

Performance Self- Assessment Update: July to September 2022

This document presents the council's performance against its objectives and governance areas between July and September 2022, including our application of the Sustainable Development principle, the Public Sector Equality Duty, and Socio-Economic Duty.

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

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Summary position

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

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

Measures: Good

Projects: Good

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

Measures: Priority for improvement

Projects: Good

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

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Excellent

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

Measures: Good

Projects: Excellent

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

Measures: Priority for improvement

Projects: Good

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

Measures: Priority for improvement

Projects: Good

A Note on Measuring Performance

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

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

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

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

Measures: Good

Projects: Good

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update

As at the end of September, there were 2,190 people on the Single Route to Housing (SARTH) waiting list, which is a slight increase from the last period, April to June (2,075). Our second SARTH measure considers the number of people housed from the register into either council stock or a Denbighshire Registered Social Landlord property. A total of 122 people were housed, which has doubled since the last period, where 61 people were housed.

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Project Update

Experiencing Obstacles: Ruthin Extra Care Housing

The demolition of Awelon has gone ahead and Reed Construction are on site. Grŵp Cynefin are working with partners to source the grant money necessary to allow them to upgrade facilities within the existing Llys Awelon accommodation to the same standard as the new apartments under construction. We are still working to the revised completion date of February 2024.

On Target: Additional Council Homes

Since the last report, delivery confidence has continued to improve because progress has been made in the following areas:

- Tenders were scored for the conversion of Epworth Lodge in Brighton Road, Rhyl, into 8 units of temporary accommodation.
- Architects were appointed to develop a design for the replacement of the former sheltered housing complex at Maes Emlyn, Rhyl.
- The purchase of a further new semi-detached house provided through the affordable housing obligation at the Cysgod y Graig development in Dyserth was completed.

- Offers were accepted for the purchase of a former council house and a former council flat in Rhyl.
- Planning permission was granted for the construction of a replacement development comprising of two ground floor retail units, and four apartments on the upper storeys of the former Next store site on Rhyl High Street.

Annual or biennial measures

2020 to 2022 data

Measure	2020 to 2021	2021 to 2022	Status
The number of people who were on the Complex Disabilities Specialist Housing Needs Register for whom supported housing has been secured – Benchmarked Locally	5	13	Excellent
The additional supply of council houses provided	14	13	Does not apply (count only)
Number of additional homes provided in Denbighshire – Benchmarked Locally	435	422	Excellent
Number of empty properties brought back into use (old definition) – Benchmarked Locally	184	196	Excellent
The number of private sector homes improved in standard and quality due to intervention from the council – Benchmarked Locally	415	325	Priority for improvement
The additional supply of affordable housing, including social housing, provided during the year – Benchmarked Locally	154	222	Excellent

Measure	2020 to 2021	2021 to 2022	Status
Percentage of households successfully prevented from homelessness (Section 66 duty) – Benchmarked Nationally	52	42	Priority for improvement
Percentage of households successfully relieved from homelessness (Section 73 duty) – Benchmarked Nationally	31	22	Priority for improvement
Number of additional Extra Care Homes supported by the council	0	74	Does not apply (count only)

Stakeholder Surveys 2018 to 2022

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

Quarterly or biannual measures

Measure	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Quarter 3 2021 to 2022	Quarter 4 2021 to 2022	Quarter 1 2022 to 2023	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Status
Number of people on SARTH waiting	2,283	2,378	2,050	2,075	2,190	Priority for improvement

Measure	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Quarter 3 2021 to 2022	Quarter 4 2021 to 2022	Quarter 1 2022 to 2023	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Status
list – Benchmarked Locally						
Cumulative number of people housed from the SARTH register	153	209	261	61	122	Does not apply (count only)

Well-being and Equality

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

Denbighshire Housing Awards

[The Denbighshire Housing Awards](#), held at 1891 Restaurant in Rhyl, was a celebration of all that tenants and communities achieve, as well as showcasing projects they are involved in across the county. The prestigious awards event is a chance to celebrate the achievements and participation of tenants for the work that they do within their communities, supporting projects that are happening across the county.

This year's awards were in **collaboration** with Brenig Construction, the lead contractor on the Llwyn Eirin project in Denbigh, the first new council homes to be designed and built for the Denbighshire area in 30 years. The Awards are to say thank you to our tenants for their continued **involvement**, and hopefully helping to foster a good **long-term** relationship with them. This celebration also gives recognition and support to tenants who

may be at a **socio-economic disadvantage**, whether they are the nominees for the awards or benefit from the good work and projects.

Temporary Accommodation Support Service

The council wants to eradicate its reliance on bed and breakfast style emergency accommodation by implementing a proposal for a [new homelessness temporary emergency accommodation support project](#). This project aims to provide comprehensive 24-hour support to people leaving temporary emergency accommodation, and will be delivered in **collaboration** with a third-sector organisation that has experience and expertise in operating 24 hour supported accommodation. This **integrates** with the Welsh Government's Rapid Rehousing plan and their recognition that there is a need for Local Authorities to work in partnership with the Third Sector, as it is widely accepted that they are value driven and motivated by social, cultural or environmental objectives, rather than simply to make a profit; as well as being committed to reinvesting their surpluses to further their social aims and for the benefit of local people and communities.

This project aims to provide holistic support to citizens placed in temporary emergency accommodation owned by the local authority, to reduce and **prevent** the risk of homelessness reoccurring, and to improve well-being outcomes in the **long-term**. A key element of this project is the **involvement** of individuals with an engaging programme of meaningful activities and interventions. The individuals who will benefit from this new support service will be those who are at a **socio-economic disadvantage**.

Apartments for Social Rent

The council is currently undertaking works to convert the former Rhyl tax office, Llys Anwyl on Churton Street, into accessible apartments available for social rent, with either one or two bedrooms for older people. Work has now begun on the building, which was vacant for years before the council made the purchase to return it to a productive use. A range of energy efficient improvements are being made to the building for the benefit of residents. The property is expected to be completed in 2023 and will be let by Denbighshire Housing.

Wherever possible the council is looking to **collaborate** and work with local suppliers and sub-contractors wherever possible. Also, there will be 'Meet the Buyer' event for those businesses interested in getting **involved** with this project. Ensuring that we adhere to

housing and energy standards will also **prevent** issues occurring in the **long-term**, benefiting the well-being of tenants. This project will benefit those at a **socio-economic disadvantage**, as well as supporting the living conditions of those with one or more protected characteristics, such as **age** and **disability**.

Homelessness and Housing Support Services

At its [meeting in July](#), Partnership Scrutiny received a follow-up Internal Audit report on the homelessness multi-disciplinary service. The report gave members the opportunity to examine the effectiveness of the cross-service corporate approach in addressing homelessness as a wider council priority, and not just that of Community Support Services. It was noted that households in emergency temporary accommodation are staying longer than before the Covid-19 outbreak due to a lack of suitable move-on accommodation. Over the last 18 months the council has secured tenancies for 99 households in social housing following the suspension of the Allocations Policy for Social Housing, of which over 50% have come from Denbighshire's Community Housing portfolio.

The Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) within Homelessness Prevention has now been fully implemented. The progress made and the ongoing efforts to implement new practices have been recognised within the follow-up audit report. Work is ongoing to develop a robust monitoring framework for quality and performance, but this has been slightly delayed as we wait for guidance from Welsh Government. Every citizen entering statutory homelessness provision receives a full 'What Matters' conversation in line with the Social Services and Well-Being Act, and the most appropriate member of the MDT is allocated to the individual or household. Ongoing support will continue to address any identified needs once a permanent tenancy has been sourced to reduce the risk of cyclical homelessness.

This multi-disciplinary team and cross-service corporate approach has been implemented with the aim of providing **long-term** benefits, prevent homelessness, and to **integrate** and work **collaboratively** across the council and with our partners. This work will benefit those at a **socio-economic disadvantage**.

Energy Improvement Works

Preparations are underway to carry out the Welsh Government funded energy improvements to the remaining Denbighshire Housing properties on Rhydwen Drive, Rhyl.

The move comes following Cabinet's agreement to award the contract to the supplier currently undertaking phase one of the works. Phase two will see the remaining 40 houses undergo the energy improvement work from late September onwards. The work will include fitting solar panels that will generate electricity and also store it in connected batteries to allow energy use in the evenings. External wall insulation will also be fitted to help reduce drafts and keep in the energy needed to heat each home, especially during winter time.

This **collaborative** project, **integrating** with the Welsh Government's ambition for warm homes, will provide **long-term** benefits to the Well-being of our tenants, as well as potentially **prevent** them from running into financial difficulty as a result of rising fuel costs. It will support those at a **socio-economic disadvantage**, and in its delivery we will at all times seek to work with and **involve** our tenants.

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

Measures: Priority for improvement

Projects: Good

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update

The coverage of superfast broadband in Denbighshire is now at 94.2%, a very small increase of 0.09% since our last report. 3.6% of premises had broadband of 10mbps or below. This is a 0.25% decrease since the end of June. The picture is still one where Denbighshire's constituencies are among those with the poorest superfast broadband coverage when compared to the rest of the UK.

50% of public transactions with the council were undertaken through its website during July to September 2022, compared to the total number of transactions undertaken using all access channels. This is the same as April to June's figure.

Unfortunately, capacity issues mean that it is not possible to provide data within this report for the percentage of damaged roads and pavements made safe within target time. These issues are being actively addressed by the Service, and we will look to provide an update in our next report.

Corporate Plan Programme Board: Project Update

Project Brief: Travel to Work, Education and Services

A draft Sustainable Travel Plan, which includes Active Travel, will be presented to Cabinet on November 22, 2022. Officers will seek approval to commence public engagement on the Plan.

Annual or biennial measures

2020 to 2022 data

Measure	2020 to 2021	2021 to 2022	Status
The percentage of principle A roads that are in overall poor condition – Benchmarked Nationally	3.5	2.6	Excellent
The percentage of non-principal/classified B roads that are in overall poor condition – Benchmarked Nationally	5	3.8	Excellent
The percentage of non-principal/classified C roads that are in overall poor condition – Benchmarked Nationally	7.6	7.5	Excellent
The percentage of adults (aged 16 or over) who have used the internet within the last 3 months (Conwy and Denbighshire) – Benchmarked Locally	89.8	Data pending	Priority for improvement
The percentage of mobile 4G road signal (all operators) – Benchmarked Locally	49.8	50.63	Priority for improvement

Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation 2014 to 2019

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

Quarterly or biannual measures

Measure	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Quarter 3 2021 to 2022	Quarter 4 2021 to 2022	Quarter 1 2022 to 2023	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Status
The percentage of Superfast Coverage in Denbighshire (>30 Mbps) – Benchmarked Locally	92.75	93.37	93.92	94.11	94.2	Priority for improvement
The percentage of premises with Broadband of 10 Mbps or below – Benchmarked Locally	4.33	4.18	3.95	3.85	3.6	Priority for improvement
The percentage of transactions undertaken via the web, compared to the total number of transactions undertaken using all access channels – Benchmarked Locally	48	51	53	50	50	Acceptable
Percentage of damaged roads	64	51	43	Data pending	Data pending	Priority for improvement

Measure	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Quarter 3 2021 to 2022	Quarter 4 2021 to 2022	Quarter 1 2022 to 2023	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Status
and pavements made safe within target time (CAT1 - Category 1 defects dealt within timescale) – Benchmarked Locally						

Well-being and Equality

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

Decarbonising Highways Maintenance

In addition to our routine highways maintenance programme, Parc Y Dre, in Ruthin, underwent an innovative net carbon zero resurfacing scheme during the period. The road was the first in North Wales resurfaced using an innovative surfacing material, lowering the overall carbon of the process significantly from that of traditional treatments, and delivered and offset by the only accredited carbon neutral surfacing contractor in the UK, Miles Macadam. Parc Y Dre was chosen for this process because the existing carriageway is constructed of concrete, which makes it a suitable site.

Highways maintenance is one of the most carbon-heavy activities we undertake as a council. This scheme is part of the council’s efforts to become a Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically Positive Council by 2030. Working **collaboratively** with communities and contractors, these works seek to maintain the overall good condition of our roads in the

long-term and **prevent** incident or injury, whilst reducing our carbon footprint. Our improvement programme is informed through the **involvement** of local members and resident feedback.

Street Lighting Energy Reduction

August saw the completion of a project to reduce the carbon output of our county's street lights by converting all of the street lights to lower wattage LED's. Overall, the council maintains a total of 11,690 street lights, and following some small initial trial programmes, it was decided to replace the remaining units with low energy LED lights over a 7-year project in order to achieve savings in both carbon output and electricity costs. Our own in-house Street Lighting Team have delivered the project in its entirety from procurement to design and installation. The equipment installed has utilised the most up-to-date technology in terms of energy efficiency, including part night dimming and constant lumen output.

