Focused on our Performance
2018 – 2019
Focused On Our Performance

This report sets out Wrexham County Borough Council’s self-evaluation of progress against the Council Plan that was agreed in May 2018: fourteen priority outcomes (our well-being objectives) spread across the four priority themes of economy, people, place and organisation.

The council had a budget of £233 million for 2018/19 and provides or enables services to over 130,000 local residents and countless more stakeholders. As such this report does not attempt to be a comprehensive assessment of all that we have done - it is a summary of performance in 14 key areas.

Performance on each priority outcome is described over two pages and includes our overall judgement of performance along with a summary of the evidence for the judgement being made – performance on our agreed outcome indicators, recent comments by our regulators and other supporting information. Some of our priority outcomes have improved from last year, however the majority have stayed the same, with over half being assessed as meeting their overall outcomes. This reflects the scale of the challenge that we have set ourselves, the financial pressures under which we are working, and our lack of complacency.

This year we are continuing to give a higher profile to how we have used our planning principles – and the five ways-of-working set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act – to shape our planning and our services.

Wrexham’s Council Plan

Wrexham County Borough Council works to ensure that the people of Wrexham are supported to fulfil their potential and to prosper. The new Council Plan 2019/22 sets out how we intend to achieve that – focusing on six in-year priorities for the current year that are in line with, and will impact across, all of our 14 well-being objectives. The Council Plan is available on the Council’s website www.wrexham.gov.uk and in accessible formats.

How to Read this Report

This report sets out an overall judgement of progress against each of the 14 priority outcomes within the Council Plan, with each highlighted as either:

- **Green**  
  Good progress is being made and outcomes are improving
- **Amber**  
  Progress is being made but not yet impacting on outcomes
- **Red**  
  Performance is off-track and outcomes are not improving

The rationale for the progress judgement for each priority outcome is set out over two pages. It includes graphical information on performance against target for agreed outcome indicators, along with highlights and challenges for future improvement.
Reading Graphs

Each graph sets out 2018/19 performance against target and, where available, trend data and a benchmark are also included. Below each graph is the 2018/19 outturn, trend on the previous year, and judgement of whether performance is on target or not. Trend information always refers to improving performance as \( \uparrow \) (over time) regardless of whether the improvement is actually represented by a reduction in performance within the one year.

Indicator Title

![Graph showing performance trends over years]

2.6% \( \uparrow \) GREEN

Target Setting

Wrexham County Borough Council works to ensure that local people receive good quality services that provide value for money within a reducing budget. We judge the success of these services through setting and monitoring outcome indicators. Outcome indicator targets are set for the current financial year at one of four levels, to reflect the council’s level of ambition and whether the council is investing, or prioritising its budget, as decisions are taken on reshaping services and making savings:

- **Stretch** to achieve a significant improvement
- **Improve** performance in line with current trends
- **Sustain** current standards of performance
- **Service Standard** below which performance should not fall

It should be noted that targets to sustain performance or to deliver against a minimum standard can still represent challenging and ambitious targets when considered in the light of the changes in funding and resources available.
E1: People want to live, work, learn visit and invest here

In 2018/19 this priority outcome was judged to be AMBER overall, vacancy rates have decreased to below the Welsh average but continued monitoring is needed for further reduction, to indicate the health of the town-centre. Tŷ Pawb officially opened its doors to the public on 2nd April 2018, and in its first year has contributed to the arts, culture, well-being and wider town-centre regeneration of Wrexham. Overall there has been an increase in the number of people visiting the County Borough and a corresponding increase in the economic impact of tourism.

Town-centre vacancy rate – all retail properties

14% AMBER ↓

Vacancy rate at the end of 2018 was 14% Amber, compared to 14.1% at the start of the year. This is a decrease compared to the vacancy rate at the beginning of 2017/18, which was 15.4%

Town-centre vacancy rate – council owned retail properties

13% AMBER ↓

This represents 3 vacant town centre properties at the end of the year out of the 22 owned by the council

HIGHLIGHTS

- Footfall in the town-centre (measured by digital footfall counter) has improved, despite the impact on public works and diversions in the town-centre during the pedestrian improvements, where the counters are sited.
- Footfall figures for Tŷ Pawb, Wrexham’s cultural community arts and market centre, for the full year were 106,672, compared to an initial projection of 50,000.
- Since 2010 visitor spend increased by 38%, the largest increase in Wales – in 2018/19 the total visitor spend increased by 4.1% to £122.6 million.
- The total number of visitor days spent in Wrexham County Borough increased by 0.8% to 2.63 million, with the total number of visitors increasing by 1.6% to 1.92 million.
- There was a 2.6% increase in the total number of day visitors to 1.52 million.
- An implementation plan for the North Wales Growth Bid was approved in March 2019, paving the way for agreement between the UK, Welsh Government and the North Wales Economic Ambition Board for investment in key infrastructure projects.
- The Wrexham Heritage Strategy: Making Connections 2018-2028 was adopted in November 2018 to provide strategic direction for improvements to key heritage sites over the next ten years.

Tŷ Pawb ended its first year with a birthday celebration on Easter Monday, 22nd April 2019. Events and activities were held throughout the day and night with 2,500 people visiting the facility for the celebration.
E1: People want to live, work, learn, visit and invest here

In June 2018, the Employment, Business and Investment scrutiny committee considered progress in implementing actions identified in the Town-Centre Markets Strategic Asset Management Plan 2016-21. They noted work carried out to date in promoting the Wrexham indoor markets, which included the installation of wi-fi in the Butchers and General Markets and repair of the historic Butchers Market clock. Subject to funding, the action plan’s priorities to enhance the markets and associated shops will continue to be supported by the council in 2019/20.

