

Annual Performance Report 2023/24





Table of Contents

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Priority Setting	4
3.	Alignment of Council Plan 2023-28 Priorities and Well-Being Objectives	5
4.	Council Plan (2023-28) Summary of Performance	6
	4.1 Assessment of Our Performance	6
	4.2 Summary of Performance for Actions	7
5.	Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives	9
	5.1 Priority: Poverty	9
	5.2 Priority: Affordable and Accessible Housing	12
	5.3 Priority: Green Society and Environment	15
	5.4 Priority: Economy	19
	5.5 Priority: Personal and Community Well-being	23
	5.6 Priority: Education and Skills	27
	5.7 Priority: A Well-managed Council	30
6.	Strategic Equality Plan	33
7.	Welsh Language	34
8.	Partnership and Collaboration Activity	35
9.	Risk Management	36
10.	Regulation, Audit and Inspection	37
11.	Climate Change (What We Have Done So Far and What's Next)	38
12.	Budget Monitoring 2023/24	40
13.	Annual Governance Statement	42
14.	Corporate Self-assessment	44
15.	Additional Background Information	45
16.	Feedback and How to Obtain Further Information	46

Introduction



Welcome to Flintshire’s Annual Performance Report (APR). This document gives an overview of the performance of the Council during 2023/24 against the priorities set within our Council Plan (2023-28) and progress against our Well-being Objectives;

- Protecting people from poverty by supporting them to meet their basic needs
- Housing in Flintshire meeting the needs of our residents and supporting safer communities
- Limiting the impact of the Council’s services on the natural environment and supporting the wider communities of Flintshire to reduce their own carbon footprint
- Enabling a sustainable economic recovery and growth
- Supporting people in need to live as well as they can
- Enabling and Supporting Learning Communities

The Annual Performance Report also provides an overview of performance of the Council in relation to other key areas, including climate change and monitoring budget.

Flintshire County Council continues to pride itself on being a Council which performs highly for its local communities and one which is guided and motivated by a set of strong social values.

The past year has been another challenging year for many, especially in light of the current economic situation and the continued cost of living pressures. However, as a Council we have continued to deliver good quality services; development of sustainable housing, supporting residents of Flintshire, delivering high quality education and learning opportunities, and a continued commitment to being a green Council.

Next year we will be mid-way through of five-year Council Plan and as a Council this provides us with the perfect opportunity to review progress achieved so far against our existing priorities and Well-being Objectives and also inform planning for the Council’s future direction to support with making a positive and lasting difference.



Neal Cockerton
Chief Executive



Ian Roberts
Leader of the Council

2

Priority Setting

The report has amended slightly from last year’s Annual Performance Report and now includes analysis of our end of year performance in relation to the Council Plan (2023-28), whereas previously this report used to focus on performance within each Portfolio.

The Council Plan (2023-28) sets out the Council’s seven priorities and Well-being Objectives and what we aim to achieve. These priorities and Well-being Objectives have been chosen as the areas where the Council can add the most value and also help us to identify how we are working towards the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

Designated public bodies are required to work individually and collectively to improve well-being in Wales. The seven well-being goals and the five ways of working (Sustainable Development Principle) set a general purpose for public bodies.



Section 5 of the report will provide a high level overview of our performance against the Council Plan (2023-28) under the following headings.

- Priority
- Key Achievements and More
- What We Said We Will Do
- Future Improvements

Full details of the Council Plan (2023-28) End of Year Performance for 2023-24 can be found [here](#)

Alignment of Council Plan 2023-28 Priorities and Well-Being Objectives

The Annual Performance Report as advised in Section 2, aligns closely with the Council Plan (2023-28) priorities and the Well-being Objectives, as detailed below:

PRIORITY	WELL-BEING OBJECTIVES
 POVERTY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protecting people from poverty by supporting them to meet their basic needs and be resilient.
 AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE HOUSING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing in Flintshire meeting the needs of our residents and supporting safer communities.
 GREEN SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limiting the impact of the Council’s services on the natural environment and supporting the wider communities of Flintshire to reduce their own carbon footprint.
 ECONOMY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connecting communities and enabling sustainable economic recovery and growth.
 PERSONAL & COMMUNITY WELL-BEING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting people in need to live as well as they can.
 EDUCATION AND SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enabling and Supporting Learning Communities.
 A WELL-MANAGED COUNCIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A responsible, resourceful and trusted Council operating as efficiently as possible.

4

Council Plan (2023-28) Summary of Performance

Overall, 2023/24 performance has been a positive start to the Council Plan (2023-28) with 74% of actions that have either met or exceeded their targets for the year, achieving a green RAG (Red, Amber, Green) status and 65% of measures also have either met or exceeded their targets, achieving green RAG status.





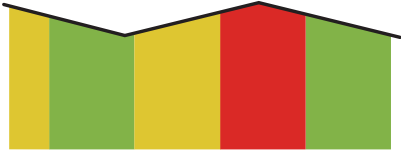
The Council recognises that not all outcomes (actions and measures) have been achieved, but there is a need to be mindful of the number of competing priorities as a Council we have responsibility for, and the

increased economic and financial constraints; however, performance and improvement remain a high priority for the Council with many positive outcomes achieved this financial year.

With the Council Plan being a five-year plan and the aim of thinking longer term (Sustainable Development Principle) there are outcomes which are continuing next year and others that will continue through the duration of the Plan. Thus, allowing performance to be analysed over a period of time.

4.1 Assessment of Our Performance

The table below provides an overview of how progress against the Council Plan (2023-28) is measured. Section 4.2 provides a high-level summary of our Portfolios and Council Plan (2023-28) performance. Please see attached Appendix 1 for a full analysis of the Council Plan (2023-28) End of Year 2023/24 Performance Report. Where it refers to a Council Plan (2023-28) objective in Section 4.2, this is referenced by a code at the end of the sentence and can be referred to within Appendix 1.

Performance Indicators for Actions			Performance Indicators for Measures	
 <p>Limited Progress - delay in scheduled activity; not on track.</p>	 <p>Satisfactory Progress - some delay in scheduled activity, but broadly on track.</p>	 <p>Good Progress - activities completed on schedule, on track.</p>	 <p>Speed dial will provide an analysis of how a measures has performed in that year, using a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) status to highlight the achievement.</p>	 <p>Will provide further analysis of the trend of a measure and how it has performed over a period of time.</p>

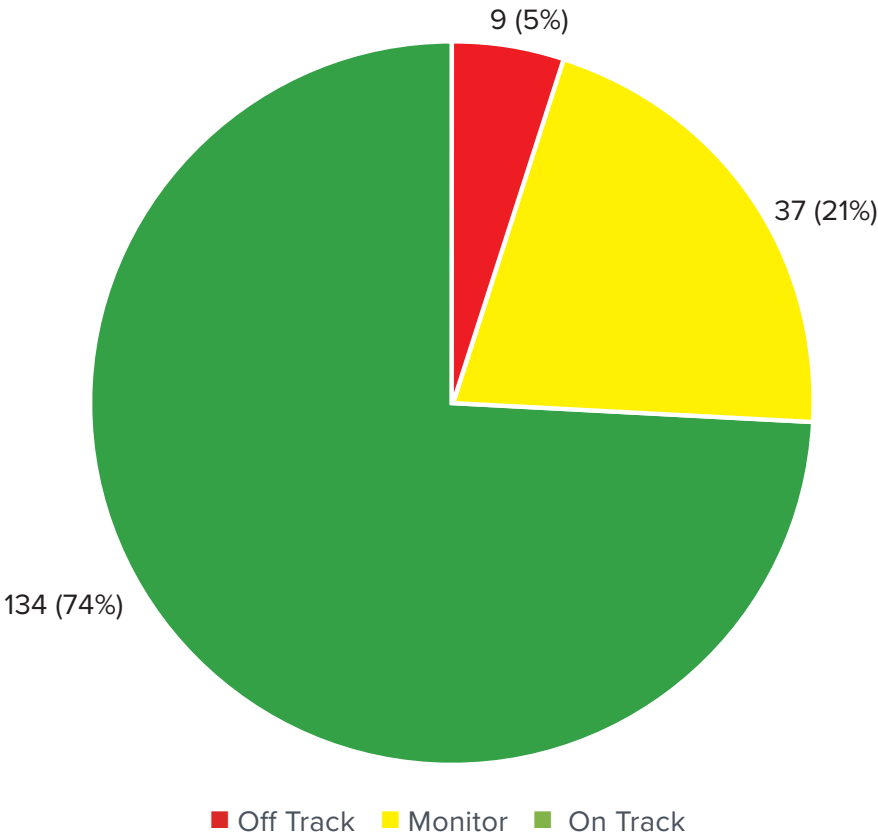
Council Plan (2023-28) Summary of Performance

4.2 Summary of Performance for Actions

Performance for 2023/24 against our Council Plan (2023-28) actions is summarised in the chart below.