The project has significantly reduced the carbon output from street lights over the seven-year period from 1,800 tonnes annually during 2015 to 2016, to just 400 tonnes for 2021 to 2022. This is a great **long-term** solution that helps **prevent** further harm and damage to our environment.

Improving Rural Transport

During this period, the council partnered with the South Denbighshire Community Partnership (SDCP) to relaunch the county's rural community car scheme. The community car scheme aims to assist rural residents to access local facilities such as shops, visiting friends and relatives, visiting a doctor or dentist, and to undertake personal business. The partnership will see the SDCP taking over the operation of the scheme, with impressive plans to see it expand to cover as many rural areas in Denbighshire's south as possible.

Again, working **collaboratively** and **integrating** with the ambition of communities and partners, we are building on the community car scheme to **involves** residents in innovative transport solutions, improve access for people to **prevent** isolation, helping those with one or more protected characteristics, such as **Age** and **Disability**, or experiencing **socio-economic disadvantage**.

Decarbonising Travel

A new multi electric vehicle charging hub began installation in August at West Kinmel Street Car Park in Rhyl, the largest of its kind in Wales. The charge park, the second current largest in the UK, will offer capability for charging 36 vehicles simultaneously. The introduction of the hub, funded by the Welsh Government, follows the successful installation of chargers at Kings Avenue car park at Prestatyn. Located at the west end of the car park, the hub will be a mix of 'fast' 7kwh chargers for local users who have no access to off street parking and 'rapid' 50kw chargers for a quick top-up. It will also assist local taxi drivers on the uptake of electric vehicles by minimising disruption to operational work time. All the chargers at the hub will be open for public use, and three of the parking bays and charging units will be specifically allocated for disabled users. Work on the site is expected to be completed by the end of October, with the charge park going live towards the end of November.

A new long wave green taxi has also been added to the pilot taxi scheme in Denbighshire. The Kia can cover up to 328 miles on a single charge and is designed to allow taxi drivers to confidently work a complete shift, including airport transfers, without the need for charging.

These examples of zero emission travel and demand responsive travel seek to **integrate** objectives at a national and local level, **collaborate** with partners, and **involve** users in **long-term** solutions that **prevent** further harm and damage to the environment. In the case of the charging hub, the scheme will benefit people with the protected characteristic of **disability**.

Supporting businesses

In July, the council installed temporary barriers on the promenade side of the Rhyl High Street pedestrian zone. The barriers are closed between 10am and 5pm every day to prevent motorists driving and parking within the pedestrian zone. This action came after the council had received numerous complaints from the local community and business owners about some drivers persisting to drive along the pedestrian zone, causing safety concerns. This was in despite of additional enforcement by civil enforcement officers; with over 400 penalty charge notices issued in this location over the last two years. Delivery vehicles are permitted to drive into the zone from 5pm until 10am the following day. An

emergency contact number is provided should emergency access be required between 10am and 5pm. Loading bays have been created on both East and West Parade near to the top of the High Street, as well as twenty free one-hour parking spaces in the Central Car Park, providing alternative nearby locations for people to use if needed.

This action demonstrates that we are listening to our communities and **involve** them in solutions. This option of a temporary barrier allows is a short-term measure while the council finds a permanent barrier solution for the **long term**. The free parking and additional loading bays will also benefit the protected characteristics of **Age** and **Disability**, as well as those facing **socio-economic disadvantage**.

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

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Excellent

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update

Denbighshire saw a 34.3% decrease in the number of repeat victims of reported domestic crime for July, August and September 2022 in comparison to the same period last year. Figures reduced from 405 to 266. As a whole, North Wales has seen a 7.5% decrease in repeat victims of reported domestic violence for July to September. The number of repeat offenders of reported domestic abuse has also decreased in Denbighshire from 33 this time last year to 28 this year, equating to a 15.2% reduction. The overall picture for North Wales is a reduction of 8.1% for same period.

Within the national Dewis Cymru website the number of resources for Denbighshire has increased from 553 to 556 in this last period. There are currently 10,959 resources for Wales on Dewis Cymru, and 2,535 for North Wales.

100 carer assessments took place between July and September, bringing the financial year total to 197 (cumulative since April). The figure is, however, a decrease of 11% for the same period last year (221).

Data for the average length of time adults (aged 65 years or over) are supported in residential care homes has decreased from 1,059 (April to June) to 1,043 for July to September. This figure was 1,050 days for the same period last year.

Corporate Plan Programme Board: Project Update

Experiencing Obstacles: Involvement in shaping and improving services

Year three research by ONEDAY was finalised for launch during July to September. Work with Democratic Services to develop the Participation Strategy to satisfy the Act has not been undertaken, however, a working group has been set up by Welsh Local Government Association for council engagement leads to share their experiences and best practice. This will likely now form a separate workstream.

Work has been undertaken to secure a replacement for the County Conversation Portal (which has been funded by this project up until the end the Corporate Plan 2017 to 2022). Pending the publication of the Engagement Policy and the replacement of the Portal being agreed, the plan is to officially close this project on Verto at the by October 2022.

On Target: County-wide Community Development

The Community Development Team has continued to oversee and monitor the delivery of the 14 UK Community Renewal Fund (UKCRF) projects in Denbighshire, which are due to be completed at the end of December. Mid-term monitoring will be completed during October and reported to the UK Government. The team has also co-operated with an assurance review for the administration of UKCRF, which has returned positive feedback. Work has been undertaken to collate available funds and prepare communication messages in readiness for the 2022 to 2023 round of the open Space Commuted Sums grant fund. The fund will be live for applications between the first week of November and the end of January; there will be just over £100,000 made available to communities across the county and internal departments for the improvement of open space recreation areas and play areas. In addition to supporting the grant administration functions described above, the team has offered guidance to 20 new community projects or enquiries and provided ongoing support to 35 projects.

The Digital Officer continues to support several communities to explore broadband connectivity improvement options. This work is increasingly complex to navigate due to alterations in the funding available to support improvements, and Openreach's current pause on the acceptance of new Fibre Community Partnership requests. The Digital Officer is currently compiling reports for each City, Town and Community Council area in Denbighshire, setting out the local connectivity landscape, opportunities and challenges. These will be used to help develop further local connectivity improvement plans over the coming months.

On Target: Assistive Technology

A robot has been provided to Coleg Llandrillo and the computing department is working with the social care department to consider social care applications. Students are working on the robot to program new functions. Live Telecare systems and peripherals have been

installed in the Coleg Llandrillo social care department. The Assistive Technology Officer will be providing training to Health and Social Care tutors.

On Target: Digital Information, Advice and Assistance

The council has recently received a national award for being digitally inclusive thanks to a variety of work. The group, chaired by Digital Communities Wales (DCW), continues to meet regularly to look at digital solutions, and another reminiscence bike is now available. A DCW representative spoke recently at an event with the Older People's Commissioner for Wales, looking at the ways we help to prevent older people being digitally excluded. Further discussions are being undertaken with the Community Equipment Integrated Service (CESI) to determine whether popular items of equipment can be displayed or trialled at Talking Points. The Health and Social Care Regional Integration Fund (RIF) bid for a digital equipment coordinator as part of the Dementia Action Plan was rejected as it was not felt to be a pan-Wales opportunity (too localised).

Digital equipment remains available for provision to combat digital isolation and have proved exceptionally popular. Internet access can be an issue around the county, however. Meetings continue with the Financial Assessment Team and Webteam to progress moving assessment forms online. Draft forms are being trialled amongst teams. Other Community Support Services webpages being updated are for support budgets and direct payments, and climate and ecological changes for health and social care.

Annual or biennial measures

Data 2018 to 2022

Measure	2018 to 2019	2021 to 2022	Status
The percentage of people reporting they have received the right information or advice when they needed it – Benchmarked Locally	88	No data No survey	Acceptable
The percentage of carers reporting they feel supported to continue in their caring role – Benchmarked Locally	55	No data No survey	Priority for improvement
The percentage of people reporting that they know who to contact about their care and support – Benchmarked Locally	84	No data No survey	Acceptable
The percentage of people who agree "my local area is a place where people will pull together to improve the local area" – Benchmarked Locally	59	63	Good
The percentage of people who feel able to influence decisions affecting their local area – Benchmarked Locally	27	20	Priority for improvement

UK Resettlement Project figures for Denbighshire 2020 to 2022

Measure	2020 to 2021	2021 to 2022	Status
The number of families resettled within Denbighshire under UK Resettlement Project – Benchmarked Locally	5	6	NA

Quarterly or biannual measures

Measure	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Quarter 3 2021 to 2022	Quarter 4 2021 to 2022	Quarter 1 2022 to 2023	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Status
The cumulative (year to date) number of repeat victims of Domestic Abuse including non-crime occurrences (3 or more in 12 months, measured as year to date)	405	509	678	126	266	Does not apply (count only)
The cumulative (year to date) number of repeat offenders of Domestic Abuse (3 or more in 12 months)	33	60	83	11	28	Does not apply (count only)
The number of live resources on the Dewis Cymru Platform – Benchmarked Locally	620	532	533	552	556	Good
The number of assessments of need for support	221	302	390	97	197	Does not apply (count only)

Measure	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Quarter 3 2021 to 2022	Quarter 4 2021 to 2022	Quarter 1 2022 to 2023	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Status
for carers undertaken during the year						
The average length of time (measured in days) adults (aged 65 or over) are supported in residential care homes – Benchmarked Nationally	1,050	1,044	1,028	1,059	1,043	Priority for improvement

Well-being and Equality

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

Extreme Heat Warning

In July, experts at Public Health Wales warned people to take extra care in the extreme heat that was forecast, a message that the council helped to promote with residents. Temperatures were expected to reach the early to mid-thirties in some parts of Wales during the first two weeks of the month. We were advised that very hot weather that lasts for a few days, or more, can cause dehydration, overheating, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. It's very important to look after children, the elderly and those with underlying

health conditions. Residents were encouraged to check in regularly with loved ones, friends, family and neighbours, and to make changes to their usual routines to cope with the extreme heat. This included avoiding strenuous activity in the middle of the day when the sun is at its hottest, drinking plenty of water and wearing a hat, sun cream and light coloured, loose clothing, ideally with long sleeves. Advice offered including keeping rooms cooler by closing blinds and curtains and closing windows.

Encouraging vigilance and preparedness under these circumstances will have directly benefitted the protected characteristics of **Age** and **Disability**. It is a good example of **collaboration** that seeks to **involve** people who may be vulnerable, as well as their families and friends. This integrates our common desire to keep everyone safe, well informed, and **prevent** any harm.

Award for Anti-Social Behaviour Initiative

Issues of anti-social behaviour had been reported at the Botanical Gardens in Rhyl, including intimidating behaviour and vandalism, which included damage to the bowling green. The council's Streetscene Team worked closely with the Friends of the Botanical Gardens and police, as well as local councillors, schools, Denbighshire Youth Service, the Community Safety Partnership and the local MP and MS to address the issues that were causing concern locally. A series of measures were introduced after discussion with partner organisations, including additional and improved CCTV coverage, gates closed at night, a fence installed around the bowling green, enhanced local police patrols, and improved lighting in parts of the park. The project was shortlisted for the North Wales Police POP (Problem Orientated Policing) awards and reached the final in July where it was awarded second place.

By **involving** the community and working **collaboratively**, partners have come together, to **integrate** our common desire to keep everyone safe and **prevent** any harm.

Community Catalysts

Community Catalysts offer free professional advice to help people work for themselves and provide care and support across the county. Thanks to this initiative there are now 16 micro-providers working for themselves in Denbighshire, and now the scheme is offering support for budding entrepreneurs to make a difference to the lives of young

people. Over 70 people within the county have already benefitted through Community Catalysts to get the support they need in their own home, whether that is help around the house, companionship, helping someone get out and about, or providing personal care. With a further 25 micro-providers coming through the programme, in the future more people in Denbighshire will be able to utilise these services to help them be happier and safer in their own home.

Integrating and working **collaboratively**, this initiative directly benefits the protected characteristics of **Age** and **Disability**. It encourages **involvement** and will hopefully help grow our care offer in the county, **prevent** harm, and meet individual needs in the **long-term**.