Value of visitor spend

Total investment

£5,523,610

Value of investment in physical regeneration

£122.6 million GREEN ↑

KEY ISSUES
- The total number of visitors staying decreased by 2.0% to 0.39 million, and the total number of staying visitor days spent in Wrexham County Borough decreased by 1.6% to 1.11 million.
- The reduction in the number of overnight stays could be a reflection of the inability to find a room within the county on certain days, or the lack of quality / attractiveness of current accommodation in the county.
- Housing Renewal - £665k has been secured through Targeted Regeneration Investment, which, including other contributions, will provide a total of £950k available to be spent on buildings considered to be important within the town in 2019/20. To date only one building has been submitted for approval, which presents a risk of funding for 2019/20 being de-committed.

We are investing in physical improvements for identified town-centre indoor markets, to enhance their vibrancy and attractiveness; attracting relevant and sustainable traders to assist with the overall ambition for the area and recognising the markets as a focal point of Wrexham as a market town.
E2: Businesses can locate and grow here

In 2018/19 this priority outcome was judged to be GREEN as the economy is strong in Wrexham, the number of recorded businesses has grown and unemployment is below the national average. Wrexham Council’s Business Support team is committed to delivering appropriate and effective business support interventions to enable delivery of the council’s priorities and to support the business community through providing a key point of contact for businesses from both within and outside the County Borough, providing information and advice which supports business growth, investment and jobs.

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- The economy in Wrexham is strong, with unemployment running below the UK and Welsh average.
- The new Town Square Hub was established by Welsh Government to support business start-ups and creative industries.
- Wrexham Industrial Estate saw record growth with over £1m a day being invested in capital projects.
- The business support model in Wrexham focuses on relationship building for any business of any size regardless of how they are constituted, and provides a single point of contact to support businesses to be viable, sustainable and adequately resourced.
- As part of the council’s business support activity, proactive support is available to a wide range of social enterprise businesses across the County Borough.

In 2018/19 Wrexham’s Business Support Team were involved in supporting a social enterprise ‘Your Space’ with their expansion plans. Your Space provides social opportunities, activities and clubs for children and young people.
E2: Businesses can locate and grow here

A report on helping new businesses and community enterprises in Wrexham was considered by the Employment, Business and Investment Scrutiny Committee in March 2019. As part of the council’s business support activity, proactive support is available to a wide range of social enterprises across the County Borough. The ‘Town Square Hub’, part of Welsh Government’s Business Wales Offer, has supported 170 individuals and businesses since its establishment in May 2018.

**Number of recorded business start-ups**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Wrexham</th>
<th>Target</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014/15</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015/16</td>
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<td>2018/19</td>
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<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019/20</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Number of qualified investment enquiries**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Wrexham</th>
<th>Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014/15</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015/16</td>
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<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019/20</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**KEY ISSUES**

- With additional funding there may be an opportunity to support further business opportunities by stimulating the economy. Commercial sector funding has not been identified to date to provide any discretionary funds to support businesses by means of grants. This is an area for reconsideration in the future.

- Allocation of employment land as part of the new Local Development Plan is a priority to enable the council to capitalise on the strength of the indigenous investment market and respond to future requirements for growth of indigenous businesses, this will create jobs, in response to future population projections.

By supporting existing businesses to increase their turnover, profit and sustainability and by encouraging links between businesses, household income across the County Borough can be raised. This means that everyone can benefit fairly from growth, improving household health and well-being with increasing levels of disposable income.
In 2018/19 this priority outcome was judged to be **GREEN**. The Tackling Poverty Strategy is formed around three priority themes of; **Understand**, **Reduce** and **Prevent** poverty. It is purposefully a council focused strategy which seeks to ensure that the activities delivered by the council contribute to addressing the issues related to poverty.

Whilst the proportion of workless households in Wrexham fell significantly in 2017 to 12.5%, this is an indicator which fluctuates regularly and which still at this low level represents 5,200 local households. Work on this priority for 2018/19 onwards is co-ordinated and directed by the council’s Tackling Poverty Strategy. 2018 data is due to be published by the Office of National Statistics in November 2019.

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- The Tackling Poverty Strategy was approved by Employment, Business and Investment Committee (EBIsc) on 10 April 2018 and the Tackling Poverty action plan went to Scrutiny in November 2018.
- The action plan is the pilot for the SYCLE (Performance Reporting System) Strategy.
- An update report on the action plan will be going to EBIsc in October 2019.
- Throughout 2018/19 the council was directly involved in the creation of 291 jobs.
- Through the council’s Communities for Work and Communities for Work Plus teams, in 2018/19, 95 participants were helped into securing and entering employment. This was during the first year of the Communities for Work Plus approach, in which recruitment of staff was ongoing and not actually complete until December 2018. A Department for Work & Pensions team is embedded within the council’s Communities for Work Team and they have contributed an additional 56 jobs through this partnership.
- During 2018/19, processes were put in place to ensure that from the first quarter of 2019/20, all schools within the county have had access to sanitary products on site and access to regular top-up deliveries.
- Progress has been made to ensure that all schools have been provided with sanitary bins, identifying how many sanitary bins should be provided in each school and where and how often the bins should be emptied.

The council continues to work with external organisations to promote the delivery of outcomes through collaboration. Funding provided to the council in respect of support for Universal Credit claimants has enabled the council to provide assisted digital support and personal budgeting support. Responsibility for delivery of this support will transfer to the Citizens Advice Bureau from April 2019.
In November 2018, the Employment, Business and Investment Scrutiny Committee supported an action plan, developed by the Tackling Poverty Strategy as the framework to deliver the Tackling Poverty theme of the Council Plan. The actions proposed in the Tackling Poverty Action Plan cover the activities of a number of council departments.