Chart 1a: Council Plan Performance - Actions 2023/24

In summary our overall progress against the actions are;



In summary our overall progress against the actions are;

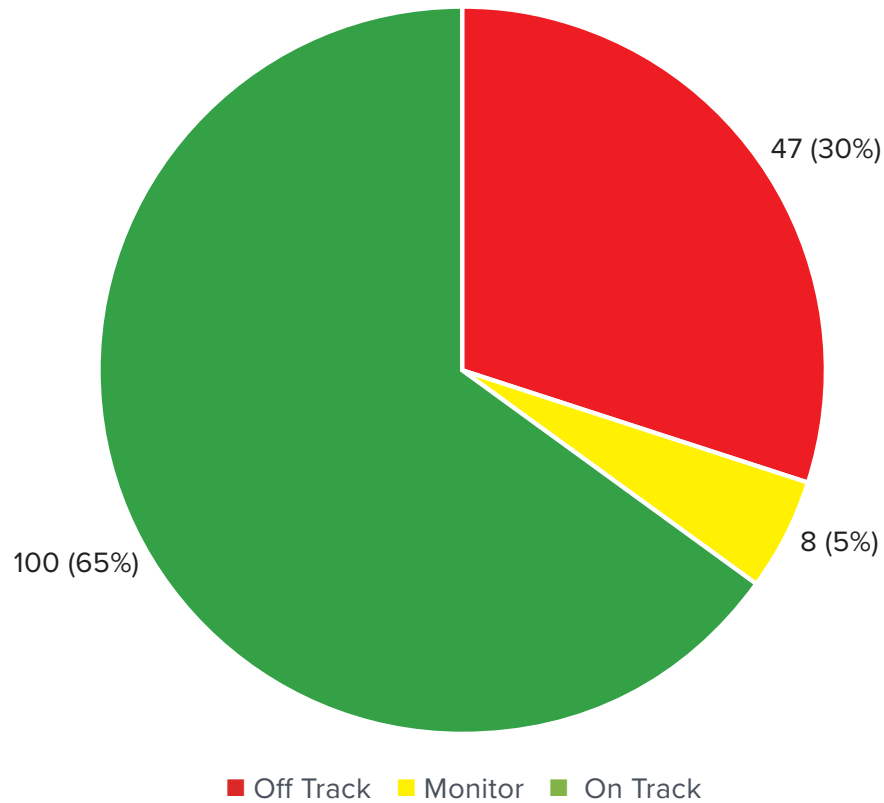
- 134 (74%) actions met or exceeded the target (green RAG)
- 37 (21%) actions are being monitored (amber RAG)
- 9 (5%) actions missed target (red RAG)

Council Plan (2023-28) Summary of Performance

4.2 Summary of Performance for Measures

Performance for 2023/24 against our Council Plan (2023-28) measures is summarised in the chart below.

Chart 2a: Council Plan Performance - Measures 2023/24



Analysis of the end of year performance against the targets set for 2023-24 shows:

■ 100 (65%) measures have a green RAG status

■ 8 (5%) measures have an amber RAG status

■ 47 (30%) measures have a red RAG status

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives



Priority:

Well-being Objective:
Protecting people from poverty by supporting them to meet their basic needs and be resilient.



Poverty

What We Said We Will Do:

- Deliver Welsh Government support schemes linked to the cost-of-living crisis.
- Maximise the number of people signposted for support to facilitate longer term change.
- Explore development of support schemes to mitigate in work poverty.
- Ensure children and young people have access to transitional play/youth activity to support succession from play opportunities into youth clubs to further support young people’s development.
- Provide free physical activity and well-being sessions within the summer School Holiday Enrichment Programme.
- Provide free access to Fit, Fed and Read sessions during summer holidays providing activities, sport, reading, crafts and meals.
- Introduce and develop a “Well Fed at Home Service”.
- Engage, support and refer vulnerable households to reduce fuel poverty and improve health and Well-being.
- Continue to provide free of charge public access to the internet at Flintshire Connects Centres.
- Support people to use digital technology through Digital Workforce Volunteers.



5

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives

Key Achievements and More for 2023/24

- A hardship scheme has been implemented to support Local Authority households to mitigate effects of in-work poverty by promoting Discretionary Housing Payments and budgeting advice. (CHC003T)
- The cost-of-living crisis continues to increase, impacting residents, and referrals to the Council continue to be received. Ongoing advice and support still form part of the Discretionary Housing Payments application process and advice is also provided around options for support, even if an application is unsuccessful. (CHC001T)
- Automatic payments for School Essential Grants resulted in 3085 children receiving payments, reducing the pressure on families and allowing them to order and purchase school uniforms. Automatic payments also enabled the team to prioritise new applications.
- The 2023 Fit, Fed and Read community programme took place across the county during a five-week period in July and August 2023, with a wide range of public sector partners tackling issues such as health inequalities, food poverty, literacy levels, and physical and mental well-being. 5,040 families and young people attended the 39 sessions. The scheme made a significant contribution in supporting 3,000 children to sign up to the annual Summer Reading Challenge. 110 volunteering hours were recorded by our young ambassadors. (CAU13T)
- The Youth Service continues to deliver a range of open access and targeted provision in a range of settings, including open access youth clubs, schools, forest school, community centres and street-based work. Flintshire Youth Service delivered 1928 sessions between April 23 - March 24 with 14,743 registered attendees.
- 150 Christmas dinner boxes were provided to vulnerable residents.
- The 'Well Fed at Home' service launched in April 2023 and the service is proving popular. In Quarter Four, Well Fed had over 200 customers ordering meals from the Well Fed food hubs within the community led hubs and mobile shop. Well Fed mobile shop visits 45 locations across Flintshire including schools, churches, community groups and sheltered accommodation schemes with residents purchasing 16,533 subsidised meals (CHC005T)
- 508 households were supported against a target of 200 to help reduce the risk of fuel poverty. Measure consists of work carried out on post installation work as well as energy advice, help and guidance for the general public to assist with fuel poverty and the current energy crisis in general. (CPE002T)



Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives

Key Achievements and More for 2023/24

- 1,203 measures delivered against a target of 1,200 to increase the energy efficiency of homes. This is made up of various component parts delivered by the Domestic Energy Efficiency Project team. Included within the statistic are works carried out on private and public housing stock for renewable heating, gas central heating, loft and cavity insulation and solar photo voltaic installations. (CPE001T)
- Supported by workforce volunteers, Digital Surgeries launched in March 2024. A schedule of surgeries are planned throughout 2024 in different towns across the county. (CGV007T)

Council Plan (2023-28) Objectives Off Track

- **Sub-priority - Food Poverty**
CHC006M Number of residents supported by the “Hospital to Home” meals service.



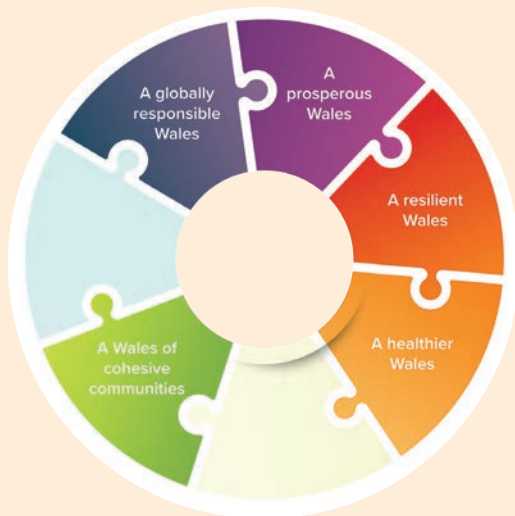
Future Improvements

- Increase campaigns to raise awareness and take-up of Free School Meals, School Essential Grants, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction.
- Support community led hubs to open their own food pantries, reducing food waste from local supermarkets and increasing access to seasonal food. This will include to hold a ‘Good Food Flintshire’ event in Autumn, working corroboratively with other key agencies.
- Low subscribers to My Account by Contract Holders (tenants). Promotion will help increase awareness and Housing Officers should aim to offer digital by default whenever a new contract is issued.



Priority:

Well-being Objective:
Housing in Flintshire meeting the needs of our residents and supporting safer communities.



Affordable and Accessible Housing

What We Said We Will Do:

- Commission a wide range of housing related support that meets the needs of the people of Flintshire.
- Ensure a multi-agency partnership approach to homeless prevention and develop a culture where homelessness is “everyone’s business”.
- Develop self-service approaches that enable people to identify their own housing options through on line support.
- Create a Single Point of Access service for housing help and advice.
- Work with housing association partners to build new social housing properties and additional affordable properties.
- Ensure the Council’s housing stock maintains the current Welsh Housing Quality Standards.
- Support our tenants to access technology and create sustainable digital communities.
- Finalise the plan for the decarbonisation of Council homes in line with Welsh Government guidance to ensure their thermal efficiency is optimised and the cost of heating homes are minimised.
- Ensure increase in stock capacity meets the identified needs and demands.
- Implement the initial recommendations of the sheltered housing review to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of current and prospective tenants.
- Work with residents to ensure our communities are well managed, safe, and sustainable places to live.
- Engage with private sector tenants, giving them a voice, and responding to their needs.
- Work in partnership with landlords and private sector agents to better understand their needs.

