Why we undertook this audit

10   This audit was undertaken to help fulfil the Auditor General's duties under section 17 of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 (the 2004 Act) and section 15 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

11   We sought to:

- gain assurance that the performance information the Council provides to senior officers and elected members enables them to understand the service user perspective and the outcome of its activities;
- gain assurance that this information forms part of the Council's arrangements to secure value for money in the use of its resources and its application of the sustainable development principle; and
- identify opportunities for the Council to strengthen its arrangements.

The Council's performance reporting arrangements

12   The Council's Cabinet, Chief Officer Team and Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive six-monthly performance reports that include details of service performance, progress towards well-being objectives and financial monitoring information. These forums also receive various annual performance reports. These include the Council's Annual Self-Assessment, complaints report and the Director of Social Services' report.

13   Our review focused on these key performance reporting mechanisms.

What we found

Limited performance information is provided to senior leaders to enable them to understand the service user perspective and the outcomes of the Council's activities

Senior leaders are provided with limited performance information to help them understand the perspective of service users

14   The Council does not include information about the perspective of service users within the performance information presented to senior leaders as a matter of course. We saw some limited examples where the Council's senior leaders are provided with information which gives an insight into the perspective of service users. These included the survey of housing tenants and the youth

justice survey. There is evidence that the Council analyses the feedback it receives on these services according to groups sharing protected characteristics.

15   The Council's Cabinet and Scrutiny report templates have a section titled 'consultation required / carried out', but apart from one instance, this is used to just note consultation, rather than provide information to help senior leaders understand what this tells them about the perspective of service users.

16   The Council has drafted a document 'How Achievements will be Measured' to accompany its 2023-28 Council Plan. However, only one of the 154 measures within this document relates to the service user perspective. This indicates that the limited insight could continue into the new reporting arrangements for the Council's latest well-being objectives.

17   Overall, the information the Council provides to senior leaders about the service user perspective is limited. It is, therefore, difficult to see how senior leaders would be able to understand from this information how well services and policies are meeting the needs of service users.

Information provided within performance reports to senior leaders largely focuses on activities, limiting their ability to understand the outcomes of these activities

18   Overall, the information provided to senior leaders is mainly focused on activities rather than outcomes. This limits senior leaders' ability to understand the impact of the Council's activities and whether it is meeting its objectives.

19   The measures the Council has drafted to monitor progress with its new Council plan only include limited information which could help senior leaders understand the outcomes of its activities.

20   We found some limited examples where information is provided about outcomes. As noted in paragraph 16, the Council's youth justice service performance report provides senior leaders with a detailed insight into the impact of its activities. The Council also shares outcomes from complaints investigations and interventions with senior leaders.

The Council does not have arrangements to routinely check that data about service user perspective and outcomes is accurate

21   The Council has limited arrangements to ensure that the data provided to senior leaders is accurate. Individual service areas are responsible for their own data accuracy arrangements, but the Council provided no examples to show that these arrangements included checking the accuracy of information about the perspective of service users. The Council's corporate team sense-check data, for example to understand any anomalies in performance, but this does not check that the information provided to senior leaders is accurate.

22   As a result, there is a risk that the Council may take decisions and action, and allocate resources based on inaccurate information.

As information provided on outcomes and the perspective of service users is limited, the extent to which the Council can use this information to help it achieve its outcomes is also limited

23   As set out above, our main finding is that performance information provided to senior leaders does not enable them to understand the service user perspective and the outcomes of the Council's activities. As a result, it logically follows that the extent to which the Council uses this information to help it achieve its outcomes is also limited.

24   We could see that the Council had made changes at an operational level following information shared within its complaints reports, but this is a limited example.

The Council does not review the effectiveness of its performance reporting arrangements in relation to service user perspective and outcomes

25   Although the Council has identified in its recent Annual Governance Statement and Annual Self-Assessment that it has limited insight into service user perspective, it has not reviewed the information provided to senior leaders to ensure it is appropriate and relevant.

26   The Council does not compare the type of information it collects or collection methods on service user perspective or outcomes with the information collected by similar organisations. We do not mean comparing the Council's performance as such, but to help it learn how other organisations are providing information about service user perspectives and outcomes to help strengthen its own arrangements. This is an important element of arrangements to secure value for money.

Recommendations

Exhibit 1: recommendations

Information on the perspective of the service user

R1   The Council should strengthen the information it provides to its senior leaders to enable them to understand how well services and policies are meeting the needs of service users.

Outcomes information

R2   The Council should strengthen the information provided to senior leaders to help them evaluate whether the Council is delivering its objectives and the intended outcomes.

Arrangements to check the quality and accuracy of data

R3   The Council needs to assure itself that it has robust arrangements to check the quality and accuracy of the data it provides to senior leaders relating to service user perspective and outcomes.