Winter Fuel Payments

The council is administering the Welsh Government's winter fuel payments scheme to assist households financially with their increasing energy costs. £90 million has been made available to support households across Wales, and eligibility for the scheme has been extended to allow more households to qualify for the £200 payments. Please refer to [our website](#) to see the benefits that will qualify customers for the Winter Fuel Scheme, as well as other means of support available in the face of the rising cost of living. This scheme is in addition to Welsh Government's fuel voucher scheme, the Cost of Living £150 payment, and the unpaid carers payment. It has been open for applications since 26 September, 2022, with payments expected to be made in October 2022.

Integrating our mutual ambition to **prevent** hardship, at least in the short-term, this **collaborative** initiative between Welsh Government and the council directly benefits those living in **socio-economic disadvantage**. Due to the nature of eligibility for this funding, this should support people with several protected characteristics, such as **Age** and **Disability**, and our more vulnerable community members.

Cost of Living Support

The council is working through applications for the Cost of Living Discretionary Fund and the main Cost of Living Scheme on behalf of Welsh Government. In September, we learned there were already 4312 payments, worth £495,195, that had been made for the Cost of Living Discretionary Fund to qualifying residents in Band E who pay by Direct

Debit. For the main Cost of Living Scheme, a total of 27,014 payments of £150 had been made to qualifying residents, totalling a value of £4,052,100. This scheme closed on September 30. Further details about the two schemes is available on [our website](#).

The Community Resilience Team gave out information and advice to residents during the present cost of living crisis through a series of 20 summer roadshows held across the county. The roadshows were delivered in partnership with a host of organisations, including Welsh Water, Citizens Advice Denbighshire, Stop Loan Sharks Wales, South Denbighshire Community Partnership, Cambrian Credit Union, NEST, Warm Wales and Ground Work North Wales.

These **collaborative** initiatives directly benefit those living at a **socio-economic disadvantage**. Our roadshows encourage engagement and **involvement**, and will hopefully bring to fruition new ideas to **prevent** harm and meet unrealised needs in the **long-term**. This will **integrate** our mutual ambition with partners, to **prevent** hardship at least in the short-term, but also with an eye on opportunities for **longer-term** collaboration.

Age-Friendly Denbighshire

Residents and communities across Denbighshire were urged to get creative in September, to share their thoughts on what would make the county more age-friendly. Ideas and contributions received were displayed, subject to permissions, to coincide with a visit from Helena Herklots, Wales' Older People's Commissioner when she visited the county to mark International Day of Older People (October 1) on October 5 at the Ruthin Rugby Club. This was a special meeting for the Ageing Well in Denbighshire Group and the Dementia Friendly Council Group, which have recently merged to offer support for intergenerational work within the County. Ideas were welcomed on a range of topics, including transport; housing; outdoor spaces; social participation; respect and social inclusion; civic participation and employment; communication and information; and community support and health services. The combined groups will be moving forward together, along with Conwy partners and Age Connects, to work towards becoming an Age-Friendly Community in Wales. More information will be shared in our next quarterly update.

This initiative particularly benefits the protected characteristics of **Age** and **Disability**. It is an excellent example of **collaboration** and **integration** that seeks to immerse and

involve older people, keeping them occupied and taking an interest in community activity. This will also contribute to reducing isolation and loneliness, and to address support on a **long-term** basis to **prevent** harm.

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

Measures: Good

Projects: Excellent

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update

Recently published data for the total economic impact of tourism in Denbighshire has seen a dramatic but unsurprising increase from £213m in 2020 to £432m in 2021. Although this remains lower than pre-pandemic figures (£552m in 2019), this increase is encouraging and indicates the resilience of the tourism sector and its continued economic significance to the county. The council will continue to support the tourism economy in Denbighshire, and in October in fact, Businesses have been invited to a free Tourism Forum, which includes a strong line-up of guest speakers. The Forum provides a great opportunity for delegates to hear about the latest developments and meet other like-minded businesses and share experiences.

The council had redeveloped its Tourism Strategy Action Plan to include Destination Management. This will help us better coordinate activity in the county and ensure a positive experience for visitors, residents and businesses. Prior to the busy season this year we made preparations to manage the expected increase in visitors, which included providing additional car parking at Moel Famau and Horseshoe Falls, and the deployment of extra countryside rangers at beauty spots, including Loggerheads and Moel Famau country parks and Horseshoe Falls. Extra street cleaning provision was put in place during to focus on busy areas in towns and parks, while increased bin emptying was in operation at tourist hotspots. For those interested in history, new audio guides were made available at Nantclwyd y Dre; and for those wanting to visit Llangollen, the recently completed Llangollen 2020 project provided more space, improved pedestrian crossing facilities, and an improved experience for pedestrians walking around the sights of the town. Plas Newydd House and Gardens in Llangollen were open to the public again and new displays told the fascinating story of the Ladies of Llangollen. There were also great opportunities to travel smart across the county through our transport network, saving costs and supporting the local environment, for example, through the Dee Valley's Picturesque Landscapes bus. Visitors were reminded, however, that Covid-19 has not gone away and

to act safely, responsibly and respectfully when needed. Information on discovering Denbighshire is available at [our Tourist Information centres](#).

Corporate Plan Programme Board: Project Update

Experiencing Obstacles: Climate and Ecological Change

Delivery confidence continues to be reported as experiencing obstacles. The successful delivery of projects appears probable, but significant issues exist that require close management attention. These appear resolvable at this stage, and if addressed promptly should not present a cost or schedule overrun. Ecologically Positive work is doing well at this early stage in the programme. Supply chain reduction work is still ongoing with an agreed method to be applied for local benefit. Various business cases and funding bids have also been progressed during this period through the Strategic Investment Group and Budget Board, including for phase II of our Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure. We have also submitted our carbon report to the Welsh Government.

In July the council formally received a Carbon Literate Organisation Bronze Award, being just one of 52 carbon literate organisations in the UK and Ireland. This award acknowledges our continued drive to becoming carbon neutral. Protecting and improving our environment is a top priority for us and we are fully committed to continue reducing our carbon footprint and increasing biodiversity across Denbighshire.

On Target: Moorland Management

This project is ongoing and remains on target, with a completion date of October 2023. We have worked hard on this project to try and alleviate the risk to our scenic countryside. The Royal Welsh Show held in July was an opportunity for us to showcase this collaborative project, sharing our learning with landowners and farmers, and promoting proactive land management techniques and the benefits of working together to make Wales more resilient to wildfires in the future.

A serious wildfire incident was averted in August thanks to public vigilance and swift action by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Ranger Team at Coed Moel Famau. Upon hearing of the report, Rangers immediately investigated and discovered an abandoned campfire in a remote location within the forest. Even after they had attended to it, the fire later reignited the leaf litter, pine needles and peaty soil and spread a few

metres. Again AONB Rangers checking on the site were able avert disaster by calling for assistance from the Ruthin Fire Station to soak the surrounding forest floor with several thousand litres of water. This collaborative action prevented a potentially serious incident from occurring.

At Risk: Energy Efficient Council Homes

Although delivery confidence has been compromised since Covid-19, we have made good progress in increasing the number of properties, currently totalling at 1,347, that have achieved an energy target of a C rating or above.

The [Welsh Housing Quality Standard 2023](#) consultation has now closed, and a draft document is expected by the end of the year. We believe the new policy will heavily impact targets on a national level, and may potentially influence future programmes of work and key asset management decisions for our housing stock.

Central Rhyl and Prestatyn Coastal Defence Schemes

At its [meeting in September](#), Communities Scrutiny considered a report on the value and benefits of investing in both the Central Rhyl and Prestatyn schemes. Members supported the recommendations to progress their approval for the schemes to be taken to the Strategic Investment Group (SIG), Cabinet and County Council successively for their respective approval.

Wildflower Project Update

The Wildflower Project is a collaborative project between Biodiversity Team, Streetscene and other sections, that aims to create urban and peri-urban local provenance meadows through a reduced 'cut-and-collect' mowing regime. This project is vital to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity and tackle the Climate and Ecological Emergency. As the flowering season came to an end in August, Streetscene staff visited sites across the county carrying out cutting with specialist mowing equipment. The cuttings were removed off the meadow sites to help lower the richness of the soil and also support a low nutrient ground that our native wildflowers and grass need to grow. Already this year the council has recorded an early purple orchid, a pyramidal orchid and nine bee orchids on sites where they had previously not been recorded.

At its [meeting in September](#), Communities Scrutiny received a report that provided information regarding the effectiveness of the steps taken to improve engagement and increase publicity with all stakeholders of the Wildflower Project. The committee confirmed their approval of progress made to date in delivering expected benefits, and pledged their continued support for the project.

Annual or biennial measures

2020 to 2022 data

Measure	2020 to 2021	2021 to 2022	Status
Total carbon tonnage emitted through staff commuting – Benchmarked Locally	1,719	2,045	Priority for Improvement
Total carbon tonnage emitted through business travel – Benchmarked Locally	126	163	Excellent
Total carbon tonnage emitted through supply chains – Benchmarked Locally	22,206	31,409	Priority for Improvement
Percentage of council owned and operated land in the highest categories of species richness – Benchmarked Locally	38.1	41.0	Acceptable
STEAM - Total Economic Impact of Tourism (£ million) – Benchmarked Locally	213.00	432.00	Priority for improvement
The percentage of existing and acquired council housing stock (1st April 2017 baseline) achieving an EPC (Energy) rating of C or above – Benchmarked Locally	46	53	Priority for improvement
The annual number of trees planted to increase canopy cover in Rhyl and Denbigh – Benchmarked Locally	4400	3,500	Excellent

Measure	2020 to 2021	2021 to 2022	Status
The number of properties with a reduced risk of flooding – Benchmarked Locally	No data	1,650	Excellent

Stakeholder Surveys 2018 to 2022

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

Quarterly or biannual measures

Our measure on the percentage of all new build council housing achieving an EPC (Energy) rating of A for 2021 to 2022 is not applicable as none were completed during this period. However, it is anticipated that 40 new builds will achieve an EPC (Energy) rating of A when completed in 2022 to 2023.

Well-being and Equality

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

Green Guide to Improving the Environment.

The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) have published an illustrated guide to the Llangollen Green Infrastructure (GI) initiative. Developed in consultation with the local community and led by the AONB's climate change lead officer, the guide identifies six well known locations in the town and how they would benefit from GI additions. Each of the locations are linked together by a GI route, which is a mainly traffic free green corridor that should encourage active travel. The guide looks at the existing situation in the town, sets out the basic principles necessary to provide a joined-up network of green spaces that would benefit the local ecosystem, and recommends improvements that would realise the GI objectives.

By **involving** the community, working in **collaboration** and **integrating** with partners and organisations, this publication marks the start of a discussion that moves us towards the **longer-term** objective of creating a more sustainable Llangollen for future generations, **preventing** further harm to the environment. Printed versions of the guide are available from the AONB's Llangollen office and also the Loggerheads Country Park office.

E-Cargo Trike

In June this year an E-Cargo trike was loaned by Sustrans as a trial at Rhyl's Brickfield Pond site to tackle the area's daily work schedule. It was designed to help reduce emissions, reduce operating costs, and help improve engagement with community members while out working. While at the nature reserve it was used to carry out fencing work and to allow Rangers to carry tools and equipment between their base and a variety of sites where strimming, brush cutting and pruning works were needed to maintain public access. Countryside staff enjoyed putting it through its paces.

Adapting how we work and **involving** our staff in these sorts of alternative solutions is important for the sustainability of what we do in the **long-term**, **preventing** harm to the natural environment through constructive **collaboration** and **integration**.

Reuse Shop at Rhyl Recycling Centre

A brand new, innovative charitable re-use shop has officially opened its doors to the public in Rhyl. Every year many items that are perfectly reusable are taken to our recycling centres as waste, but these items could actually be used by someone else. This project,

developed in **collaboration** with Bryson Recycling, the council, St David's Hospice, and support from the Welsh Government's Circular Economy Fund, is a great way to **involve** people and change the way that people think about unwanted items in the **longer-term**. It also benefits the protected characteristics of **Age** and **Disability**, as well as those at a **socio-economic disadvantage**, and **integrates** with the Welsh Government's 'Beyond Recycling' ambitions. We would encourage everyone to take advantage of Rhyl Reuse, which is open seven days a week from 9am to 4.30pm (9am to 4pm November to March) and from 9am – 3.30pm on Sundays.

Microchipped Bins

Residents in parts of West Rhyl have taken delivery of brand new bins as part of a wider programme of changes being introduced to waste and recycling services in the county next year. Brand new, larger black bins have been delivered to over 900 properties across 26 streets as part of a pilot project; and some properties have also received brand new blue bins. Both are microchipped, which allows the council to identify bins belonging to individual properties so that we can improve our communications in the future. The council often needs to contact the users of the bin to provide support and advice around where to store their bins, and what waste goes in each bin. Being able to locate the correct people to talk to straight away saves valuable time and decreases the risk of waste escaping into the environment, or good recycling becoming contaminated.