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives

5

Key Achievements and More for 2023/24

- Work continues to promote Housing Support and Homelessness services through the development of website content and active engagement with residents electronically, which for many is a preferred method of sourcing information. Additionally, officers regularly attend local activities to promote services and support offers through groups such as local Community Hubs, Children's Services Forum and Citizen Advice Bureau frontline worker events and the Flintshire Support Network (FSN). **(CHC008T)**
- Community Based Accommodation Support Services Team (CBASS) received over 500 out of hours calls with 156 residents requiring attendance. The CBASS teams support residents who have a range of needs including substance misuse and mental health problems. The team work closely with Social Services and other services to support residents to stay safe and well and maintain their tenancy.
- Housing Supply Map and availability data has been included as part of the Housing Hub webpages on the Council's website. This allows residents to be better informed about local social housing supply.
- There has been an increase in homeless households rehoused by the Council and Housing Partners through the 50% homeless nominations process.
- The Council continues to target properties that do not meet the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) 65 rating through various improvement works. This includes, installation of efficient central heating systems, renewable technology (Solar Panels and Air Source Heating) and extensive external refurbishment contracts comprising of new windows, doors, loft insulation and roof coverings, the energy performance and thermal efficiency of our properties is addressed and improved. Our current average SAP rating for our entire stock is 73.5%. The Council are currently moving towards incorporating our decarbonisation measures into our investment programmes of refurbishment works to our tenanted homes. **(CHC012T)**
- Staff service improvement groups are working through priorities as identified through the last Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR) to see where improvements can be made. **(CHC023T)**
- Work continues with regards to housing support and advice for landlords when they have issues with residents. This is positive prevention activity to avoid housing problems and risk of homelessness. Where landlords are selling properties, we now have a purchase offer and an established process in partnership with Housing Strategy and Empty Homes Teams. This is in direct response to landlords telling us they are selling up and leaving the market. **(CHC029T)**
- Utilised 96% of the allocated £13.3m Social Housing Grant (SHG) in 2023/24. Schemes have been prioritised for inclusion within the main Programme Development Plan. **(CHC014T)**

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives

Council Plan (2023-28) Objectives Off Track

- **Sub-priority - Housing Support and Homeless Prevention**

CHC007M Number of presentations to the homeless service.

CHC008M Percentage of successful prevention outcomes for homelessness under Housing (Wales) Act 2014.

CHC009M Percentage of successful relief outcomes for homelessness under Housing (Wales) Act 2014.

CHC010M Number of households accommodated by the Council under Housing (Wales) Act 2014 homeless duties.

CHC011M Average length of stay (days) for those households in interim homeless accommodation under Housing (Wales) Act 2014.

- **Sub-priority - Housing Needs and Housing Options**

CHC015M Number of applicants rehoused via SARTH by All Housing Partners.

CHC017M Number of households rehoused with significant adaptations requirements.

- **Sub-priority - Social Housing**

CHC018M Number of Council Homes under construction.

CHC021M Number of Affordable Homes completed via NEW Homes.

CHC019T Increase the Council's housing portfolio by building social housing properties and affordable properties for North East Wales (NEW) Homes.

CHC024T Support our tenants to access technology and create sustainable digital communities.



Future Improvements

- Scope the potential merger of the Telecare (Social Services) and Carelink teams to create a more efficient service for both the Council and the customer.
- Undertake the STAR survey again in 2024/25 and assess response to areas identified previously for improvement, including tenants views and these are taken into account to inform service provision and delivering of services.
- Ensure the sheltered housing review continues to assess and identifies the needs of current and prospective tenants and the council implements solutions to achieve them.
- Deliver the agreed restructure of the Housing and Prevention Service increasing resources to engage with Private Sector Landlords.

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives



Priority:

Well-being Objective:
Limiting and enhancing the impact of the Council's services on the natural environment and supporting the wider communities of Flintshire to reduce their own carbon footprint.



Green Society and Environment

What We Said We Will Do:

- Produce guidance on viable and deliverable options to mitigate the impact of phosphates from new development on Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) protected rivers.
- Work with Flintshire's leisure and culture trust partners to reduce carbon emissions.
- Develop plans towards net zero carbon for our assets in line with Welsh Government guidance.
- Review the procurement policy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from suppliers.
- Ensure climate change and biodiversity are considered a priority in key decision making across all Council services.
- Assess the feasibility of schemes within land assets for resisting flood and drought while enhancing biodiversity and increasing carbon storage.
- Identify projects to further support climate adaptation ambitions following Welsh Government guidance.
- Reduce the environmental impact of our fleet by transitioning to ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEV).
- Deliver an increase in canopy cover as part of the Urban Tree and Woodland Plan.
- Enhance the natural environment through the delivery of the Section 6 Environment (Wales) Act 2016 biodiversity duty.
- Explore opportunities to develop the Flintshire Coast Park through the production of a scoping study.
- Support the development of public electric vehicle charging network.
- Promote active travel and further develop the County's walking and cycleway network.
- Implement formalised crossing facilities at existing school crossing patrol sites.
- Work in partnership, actively support and engage with community led groups by developing recycling initiatives.

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives

Key Achievements and More

- The adoption of the Local Development Plan (LDP) was premised on the basis of certain allocated housing sites having to demonstrate nutrient neutrality in terms of not harming the Bala Lake and River Dee (Special Area of Conservation) through the release of phosphates from waste water treatment works into the River Alyn. Work commenced on the feasibility of developing wetlands alongside the waste water treatment works at Mold, Buckley and Hope, which would have required developer financial contributions as part of a process to have been set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). However, the release of updated and unchanged permits for the three waste water treatment works by Natural Resources Wales and the availability of 'headroom' (difference between the level of phosphate permitted by the permit and the actual level of phosphate being released by the treatment works) evidenced by Dwr Cymru/ Welsh Water has provided a window within which to deliver LDP allocations. **(CPE044T)**
- The revised Procurement Strategy for 2024/2027, has a key theme centred around 'Climate Emergency' - ensuring procurement exercises have a reduced impact on CO2 emissions, and that our suppliers embrace our Net Zero Carbon ambitions too. **(CPE009T)**
- The Council's investment in the Fit Framework for 2024/25 and 2025/26 will see energy efficiency and renewable energy works worth £1.5 million invested in our building assets. The framework has been awarded and project work will commence post-April 2024. **(CPE010T)**
- The following strategies and plans have been reviewed and now incorporate the Council's Net Zero Carbon ambitions: Asset Management Plan, Procurement Strategy, Biodiversity Plan, Waste Strategy, and Housing Strategy and action plan.
- Over 100 standard trees planted, and over 4000 whips planted, with carbon sequestration potential of 2,972kgCO₂e.
- A working draft of the Flood Risk Management Strategy has been drafted with consultants and the next stage is to complete the draft action plan in order to carry out stakeholder consultation with Members and key stakeholders. This will then lead to a public consultation exercise on the strategy before review of comments made, sign off by the Council, and submission to Welsh Government. **(CPE012T)**
- Bee friendly status: Bee friendly status obtained in recognition of our work for pollinators, we are the fourth Local Authority in Wales to receive the status.
- Small Grants for Nature: The Council have delivered our first small community nature grant which allocated over £13,000 to small community groups and schools to support local features for nature.
- Ponds for Schools project successfully obtained funding from the Airbus Community Impact Fund to restore ponds in two schools, the projects included preparatory educational visits, pond works, and volunteering sessions with Airbus corporate staff.

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives

Key Achievements and More

- Significant natural environment enhancement through changes in estate management, tree planting and green infrastructure projects. (CPE016T)
- Assessment of over 180 Flintshire owned sites for suitability for tree planting is to become part of the Flintshire Forest.
- Successful Countryside and Greenfield Valley events programme with 7537 event participants.
- Shared Prosperity Funding secured to further progress establishing the Flintshire Coast Park. (CPE019T)
- Social media promotional and awareness content reached 54,000, which is a 10% increase of social followers.
- Active Travel schemes including; Holywell Urban Area and Flint Six Schools have been delivered as part of Safer Routes in Communities initiatives enabling pupils to walk and cycle to school safely, as well as benefitting the wider local communities.
- All civil engineering works associated with the formalised crossing facilities has been completed and will be operational in May 2024. (CST017T)



- Electric Vehicle (EV) charging feasibility study and associated Delivery Plan completed in February 2024. The aim of the study is to identify the next phase of EV charge-points within public car parks in Flintshire. (CST004T)
- The Waste Strategy Team have been actively engaging with communities in Flintshire to promote our recycling and reuse services. This has taken place with housing associations, at community group meetings and on the doorstep. A six week consultation took place with Flintshire residents and stakeholders to gain their input into developing a future Resource and Waste Strategy. Five engagement events took place in January 2024, where team members met and discussed recycling with Flintshire residents. Work has begun with Repair Café Wales to introduce more repair centres. (CST009T)
- A new Resource and Waste Strategy was adopted in March 2024 which identifies measures to maximise the amount of waste reused, recycled and composted. (CST019T)
- Service Delivery waste and recycling crews continue to visit approximately 11,624 per day and this year have maintained a successful collection rate of 99.72%.