**Percentage of working age people who are benefits claimants – claimant count**
Contextual indicator ↓ 2.9% in Wrexham compared to 2.7% in Wales

**Percentage of 16 – 64 year old population with no qualifications**
Contextual indicator → 7.1% in Wrexham compared to 8.7% in Wales

**KEY ISSUES**

- Whilst the proportion of workless households in Wrexham fell significantly in 2017 to 12.5%, this is an indicator which fluctuates regularly and which still at this low level represents 5,200 local households. Work on this priority for 2018/19 onwards is coordinated and directed by the council’s Tackling Poverty Strategy and associated Action Plan. 2018 data for the percentage of the population with no qualifications is due to be published by the Office of National Statistics in November 2019.

- The Tackling Poverty Strategy is a pilot for the new performance reporting system SYCLE. As with any new system, technical issues have been identified such as loss of data, data not showing within reports etc. however the officers are working to overcome the initial problems and ensure data quality is maintained.

Interventions delivered by the council include child health and wellbeing development, parenting support, support for those on benefits, help with employment and employability, business development for the creation of new employment and support and guidance to sustain tenancies.
PE1: All people have positive aspirations, learn and achieve their potential

In 2018/19 this priority outcome was judged to be **AMBER** because there is a need for a continued focus on improving standards in secondary schools.

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**Percentage of pupils achieving the Foundation Phase Indicator at the end of year 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Wrexham</th>
<th>Wales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td>92.0%</td>
<td>91.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018/19</td>
<td>91.0%</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
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**Percentage of pupils achieving the Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage Two at the end of year 6**

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
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<th>Wales</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>82.5%</td>
<td>GREEN</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>89.5%</td>
<td>GREEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-17</td>
<td>88.0%</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td>87.0%</td>
<td>89.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018/19</td>
<td>86.0%</td>
<td><strong>GREEN</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- Attainment at the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2 is above the Wales average in nearly all main indicators.
- Performance at Key Stage 3, for the first time at the Core Subject Indicator, is above the Wales average, due to the decrease in performance being less than the Wales average decrease.
- The number of pupils choosing to stay in full time education after Year 11 has decreased by 6.6% to 82% in 2018.
- The proportion known not to be in employment, education and training (NEET) at Year 11 has increased from 1.1% in 2017 to 1.7% in 2018.
- A robust approach to self-evaluation and business planning has been implemented based on quarterly monitoring and the AIA approach: Achievements, Impact/Issues, Action.
- Level 2 and 3 Business Plans feed up into the overarching priorities contained in the Level 1 Plan.
- Performance monitoring occurs on a quarterly basis whereby impact is evaluated and remedial action is taken as necessary.

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**The supply of Welsh medium education places exceeded demand at each intake in 2018/19.**
PE1: All people have positive aspirations, learn and achieve their potential

There are strong and positive relationships between the local authority, schools and the regional school improvement service, GwE, who work in partnership to the purpose statement:

“Working together to provide an excellent and inclusive school and community for every child and young person”

**Percentage of pupils achieving the Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage Three (aged 11-14)**

![Graph showing percentage of pupils achieving the Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage Three (aged 11-14)]

**Pupil destinations on leaving Year 11 (age 16)**

82% of pupils remained in full time education **GREEN**

1.7% of pupils were known not to be in Education, Employment or Training **GREEN**

**86.7% AMBER** although note, this is for the 1st time above the Welsh average

**KEY ISSUES**

The Welsh Government no longer publishes teacher assessment data at a school, local authority and consortia level from **Foundation Phase to Key Stage 3**. This is a significant move away from gathering information about young people’s performance on a school by school basis for accountability purposes. Consequently, the prime purpose of teacher assessments has started to shift back to individual learners. Performance in all main indicators decreased across Wales in 2018-19, therefore rendering comparison against previous targets meaningless. From 2019, at **Key Stage 4**, the Welsh Government has begun to remove the historic disproportionate emphasis on one or two isolated school performance measures (e.g. Level 2 inclusive) to a culture where a wider range of indicators which capture the whole learning experience, learner progress and ambitions for the new curriculum are considered.

Five priorities were identified for 2018-19 as follows:

- Raise standards at all phases / stages with a particular focus on secondary schools and the performance of vulnerable groups;
- Improve outcomes in other educational provision such as work based learning, Adult Community Learning and Youth Justice;
- Improve inspection outcomes, with a particular focus on secondary schools;
- Improve attendance and reduce fixed term and permanent exclusions; and
- Improve the infrastructure of Wrexham schools through delivery of the 21 Century Schools Programme, including increasing capacity for Welsh medium provision.
PE2: Supporting people to live active, independent lives within their community

In 2018/19 this priority outcome was judged to be GREEN, as overall performance is comparable to last year. It is difficult to compare year-to-year performance as the client group changes, so we are not comparing like-for-like each year.

Percentage of people requiring no further care package and a reduced package of care following reablement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<td>2017/18</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018/19</td>
<td>92%</td>
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<td>2019/20</td>
<td>65%</td>
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92%

Level of independence and assessment of Quality of Life of Older People

57.4% GREEN

HIGHLIGHTS

- The reshaping of day and work opportunities services to deliver more flexible, person centred services that are fit for purpose, offer quality, are sustainable and make more effective use of available resources is well underway.
- Results from the adult social care and housing ‘Quality of Life’ (QOL) questionnaire indicate that 90.3% of clients say our services improve their quality of life.
- Work to turn our front-of-house Single Point of Access into a fully-rounded service that offers information, advice and assistance, with a clear focus on prevention and early intervention, has taken place. Locating the Occupational Therapy service within SPoA has been a major factor, creating a more integrated and streamlined response.
- Community Agents play a key role in how the department supports strong and resilient communities – enabling older people to find local solutions to meet their needs, rather than having to come through social services.
- Reablement has been changed from an ‘intake service’ into a ‘targeted service’ as not everyone benefits from this support, therefore pathways which are clear about if and when it’s appropriate have been developed. People who won’t benefit are directed straight to long-term domiciliary care.
- There has been a good level of improvement in client satisfaction with their quality of life.
- Performance with Disabled Facilities Grants has remained consistent with last year and only just missed the target.