Involving residents more and more in good recycling habits will improve recycling rates in our county and help **prevent** poor waste management practices and harm to our environment in the **longer-term**. We are also **integrating** and **collaborating** with the Welsh Government's ambitions for Wales to remain one of the highest recycling nations in the World. We look forward to working with our residents over the coming months to make this new scheme a great success for their community.

Living Wall

A further project to the one above in Rhyl has seen a living wall recently being erected on the Rhyl City Strategy (RCS) Hub building on the corner of Wellington Road and Elwy Street. The development includes twelve metres square of vertical planting in a modular system, has an irrigation system to provide water and feed the plants automatically, and a tank beneath to allow for water to be recycled.

Delivered in **collaboration** and **integrating** with the Welsh Government's Transforming Towns funding, this project forms part of a wider town centre greening initiative that seeks to **involve** communities and **prevent** harm to our environment in the **longer-term**.

Benefits will include improved air quality and increased biodiversity through nesting space and food for birds and insects, whilst also improving people's well-being in an area of **socio-economic disadvantage**.

Beach Maintenance

In partnership with Rhyl Town Council, Rhyl Business Improvement District, and Keep Wales Tidy, the council has obtained a new surf rake to enable an enhanced standard of cleansing, leaving Rhyl beach free of cigarettes, plastic, glass and other detritus throughout the summer months, **preventing** harm and protecting this area of natural beauty from poisonous toxins and ensuring a high standard of cleanliness is maintained for locals and tourists. The rake will complement the already great work undertaken to keep Rhyl beach tidy by volunteering community groups, such as Surfers Against Sewage and their regular beach cleans.

In addition to the beach rake, Streetscene have recently purchased with contributions from key partners, electric waste collection carts that will be deployed in busy pedestrian areas to carry waste where it is difficult to access with traditional vehicles during busy periods and during events, such as Rhyl Air Show. We have also jointly funded an electric Glutton street cleansing vacuum cleaner, which is deployed in the Rhyl Town centre area.

These steps will benefit an area of **socio-economic disadvantage** and help foster a sense of pride in Rhyl as a local area, hopefully encouraging the **involvement** of residents and visitors in the maintenance of the beach and town in the **longer-term**, and **preventing** harm to the built and natural environment. We have worked with numerous partners to help bring these measures into fruition, showing great **integration** and **collaborative** working.

Gronant

The group of Little Terns found at Gronant beach near Prestatyn is the largest breeding colony found in Wales. The 2022 season marks the eighteenth year Denbighshire Countryside Services has dedicated to protecting the colony. A return to full engagement

activities on the site following the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions saw 1,138 visitors visit the beach to support and view the colony. There were 211 breeding pairs recorded this year, the highest count seen at Gronant, and a 23% increase on the previous count in 2018. The baseline for sustaining a Little Tern colony is widely accepted to be 0.74 fledglings per pair, and this season's colony saw a figure of 0.99, providing an encouraging sign about the future of these endangered birds. Nearly 300 children also visited the site this season thanks to the work of the project's engagement officer and wardens. Over 200 children were additionally involved in the project through visits to schools.

This season saw individuals from the North Wales Little Tern Group, Denbighshire Countryside Services, Merseyside Ringing Group, Bangor University, Prestatyn High School and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) contributing time to volunteer on the project. This support totalled well over 600 hours of volunteering. The volunteers helped to chase away kestrels trying to prey on the ground dwelling chicks, as well as helping with other tasks ranging from post knocking to photo identification.

The dunes at Gronant were first awarded Keep Wales Tidy's prestigious Green Flag Award last year, which provides a national quality standard and framework for green space. In September we welcomed the news that Gronant Sand Dunes had kept its Green Flag status for 2022 to 2023; a sign to the public that a park or green space boasts the highest possible environmental standards, is beautifully maintained, and has excellent visitor facilities.

Success is attributed to working **collaboratively, involving** people to ensure the **long-term** future of the breeding colony, preservation of the beach, and the **prevention** of harm to this beautiful natural environment. It is a site that directly benefits those experiencing **socio-economic disadvantage**, as well as the protected characteristics of **Age**, and **Disability**.

Fostering Tourism

An online Wales Ambassador Scheme, which provides a series of training modules and knowledge on the special qualities of areas in Wales, continues to grow. The modules covered include welsh language, communities, culture, history, sustainable tourism, cycling and walking. The training is totally free and open to everyone. Residents, volunteers and local community groups are particularly encouraged to become

Ambassadors to learn more about the unique characteristics of each area. Denbighshire was the first to launch an online course of its kind in Wales. Snowdonia and Brecon Beacons National Parks, Conwy and Gwynedd have since launched courses and Flintshire, Anglesey, Ceredigion, and Carmarthenshire are busy preparing to launch later this year. To date, over 2,600 people have enrolled onto at least one of the courses on the website with 1,684 achieving the bronze level certificate across 5 courses. In total, 4,330 bronze, silver and gold certificates have been awarded to Ambassadors. For more information on the scheme and to sign-up please visit the website for [Ambassador Wales](#).

‘Clwyd’ was featured at this year’s The Royal Welsh Show, with Denbighshire, Conwy, Flintshire and Wrexham working under the Clwyd host counties banner to focus the spotlight on the ‘North Wales Way’, one of the three routes (together with the ‘Cambrian Way’ and the ‘Coastal Way’) that make up the ‘Wales Way’. The North Wales Way follows an old trading route for 75 miles along the northern coast into Anglesey. At the showground, the four counties provided visitor information displays, with a broad range of promotional literature; films promoting the region, and showcased local food and drink produce. To find out more information about the North Wales Way, please visit [the North East Wales website](#).

Integrating with the ambition of local businesses, residents and visitors, promoting our tourism and supporting continuous learning through great **collaborative** programmes such as the Ambassador Scheme will help more people become invested and feel **involved** in the historic, cultural and environmental richness of our county; as well as support its economic success in the **longer-term, preventing** stagnation. It can have a positive impact on people’s well-being; whether looking to learn more about the area, improve job prospects or meet new people. There are also benefits to those with the protected characteristics of **Age** and **Disability**, as well as those at a **socio-economic disadvantage**.

Tackling Phosphorus Pollution

At its [meeting in September](#), Cabinet was advised that new phosphorous standards for the nine Welsh riverine Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) had been set, with around 38% of surveyed waterbodies in the ‘River Dee and Bala Lake SAC’ compliance areas having failed to achieve the targets. Wrexham County Borough Council and Flintshire County Council had committed to form a Nutrient Management Board (NMB), and it was

recommended that Denbighshire County Council join the partnership to enable a catchment-wide approach to improving water quality in the River Dee, and ensure the council could deliver local community projects and an efficient Planning Service under the Habitats Regulations 2017. The report set out the legal framework, structure, potential resource requirements and early workload. Cabinet recognised the importance of tackling phosphate pollution both for environmental reasons, and the impact on planning applications, including future housing provision, and were fully supportive of the joining the NMB.

Integrating and **collaborating** with our partner authorities, and recognising the ambition of the Welsh Government, to work on this important issue will **prevent** harm to our important waterways and maintain their beauty and delicate ecosystems for the enjoyment of future generations in the **long-term**. We cannot do this alone, however, and will need to **involve** landowners, farmers, foresters, land managers and businesses.

Colomendy Industrial Estate

In September the enabling works by Jones Bros at the industrial estate for the council's new Waste Transfer facility for domestic, trade and highway waste was recognised by the 2022 Institute of Civil Engineers (ICE) Wales Cymru Annual Awards, being shortlisted for two awards – the Roy Edwards Award and the Alun Griffiths Award for Community Engagement. The awards showcase the outstanding work done by civil engineers from across the region over the previous year.

We were delighted that this innovative **collaboration** project was recognised by the ICE Awards, particularly recognising the **involvement** of the community. It is hoped that the project will provide a **long-term**, sustainable solution to support our important waste management efforts that protect and **prevent** harm to the environment. The jobs and opportunities that will come from this scheme will benefit the protected characteristics of **Age**, and those at a **socio-economic disadvantage**.

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

Measures: Priority for improvement

Projects: Good

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update

There is only one update to give in this report to our data framework for Young People; this relates to the 18 to 24 claimant count. Data for July to September reveals a slight increase in Denbighshire's claimant count, now resting at 5.3% (up from 4.9% in June). This increase appears to reflect national trends, with both the Wales and UK averages also rising. We remain behind the Wales average at 4.3% (up from 4.1%). The UK claimant count has also still not recovered its pre-pandemic levels (which were historically lower than Wales), now at 4.6% (up from 4.3% in June).

Following Welsh Government guidance, we continue to be unable to use attendance and attainment data to benchmark the performance of our schools. However, we must note congratulations to those pupils that received their GCSEs, AS and A level results this summer. Learners have continued to face significant challenges over the last year, and there has been a great deal of work undertaken by pupils, families, schools and partners to ensure that the best possible results are achieved.

In other good news, the council's Oak Tree Centre in Rhyl, which provides full day care for children between the ages of eight weeks and 12 years, has received a positive report following a recent inspection by Care Inspectorate Wales and Estyn. Two recommendations have been made for improvement, which the council will take forward. The full report may be viewed on the [Care Inspectorate Wales website](#).

Corporate Plan Programme Board: Project Update

Experiencing Obstacles: Modernising Education

Following a notice of motion in January 2022, which had originated from concerns over the condition of Prestatyn High School, County Council requested that the condition surveys of all schools be reviewed to see whether they had changed to such an extent as to call into

question the current priority order of schools. It was resolved at Cabinet's [meeting in July](#) that no significant change had occurred in respect of the condition of school buildings, and that the current policy order of schools was still current and correct.

The Outline Business Case was recently approved by Welsh Government for the Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn project and the pre-planning consultation was live until October 18. Options for the proposed Ysgol Pendref land swap are being reviewed for with a view to the Trust meeting to consider the options. The findings of the feasibility works for the Ysgol Bryn Collen / Ysgol Gwernant scheme are also being awaited.

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

Experiencing Obstacles: Childcare Settings

The programme continues to progress a number of small projects under the Child Care Capital Grant / Flying Start Capital Grant. Progress has been slow on the works at the Oaktree Centre in Rhyl, with the scheme behind the initial completion date. A revised tender for Twm o'r Nant project has been received and this was again over the forecast budget. The project at Ysgol Dewi Sant has also seen an increase in the anticipated costs and has stalled due to issues over drainage.

At Risk: Work Start

The project is now at risk as there are continued delays to the announcement of the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund, which was due in August but is now not expected until the end of October. No further funding has been agreed to support the project beyond December, which places staff at risk of redundancy. We remain, however, on track to deliver current targets until the end of December 2022.

On Target: Volunteering

HR Business Partners will work with services to refresh their representation on the Internal Volunteers Network. This will allow services that have not yet been involved to think about where there is scope to provide volunteering opportunities going forward. In the meantime, live volunteering opportunities were promoted at the recently held Recruitment Fair co-ordinated by HR, and there are new templates for volunteer managers to complete ahead

of upload to their dedicated webpages. In addition to this, the volunteers email is back-up and running, and there is now an online form that people who wish to participate in volunteering can use to register. This is then matched against volunteering opportunities available.