Council Plan (2023-28) Objectives Off Track

- **Sub-priority - Net Zero Carbon Council**
 - CPE018M** Percentage of Councillors received carbon related training.
 - CPE019M** Percentage of employees received carbon related training.
 - CPE020M** Number of contracts with carbon impact assessed.
- **Sub-priority - Climate Change and Adaptation**
 - CPE024M** Increase in carbon sequestered (Kg/tCO₂e).
- **Sub-priority - Flood Risk Management Strategy**
 - CPE205M** Completion of the Flood Risk Management Strategy by the revised Welsh Government due date.
- **Sub-priority - Fleet Strategy**
 - CST013M** Number of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles on Fleet.
- **Sub-priority - Active and Sustainable Travel Options**
 - CST018T** Declassification of hazardous routes across the county where appropriate through the implementation of engineering initiatives.
 - CST016M** Number of hazardous routes declassified through the Implementation of Active Travel infrastructure to provide safe routes to schools.
- **Sub-priority - Circular Economy**
 - CST006T** Achieve Welsh Government recycling targets.
 - CST008T** Promote the option to reuse and repair unwanted items at Household Recycling Centres by partnering with local Charities or social enterprises.



Future Improvements

- The roll out of the Climate Essentials e-learn to the wider workforce was delayed to coincide with the roll out of the new Learning portal. Once this module is available it will vastly increase the number of employees and Members receiving carbon related training.
- To improve on recycling targets. In 2023/24 the Council missed the statutory recycling target for the fourth year in succession, resulting in potential infraction charges.
- Work has been underway this year to identify Flintshire Council land assets with the potential for planting schemes in order to provide natural flood mitigation, and improved biodiversity and carbon sequestration of our land. This work is nearing completion and will help to inform sites that can be considered for planting in the coming years.

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives



Priority:

Well-being Objective:
Connecting communities and enabling a sustainable economic recovery and growth.



Economy

What We Said We Will Do:

- Ensure that Economy interventions consider and meet the needs of rural businesses and individuals.
- Commission a data review for rural Flintshire and hold community consultation to better understand rural community needs.
- Monitor the health and vitality of town centres to support effective management and business investment decisions.
- Encourage and supporting investment in town centre properties specially to facilitate more sustainable uses and including improvements to the environment.
- Understand the needs of and supporting community enterprises in town centre locations.
- Libraries and leisure centres are community well-being hubs with social objectives underpinning their operation.
- Engage town centre small businesses and promote support packages available to them.
- Support small and/or local businesses to engage with public sector procurement opportunities.
- Support recovery of the County’s Street and indoor markets.
- Support growth of the local and regional food and drink business sector through marketing and collaborative projects.
- Support recovery of the tourism and hospitality sectors and rebuild confidence in the industry.
- Increase the scale and impact of the social business sector.
- Support local businesses in their efforts to reduce their carbon footprint and become more resource efficient.
- Improve digital connectivity across the County for businesses and residents.
- Make decisions at Planning Committee in line with the adopted Local Development Plan.
- Co-ordinate a multi-agency approach to support businesses to recruit people from disadvantaged groups.
- Deliver mentoring and wider support programmes to assist disadvantaged people to re-engage with the labour market.

Key Achievements and More

- All current interventions (outside of specific town centre projects) supporting individuals and businesses are targeting all of the County. **(CPE051T)**
- Discussions are underway with Wrexham University about how the needs of rural Flintshire residents can be most effectively assessed and supported. **(CPE053T)**
- The Council processed over £30m of Shared Prosperity Fund project proposals in conjunction with similar processes across the other North Wales Councils. £11m of funding was awarded to projects in Flintshire supporting businesses, supporting places and communities and improving skills and employability. The majority of projects cover all of the County including rural areas, especially those focused on the visitor economy, which will bring a disproportionate benefit to rural businesses.
- Work has continued during Quarter 4 (January - March 2024) to monitor and respond to the health, vibrancy and needs of town centres across Flintshire. This has included planning and delivering an online consultation for four towns across Flintshire, which 3,356 local people responded to, and also reviewing data related to the town centres to develop up-to-date profiles of the current strengths and focus for future improvement/ investment. The focus of the past three months has been on initiating work in four of the seven towns (Connah's Quay, Flint, Mold and Queensferry). The place making plan for Shotton has been developed and identifies 10 key themes and priorities responding to local needs. The place making plans for both Holywell and Buckley have also been commissioned and work has progressed on these also. **(CPE024T)**
- 'Save The High Street' has been engaged by the Council's Regeneration Team to deliver tailored business support for town centre businesses across the seven town centres of Flintshire, to support their growth, development and diversification through the delivery of an intensive eight week support programme. Flintshire was the first local authority in Wales to partner with 'Save The High Street' using funding secured from the Shared Prosperity Fund. 14 town centre businesses participated in the 'Save The High Street' eight week intensive programme. Due to the success of the pilot project, a further 30 businesses will benefit from this provision between April and November 2024. Excellent feedback has been received from local businesses who participated and has been featured in the local press. Work has continued to roll-out grant schemes and encourage take-up amongst local businesses as take-up has been excellent. **(CPE028T)**
- The Regeneration Team secured £1.178million from UK Government to deliver Town Centre Investment Programme across seven towns in Flintshire (Buckley, Connah's Quay, Flint, Holywell, Mold, Shotton, Queensferry) in 2023/24 and 2024/25. The programme comprises of nine projects in total - a mix of capital and revenue initiatives aimed at supporting our Flintshire's high streets. **(CPE025T)**
- During January - March 2024, 42 support sessions have been delivered by the Council's Social Enterprise Officer to social enterprises in the towns of Buckley, Connah's Quay, Mold and Shotton. These sessions have involved understanding their needs and tailoring support provided to these in addition to

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives

5

Key Achievements and More

- encouraging the social enterprises to utilise the Flintshire Social Impact toolkit to calculate their overall social value. Of the organisations supported over the last three months, this has involved a total of £807,269 social value being recorded. **(CPE054T)**
- £466,458 secured from Welsh Government's 'Transforming Towns' and UK Government's Shared Prosperity Funding £180,000 of this total being contributed to businesses towards improving their premises. **(CPE025T)**
 - £63,130 has been awarded to local communities to deliver activities and events in towns across Flintshire to improve footfall and the vibrancy of towns. **(CPE025T)**
 - The development of the Flintshire Social Impact toolkit and increase of numbers of social enterprises using it, continues to demonstrate the impact of social enterprise activity in Flintshire. During this reporting period (2023/24) the 14 participating social enterprises reported the generation of a combined social value of £2,119,680.98 through the 18 activities being measured. **(CPE054T)**
 - The Business Development Team have delivered two Net Zero workshops and in partnership with Deeside Decarbonisation Forum have delivered four network events, engaging with 271 business delegates throughout the year. **(CPE033T)**
 - Mold Street Market continues to thrive with an average of 66 traders attending each market day and 24 new traders have been accommodated since April 2023, (including the replacement of retired stallholders). Mold Indoor Market is currently 87% occupied with interest shown in the two remaining vacant units.
 - 143 business support sessions were delivered to 43 social enterprises.
 - Engagement with over 90 commercial investors to support new businesses moving into Flintshire or expanding current operations.
 - Fibre connectivity has improved significantly in Flintshire recently. A number of regional projects to improve connectivity are approaching delivery phase. Locally, work is underway to encourage network operators to fill gaps in mobile phone coverage and capacity. **(CPE05T)**
 - A successful joint partnership between Communities For Work Plus, Jobcentre Plus and Careers Wales through the Jobs, Skills and Training Events group has delivered a number of successful projects throughout the year highlighting opportunities available locally. **(CPE042T)**
 - £160,000 Brilliant Basics Fund Grant was secured to develop and improve regionally recognised trails across Flintshire and associated infrastructure.
 - The Flintshire Tourism Association supported with securing and the delivery of £64,000 funding from Cadwyn Clwyd to support wider business and marketing activities over the summer. **(CPE032T)**
 - The Flintshire Tourism Ambassador Course was delivered in July 2023. Seventy ambassadors have completed and achieved the Bronze and Silver Award during 2023/24. **(CPE032T)** www.ambassador.wales

5

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives

Council Plan (2023-28) Objectives Off Track

- **Sub-priority - Rural Regeneration**
 - CPE052T** Recruit a Digital Connectivity Officer to support rural communities to access better quality connectivity options.
 - CPE035M** Digital Connectivity Officer appointed.
 - CPE036M** Rural needs report completed.
- **Sub-priority - Town Centre Regeneration**
 - CPE038M** Completion of initial 3 (of 7) Place Making Plans in partnership with a range of stakeholders.
- **Sub-priority - Local Development Plan (LDP) Targets**
 - CPE039M** Completion of first LDP Annual Monitoring Report and submission to Welsh Government.
 - CPE040M** Completion of annual review of LDP housing trajectory.
 - CPE042M** Contribution to the scoping of the form and content of the North Wales Strategic Development Plan.
- **Sub-priority - Reducing Worklessness**
 - CPE043T** Deliver mentoring and wider support programmes to assist disadvantaged people to re-engage with the labour market.
 - CPE013M** Number of individuals receiving support.