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Appendix 1

Key questions and what we looked for

Exhibit 2: key questions and what we looked for

The table below sets out the question we sought to answer in carrying out this audit, along with the audit criteria we used to arrive at our findings.

Level 1
Does the Council's performance data enable senior leaders to understand the service user perspective and the outcomes of its activities to effectively manage its performance?

Level 2	Audit Criteria[1] (what we are looking for)
2.1 Does the performance information provided to senior leaders include appropriate information on the perspective of service users?	• The information is: – relevant to the objectives the Council has set itself; – sufficient to enable an understanding of the service user perspective; – sufficient to provide an understanding of progress towards the outcomes the Council is planning to achieve; – drawn from the diversity of service users including groups who share protected characteristics; and – used to inform comparisons with the performance of similar bodies where relevant. • The Council has involved service users in determining which information to collect.
2.2 Does the performance information provided to senior leaders include appropriate information on the outcomes of the Council's activities?	• The information draws on a range of evidence sources to provide a holistic view of progress. • The information enables senior leaders to monitor progress over the short, medium and long term. • The information enables senior leaders to monitor the delivery of outcomes that cover multiple service areas and/or organisations.

[1] Our audit criteria have been informed by our cumulative knowledge of previous audit work, as well as the question hierarchy and positive indicators we have developed to support our sustainable development principle examinations.

Level 1
Does the Council's performance data enable senior leaders to understand the service user perspective and the outcomes of its activities to effectively manage its performance?

Level 2	**Audit Criteria[1] (what we are looking for)**
2.3 Does the Council have robust arrangements to ensure that the data provided is accurate?	• The Council has clear arrangements to check the quality and accuracy of the data it provides to senior leaders. • Where weaknesses in data quality are identified, the Council addresses them.
2.4 Does the Council use the information to help it achieve its outcomes?	• Where poor performance is identified, the Council uses the information to make changes/interventions. • There is evidence of the Council improving its progress towards its outcomes as a result of interventions.
2.5 Does the Council review the effectiveness of its arrangements?	• The Council reviews the information provided to senior leaders to ensure it is appropriate and relevant. • The Council compares the information it collects with the information collected by similar organisations to identify opportunities to strengthen its arrangements.

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We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English. Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg.

Organisational response

Report title: Use of performance information: service user perspective and outcomes – Flintshire County Council

Completion date:

Document reference: 3976A2023

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Ref	Recommendation	Organisational response Please set out here relevant commentary on the planned actions in response to the recommendations	Completion date Please set out by when the planned actions will be complete	Responsible officer (title)
R1	**Information on the perspective of the service user** The Council should strengthen the information it provides to its senior leaders to enable them to understand how well services and policies are meeting the needs of service users.	Service level user information is reported at the discretion of services to relevant influencing managers or portfolio leaders as appropriate. However, as part of the Council's Corporate Self-assessment 2022/23, the Council identified consultation and engagement as an opportunity for improvement and an action plan was devised to address and improve consultation and engagement across the Council. This includes developing a Consultation and Engagement Strategy, and as part of the development of this strategy a key focus will be to consider the needs of the service users and how we gather and use this information	July 2025	Customer Contact Service Manager / Customer Service and Communications Manager
R2	**Outcomes information** The Council should strengthen the information provided to senior leaders to help them evaluate whether the Council is delivering its objectives and the intended outcomes.	To strengthen how the Council is delivering its outcomes and intended outcomes of service user perspectives, the annual review of the actions and measures detailed with the Council Plan 2023-28 will ensure, where applicable, information is captured and recorded on this specific subject matter, with outcomes that seek to deliver, short, medium and long-term benefit to our citizens and communities. This will be achieved by engaging with Portfolios directly to finalise the content review for 2024-25 of the Council Plan 2023-28 Additionally quarterly Council Plan 2023-28 performance reports are presented to senior leaders which would include this information.	June 2024	Internal Audit, Performance and Risk Manager / Strategic Performance Advisor

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| R3 | **Arrangements to check the quality and accuracy of data**

The Council needs to assure itself that it has robust arrangements to check the quality and accuracy of the data it provides to senior leaders relating to service user perspective and outcomes. | It is the responsibility of service area to review the accuracy of their data and the information it provides to senior leaders. Arrangements to check the quality and accuracy of data beyond existing arrangements would require additional capacity that the present financial environment would not allow.

However, as an additional step, Performance Leads will be asked to confirm the monitoring arrangements they have in place to ensure data accuracy and that they arrangements are operating effectively. This would cover both data relating to service user perspectives and performance management outcomes for the Council Plan. | December 2024 | Internal Audit, Performance and Risk Manager / Strategic Performance Advisor |

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Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn bwrpasol