Annual or biennial measures

2020 to 2022 data

Measure	2020 to 2021	2021 to 2022	Status
Percentage of pupil attendance in primary schools – Benchmarked Nationally	No data due to Covid-19	No data due to Covid-19	Excellent (based on 2019 to 2020)
Percentage of pupil attendance in secondary schools – Benchmarked Nationally	No data due to Covid-19	No data due to Covid-19	Priority for improvement (based on 2019 to 2020)
The percentage of children aged 4-5 years who are a healthy weight or underweight (reported one year in arrears) – Benchmarked Nationally	71.8	No data due to Covid-19	Priority for improvement
Local Authority Points Score Average - KS4 Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate Indicator – Benchmarked Nationally	No data due to Covid-19	No data due to Covid-19	Excellent (based on 2019 to 2020)
The percentage of children achieving 5 GCSEs A*-C (Level 2, Key Stage 4), including English or Welsh (1st language), Maths and English Literature, by the end of secondary school, against the percentage that achieved the expected standard at the end of primary school	No data due to Covid-19	No data due to Covid-19	Acceptable (based on 2019 to 2020)

Measure	2020 to 2021	2021 to 2022	Status
(Level 4, Key Stage 2) – Benchmarked Nationally			
The number of schools providing education through suitability and condition categories C and D – Benchmarked Locally	27	27	Priority for improvement
The percentage of pupils (using Pupil Attitudes to Self and School - PASS) who respond positively against pupils' feelings about school – Benchmarked Locally	87.2	No data due to no Survey.	Good
The percentage increase in the salaries of young people enrolled in the Employment Bursary Project – Benchmarked Locally	17	16	Excellent

2018 to 2022 data

Measure	2018 to 2019	2021 to 2022	Status
The percentage of residents that are satisfied that there are job opportunities for young people at the start of their career – Benchmarked Locally	19	19	Priority for improvement
The percentage of residents that are satisfied that there are opportunities for young people to develop their skills – Benchmarked Locally	28	26	Priority for improvement
The percentage of residents that are satisfied that there are leisure opportunities that appeal to young people – Benchmarked Locally	50	40	Priority for improvement

Quarterly or biannual measures

Measure	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Quarter 3 2021 to 2022	Quarter 4 2021 to 2022	Quarter 1 2022 to 2023	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Status
Percentage of the population aged 18 to 24 claiming Job Seekers Allowance – Benchmarked Nationally	7.5	6.9	6.2	4.9	5.3	Priority for improvement

Well-being and Equality

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

Summer of Fun and National Play Day

A 'Summer of Fun' returned for children and young people in Denbighshire this year, with the council once again providing a range of free sporting, cultural and play based bilingual activities as part of the Welsh Government's Summer of Fun project. Events took place across the county between July 1 and September 30, and were open to young people aged between 0 to 25.

During the first week of August, the council organised a great day out for the whole family in Rhyl. The annual National Play Day celebrations took place at Ysgol Christchurch playing fields. The free event featured a host of activities, including den building, arts and crafts, messy play, cardboard box city, dressing up, forest schools, bouncy castles, circus skills, painting, water-play, bird box making, giant games, inflatable bungee and much more.

Delivered in **collaboration** with the Welsh Government, **integrating** our aims to encourage healthy expression through play activity, our events sought to support the well-being of our residents by **involving** communities, young people and their families. Events such as this **prevent** isolation, directly benefit the protected characteristic of **Age**, and help those at a **socio-economic disadvantage**; as well as hopefully creating lasting **long-term** memories and supporting child and skills development.

Summer Reading Challenge

Children aged between 4 and 11 were encouraged to visit local libraries in Denbighshire during the summer to meet the 'Gadgeteers' and to get involved in a science and innovation themed Summer Reading Challenge. With free materials from libraries and online through the [Challenge website](#), children will be able to join six fictional characters and use their curiosity and wonder to understand the science behind a whole range of interests, from fashion and technology, to cooking and music. Summer Reading Challenge events at libraries will include science workshops with Xplore, and Lego workshops with G2G, Words and Wiggles story and dance sessions with Eleni for under 5s, and Bookstart baby rhymetimes.

It is important that we continue to **collaborate** and **integrate** with our partners to deliver worthy schemes such as this that will benefit the well-being and development of our young people in the **long-term, preventing** deprivation and isolation through **involvement**. This work directly benefits the protected characteristics of **Age** and helps those at a **socio-economic disadvantage**.

Climate Change

Denbighshire pupils have been asked to post a message through time to help us create a better future by imagining that we have moved ahead to 2050. They have been asked to send a postcard back to their younger selves to explain how climate change is potentially impacting on their lives. Those taking part are encouraged to imagine what has been done over the years to help the environment and reduce climate change, the impact of new technology on people and the environment, how animals are surviving in the future, and the effects of the weather.

Our young people have an excellent understanding of how climate change is and will impact our everyday lives, and it is hoped that **involving** them in this project will lend a megaphone to their views and promote **collaborative** and **integrated** action for change, **preventing** further harm to our environment in the **long-term**. The competition directly benefits the protected characteristic of **Age**, and is supported by the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT). Information on the competition is available on [our website](#). The winning pupils and schools will be revealed on December 12.

TRAC and Llwybrau

TRAC, a project that supports young people disengaged in education to realise their potential, celebrated its achievements at a special event in July. Supported by the European Social Fund through the Welsh Government, the project started in 2015 and has worked with 18 local companies to deliver 126 bespoke courses to young people in Denbighshire to address their needs and provide quality engagement and accredited provision. To date 1,995 young people have been supported through various providers, including support mentors, youth officers, counselling, bespoke courses and support from Careers Wales. 304 young people secured qualifications through the support they received, and 471 had a reduction in becoming NEET (Not in Education Engagement or Employment). Of the participants 78.8% have continued in full time education, and a further 13.3% moved on to a full-time higher level course in college. Over the lifespan of the project the NEET figures in Denbighshire have reduced steadily from 3.1% to 1.7%.

With European Funding for the project coming to an end this year, Education colleagues are taking forward plans for a project, 'Llwybrau', to continue to tackle socio-economic disadvantage, supporting vulnerable children and young people in schools. Llwybrau will be a smaller, but still substantial solution using learning from data analysis and the independent Wavehill interim evaluation to focus and adapt those areas of the TRAC project that have proven most impactful. The intention is that this will be funded through the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund.

The success of TRAC as a **collaborative** project that **integrated** the aims and ambitions of sponsors and providers to help all young people to remain engaged in education and achieve their potential cannot be downplayed. **Involving** young people in the identification of alternative, more suitable pathways to learning has been key, and has ultimately led to the **prevention** of circumstances that could lead to **long-term** hardship for those

individuals. The project directly benefits the protected characteristic of **Age**, and helps those at a **socio-economic disadvantage**.

School Meals

During the summer holidays the council supported the continuation of the 'Food and Fun' School Holiday Enrichment Programme (also known as SHEP). This is a school-based education programme that provides food and nutrition education, physical activity, enrichment sessions and healthy meals to children during the school summer holidays. Food and Fun has developed into a national, fully funded Welsh Government programme administered by the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA).

As with previous years, the council made free school meal arrangements during the summer holidays to directly pay parents and guardians £19.50 per child per week to meet the costs of buying and preparing meals for free school meals. Denbighshire administered the fund on behalf of the Welsh Government, benefitting 4,275 children.

Finally, the council and schools have worked hard to put in place preparations for the rollout of Universal Free School Meals in primary schools, with the initial phase being for reception children from September. Following receipt of £859k from the Welsh Government, works to increase the capacity of 13 primary school kitchens has taken place. The offer will increase our catering service's daily meal count from 3500 to 7687. Delivery of the project has been a significant challenge and within very tight timescales. However, the support from local suppliers, contractors and the Welsh Government has been excellent. The next phase will focus on ensuring that all primary schools are able to deliver to year 1 and 2 pupils by Easter 2023.

Our work in this areas to support healthy eating directly benefits the protected characteristic of **Age** and those at a **socio-economic disadvantage**. In all these endeavours we have **collaborated** and **integrated** well with partners at a national and local level, focussing on providing **long-term** quality services that will benefit the nutritional well-being of our young people and **prevent** hunger and negative eating behaviours. We also seek to **involve** young people in the design of our menus to keep them engaged with healthy and nutritional diets.

School Uniform and Equipment Grants

Parents and guardians have been encouraged to apply for the Pupil Development Grant, which is being administered by the council on behalf of the Welsh Government. Parents or guardians who receive a qualifying benefit can receive a grant of £225 if their children are in reception or years 1 to 11, or £300 if the child is just starting in Year 7. The grant may be used to cover the costs of school uniforms; sports kits; sports outside of school; uniforms for wider activities (such as scouts and guides); equipment for activities to support the curriculum (such as design and technology); equipment for out-of-school hours' trips, including outdoor learning; Duke of Edinburgh activities; and computers, laptops and tablets. For more information on what support is available, visit our [Cost of Living Support webpage](#).

Working in **collaboration** with the Welsh Government, **integrating** our ambition that no child is left behind in their learning, this grant will help ensure that those at a **socio-economic disadvantage** are supported to have equal access to educational opportunities, **preventing** deprivation and supporting **long-term** development. It directly benefits the protected characteristic of **Age**.

Curriculum for Wales

At its [meeting in July](#), Performance Scrutiny received a report from the Principal Education Manager and GwE officers on the implementation of the Curriculum in Wales and the support given to Denbighshire schools. The new curriculum is very different to that which previously followed, being more skills based, with schools being encouraged to shape the learning experience around their learners. Although it is not prescriptive, it gives a clear structure to ensure that Denbighshire's 16,500 students become ambitious, capable, enterprising, creative, healthy, confident and ethically informed. The curriculum would be statutory in all Welsh primary schools from September 2022 and secondary schools from September 2023.

The committee resolved to receive a further report in 12 months' time detailing the effectiveness of the Curriculum's implementation in the county's primary schools, including the lessons learnt during the implementation stage, and outlining the measures taken to prepare for the Curriculum's delivery across the County's secondary sector from September 2023.

Considerable **involvement** and **integration** work has taken place to prepare schools for the new curriculum, in **collaboration** with GwE, our school improvement partners, and the Welsh Government. It is critically important that the new curriculum works for both schools and learners to support **long-term** delivery and development, and **prevent** educational deprivation. This work directly benefits the protected characteristic of **Age**.

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

Measures: Priority for improvement

Governance: Good

Corporate Health Performance Framework: Measures Update

With this report, 51% of our Corporate Plan measures currently present as a priority for improvement, which is consistent with our last report. Two of our corporate projects are currently presenting as 'compromised' (Dewi Sant Childcare, and the Ysgol y Castell extension), with 100% of projects being regularly updated by project managers.

The Dewi Sant Childcare project is facing an issue with drainage on the site that means the project cannot move forward at present. The project is dependent on the completion of the Ffordd Derwen flood risk management scheme, which is currently in the detailed design and full business case stage, with works on site not anticipated to start until late 2023 to early 2024. Works on this scheme have to be done before the Dewi Sant project can link in. Timescales will be discussed with Welsh Government as the above impacts on the funding programme.

The second compromised project, the Ysgol y Castell extension, is effectively on pause at present due to a lack of funding. Alternative funding options have been explored but have proved unsuccessful. All stakeholders are being kept informed.

55% of our Corporate Risks were found to be inconsistent with our risk appetite during our most recent review, which commenced in August. These are being addressed by senior managers and Cabinet, and justify their inclusion in our Corporate Risk Register as the most serious risks faced by the council.

We have received no formal recommendations for improvement from external regulators (Estyn, Care Inspectorate Wales and Audit Wales), and there have also been no low assurance reports in this period from internal audit.

Our measure on budget variance (i.e. what we have and receive versus what we are spending) has increased from 1,109k in June 2022 to 2,661k in September 2022. The council's reserves remain at £7.135m.

The percentage of negative news stories about the council (taken as a proportion of all news stories about the council) has increased slightly to 11% between July and September. The April to June figure was 10%. This represents 84 negative stories out of a total of 734. The percentage of external complaints upheld or partly upheld over the last quarter has increased from 46% to 67%. This represents 55 complaints upheld or partly upheld.

As at September 2022, sickness absence stood at 10 days, down from 10.18 in the last period. This compares to 7.54 days in September 2021. As at September 2022, the percentage of staff who have had at least 3 one-to-one meetings in the last 12 months stood at 52%, up from 45% in the last period.

By the end of September, 35% of the council's spend was with local suppliers and 64% of contracts (over £25k and under £1,000k) during the period contained community benefits. Two collaborative procurement activities were completed during the period, and none were missed. There are now 17 potential collaborative procurements on the horizon, and these will be explored and developed in the coming months.

Our final measure considers the council's efforts to support residents into work through placements that we ourselves offer within the council. During July to September we successfully supported 8 additional placements, bringing our annual cumulative total to 163.

Corporate Health Self-Assessment: Governance Areas

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

Corporate Planning

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

Develop a new Corporate Plan by October 2022

A workshop was held with County Council on July 12 where constructive input was given on the nine draft objectives developed for the 2022 to 2027 Corporate Plan. Subsequently a final round of public engagement was launched in August to 'check-in' with our stakeholders that we were concentrating on the right things. We received positive feedback, with some 220 respondents contributing in this phase. The final Corporate Plan for 2022 to 2027 is to go forward for County Council approval on October 11.

Senior Leadership Team

Two new Corporate Directors were appointed in July ([see below](#)) addressing capacity issues at the Corporate Executive Team level. Both took up post in September, and work to now review the Head of Service tier can begin. Initial discussions with managers and staff will take place during the autumn, seeking to bring forward proposals for member consideration in December. In the meantime, interim arrangements continue to be in place, with middle managers acting up to cover vacant head of service roles.