Future Improvements

- The Council will be working closely with Welsh Government and communities in order to increase patronage on public transport through the delivery of education and infrastructure improvements.



Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives



Priority:

Well-being Objective:
Supporting people in need to live as well as they can.



Personal and Community Well-being

What We Said We Will Do:

- Continue to grow the Microcare market, including access to commissioned care packages.
- Develop a national, regional, and local approach to Early Years Transformation so that all our children ages 0-7 have the best possible start in life and are able to reach their full potential.
- Support people to achieve their mental well-being outcomes by promoting personal and community well-being through open access courses delivered by the Learning Partnership.
- Work in partnership with the Community Mental Health Team and Social Services Mental Health Support Service to develop clear pathways for individuals needing access to Mental Health services, and a sustainable model for the future.
- Utilise the progression model as a way of promoting people’s independence skills.
- Provide additional placements for step down care within our in-house provision (Croes Atti 2).
- Work with Housing to fund a small team of people to support individuals with low level Mental health problems to improve their housing.
- Plan for the relocation of Tri Ffordd supported employment project to Maes Gwern in Mold.
- Prepare for the implementation of the new Liberty Protect Safeguard procedures.
- Deliver a programme of registered Children’s Homes to help avoid the need for residential placements outside Flintshire.
- Explore the recommissioning of advocacy services on a regional basis.
- Develop childcare expansion and seamless childcare provision across programmes.
- Continue to grow our in-house fostering service to support more looked after children.
- Continue to grow our in-house homecare service to support more people to live at home, utilising a rolling scheme of recruitment.
- Establish a Dementia Strategy Implementation Group, to include representation from people with lived experience.

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives

Key Achievements and More

- 46 Microcare businesses were operational at the end of March 2024. The intention is to increase this by another 10 providers over the next 12 months. [\(CSS014T\)](#)
- The Wellbeing and Recovery Team is now fully operational and delivering excellent outcomes. The service focusses on those residents who have housing problems, or are homeless, or at risk of homelessness and require additional support due to their mental health. The service is proving very successful and currently has a full caseload and a waiting list. The service is part funded through Social Care and Housing Support Grant and consideration will be given to increasing capacity during 2024-2025. [\(CSS015T\)](#)
- In order to provide additional capacity for step down care within our in-house provision, twelve step down Discharge to Recover and Assess beds have been agreed for Croes Atti Newydd (planned for completion in May 2025). This will increase the step down provision from its current level of 16 to a total of 28 across Flintshire. [\(CSS011T\)](#)
- The design concept for the Maes Gwern hub has evolved to incorporate areas to enable health services and therapies to be delivered at the site. This is in addition to the learning disability, mental health, and autism support services to create an integrated social services and health hub. The construction start date to commence April 2024. [\(CSS002T\)](#)
- Continue to support individuals to achieve their mental well-being outcomes by promoting personal and community well being through open access courses delivered by the Learning Partnership, with 66 courses available. Courses have been well attended throughout the financial year. [\(CSS003T\)](#)
- The North East Wales Community Equipment service continue to deliver a level of service exceeding Welsh Government standards for equipment requests. 93% of equipment has been reused this year; this equates to £2,185,980 cost avoidance (average £42,076 a week). Without this level of re-use of equipment, the North East Wales Community Equipment Service budget would only cover 12.5 weeks of operation. [\(CSS006T\)](#)
- Between April 2023 and March 2024, 1109 safeguarding reports for adults were received, representing a 23% increase on last year. 667 of these reports met the threshold for an enquiry under Section 126, representing a significant increase in demand, however, the Safeguarding Unit continue to prioritise safeguarding reports on an individual basis. [\(CSS006T\)](#)



Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives

Key Achievements and More



- The children’s residential homes are now fully operational. Ty Nyth is a tri-party partnership collaboration between Flintshire County Council (FCC), Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC) and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB), offering up to four places for children and young people aged 8-18 years. Park Avenue provides care and support; including accommodation, for up to four children and young people between the ages of 8–18 years old who are supported by Flintshire County Council. Bromfield Park and Chevrons Road offers care and support including accommodation for one young person aged 8-18 years as a solo placement or two siblings aged 8-18 years. Mesen Fach is an emergency crisis flat on the site of Ty Nyth. (CSS007T)

- Foster carer recruitment has been active this year, with four new general foster carers approved and a further eight connected person carers. (CSS008T)
- Flying Start two-year-olds part time childcare expansion Phase 2 is currently being rolled out across Flintshire with an additional 23 children for 2024/25. (CSS018T)

- The Adults Advocacy Contract has been successfully commissioned in collaboration with Wrexham County Borough Council. This has been awarded to ASNEW for Independent Professional Advocacy and Community Advocacy, and Advance Brighter Futures have been awarded Self Advocacy. (CSS016T)
- The Flintshire Dementia Strategy supports around 850 people living with dementia, and carers, receiving care and support or engaging in community activities in Flintshire.
- Throughout 2023 over thirty community events were attended to engage with Flintshire residents to drive environment initiatives and behavioural change.
- Fourteen sessions offering a range of activities and sport for young people around Flintshire are available. The Youth Services work with Community councils and sit on the contextual safeguarding meetings to ensure they are in the right areas.



5

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives

Council Plan (2023-28) Objectives Off Track

- **Sub-priority - Safeguarding**
CSS011M Percentage of Pre-birth assessments completed within timescales.
- **Sub-priority - A Well Connected, Safe and Clean Local Environment**
CST011M Number of targeted environmental educational campaigns undertaken to promote improved Local Environmental Quality.



Future Improvements

- Recruitment for in-house home carers continues to be challenging, however the service has developed a recruitment plan to help increase the workforce and grow the share of the market.
- Increase the number of community champions to deliver environmental initiatives.

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives



Priority:

**Well-being Objective:
Enabling and supporting
learning communities.**



Education and Skills

What We Said We Will Do:

- Support the implementation of the revised curriculum for secondary pupils in years 7 and 8.
- Continue to deliver Alternative Provision (Education) and to increase the number of young people on the programme gaining qualifications and achieving their full potential (subject to external grant funding).
- Provide bespoke support for schools through training and development to improve the level of speech language and communication skills for pupils.
- Explore and develop options for in house provision in response to the increasing number of pupils struggling to engage with education due to mental health difficulties.
- Embed the delivery plan for Integrated Youth Services by maintaining focus on digital, school and community engagement.
- Provide Duke of Edinburgh Award training opportunities for young people in Alternative Provision, schools, and community groups (subject to external grant funding).
- Schedule Council approval to progress Wales Government’s Band B Sustainable Communities projects within the Learning Investment Programme.
- Continue construction of the 3-16 campus at Mynydd Isa.
- Deliver the Adult Community Learning (ACL) programme.
- Complete the annual strategic actions within the Welsh Education Strategic Plan 5-year action plan.
- Run a referral programme for children and young people with ACEs or a disability and their families to provide low cost / no cost physical activity opportunities to improve overall health and well-being.
- Embed a Whole School Approach to Emotional Health and Wellbeing in all Flintshire schools.

Key Achievements and More

- Informal Qualifications delivered by Flintshire Youth Service and eight young people were recruited for the Youth Work Young Leaders Award.
- Anti-Racism: 'Leaders of Now' is a pilot project that has seen young people from four secondary schools in Flintshire lead the way in challenging racism in their own settings.
- The model of intervention for the Community Focused Schools Team has been established and further developed to focus on transition. [\(CEY045T\)](#)
- All secondary schools in Flintshire have implemented the revised curriculum for secondary pupils in Years 7 and 8 from September 2023. Each school continues to work with their supporting improvement adviser to embed this work. [\(CEY044T\)](#)
- Over the past six months, from October 2023 to March 2024, the PlayPals project has been successfully implemented across eight schools in different areas of Flintshire.
- Substance Education by Flintshire Sorted: This was undertaken in twelve schools and PPRUs through assemblies, lunchtime walkaround sessions and input into lessons, engaging a total of 2,152 children and young people. 75 sessions also took place in the community.
- Over 70 Young People enrolled on the Bronze and Silver Duke of Edinburgh. [\(CAU019T\)](#)
- £6.23m of capital investment was injected across the school network to improve facilities for learners.
- Construction of new 3-16 campus continues and is progressing well, following the site start in November 2022 on the Argoed High School site. [\(CEY015T\)](#)
- Sixty young people successfully completed the John Muir Award through the Forest School programme.
- The Council's contribution to the Adult Community Learning Partnership continues to grow, with over 1,036 learners and 246 sessions being delivered during this reporting year. Examples of the courses that we provided include - First Aid for Parents, Pre and Post-natal Fitness, Employability Skills, Autism Awareness, Safeguarding, Social Media workshops, Food Safety qualifications. [\(CAU020T\)](#)
- Secured funding through the Shared Prosperity Fund to improve responses and support to children and young people at risk of exploitation by enabling Action for Children to deliver their SideStep Programme until December 2025.
- Welsh Language Music Club - 35 young people took part in a 4 week programme across two schools.
- 56 young people from secondary schools competed in the Eisteddfod in a variety of different competitions, including Cogurdd, Dance, Singing and Reciting.
- A review has been undertaken to consider the current provision and engage with Welsh medium settings to determine need. The findings are being collated and will be presented to the Welsh Education Strategic Plan Forum. [\(CEY054T\)](#)
- Flintshire schools are positively engaged with developing their work around the whole school approach to emotional health