A series of workshops and a questionnaire were used to gain the views of individuals who attend services, their families, carers, support providers, professionals and other partners to help reshape the day and work opportunities services.
In considering the Social Services Annual ‘Director’s Report’ 2018/19, the Safeguarding, Communities and Well-being Scrutiny Committee commented that: “The Social Care department be congratulated on the work undertaken given such difficult financial circumstances.”

**Average number of calendar days to deliver a disabled facilities grant**

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<th>2016/17</th>
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Number of carers who were engaged with during the year across the County Borough

988 AMBER

**KEY ISSUES**

- Sustaining the number of carers engaged with during the year has been a priority area. The number of carers engaged with throughout this year is 988, which is a reduction on the previous year. This was due to a data quality exercise that removed a number of people from our systems who no longer have caring responsibilities. In light of the reduction in the numbers of carers engaged with, in future a physical copy of the questionnaire will be sent to those carers on the register who are not known to Adult Social Care.

“Very pleased with the service. Couldn’t ask for more or less – been patient, diligent…put me on the right path to where I want to go.”

*Community Agents service user*
PE3: Safeguarding those who are vulnerable

In 2018/19 this priority outcome was judged to be **AMBER**. The percentage of statutory reviews of Looked After Children, children on the Child Protection Register and Children in Need of Care and Support held within timescale has fallen to 80.1% in 2018/19. This is below our local target of 90% for the year. However this has been a priority area for improvement; as a result during the final quarter of 2018/19 our performance improved to 90% and this level of performance has been sustained during the first quarter of 2019/20. This will remain a priority area during 2019/20.

**The percentage of children seen as part of their assessment**

The Director of Social Services Annual Report is an annual, statutory self-assessment of Social Services performance which is available on the council website.

This report, along with its supporting evidence, is reviewed throughout the year by CIW (Care Inspectorate Wales) to ensure it presents a recognisable picture of performance in Wrexham.

98.0% **GREEN**

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- The Young People’s Care Council and the Senedd Yr Ifanc consulted on Wrexham’s child friendly complaints procedure. This can be used by any service accessed by young people and their family, not just Social Care.
- In 2018 a letter was received from the Children’s Commissioner complimenting the work of the Young People’s Care Council in the production of a media piece focused on privacy.
- To support with expanding the pool of approved foster carers, in 2018 a Recruitment Officer was appointed. This post aims to increase awareness in the community and attract more interest in becoming a foster carer.
- Wrexham has been one of the first local authorities in North Wales to introduce a ‘Missing from Home Coordinator’. This post ensures young people who have previously been reported as missing are visited within 72 hours of their return and assessed for vulnerabilities in relation to exploitation.
- In light of the significant rise in numbers of ‘Looked after Children’, in 2018 the ‘Edge of Care’ panel was introduced. This is a multi-disciplinary approach aimed at managing the threshold to the looked after system, to ensure resources are appropriately identified and allocated.
- Referral documentation and process has been refined into the Prevention & Support Service (PASS). The success of this approach will continue to be built upon.
- The Engagement Strategy is being rewritten to link to the wider corporate ‘Involvement Strategy’ which runs from 2018 to 2022.

“Thanks for everything. I have been through a lot the last couple of months and you have helped me so much”

Feedback from a service user on a PASS Evaluation Form (2018)
PE3: Safeguarding those who are vulnerable

The Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) publishes an annual letter reviewing the council’s performance in carrying out its statutory social services functions. In 2018/19 CIW found that:

- There are increasing opportunities for carers, adults and children to have their voices heard and be equal partners in the assessment of their needs and the planning and delivery of their care and support.
- Staff from across social care services in the council reflect a can do and will do approach and there are areas of innovation and good practice across adults and children’s services.

The full review letter is available on the CIW website.

The percentage of all statutory reviews held within timescale

74.8% of assessments were completed for children within the statutory timescales

AMBER

80.1% RED

KEY ISSUES

- Since the commencement of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act in April 2016 the process for assessment has changed to a proportionate 42 day assessment. This assessment focuses on ‘What Matters’ to the child and family and on the best way to achieve their personal outcomes. In 2018/19, 74.8% of assessments were completed within timescale, an increase on 64.9% in 2017/18. This remains a priority area for further improvement next year.
- The percentage of statutory reviews of Looked After Children, children on the Child Protection Register and Children in Need of Care and Support held within timescale has fallen to 80.1% in 2018/19. This is below our local target of 90% and is also a priority area for improvement.
- A move to a new national health and social care ICT system was planned for 2018 but unfortunately this implementation was delayed due to circumstances outside of the Council’s control. The project team has been retained and the project plan reused for anticipated implementation of the new system in 2019.
- In Wrexham, and across the region, there are an increasing number of children waiting to be adopted. Although this presents a challenge regionally it is not unique to North Wales and reflects a national trend of a shortage of adopters.