Committee Appointments

At its [meeting in July](#), the work of County Council continued with the appointment of various committees and positions, including to appoint elected members to the Democratic Services Committee and to appoint the committee's chair; the appointment of an elected member to the North Wales Police and Crime Panel; the appointment of directors to the Board of Denbighshire Leisure Ltd; and the appointment of a Town, City and Community Council representative to the Standards Committee. The council also agreed it's committee dates for 2023. A survey of members is to take place to determine whether meetings held during the day is a detriment to working members where employers are reticent to release staff to attend meetings.

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

With restrictions on office working now eased, the New Ways of Working Project continues to assess staff behaviour in terms of office and home working patterns; this includes a survey of staff that was launched during the summer. We will also monitor staff habits in the upcoming colder months where we may see a change. Our analyses will better inform our long-term asset strategy and policies. There is also ongoing work to review health and

safety procedures within our buildings, including signing in and out, and the availability of fire wardens and first aiders.

A recent Audit Wales report on the council's asset and workforce management in the wake of the pandemic was discussed by the Governance and Audit Committee at its [meeting in July](#). Four recommendations were made by the report:

- Consider learning and areas for improvement from the pandemic to help inform future use of assets and workforce, where the pandemic has highlighted such opportunities.
- Clarify the council's vision for the shape and size of its building assets and workforce in the short, medium, and long term.
- Develop asset and workforce strategies and delivery plans that build on learning from the council's experience of the Covid-19 pandemic, and deliver the council's vision in these areas.
- Identify the costs of delivering these plans and incorporate these into the medium-term financial plan.

The council's full management response to these recommendations was considered alongside the report by the committee, giving assurance that work had already been done, or was underway to address them, particularly through the work of the New Ways of Working project.

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

One outstanding requirement of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act concerns arrangements for a peer 'Panel Assessment' of council functions, to take place once within the electoral term. We are very clear about the need to discuss these arrangements as soon as possible with elected members, so that they may determine when in their term the assessment should take place. However, we are waiting on the Welsh Local Government Association to provide us with detail on their national Peer Assessment offer, including costs. We have been assured that we will have this detail to discuss with members in the spring, with the first panel assessments of local authorities taking place in the autumn of 2023 at the earliest.

Service Challenge Action: Commitment to customer service.

As reported previously, this improvement activity is on hold until the new senior management structure is known. It is hoped that the programme may be run in the spring, but this it to be discussed with the Corporate Executive Team in the autumn to see what is possible in the context of the review of the Senior Leadership Team. It is proposed that the challenges will work as previously to a condensed timetable and reduced paperwork; however, consideration does need to be given to how service level data is reviewed, as this is an important part of our Performance Management Framework. Following a recent Audit Wales review of Performance Management ([see below](#)), proposals will also include a recommendation for the publishing of service level performance data.

Other developments in the last period

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

Following the news of the death of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the Chairman of the County Council, Cllr Arwel Roberts, issued a [statement of condolence](#) on behalf of the council, and laid floral wreaths as a mark of respect at a short ceremony at County Hall, Ruthin, and Russell House, Rhyl. Provision was also made for the public to lay floral tributes and sign books of condolence at locations across the county (including an electronic version available through our website). Planned public meetings of the County Council and its committees were postponed until after the official period of public mourning ended on September 26, and arrangements were put in place to observe the national bank holiday on September 19.

King Charles III

Following the Accession Council's proclamation of the accession of King Charles III on September 9, local ceremonies took place across the United Kingdom. Chairman of the County Council, Cllr Arwel Robert, read out the proclamation in both Welsh and English during a ceremony held at County Hall, Ruthin. The Chairman also expressed his gratitude to those who attended and to those who ensured the arrangements were carried out in a dignified and respectful manner.

Shared Prosperity Fund

The Shared Prosperity Fund is predominantly a revenue funding programme and Denbighshire's individual allocation is £25,647,958, with investment priorities focusing on Community and Place; Supporting Local Business; and People and Skills. At its [meeting in July](#), Cabinet received an update on local arrangements for planning and delivering the Regional Investment Strategy. Approval was given to further develop the Shared Prosperity Fund Programme; delegate authority to the Chief Executive and the Leader to develop and submit Denbighshire's priorities for inclusion in the Regional Investment Strategy; and for Gwynedd County Council to act as lead body for the submission of the Strategy and to lead on the subsequent delivery programme.

Financial Planning

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

Finance Update Reports

At its [meetings in June](#) and [September](#), Cabinet received an update on the council's financial position. The net revenue budget for 2022 to 2023 is £233.696m (up from £216.818m in 2021 to 22). As at September, the position on service and corporate budgets is a forecast overspend of £1.953m (up from £1.936m the previous month). £0.754m had been identified through service savings and inflated fees and charges (no savings having been requested from Community Support Services or Schools). At the end of August, the council's borrowing totalled £239.683m at an average rate of 3.78%. Investment balances were £23.7m at an average rate of 1.5%.

With regards to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), the latest revenue position assumes a decrease in balances at year end of £570k, which is £567k more than the £4k at the time the budget was approved. The movement relates to a reduction in estimated rental income. HRA balances are therefore forecast to be £1.486m at the end of the year. The HRA Capital budget of £29.9m is largely allocated between planned improvements to existing housing stock (£17m) and new build developments and acquisitions (£13m).

The reports also give a summary of the council's capital plan. The approved capital plan is £66.1m, with expenditure to date of £8.2m. The Capital Plan contingency was increased

by £1.676m to £2.176m (up from the £0.500m agreed in February) due to carrying forward the unhypothecated element of a capital grant received from the Welsh Government in March. After an allocation made to the Waste Project, the contingency level at £1m will help mitigate the risks to the overall programme of the impact of inflation on capital costs.

A particular area of concern was the budget position for Education and Children's Services, where it has progressively worsened month on month with now a forecasted overspend of £2.457m. The majority of the pressure (£1.5m) related to new residential and independent fostering placements. The difficulties in predicting spend for that demand-led service has been well documented previously. The Out-of-County income budget pressure has increased this month by £519k to £611k with a decrease in expected income, due to a reduction in number of pupils from other local authorities. The projected overspend assumes we will receive Welsh Government funding of £0.880m this year, although £0.300m of this is yet to be confirmed. Further discussion will occur in the autumn as to how best to deal with these pressures going forward.

Statement of Accounts

The council has a statutory duty to produce a statement of accounts that complies with approved accounting standards. The audited accounts have to be formally approved by the Governance and Audit Committee at its [meeting in July](#) on behalf of the County Council. The draft accounts have now been finalised and were signed by the Head of Finance, and have been made available for audit and public inspection as required. As happened for the last few years, the Welsh Government issued guidance that due to the ongoing impact of Covid-19, the statutory deadlines for the completion of the Draft and Audited accounts would be extended. The council took the early decision to issue a notice to say that we would not be aiming for the statutory early deadline of May 31 for the Draft Statement of Accounts, and July 31 for the Audited Statement of Accounts. However, the statement confirms that we would achieve the revised deadlines of August 31 and November 30. This decision was taken in consultation with Audit Wales and informed by their assessment of their ability to complete the required audit work.

Certification of Grants and Returns

At its [meeting in July](#), Governance and Audit considered Audit Wales' report on the certification of grants and returns by the council during 2020 to 2021. Grant Funding is

vital in funding local government activity in a number of areas, and this report helps give assurance that there are adequate arrangements in place within the council to administer the grant process. The report finds that the council has adequate arrangements in place for the production and submission of the 2020 to 2021 grant claims. The number of grants that are specifically audited by Audit Wales has reduced dramatically over recent years, however, the seven that remain are very complex and involve a large number of transactions and value. It is pleasing that the total effect of amendments to the Authority's claims and returns was small. It should also be noted that only one of the grants required qualifications.

Annual Treasury Management

At its [meeting in July](#), Governance and Audit considered the Annual Treasury Management report, which outlines the council's investment and borrowing activity for 2021 to 2022. It also provides details of the economic climate during that time and shows how the council complied with its Prudential Indicators. Approximately £0.5bn passes through the council's bank accounts every year. The council's outstanding borrowing at the end of March was £234.7m at an average rate of 3.77%, and the council held £28.7m in investments at an average rate of 0.47%.

Members were reminded of the three priorities considered when investing funds:

- keep money safe (security);
- make sure that the money comes back when it is needed (liquidity);
- make sure a decent rate of return is achieved (yield).

Audit Enquiries

Audit Wales, as the council's appointed external auditors, have a duty to obtain evidence of how management and those charged with governance are discharging their responsibilities for preventing and detecting fraud. A report presented to the Governance and Audit Committee [meeting in July](#) sets out the Audit Enquiries Letter and the council's response to those enquiries, covering the following areas:

- Management processes in place to identify and mitigate against the risk of fraud.
- Awareness of any actual or alleged instances of fraud.

- Processes to gain assurance that all relevant laws and regulations have been complied with.
- Whether there is any potential litigation or claims that would affect the financial statements.
- Processes to identify, authorise, approve, account for and disclose related party transactions and relationships.

The response gives a good overview of many of the issues that the Governance and Audit Committee has had sight of, and gives assurance that there are robust processes in place. Critically, all known or suspected fraud that Internal Audit have been made aware of have been investigated, records maintained, and the Governance and Audit Committee updated quarterly as part of the Internal Audit progress update. Although there have been individual investigations carried out by Internal Audit, there have been no material level frauds identified. We are also not aware of any instances of non-compliance with any relevant laws or regulations.

Regulation of Investigatory Powers Annual Report

The annual report was presented to the Governance and Audit Committee [meeting in July](#), and covers the council's use of its powers of surveillance under RIPA (Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000). The level of RIPA activity, which relates only to 'covert' surveillance, rather than 'overt' surveillance, has reduced dramatically over the past ten years to the point now where little or no covert surveillance is taking place. The council will utilise its RIPA powers only as a very last resort, i.e. where all other means of gathering evidence has been considered and explored.

In the event of a RIPA application being taken forward, there are legal hurdles to overcome before the surveillance can take place, which includes a detailed application form completed by the applicant, a face-to-face meeting with one of the council's Authorising Officers (a member of CET), and then attendance for formal approval from the Magistrates Court. Irrespective of the process, one of the reasons for a reduction in this activity is that the council has other transparent methods in place, in a world where public bodies now share more data than they may have done previously as a way of combatting fraud and crime. The two main areas where the council is more likely to require a RIPA authorisation is in respect of underage sales and fly tipping. However, the council is

required to consider other less intrusive means of preventing or combatting such activities, such as signage or working transparently with publicans and off-licences to ensure they are complying with their duties on alcohol sales.

Since the last Annual Report to the Committee there has been no covert surveillance activity conducted, and this is a trend that is the same throughout all local authorities. The Covid-19 pandemic will also have had an impact on any ability or necessity to carry out such activities.

Performance Management

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

Implement annual process for stakeholder engagement on council performance.

The project team have taken account of lessons learned from the first year of the annual Stakeholder Survey (2021) and revised the survey to focus on only the statutory questions that we need to ask under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, covering the performance of our corporate objectives and governance. The survey and approach were shared with SLT and Cabinet Briefing in September, and will be launched in November. The survey will be promoted through a targeted communications campaign and run until the end of January, with the results analysed in time for inclusion in our end of year Self-Assessment.

Delivering Sustained Improvement

As previously reported, Audit Wales have published a [review of the council's performance management arrangements](#), seeking assurance that they are robust and likely to support continuous and sustainable improvement. It concluded that the council's Performance Management Framework and arrangements for measuring and reporting performance are effective, with some opportunities to improve the use of the performance management software. The council could also look to improve performance reporting of non-priority areas, how finance and performance information are considered simultaneously, and that staff 1:1s are recorded in an accurate and timely manner. Following the postponement of

the Governance and Audit Committee's meeting in September, the report is now to be considered at its [meeting in October](#), alongside the management response.

Queen's Buildings

Following on from our previous report on the progress of the Queen's Buildings, contractors, Wynne Construction, have started on the groundworks for the site, which includes piled concrete foundations. As part of Wynne's community engagement, the firm hosted two community-facing events at Rhyl Pavilion, including a 'Meet The Buyer' event (open to subcontractors who are interested in joining the supply chain, as well as social enterprise and third-sector organisations looking to provide goods and services during the construction phase); and a job fair for the public (which showcased what will be involved on the scheme, as well as highlighting the local career opportunities that the project will offer). The council is now commencing the process to secure an operator to manage the development, which includes 18 individual units (including 5 hot food units), a double-sided bar and large flexible events space internally, and an external area capable of holding events, markets or seating. Traders interested in trading at the Queens Market are also encouraged to register their interest for a space through [our website](#).