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives

Key Achievements and More

- and well-being. This work will be ongoing as schools continue to embed effective practice. [\(CEY055T\)](#)
- 24 candidates from schools and Education and Youth successfully completed the local Trauma Informed Schools UK diploma training. [\(CEY056T\)](#)
- The Council has successfully achieved the Integrated Youth Services delivery plan by maintaining a strong digital presence, ensuring school and community immersion workers and play team are active in schools, and sustaining ongoing community engagement. [\(CEY011T\)](#)
- All schools have now formally adopted their own digital strategy. This gives all schools a standard to work from to develop their digital progression in a structured manner. [\(CEY048T\)](#)

Council Plan (2023-28) Objectives Off Track

- **Sub-priority - Educational Engagement and Achievement**
[CEY004M](#) Reduction in the number of permanent exclusions.
[CEY005M](#) Reduction in the number of fixed term exclusions.
- **Sub-priority - Digital Learning Opportunities**
[CEY017M](#) Number of Youth Work Sessions Delivered - Digital.
- **Sub-priority - Welsh Education Strategic Plan (WESP)**
[CEY011M](#) Number of Year 11 pupils studying Welsh.



Future Improvements

- The level of exclusion remains high across secondary schools, and this remains a targeted priority. The focus on Trauma Informed practice will continue with the aim of supporting a reduction in the need for exclusion by encouraging schools to adopt a different approach to managing serious behaviour incidents.
- There has been a 12 month gap in the position of the Welsh Language Youth Worker. The new post holder was successfully recruited at the end of 2023 and starts their position in May 2024. The sustaining of the current projects has been a success and focus will be placed on growth for 2024/25, including the Welsh language skills across the play and youth team.



Priority:

Well-being Objective:
Responsible, resourceful, and trusted Council operating efficiently as possible.



A Well Managed Council

What We Said We Will Do:

- Maintain competitive pay and reward, and terms and conditions of employment.
- Recruit sufficient permanent high quality staff with suitable qualifications and experience.
- Retain existing employees by supporting them to carry out their roles effectively, and by ensuring that our total offer for new and existing employees is competitive within the market place.
- Increase the level of Welsh Language across the organisation.
- Develop and implement an Action Plan to meet Welsh Government's Anti-racist Wales Action Plan.
- Complete an annual self-assessment against the Welsh Language Standards and implement an action plan for improvement across all Portfolios.
- Publish the Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report to meet our statutory public sector equality duties.
- Ensure the funding needs of the Council cover the medium term are met through financial planning.
- Ensure robust processes exist for the management and recovery of debt including Council Tax and rent.
- Monitor Council Progress against the Corporate Asset Management Plan.
- Continue to provide a corporate Contact Centre for handling telephone calls to the Council.
- Provide access to Council services on the internet in a responsive way (information can be accessed using different devices).
- Work with public sector partners, develop and publish a local Well-being Plan for 2023-28 setting out the local well-being objectives and how the Public Services Board, including the Council, aims to achieve them.
- Deliver three engagement events to encourage other organisations to sign up to the Armed Forces Covenant, which contribute to Flintshire County Council being re-accredited with the Defence Employers Recognition Scheme Gold Award in 2024.

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives

5

Key Achievements and More

- During the year 754 positions were filled, which is positive and indicates that we are able to recruit to a large number of positions, all of which will have been assessed as meeting the essential criteria for the post (including qualifications and experience), (percentage determined after deducting those who commenced employment but left during the first 12 months (CHR004T)
- Turnover for 2023/24 was 13.55%, which means that the stability for the year was 88.69%. (CHR005T)
- A range of Welsh language courses have been accessed by a number of learners and by offering different levels/methods of learning makes it more accessible. (CHR008T)
- There have been 2,403 portal accesses to Vivup from September 2023 up until the end of February 2024. 500 self-help downloads have been recorded and 63 employees have accessed counselling. (CHR007T)
- The annual self-assessment for all Portfolios has been completed, with actions being identified and implemented. Regular reviews and reminders of Welsh Language Standards continue to be shared across the Portfolios. (CPA004M)
- The Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report was approved and published in March 2024. The action plan is now included within the Strategic Equality Plan 2024/28 which has now been published. (CPA004T)
- The Council was able to set a legal and balanced budget for 2024/25 in February 2024. Work is underway to update the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2025/26 onwards and an update report is scheduled for June/July 2024. (CFI001T)
- The Council continues to apply robust, but fair, debt recovery processes to maximise collection levels across all areas. At the same time, the Revenues service engages constructively with residents who struggle to meet their payment obligations by entering into affordable payment plans. The approach to debt recovery is set out in the Council's Corporate Debt Recovery Policy. (CFI004T)
- The Corporate Asset Management Plan informs the Capital Programme, which is reviewed annually, and progress is monitored throughout the year. The Corporate Asset Management Plan will be refreshed 2024/25. (CPA005T)
- Work has commenced on the Office Strategy; draft principles have been prepared and further work is required to firm up principles. (CPA007T)
- The corporate Contact Centre is open Monday-Friday between 08:30 - 17:00. The team continues to handle a wide range of telephone calls for services in Housing, Streetscene, Planning, Elections and Blue Badges. In addition, the team answer calls to the Council's main telephone number. (CGV009T)
- The Digital Flintshire Hub continues to promote a range of initiatives to help people to use digital technology now and in the future. The Hub includes resources to keep people safe online, training, health and wellbeing resources, digital events and activities. The Hub also provides information about the Council's ambitious plans contained in the Digital Strategy.
- The joint Flintshire and Wrexham Public Services Board (PSB) have been working on the first year of the Well-being Plan 2023-28. Three Outcome Boards and an Integration Team have been established and partnership project working is ongoing. (CPA010T)

Assessment of our Seven Priorities and Well-being Objectives

Council Plan (2023-28) Objectives Off Track

- Sub-priority - People

CHR001M The number of working days lost per full time equivalent (FTE) local authority employees lost due to sickness absence.

CHR003M Percentage of permanent employees who leave within first year of employment.

CHR004M Percentage of employees who have completed all of mandatory modules.

- Sub-priority - Flintshire Assets

CPA006M Commercial rent review completed: To increase rental income in line with prevailing market rents to make sure that rental income is optimised. To ensure rental consistency within estates.

CPA007M County Hall Master Plan options appraisal/strategy: To develop a plan which will provide the blueprint for the redevelopment of County Hall site.

- Sub-priority - Digital

CGV008M 80% of telephone calls to the corporate Contact Centre answered.

- Sub-priority - Partnerships

CPA009M Number of organisations who sign up to the Armed Forces Covenant.



Future Improvements

- Although the use of agency workers has increased in 2023/24, reducing the use of agency workers still remains a key priority for the Council.
- Low subscribers to My Account by Contract Holders (tenants). Promotion will help increase awareness and Housing Officers should aim to offer digital by default whenever a new contract is issued.
- We need to encourage more organisations to sign up to the Armed Forces Covenant. Two organisations signed up to the Covenant during 2023/24.

Strategic Equality Plan

6



During the past 12 months, the new Strategic Equality Plan, (SEP) 2024-28 has been developed and published. The new Plan includes actions from Welsh Government's Anti-racist Wales action plan and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, Plus (LGBTQ+) Action Plan for Wales. The Council's Housing Team is working with Tai Pawb to develop specific actions and training to embed an anti-racist approach within the Service. A new LGBTQ+ e-learning module has been developed to support the implementation of the new SEP and meet the commitments of the LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales.

Vision Support reviewed the Council website to ensure it is fully accessible for people who are blind or have visual impairments. The results of their review were positive and no issues with accessibility were identified.

We have continued to work with the University of Manchester on developing a new approach for Integrated Impact Assessments (IIA). The new IIA Tool has been piloted by several officers across the Council, this takes into account recommendations made by Audit Wales in their report "Equality Impact Assessments: more than a tick box exercise". An evaluation of the new Tool will be completed by the University during 2024/25 which will involve interviews with both IIA authors and decision makers. This will help understand how the outcomes of IIAs influence decisions made by the Council.

Welsh Language

There has been an increased number of initiatives to increase the use of Welsh by employees. In addition to providing Welsh language skills training and offering informal chat sessions. Several teams are participating in Bangor University's ARFer project which aims to increase the use of incidental Welsh amongst employees, whatever their level of skill. We have developed video recordings with phonics to support employees use more Cymraeg in meetings and on the telephone. This means that employees can hear and see words and phrases to support pronunciation.

laith, the Welsh Centre for language planning, delivered a series of courses - "Welsh Matters for Everyone" and "Welsh Matters for Managers".