It has been a milestone year for ‘Together Achieving Change’ (TAC) as they are celebrating 10 years since the roll out of the service. A celebration event including attendance from families who have received support as well as practitioners from other services, was held in December 2018.
PE4: People are safe and feel included

In 2018/19 this priority outcome of the Council Plan was judged to be AMBER. A lot of positive, multi-agency work is ongoing, with a strong focus on Wrexham town-centre, which has seen significant reductions in anti-social behaviour. Public perception around safety and fear of crime in the town-centre is a concern, however, and the Community Safety Partnership (CSSP) wish to address this further in the coming year.

**Number of Acquisitive Crimes in Wrexham County Borough**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>crimes</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Perceptions of Safety Survey 2018**

- **35%** of survey respondents feel safe in Wrexham Town Centre
  - RED
- **72%** of survey respondents feel safe in their local area
  - AMBER

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- Anti-social behaviour in Wrexham town-centre has reduced significantly (-42%) when compared with previous years.
- Wrexham’s Best Bar None (BBN) scheme has been recognised nationally and won the title as ‘Most Innovative BBN scheme 2018’ at the National Best Bar None awards. The scheme promotes responsible drinking and the safety of staff and customers of the night time economy in Wrexham. A total of 14 licensed premises in Wrexham town are currently engaged with the scheme.
- Funding has been agreed to extend the contract for the Wrexham Welfare Centre (Hafan Y Dref) until 1 April 2020. Hafan Y Dref is staffed by British Red Cross volunteers and offers a safe place for people feeling vulnerable or unwell on a night out in Wrexham town centre, and reduces demand on frontline emergency services.
- A town-centre multi-agency group has been established by the council, focusing both on the symptoms and causes of anti-social behaviour in the town centre. The group includes representatives from North Wales Police, Fire and Rescue Service and the 3rd sector. One of the major successes of the group this year has been a significant reduction in begging in the town centre, using a combination of enforcement and support related initiatives.
- The ‘NPS Taskforce’ (a multi-agency response to the issues associated with the use of New Psychoactive Substances in Wrexham) reached the end of its pilot phase on 31 March 2019. 12 of the ‘top 20’ most visible and vulnerable individuals in the town centre, were supported to access residential substance misuse treatment, as well as targeted holistic support for many other individuals within this cohort.

**Respondent to the 2018/19 Hafan Y Dref Review questionnaire:**

“Hafan Y Dref is a key necessity for the night time economy. Every weekend they assist us in many ways. The centre is a great asset to the town.”
The Safeguarding, Communities and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee (fulfilling its function as Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee) review and / or scrutinise decisions by the Wrexham Community Safety Partnership (CSP) in connection with the discharge of crime and disorder functions by responsible authorities.

The Home Office do not benchmark all areas against each other, instead preferring to compare performance across ‘similar groups’ of authorities that have similar contexts and so therefore could be expected to have similar levels of crime. Crime rates in Wrexham were about the same as the average for Home Office similar areas (such as Telford and Darlington) but, as would be expected, are higher than elsewhere in North Wales. For more information see http://www.police.uk/north-wales/WXW13/performance/compare-your-area/

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>30 first time entrants to the Youth Justice System (ages 10 – 17)</th>
<th>46.2% reoffending rate of those within the Youth Justice System</th>
<th>1 young person in custody per 1,000 of the 10 – 17 year old population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GREEN ↑</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**KEY ISSUES**

- Changes in crime recording processes continue to impact on reported crime figures, with victim based crimes having increased significantly as a result, from 1,024 in 2017/18 to 1,047 in 2018/19. This reflects a change in police recording processes whereby if several separate crimes are identified within one report (e.g. a domestic violence report which when reported includes two previous incidences) they are now recorded individually whereas previously they would have been reported as a single crime.

- The % of survey respondents who feel safe in the town-centre has also fallen and this information is being used by the CSP in reviewing their action plan.

- Gold Strategic group, the emergency response group which governed the ‘NPS Taskforce’ pilot has formally disbanded. However, the CSP have made a commitment to adopt this agenda going forward. Work is ongoing to embed key principles of the pilot into mainstream services and the focus will extend beyond just those who use New Psychoactive Substances, to include users of all substances.

- There has been an amount of negative publicity regarding substance misuse in the town-centre, in local and national media. The council are looking at a strategy around this moving forward, working closely with representatives from the CSP in order to highlight the positive work happening in the town-centre.

Established in 1998, the Wrexham Community Safety Partnership has a statutory responsibility to undertake an annual review of crime and disorder, and to be aware of the nature of crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour, and the misuse of drugs within the county borough. The CSP will identify and implement effective actions to reduce these problems and direct resources to address them. Wrexham CSP are committed to tackling the current issues in Wrexham town-centre, and continue to work towards ensuring Wrexham town is, and feels like, a safe place to be.
PE5: Enabling access to leisure and cultural activities

In 2018/19 this priority outcome was judged to be AMBER. This is due to reductions during the year in visits to parks, country parks, sports and leisure centres as well as the fact that, despite significant improvement, visits to libraries remains below target. However, levels of volunteering continue to increase and the development of Tŷ Pawb, as well as the refurbishment of leisure centres, have significantly improved the leisure and culture offer of the County Borough for future years.