The funding for the development has been provided by the council, the Welsh Government Transforming Towns programme, and the European Regional Development Fund. Transforming Towns is supporting work to the value of nearly £25m within Rhyl town centre, improving and adapting underutilised commercial and residential property. Minister for North Wales, Lesley Griffiths, visited some of the projects in the town centre in July, which included the Queen's Market. The Minister also saw some of the areas planned for development in the High Street, including the renovation of three properties to provide small business spaces on the ground floor, and intermediate housing units on the upper floors. For the most up-to-date information about Rhyl regeneration projects, visit the [council's website](#) for information on Rhyl Regeneration.

Address Staff Capacity within Internal Audit

As at September 23, the planning for addressing staff capacity was on track, as the Chief Internal Auditor (CIA), Principal Auditor and two Senior Auditor roles had all been filled, and the team was running with just one vacancy for an auditor. The intention was to convert this vacant post from an auditor to a senior auditor role, and it has been to the

budget board. However, since September one of the Senior Auditors has been successful in being appointed to an external role, and therefore the vacancy list will be two posts by the end of this year. As a consequence, Internal Audit are looking at advertising for the two posts in mid-November, and are exploring different ways of advertising and attracting people to apply.

Improve the feedback received by clients following internal audits

To improve the number of completed post audit questionnaires, the Internal Audit Team is looking at sending the questionnaires out on a six monthly basis. Then after a month, a polite reminder will be sent to hopefully prompt a few more officers to complete the questionnaire. Unfortunately, due to staff shortages the questionnaires will only be going out at the end of October, and the reminder at the end of December. Currently we feel that the questions being asked are relevant and are not going to review them until the next financial year.

Other developments in the last period

Self-Assessment of Performance

The council's Self-Assessment of performance against its functions, the first required under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, was approved by County Council on July 19, and subsequently published on our [performance webpage](#).

Going forward it is our intention to publish each quarterly performance report (which make up our annual Self-Assessment) on this webpage, in addition to tabling every other report (July to September, and January to March) publically with Cabinet and Performance Scrutiny. This July to September update report is the second of our ongoing self-assessment for 2022 to 2023. The previous April to June report may now be viewed through the above link.

Director of Social Services Annual Report

At its [meeting in July](#), Performance Scrutiny received the draft of the Director of Social Services Annual Report. The report is an honest reflection of Adult and Children's Service performance in the context of recovering from the pandemic and the long-term effects that still impact on our ability to deliver social care services. Nevertheless, some significant

achievements have been made and are noted in the report. Overall our performance is comparable with the previous year, with some improvement in areas such as the number of children returned home from care, and the number of assessments for children completed within statutory timescales. This is at a time where we are seeing significant recruitment and retention issues and increasing complexity of need for those entering statutory services. Throughout this year, priority has been on maintaining capacity and resource to deliver our statutory services, which has limited our ability to develop and progress as much as we would have liked. However, we have built on innovative and creative practice that was developed during the Covid-19 outbreak.

During the year we have made good progress in supporting and improving services for young carers, as well as developing a Carer's Charter with our Carers' Strategy Group. There is more work to be done in identifying informal carers, and this will be progressed through Denbighshire's State of Caring Action Plan. The completion of the Bwthyn y Ddôl centre has been delayed, but the multidisciplinary team are now established and are working with children and young people on the edge of care. Both adult and children's social services are developing and enhancing their Edge of Care Teams to provide early intervention and prevention to those individuals and families who may otherwise need support from statutory services.

Moving forward, work will take place to embed the work of the Independent Living Advisers to support individuals and families to have their care and support provided through a direct payment, which will increase choice and control over their own care and support needs. We will continue to support the development of micro-enterprises through our partnership with Community Catalysts, enhancing opportunities for small care and support enterprises across the county, particularly in rural areas. We will also prepare for the implementation of the Liberty Protection Safeguards.

The final Director of Social Services Annual Report is available on [our website](#).

Annual Report on Safeguarding Adults

At its [meeting in July](#), Partnerships Scrutiny received the Annual Report on Safeguarding Adults in Denbighshire. The report detailed the activities conducted by the Safeguarding Team, with a focus on maintaining the consistency of quality safeguard work, including performance against Welsh Government indicators. Denbighshire's performance for the

number of enquiries dealt with within 7 days remained high at 99.7%. It was also noted that the council fully adhered to the Wales Safeguarding procedures. The report includes a great deal of data, including the number of referrals received over the last 3 years. It was noted the number of referrals had decreased since the pandemic, but did not concern officers as similar patterns had been observed in neighbouring authorities. There exists a Conwy and Denbighshire Delivery Group, which is a monthly meeting of partner agencies to look at safeguarding data and trends, comparing against Care Inspectorate Wales statistics where appropriate. The Delivery Group also feeds through to the North Wales Safeguarding Board.

Annual Report of Scrutiny

At its [meeting on July 19](#), County Council received the Annual Report of Scrutiny, which highlighted the important role that Scrutiny plays in supporting the delivery and monitoring of the council's Corporate Plan. The report also summarised the conclusions of the review undertaken following the call-in of a Cabinet decision during the year; the work undertaken by a number of Scrutiny task and finish groups; and details of the types of additional work undertaken by Scrutiny members. It was noted that encouraging residents to interact with Scrutiny continues to be a challenge. A positive was the involvement of students from Ysgol Dinas Bran in a discussion on eradicating the use of single use plastics in the school meals service, following which Scrutiny conveyed the students' concerns and observations to Cabinet. Members also expressed their gratitude to the Scrutiny Co-ordinator, Rhian Evans, for her continued support and hard work throughout the year.

North Wales Economic Ambition Board

At its [meeting in July](#), Partnership's scrutiny received an update on the annual and quarterly performance of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board, which included the governance and progress of projects within the North Wales Growth Deal. The North Wales Growth Deal had been agreed on the basis of a portfolio of 5 programmes, covering Agri-food and Tourism, High Value Manufacturing, Low Carbon Energy, Land and Property, and Digital Connectivity. The Head of Planning and Public Protection provided reassurance to members that Denbighshire officers were working closely with the Board. It was hoped that a briefing session on the Growth Deal and programmes could be arranged to brief all councillors.

Hafan Deg

At its [meeting in September](#), Performance Scrutiny considered the effectiveness of the transfer of the Hafan Deg facility in Rhyl to the external provider, KL Care; including the provider's progress in growing and expanding the services available at the centre, and the lessons learnt from the pandemic. The report provides an honest evaluation of the difficulties that services at Hafan Deg have faced due to the ongoing effects of the pandemic. During a recent contract monitoring visit, a number of areas for improvement were identified. However, the report does offer assurance that the centre continues to provide person-centred care to all attendees. An action plan is being developed with KL Care to support the centre to address the identified areas for improvement, and take the corrective and development actions required to enable the service to fully meet the contract requirements. Regular and robust contract monitoring that had been disrupted during the pandemic must now take place to ensure that plans for the centre are being delivered, with key milestones achieved.

Risk Management

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

Corporate Risk Register

Meetings with risk owners commenced in August to review the Corporate Risk Register and scope any new risks not included. It is anticipated that a number of risks have, or will in the near future, escalate in light of the deterioration in the economy and continuing pressures in relation to recruitment and retention and safeguarding. Excluding two risks – on the basis they are proposed for removal – we have a total of 20 risks currently, and 11 are inconsistent with our risk appetite (55%).

In relation to our risk of a serious safeguarding or practice error, the score has been increased on the basis of our assessment that the likelihood of this occurring is currently higher than it was previously. Increasing the risk score will enable the risk to be further prioritised and escalated, which feels appropriate and necessary at this time. Our Corporate Executive Team and Cabinet will monitor this risk and the effectiveness of our management of it.

Other developments in the last period

Risk Owners

Following the election of new councillors in May we have updated the elected member risk owners on the Corporate Risk Register. Restructuring of the Senior Leadership Team is expected to be complete by March 2023, which will likely result in further changes to risk owners over the coming months.

Risk Appetite Statement

The council's [risk appetite statement](#) was last reviewed in September 2020. During this period, preparations have gotten underway to work with senior leaders and Cabinet to consider the statement once again. This review is felt to be timely given that we now have a new council and a new Corporate Plan to work towards. The statement must reflect our appetite now in a post-pandemic, post-Brexit world, where escalating costs and uncertain economic forecasts pose challenges for us in the delivery of services and projects, and threaten shared outcomes around personal and community independence and resilience.

Information Risk Policy

Work has started on a draft Information Risk Policy for the council, which will be reinforced by our existing [Risk Management Strategy](#). The draft will be considered by our internal Information Governance Group over the coming months, prior to seeking member approval. This work will support the production of an annual statement on Information Governance for the council.

Workforce Planning

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

Staff Training, Development and Mental-Health

A survey of staff well-being was carried out during the summer, to which 595 staff responded. 503 members of staff (84%) confirmed that they work two days a week or less from the office, 92 (16%) confirmed that they worked 3 days a week or more from the office, and 54 (9%) confirmed that they worked full time from the office. Staff cited many

advantages to working from home, such as greater efficiency; less unproductive travel time; reduced carbon emissions; and an improved work life balance. However, some staff said they felt isolated, lacked face-to-face contact, or sometimes experienced problems with ICT. Managers should work with staff where such issues exist to find a resolution. Senior managers will continue to monitor the approach and will work closely with staff, trade unions and members to ensure that we can continue to adapt our working practices to improve efficiency and maintain service delivery. For example, staff are encouraged to continue to ensure close working relationships with members, including by having regular face-to-face meetings or site visits, for example.

A review of our current flexible working policy and guidance is underway, to support these new ways of working. Meetings about the draft guidance are planned to take place with trade unions during December. Induction materials and sessions to support staff and managers with the new ways of working will commence early in 2023, once agreement has been sought from the Corporate Executive Team. A 12-month action plan will be developed once Mental Health Champions are in place to support delivery.

Virtual staff roadshows with the Chief Executive and the Leader are planned to take place in November.

Improve the information we have about our workforce

This action includes equality information to support more detailed analyses in future Public Sector Duty Reports. We now have equality information for 76% of staff, compared to 52% previously, and will continue to work to improve this.

Workforce planning

Workforce planning actions are underway to progress the findings of the corporate and service-level workforce planning reviews. There continues to be a significant focus on recruitment, especially in social care and health roles. A six monthly action plan update report will be presented to the Corporate Executive Team in October.

Every August, Denbigh plays host to the Denbighshire and Flintshire Show. This year the council's social care team joined the show to talk about the 'Make People Smile' campaign to recruit people into social care roles in Denbighshire. Officers gave information and

advice on the various roles within social care, the training available, and the opportunities for career progression with flexibility to meet individual needs.

In September, the council also hosted a fair at its Caledfryn offices in Denbigh, showcasing a wide range of careers and job opportunities available in the county. Managers and staff were available to answer questions, as well as offer information on a range of volunteering opportunities. All council jobs are advertised on our website, as well as through the Denbighshire County Council Jobs pages on Facebook.

This action also includes work to consider how best to plan for posts requiring a specific level of Welsh above Level 1. A proposal for how best to plan for posts requiring above Level 1 Welsh has been delayed, but we hope to provide an update on the plan in our next report.

Service Challenge Action: DBS Compliance

Work to address the issue of compliance with Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and risk assessment (except for employees under Social Care Wales or CSIW) is ongoing. Our approach during the Covid-19 pandemic was to focus on new employees and that resulted in a backlog for renewals for established employees. Recruitment into a compliance role has been challenging, and as a result DBS and risk assessment indicators have remained a priority for improvement. DBS compliance has fallen from 93% to 85% in this last period. We have now appointed a temporary post, with the post holder commencing in October 2022. The post holder will focus solely on the renewal backlog and we will establish a new fortnightly monitoring report to review the impact the role is having.

Other developments in the last period

Corporate Directors

[County Council in July](#) appointed two new Corporate Directors. Following a rigorous process, Gary Williams, former Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services, was appointed Corporate Director for Governance and Business; and Tony Ward, former Head of Highways and Environmental Services, was appointed the new Corporate Director for the Economy and Environment. Both new Directors commenced their new posts on September 1, 2022, and will help bolster capacity at the Corporate Executive level.

Pay Policy Statements

At its [meeting in July](#), County Council considered its Pay Policy Statement, which must be agreed annually in accordance with the requirements of 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011. Pay Policy Statements must incorporate all existing pay arrangements for the workforce groups within the council, including Chief Officers and the lowest paid employees. Officers presented an updated draft that included new pay awards negotiated nationally through the Joint Negotiating Council, and an updated comparison of the lowest paid against the Chief Executive's salary. The council's policy is that it will abide by and honour any nationally agreed pay award, and County Council accepted the recommended changes to the Pay Policy for 2022 to 2023, made by the Senior Leadership Remuneration Panel.