The aim of these courses was to look at:

- **Influences on language use** - reflect upon personal experience and knowledge, understand changes to the status of the Welsh Language and what influences language attitudes and behaviours.
- **Why Use Welsh** - understand National Policy and legislation and the Language Standards in Flintshire
- **Facts and figures about the Welsh Language** - linguistic demography of Wales and Flintshire
- **Working Bilingually** - importance of bilingual services

We have experienced difficulties recruiting Welsh speaking job applicants, as have other public bodies. To tackle this we worked with Wrexham County Borough Council and partners, including Menter Iaith Fflint a Wrecsam, Mudiad Meithrin and Coleg Cambria, to look at solutions to attracting and recruiting more Welsh speakers to our organisations. This has involved two employees being involved in promotional videos to show how we support employees to use Welsh at work. The North Wales Regional Public Services Board also commissioned Iaith to look at issues and solutions to recruiting and retaining Welsh speaking employees. This work will be completed during 2024/25.

During 2023/24, we asked employees to complete a Welsh language attitude survey the results will be used to develop more initiatives to promote the Welsh language during 2024/25.



Partnership and Collaboration Activity 8

Flintshire has a longstanding and proud track record of partnership working. The communities it serves rightly expect the statutory and third sector partners to work together to manage shared priorities through collaboration. The Flintshire Public Services Board is at the heart of promoting a positive culture of working together, setting shared priorities, and combining resources for the benefit of Flintshire, with an overall aim of improving local well-being.

The Flintshire Public Services Board was formally established in April 2016 following the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 coming into effect. The Flintshire Public Services Board and Wrexham Public Services Board formally merged in January 2023.

Membership of the Flintshire and Wrexham Public Services Board includes Natural Resources Wales, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, Flintshire County Council, Wrexham County Borough Council, Association of Voluntary Organisations Wrexham, Flintshire Local Voluntary Council, Coleg Cambria, DWP, North Wales Police, Wrexham Glyndwr University and Welsh Government.

The Flintshire and Wrexham Public Services Board is working with its communities to change how we do things, to make sure we will be able to face the challenges ahead such as the climate and nature emergency, and how we ensure good mental health and wellbeing for all.

A key focus for the Flintshire and Wrexham Public Service Board has been the development of a new five-year Well-being Plan, drawing

on the findings of the Well-being Assessments produced in 2022. The Flintshire and Wrexham Public Services Board Well-Being Plan 2023-2028 contains two well-being objectives for the Public Services Board over the coming five years:

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

Under these objectives are several outcomes, which fall under three themes: Children and Young People, Our Communities, and Where We Work.

The Well-being Plan 2023 - 2028 will shape the work of the Public Services Board over coming years and there will be close working with other Public Services Boards across North Wales, along with local communities.



Risk Management

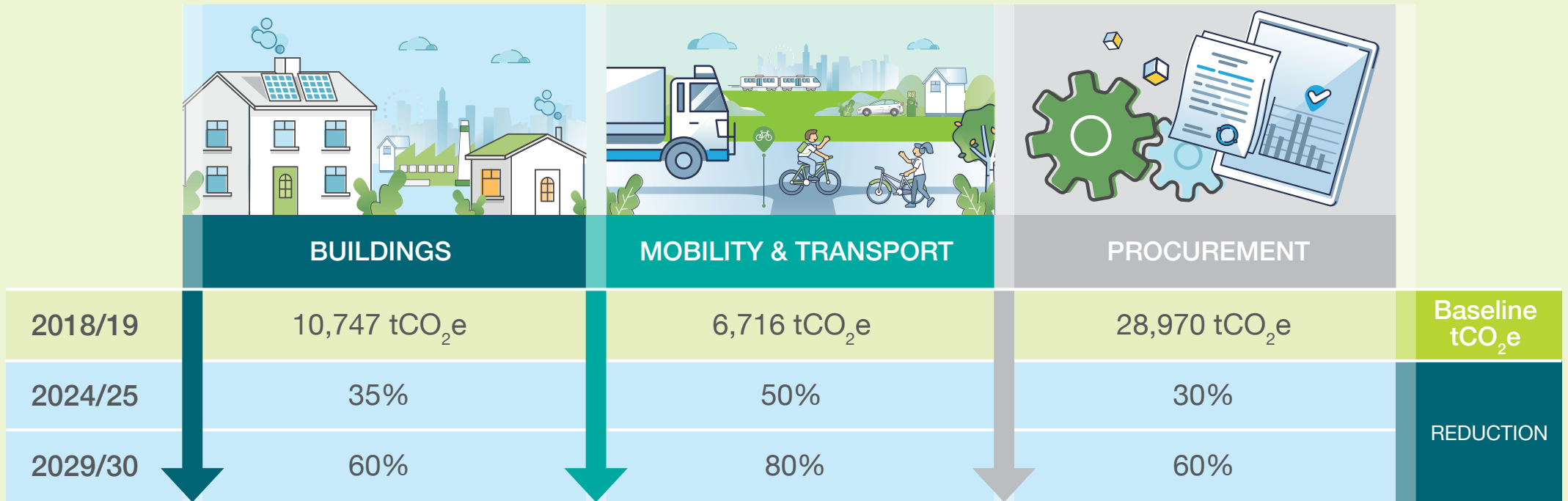
All Council Plans, business as usual and emerging risks are identified, assessed, treated, and monitored using the Council's Risk Management Framework.

Risks are identified using qualitative (milestones & actions) and quantitative (performance indicators, financial) data. Risk identification remains a key priority for the Council.

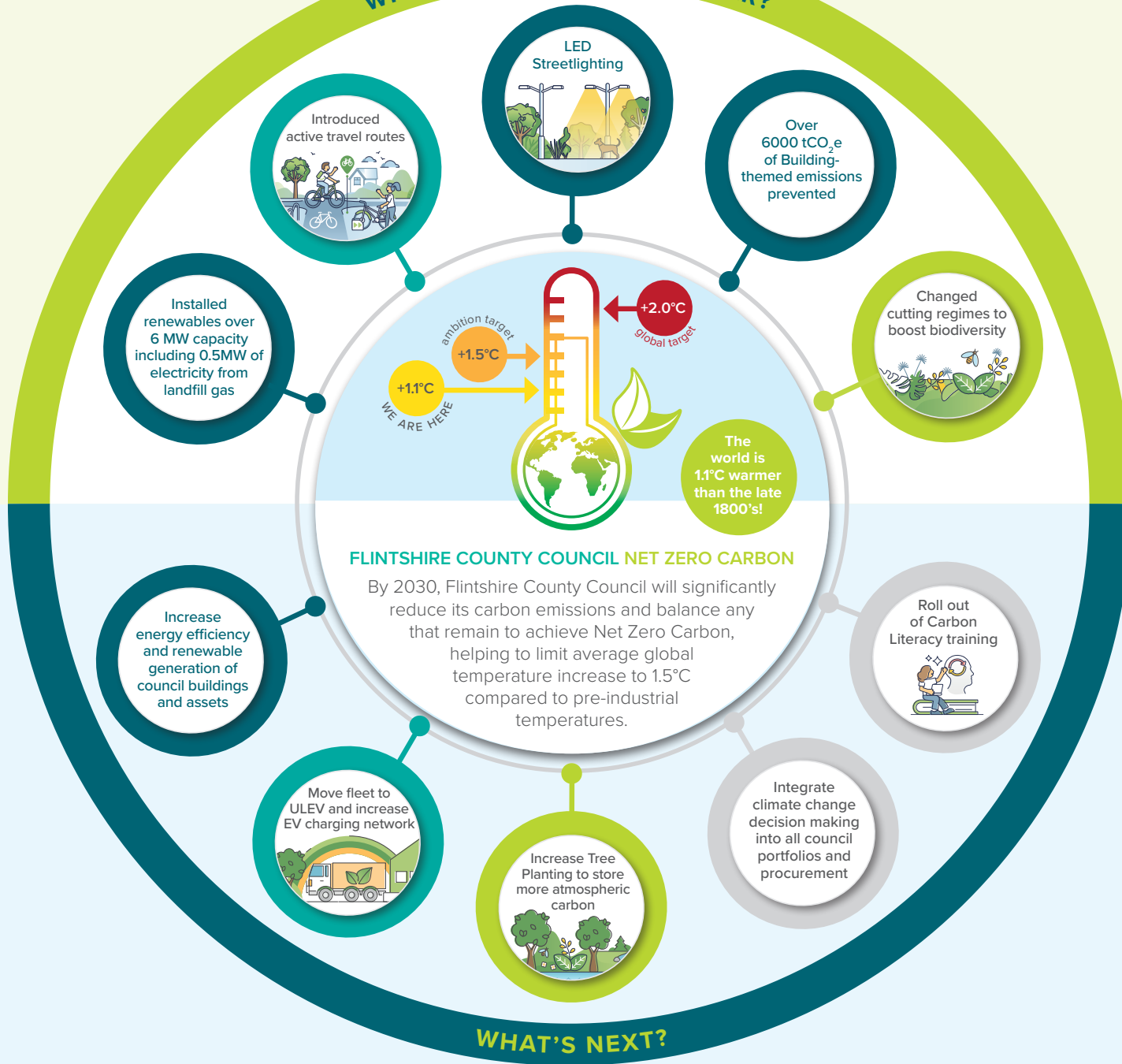
It is a continuous process which is embedded in not only in our day to day (business as usual) but embedded within our Council Planning, Portfolio Business Planning, Project Management, and Partnerships (short term, medium term and long term).