Volunteering for the council

2,628 hours supporting sports development
AMBER ↓

1,628 hours supporting museums and heritage
GREEN ↑

2,241 hours supporting parks and country parks
AMBER ↓

The number of visits to local authority sport and leisure facilities per 1,000 population where the visitor participates in physical activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Wrexham</th>
<th>Wales</th>
<th>Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>800</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018/19</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019/20</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020/21</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HIGHLIGHTS

- The number of visitors to sport and leisure facilities has increased significantly following a drop the previous year. This is believed to reflect the partial or temporary closure of some centres whilst refurbishment took place.
- Visitor numbers at Wrexham Museum were reasonably strong at over 34,400 despite an unusually sustained period of very hot weather over the summer which tends to reduce visits to the town-centre attractions.
- Tŷ Pawb officially opened and in its first year has contributed to the arts, culture, well-being and wider town-centre regeneration of Wrexham.
- The Active Young People programme continues to grow with 111 new Sports Leaders trained and able to support the delivery of extra-curricular sport within their schools and communities, 253 new Playmakers trained within the authority’s primary sector to support the delivery of playground and PE activity and the number of children who attended at least one extracurricular session at their secondary school increasing.
- Wrexham’s town-centre library has had its foyer revamped with installation shelving, self-service kiosk, staff pod, and a digitally enabled breakfast bar. Verbal feedback has been positive and the relocation of the self-service kiosk has been revolutionary with all ages (young and old) using the kiosk rather than the main counter.

Nearly a hundred new volunteers were recruited to assist at Tŷ Pawb and a total of 1,557 hours of volunteering given in its first nine months.
PE5: Enabling access to leisure and cultural activities

Whilst the number of visitors to parks and country parks has decreased due to challenges, as identified in 'key issues' below, the percentage of children and young people ‘Hooked on Sport’ and/or participating in community and extra-curricular sporting activities has increased. This has been achieved by taking a proactive and focused approach, working with key partners in the community, to offer different or new activities in a range of settings.

The number of visitors to parks and country parks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Visitors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018/19</td>
<td>439,036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019/20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018/21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The percentage of children and young people who are:

- **44.2%** ‘Hooked on Sport’
- **49.2%** participating in extra-curriculum activity at least once per week
- **63.2%** participating in sport at least once a week at a community club

**KEY ISSUES**

- The number of visitors to parks and country parks has fallen for the second consecutive year, from 561,000 in 2016/17 to 439,036 in 2018/19. Visitor numbers have been impacted by the introduction of parking charges at the parks, and a reduction in the number and size of events held in the parks due to a decrease in ranger staff capacity. This reflects the financial challenges which have faced the council over the past two years.

- Volunteers at Wrexham Museum gave 1,628 hours, down from 1,807 in 2017-18, due in part to not actively advertising or taking on as many volunteers as in previous years. New volunteers have however been recruited to assist at Tŷ Pawb.

- Initial plans for the refurbishment of Wrexham Museum are now being adapted to incorporate the new National Football Museum for Wales which will be based within the museum.

Two new Gold and 26 Silver Ambassadors have been appointed to support the Active Young People Officers develop and grow an inclusive and varied extra-curricular provision across the county.
For 2018/19 this priority outcome was judged to be **GREEN**. Good progress has been made towards meeting the Welsh Housing Quality Standard by December 2020 with four out of six targets being achieved or over-achieved by the end of the financial year. Empty properties continue to be brought back into use. The number of properties being brought back into use and the new units of affordable housing being delivered have both increased on the previous period.

**NEW UNITS OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

- **35** The number of empty properties brought back to use
- **93** GREEN ↑

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- Performance across this priority has been improving and is green against target.
- All of the private sector rented properties (7,908) the council is aware of have been registered with RentSmart Wales.
- 93 units of affordable housing have been completed during the year as a number of pre-planned schemes, including one large scale development, came to completion during 2018/19 including:
  - 12 units at Rhos
  - 3 units at Coedpoeth
  - 3 units at Gresford
  - 4 units at Llay
  - 55 units at Rivulet Road, Wrexham
- All are now occupied by households who were waiting for council accommodation.

The Welsh Housing Quality Standards programme contributes to the council’s strategic aims, People are safe and feel included – advancing our role as a housing provider, developer and enabler.
PL1: Homes that meet people's needs and aspirations

A report to the Homes and Environment Scrutiny Committee in July 2019 highlighted work undertaken to significantly improve and invest in the council’s housing stock, to ensure that tenants have a high standard of quality accommodation. In 2018/19 552 properties (around 5% of overall stock) were comprehensively refurbished by the council. This has led to improved tenant satisfaction as properties are refurbished to a higher standard and are free from major defects. It is also hoped that in turn this will lead to more sustainable tenancies as tenants are much happier with the state of their accommodation.

The percentage of council homes which meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standard:

- 97% of homes meet the WHQS for kitchens
- 96% of homes meet the WHQS for bathrooms
- 94% of homes meet the WHQS for being adequately heated
- 88% of homes meet the WHQS for being in a good state of repair

**KEY ISSUES**

- The council’s own house building programme is the only exception to the green performance for this objective as projects have reached planning permission stage but building has not yet commenced.
- The kitchen ‘mopping up’ programme is due to be completed in 2020/21. The previous 351 tenant refusals, which are also known as ‘acceptable fails’ are part of an ongoing ‘mopping up’ exercise and have been programmed in for the years 2018/19 to 2020/21. Acceptable fails, all tenants choice, are running at around 20%. A number of the tenant refusals are also being completed during the departments major refurbishment of void properties programme.
- The bathroom ‘mopping up’ programme is due to be completed in 2020/21. The previous 401 tenant refusals, which are also known as ‘acceptable fails’ are part of an ongoing ‘mopping up’ exercise and have been programmed in for the years 2018/19 to 2020/21. Acceptable fails, all tenants choice, are running at around 20%. A number of the tenant refusals are also being completed during the departments major refurbishment of void properties programme.
- The central heating programme is due to be completed in 2020/21. External wall insulation programme to non-traditional properties commenced in 2016 and should be completed in 2019/20. The 1,237 non-compliant properties are programmed in for the years 2018/19 to 2020/21.