Assets

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

Asset Management strategy

The Terms of Reference for the Asset Management Group were updated and accepted at the July meeting. The recruitment for a new post in the Asset Management Team resulted in one candidate being shortlisted for interview. Unfortunately, the candidate accepted a role elsewhere prior to the interview date. A further recruitment exercise is ongoing but a decision to appoint may be delayed due to the current financial landscape.

Phase 2 Social Housing Retrofit Work

In line with the council's planned capital maintenance work, Welsh Government funding has been secured for optimised retrofit works for energy saving in homes and the benefit of tenants. Previous funding had enabled Phase 1 energy works to 55 houses on Rhydwen Drive, and the intention is to use the latest funding to continue those works for a further 44 houses along the street. This work falls within the Capital Planned Works with approved Cabinet commitment to a £2.5m spend. It was agreed to proceed with a Direct Award contract to Sustainable Building Services, who is the contractor who is currently undertaking Phase 1 of the works. Phase 2 would also enable the 12 apprentices from Phase 1 to continue their employment and gain relevant qualifications by the end of the second phase. The council is at the forefront of progressing such energy improvement

works, particularly in one of the most deprived areas in Wales, with tenants benefiting from lower energy bills at a time of rising costs.

Service Challenge Action: Remote Meeting Hubs

The aim of this work is to support remote meetings in areas where the broadband connection is poor. This project is awaiting the outcome of grant funding before it can progress any further at this stage.

Service Challenge Action: Supporting Businesses and Partners to Adapt

The plan for wider behaviour change activities as part of our Climate and Ecological Change Programme in 2022 to 2023 has been in development during this period. There have been delays, however, due to staff changes and shortages.

Procurement

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

Biodiversity Protection and Decarbonisation in Procurement

The Legal Services Manager continues to provide interim managerial support to the Procurement Team, in the absence of a Procurement Manager being in post. There continue to be capacity issues and these are still affecting the pace of progress in relation to these actions. The team is in the final phase of preparing the Draft Procurement Strategy, which will have a focus on decarbonisation. In the coming period, a paper will be presented at Cabinet to discuss mandatory weighting against carbon reduction in tender evaluations. Specific resource is required to support this area and we hope to be able to recruit a fixed term role to focus on decarbonisation through Procurement in the coming months.

Since our last update, our Community Benefits Hub is now requesting connection to the national grid over local diesel generator power, where appropriate. The Hub is also trying to reduce distance travelled in contract delivery.

Decarbonisation Procurement Expertise

The Procurement Team hopes to secure agreement for more specialist experience within the team to progress decarbonisation in our procurement and the supply chain. However, recruitment across the council and wider public sector remains extremely challenging.

Contract Procedure Rules

Contract Procedure Rules will be updated to reflect new UK Public Procurement legislation due in 2023 to 2024. We will continue to report on progress through this report in the meantime.

Contract Training for Staff

In our last update, we identified a further 39 officers, in addition to the 81 that have already received training, that could be put forward for Proactis Contract Management training. Four officers are booked onto a session to take place in the next period, October to December 2022. The team will continue to provide training on the Contract Management Module of Proactis as and when required.

Service Challenge Action: Sustaining the Community Benefits Hub

The Community Benefits Hub continues to work with the Climate Change team to develop a range of applicable Community Benefit questions and expectations. Some support for project work undertaken at the county's tree nursery in St Asaph has been secured. As the new Social Partnership and Procurement Bill will be introduced next year, the Welsh Government has formed a Welsh Government Social Value Working Group. The group is made-up of representatives of all public sector bodies in Wales, including local authorities, health boards, emergency services, and Natural Resources Wales. Denbighshire's Community Benefits Hub Manager has been voted to become Chair of the Group. Whilst this does not secure funding for the Hub, it will raise the profile of our approach.

Annual or biennial measures

2019 to 2021 data

Title	2019 to 2020	2020 to 2021	Status
The percentage of new appointees from applications where it was disclosed that they are either from a racial or religious minority group, have a disability, are gay or bi-sexual, or had their gender reassigned	15	4	Does not apply (count only)

2020 to 2022 data

Title	2020 to 2021	2021 to 2022	Status
The percentage difference in the mean hourly rate of pay for women – Benchmarked Locally	-13.5	6.7	Acceptable
The percentage of the lowest paid salaries (bottom quarter) that are women – Benchmarked Locally	79.9	79.3	Priority for Improvement
Member attendance (expected and present), year to date (%)– Benchmarked Locally	89	84	Good
Net Carbon Zero – Total carbon tonnage emitted and absorbed by the council (excluding supply chain) – Benchmarked Locally	10,277	11,656	Excellent

2018 to 2022 data

Title	2018 to 2019	2021 to 2022	Status
Overall satisfaction with the council (%) – Benchmarked Locally	40	32	Priority for Improvement
Partners that agree the council works well with them (%) – Benchmarked Locally	New to 2021	62	Good
Councillors and council employees who agree that there is a good working relationship between political leaders and senior management (%) – Benchmarked Locally	New to 2021	63	Good
Stakeholders who agree that the council manages its performance well (%) – Benchmarked Locally	New to 2021	28	Priority for Improvement
Stakeholders who agree that the council manages its risks and challenges well (%) – Benchmarked Locally	New to 2021	30	Priority for Improvement
Stakeholders who agree that the council manages its finances well (%) – Benchmarked Locally	New to 2021	26	Priority for Improvement
Stakeholders who agree that the council has long-term plans in place (%) – Benchmarked Locally	New to 2021	31	Priority for Improvement
Stakeholders who agree that the council treats its workforce well (%) – Benchmarked Locally	New to 2021	35	Priority for Improvement
Stakeholders who agree that the council makes best use of its assets and resources (%) – Benchmarked Locally	New to 2021	20	Priority for Improvement

Title	2018 to 2019	2021 to 2022	Status
Stakeholders who agree that the council purchases its goods and services in a fair and efficient way (%) – Benchmarked Locally	New to 2021	25	Priority for Improvement

Quarterly or biannual measures

Title	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Quarter 3 2021 to 2022	Quarter 4 2021 to 2022	Quarter 1 2022 to 2023	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Status
The percentage of Corporate Plan Measures showing as 'Priority for Improvement' – Benchmarked Locally	45	43	47	51	51	Priority for improvement
The number of projects on the project register showing as 'compromised' – Benchmarked Locally	2	2	1	1	2	Acceptable
The percentage of projects whose delivery confidence was updated in the last three months –	90	84	100	95	100	Excellent

Title	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Quarter 3 2021 to 2022	Quarter 4 2021 to 2022	Quarter 1 2022 to 2023	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Status
Benchmarked Locally						
The percentage of corporate risks inconsistent with the council's risk appetite statement – Benchmarked Locally (six monthly)	62	No data	64	No data	55	Priority for Improvement
The cumulative number of negative reports from external regulators – Benchmarked Locally	0	0	0	0	0	Excellent
The cumulative number of Internal Audit low assurance reports, financial year to date – Benchmarked Locally	1	3	4	0	0	Excellent

Title	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Quarter 3 2021 to 2022	Quarter 4 2021 to 2022	Quarter 1 2022 to 2023	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Status
Corporate and Service Budget Variance (£k)	2,445	2,731	-2,399	1,109	2,661	Does not apply (count only)
Council reserves (£k)	7,135	7,135	7,135	7,135	7,135	Does not apply (count only)
Negative news stories as a percentage of all news stories about the council – Benchmarked Locally	6	8	9	10	11	Priority for Improvement
The percentage of external complaints upheld or partly upheld over the last quarter – Benchmarked Locally	67	52	60	46	67	Excellent
The rolling average number of working days / shifts per full time equivalent (FTE) local authority	7.54	9.03	9.57	10.18	10	Priority for improvement

Title	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Quarter 3 2021 to 2022	Quarter 4 2021 to 2022	Quarter 1 2022 to 2023	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Status
employee lost due to sickness absence – Benchmarked Locally						
The percentage of staff who have had at least 3 one-to-one meetings in the last 12 months – Benchmarked Locally	42	36	43	45	52	Priority for Improvement
The percentage of spend with suppliers based within Denbighshire – Benchmarked Locally	38	40	36	39	35	Good
The cumulative percentage of Denbighshire contracts over £25k and under £1m containing community benefits –	88	88	88	100	64	Excellent

Title	Quarter 2 2021 to 2022	Quarter 3 2021 to 2022	Quarter 4 2021 to 2022	Quarter 1 2022 to 2023	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Status
Benchmarked Locally						
The cumulative number of work experience placements offered within the council	110	134	143	155	163	Does not apply (count only)

Improvement Actions

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

- Survey of elected members to determine the timing of meetings.
- Briefing for all councillors on the North Wales Growth Deal.

Equality and Diversity

Equality and Diversity Campaigns

In support of the Interim Strategic Equality Plan, the council will regularly promote campaigns in support of people with protected characteristics or living at a socio-economic disadvantage. For July to September 2022, the council has supported the following through promotion and publicity:

- June – promotion of the Anti-Racism Wales Action Plan.
- July – flag raising to show gratitude on NHS, Social Care and Frontline Staff Day.
- July – promotion of the Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report.
- August – promotion of the campaign highlighting the importance of the [Welsh Language in social care work](#).
- September – flags raised to pay tribute to those who have served in the Merchant Navy, and to honour Emergency Services Day.

Strategic Equality and Diversity Group

During July to September, work was undertaken at various fora to plan for the first Strategic Equality and Diversity Group meeting, which will take place on October 26. This Group will oversee internal arrangements to support and monitor equality and diversity within the council. It is currently proposed that the group will meet quarterly, and there will be a review after the first twelve months to assess its achievements.

UK resettlement programme

The Welsh Government has renewed its call for more hosts that can offer a home to support those resettling in the UK as a result of the atrocities in Ukraine to come forward, and the council is supporting them to share information and reach local communities. The council has worked closely with Welsh Government to welcome families and individuals to Denbighshire, and teams from the council have been working to carry out checks at properties put forward as a sanctuary. Teams are also working to support people's health and well-being needs, as well as supporting families to find places in school for their children.

Additional Learning Needs

At its [meeting in July](#), Performance Scrutiny received an update on the council's compliance with the statutory requirements of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018. The report provided an update on the progress made to ensure that the Local Authority and schools were ready to meet their statutory requirements under the Act, which commenced September 2021 but for which implementation will be phased until 2024. The Committee requested that a further report be provided in 12 months' time on the council's compliance with the Act, and on the effectiveness of the ECLIPSE system in identifying, monitoring, managing and supporting pupils who have additional learning needs.

School categorisation according to Welsh Medium Provision

At its [meeting in September](#), Performance Scrutiny considered a report by the Head of Education outlining the conclusions of the recent Welsh Government consultation on Language Categorisation and its implications for Denbighshire schools and pupils. The current policy for categorising schools has been in place since 2007. The publishing of 'Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers in 2017', and more recently the Curriculum for Wales, highlighted the need to review the policy around the categorisation of schools according to the Welsh-medium provision. The number of school categories are essentially being reduced to three in both the primary and secondary sector, with two transitional categories (see appendix 1 within the meeting papers). In Denbighshire, the 27 current English Medium primary provision will transfer to be classified Category 1, and the 14 Welsh Medium provision will transfer to be classified Category 3. The remaining schools will need to be allocated to either one of the three main categories, or one of the two transitional categories if appropriate. Scrutiny requested that a progress report be presented to the Committee in the autumn of 2023.

North Wales Market Stability Report 2022

At its [meeting in July](#), Performance Scrutiny was provided with an overview of the North Wales Market Stability report 2022, which has been produced as a requirement of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. The report assessed the sufficiency of care and support, as well as the stability of the market, informed by the North Wales Population Needs Assessment. It highlighted a number of concerning issues already

known to us in Denbighshire, including, but not limited to, reduced capacity within the care home and domiciliary sector, increasing fees and costs, rise in those presenting with complex needs, limited respite care, and a lack of short-term foster placements. A great deal of work has already, and continues to take place to address all of these issues, and the key objectives for the council in the next 12 months will be to attain stability in domiciliary care, looking to support from micro-enterprises and rural providers; to implement fostering friendly policies in Denbighshire; and to prepare for the launch of the residential assessment unit, Bwthyn y Ddôl. The final version of the Market Stability Report will be going to the Regional Partnership Board (RPB) for final sign off in November, before being submitted to the Welsh Government.