TAKING ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE



WHAT HAVE WE DONE SO FAR?



LEARN MORE



CONTACT US

climatechange@flintshire.gov.uk



Flintshire County Council
Climate Change Strategy



What's your
carbon footprint?



Take our questionnaire

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg. Gweler y dudalen Gymraeg ar ein gwefan.

This document is also available in Welsh. See Welsh page on our website.



Our Flintshire, Our Future 2023 - 2024

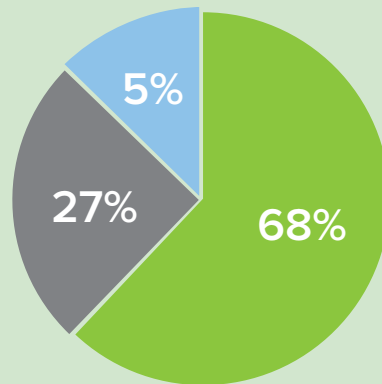
The budget, your Council Tax and local services

Every year councils have to set a budget which balances their resources with their spending needs. Between 2008 and 2020 all councils received reduced funding from government. As a low funded council - ranked 20 out of 22 councils in Wales - Flintshire was particularly exposed to the effects of this period of austerity.

Over the last 14 years, Flintshire County Council has reduced its spending by **£100M**. Every year it's been harder and harder to make more savings and protect services. At times hard budget choices have been needed.



Where the Council's money comes from



- Comes from the Welsh Government
- Comes from Council Tax
- Comes from the fees we charge for some services e.g. planning fees, garden waste charges, Register Office fees

Budget Monitoring 2023/24

What your Council Tax pays for

The Council Tax you pay goes up every year, but not all the money collected goes to pay for council services. It also supports 34 Town and Community Councils, the North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner and contributes to increases in funding for other regional services.

How Council Tax is shared between the Council and other public services

£125.5M is the total the Council expects to collect in Council Tax in 2023/24, of which:

80% is retained by the Council as a contribution to run local services.

17% is collected on behalf of North Wales Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner.

3% is collected on behalf of our Town and Community Councils.

Flintshire County Council is committed to keeping its annual increase at 5% or less and has applied a 3.99% increase to pay for council services.

All six North Wales councils also contribute to the costs of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority, The North Wales Coroners Service and GWE - the Regional Education Improvement Service. Flintshire has added an extra 0.96% to cover annual increases in these contributions.

This brings the total increase of Flintshire County Council's portion of Council Tax to 4.95%.



What this means in monetary terms for Council Tax for 2023/24

Using an average Band D property example:

	2023/24	2022/23	Increased Cost	Percentage increase
Flintshire County Council	£1,521.33	£1,449.58	£71.75	4.95%
North Wales Police & Crime Commissioner	£333.09	£316.80	£16.29	5.14%
Town and Community Councils*	£51.98*	£49.02*	£2.96*	6.04%*
TOTAL COST	£1,906.40	£1,815.40	£91.00	5.01%

* average cost across all 34 Town and Community Councils, the cost on individual bills will differ from Council to Council



Balancing the books for 2023/24

What is the Annual Governance Statement?

The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2018 require us to prepare a statement on internal control. Like many authorities in Wales, this is referred to as the 'Annual Governance Statement'. This is a public document that reports on the extent to which we as the Council comply with our own code of governance.



In the Annual Governance Statement, we, the Council:

- Acknowledge our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of governance;
- Summarise the key elements of that governance framework and the roles of those responsible for the development and maintenance of the governance environment;
- Describe how we have monitored and evaluated the effectiveness of our governance arrangements in year, and any planned changes in the coming period;
- Provide details of how we have responded to any issue(s) identified in last year's governance statement;
- Report on any governance issues identified from this review and provide a commitment to addressing them; and
- In referring to the Council, this includes its group relationship with other entities such as New Homes and Newydd

The Annual Governance Statement reports on the governance arrangements that has been in place at Flintshire County Council during the financial year 2023/24 and up to the date of approval of the Statement of Accounts.

Annual Governance Statement 13

Cymharu Effeithiolrwydd Trefniadau Llywodraethu'r Cyngor

Comparison of Performance		2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Good Governance Principles	A Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of Law				
	B Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement				
	C Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic social and environmental benefits				
	D Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievements of the intended outcomes				
	E Developing the entity's capacity, including the capacity of its leadership and the individuals within it				
	F Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong financial management				
	G Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability				

Score - 3 Evidence but further action required	Score - 3 - 4 Good evidence / Action may be required
Score - 4 Good evidence	Score - 4 - 5 Good evidence / Very best practice
Score - 5 Very best practice	Unable to deliver due to Covid

There will not be a separate action for those scored 3-4 if the issue has already been covered by actions to address those scored a 3.

14

Corporate Self-assessment

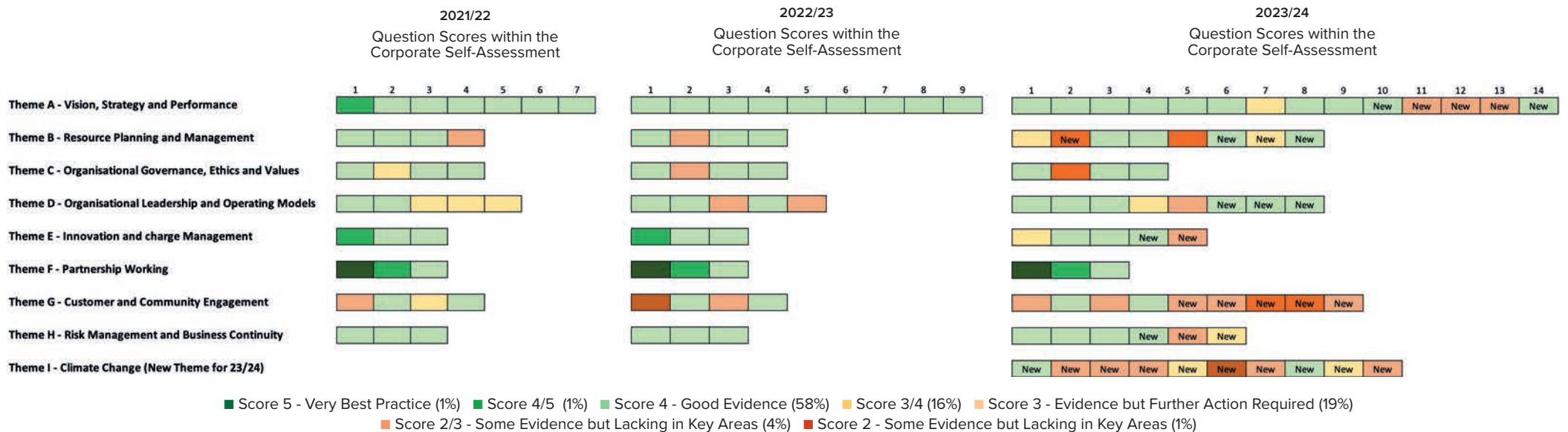
The Corporate Self-Assessment is a comprehensive assessment of the corporate organisation and not a detailed assessment of the performance of each service portfolio, the assessment themes are designed in this way. The Corporate Self-assessment is meant to provide a platform for assurance and self-improvement and would lead to an improvement plan for the organisation.

The Corporate Self-Assessment model focuses on a number of themes and considers a number of core questions within each of these themes. As with all models there will inevitably be overlaps across themes, however, the themes are sufficiently defined and demarked

to avoid too much overlapping or duplication. This year, the Corporate Self-Assessment also incorporates a number of additional questions and a new theme to cover areas that will be considered within the Panel Performance Assessment.

Building on the approach in 2021 the Corporate Self-assessment has a stronger focus on i) a more proportionate and targeted collection of evidence and ii) the analysis of evidence, focusing on the strengths, areas for development and the impact that is being achieved. This approach will help the formulation of the action plan.

Comparison between 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24 Corporate Self Assessments



Note: Two additional questions were added to the 22/23 Corporate Self-assessment within Theme A

Additional Background Information

15

There are a number of related documents which support the Annual Performance Report and are available on Flintshire County Council's website.

- Council Plan 2023-28
- Social Services Annual Performance Report
- Welsh Language Standards
- Strategic Equality Plan
- Risk Management Framework
- Corporate Self-assessment
- Previous Annual Performance Reports



Thank you for reading our Annual Performance Report for 2023/24.

Your views and suggestions about how we might improve the content and layout of the Annual Performance Report for future years are welcome.

Please contact the Performance and Risk Management Team:
Email: PRM@flintshire.gov.uk