“I am very happy and enjoy my new home, people who live here are lovely. I hope to stay here for a very long time.”

“It’s much better than I expected and love that it’s been decorated – only need to get some carpet and furniture in and it will be a lovely little flat.”
PL2: An environmentally responsible place

In 2018/19 this priority outcome was judged to be GREEN. Whilst the overall cleanliness of the highway and the time taken to remove fly tipping have both significantly improved therefore giving the current green status, it should not be forgotten that there are factors outside the control of the council which can have an impact on the ability to find markets for the recycling streams. This is a national and international problem that means there is a need to continue to strive to ensure the statutory recycling targets are achieved, despite the current optimistic forecast of the ability to achieve them.

The council has worked with local residents to surpass the Welsh Government’s statutory target of reusing, recycling or composting 64% of municipal waste by 2020. The council’s local target is 66.5%.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The next statutory recycling target set by the Welsh Government is for 2020. The target set is 64% and this has been comfortably met much earlier than required.
- The council is still achieving performances above the next statutory target and are within the upper quartile of Welsh Local Authorities when comparing overall recycling percentages.
  - Our recycling percentage of 66.12% was up on the previous year low of 65.44%.
- Although the council does not have the financial resources to purchase and expand the roll-out of stackable recycling trolleys to all parts of the County Borough, biodegradable food bags have been issued to all properties in the county and the council continues to collect glass, plastic and cans, and paper in separate recycling boxes at the kerbside.
- As part of the councils commitment to reduce its carbon emission, during 2018/19 it has:
  - increased its electric vehicle fleet with the purchase of three pool vehicles for use by council staff located at Abbey Road and Ruthin Road depots.
  - replaced a further 1,800 street lights to low energy use LED’s
  - introduced five electric vehicle charging points in a number of council car parks across the County Borough including Tŷ Mawr, Tŷ Pawb, Alyn Waters, Waterworld and Froncysyllte.

Progress continues on the installation of LED street lighting with a further 1,700 units converted in 2018/19. By 2021, all council owned street lights will be converted to LED achieving significant savings in energy cost and reductions in carbon emissions.
PL2: An environmentally responsible place

In April 2019 the Homes and Environment Scrutiny Committee acknowledged Wrexham’s pro-active approach in terms of single use plastic.

3.9 ↑
The average number of working days taken to clear fly-tipping incidents

95.9% GREEN ↑
The percentage of highways inspected of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness

**KEY ISSUES**

- At the end of the financial year, fly-tipping incidents were being investigated and cleared within an average of 3.9 days. This represents a significant improvement in terms of performance as in the previous year, the average time was 6.2 days.

- The percentage of highways inspected that were of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness showed an increase from 91.5% the previous year to 95.9% in 2018/19.

- The Welsh Government statutory recycling targets continue to increase. The council has already met the target of recycling 64% of waste by 2020 but will need to recycle 70% of waste by 2025. Despite the excellent progress made to date, achieving the expected 70% target by 2025 presents a significant challenge.

- Delivering a culture change to recycling will be important and the council will continue to roll out recycling awareness and education programmes with residents and schools across the County Borough. A failure to meet recycling targets may result in financial penalties being imposed by the Welsh Government.

- The Environmental and Technical Department delivers a wide range of both statutory and non-statutory services. Continued pressure on limited resource presents a significant challenge for the department in maintaining the delivery of services to agreed standards.

- Despite progress in reducing carbon emissions, the Welsh Government’s ambition for public sector organisations to be carbon neutral by 2030 will present a significant challenge for Local Authorities, given the scale and nature of services delivered.

Through collaboration working with Welsh Government, their appointed agents, other agencies and our PFI partner, the council continue to actively pursue options that will continue to improve the percentage of recycling in our municipal waste and the standard of cleanliness of the highway network.
PL3: Communities with sustainable, attractive settlements, neighbourhoods, buildings and spaces

In 2018/19 this priority outcome was judged to be **GREEN**, because the Local Development Plan is being progressed in line with the Delivery Agreement (timetable) and is on course for adoption in 2020, dependent on the progress of the Examination in Public (EIP) process, September 2019.

**100%**

Preserve or enhance the conservation areas - percentage of applications approved in line with Conservation Area Guidance

**362**

Dwellings were completed over the course of the last year

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- The Deposit Local Development Plan (LDP) went out to full public consultation between 9 April and 16 July 2018, with consultation attracting approximately 3,000 representations.

- Following consultation, feedback was reported to the Planning Policy Panel, Executive Board and Full Council between September and November 2018, to seek approval to submit the plan to Welsh Government and the Planning Inspectorate for Examination in Public (EiP).

- Approval was obtained and the LDP was submitted to the Welsh Government and Planning Inspectorate on 30 November 2018. The independent Planning Inspector will examine if the plan is sound, in a process which will include a series of hearings in September/October 2019. A binding report will be issued to the council following the EiP process.

- Adoption of the plan is anticipated in 2020 depending on the process of the EiP.

- 362 dwellings have been constructed in 2018/19, an increase in numbers compared to last year (193). (Source: Preliminary Housing Land Monitoring Report 2018/19).

- The speed with which planning applications are being determined by the authority continues to improve.
PL3: Communities with sustainable, attractive settlements, neighbourhoods, buildings and spaces

Wrexham County Borough Council has submitted its Local Development Plan (LDP) to the Planning Inspectorate and Welsh Government for Examination in Public. The LDP will replace the current adopted Unitary Development Plan. The Local Development Plan will be a long-term land use and development strategy focused on achieving sustainable development and will:

- guide development for housing, employment, retail and other uses;
- set out policies that will be used to decide planning applications; and
- safeguard areas of land requiring protection or enhancement.

KEY ISSUES

- To strengthen Wrexham town as a key settlement of national importance with a focus for investment in future employment, housing, retail, office, leisure and services.
- The development of brownfield land within the County Borough remains a priority; however all the homes needed over the period to 2028 cannot be delivered on brownfield sites alone.
- The council has a duty under both the Planning and Housing Acts to deliver new homes, in sustainable locations that meet the needs of all society, including the Gypsy and Traveller community.
- Plans are currently in place to extend the fast-track planning service to all minor planning applications and extend the delegation scheme to increase capacity and improve efficiency.
- Improve recent performance at appeals which will involve Member training.
- Enforcement action is to be re-prioritised to proactively monitor key sites and take a more selective preventative approach to enforcement.
- Greater emphasis needs to be made on outcomes, developing a more critical assessment of design in order to create more local distinctiveness.

The Local Development Plan is one of the key strategic documents for the council and is integrated with future plans for housing, business, education, travel and other needs. Assessments and studies to support the plan have been developed in collaboration with neighbouring authorities where appropriate and conservation area character assessments and management plans are being published in collaboration with public, private and voluntary organisations as well as local communities.
PL4: Well-connected communities

In 2018/19 this priority outcome was judged to be GREEN. Despite increasing pressures on limited resources, ageing infrastructure and increased demands and expectations, the trend in the condition of the highways network across the County Borough is one of overall improvement, with the County’s ‘A’ and ‘B’ road network are recognised as some of the best maintained in Wales. Whilst the ‘C’ and ‘unclassified’ road network are not to the same level of condition, recent years have seen an improving trend.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of A classification roads in poor overall condition</th>
<th>Percentage of B classification roads in poor overall condition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.3% AMBER ↓</td>
<td>2.6% AMBER ↓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HIGHLIGHTS

- All our public consultations confirm how important the condition of the highway network is to the vast majority of stakeholders and the level of support for the council’s aim of maintaining funding levels for proactive investment in carriageway resurfacing.
- In terms of the A and B road network, Wrexham’s performance is comparable to some of the best performing Local Authorities in Wales (6th). Whilst the picture concerning the lower class C and unclassified roads is not as good, this situation is reflected across the country with Local Authorities prioritising limited funding to those areas of the network which pose the greatest level of risk and are more costly to maintain should they fall into a state of disrepair.
- Following a series of successful funding bids, Welsh Government grant funding has enabled investment in Wrexham Bus Station, including refurbishment of the existing toilets, enhanced CCTV and installation of new real time electronic information boards.
- As part of the council’s on-going commitment and statutory duties under the Active Travel Act, investment in the provision of a new safer walking and cycling infrastructure continues to be made including the creation of safer routes in the communities and other associated road safety initiatives throughout the County Borough.
- Virgin Media continue to expand their network to enable access to up to 516mbps broadband and other services as part of its national ‘Project Lightening’ network expansion. Around 14,000 properties are now able to access a full fibre connection, which is approximately 22% of all Wrexham’s households. This has massively boosted the regions standing within Wales, which has an average of only 4% full fibre coverage.
- The New Wales and Borders Rail Franchise awarded in October 2019 will deliver a phased programme of improvements over the coming years including new trains, increasing service frequencies on both the Wrexham to Bidston line and Chester Shrewsbury line.

Through the development and implementation of the Highways Asset Management Plan, the council is taking a long-term preventative approach to investment in the highways network.
PL4: Well-connected communities

During the Homes and Environment Scrutiny Committee in May 2019, Members acknowledged the increasing pressure on limited resources, ageing infrastructure and increased demand and expectations whilst commenting that the trend in the condition of the highways network across the County Borough was one of overall improvement within the A and B network.

### Percentage of ‘C’ Roads in a Poor Overall Condition

![Percentage of ‘C’ Roads in a Poor Overall Condition graph](image)

- **70%** of total length of rights of way that were found to be easy to use.

### KEY ISSUES

- **The percentage of total rights of way which are easy to use is collected through a random sample of existing paths. The past four years have reflected performance at or above 70%, with a blip of 51% in 2017/18. The figure of 70% of rights of way easy to use in 2018/19, suggest the 2017/18 was an anomaly, due to the nature of the randomised sample system.**

- **The ten year funding of public rights of way improvement from 2007 to 2017 by Welsh Government improved much of the network. The loss of Welsh Government funding coupled with a reduction in the maintenance of the rights of way budget by the council indicate it is unlikely there will be further improvement in the performance indicator related to the accessibility of the rights of way network in the future.**

- **To simply maintain a steady state in the condition of the existing network, it is estimated that investment of around £2.3 million is required per annum. It is only through the additional funding received from the Welsh Government in recent years that the council has been able to meet the required steady state of funding levels. Future funding levels remain uncertain and are forecast to fall below the minimum requirements.**

- **The general pattern of bus provision and usage both in the county and throughout Wales continues to decline. Over the last four years, there has been a 30% reduction in the number of buses departing from the bus station.**

- **Together with the loss of a number of commercial operators, revenue funding to support non-commercially operated services continues to reduce. The council is working in partnership with the Welsh Government and Transport for Wales on a review of services and options for the implementation of a three year pilot of demand responsive transport services.**

- **The operation and resilience of the A483(T) remains a concern. The Welsh Government through its agents (North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agency) continue to progress works to identify options to the capacity restrictions on the A483(T), specifically junctions 3 through to 6. An announcement is expected early in the New Year by the Minister for Transport on a preferred delivery option.**

Through collaborative working with the Welsh Government and other agencies, the council is actively pursuing options that will deliver sustainable improvements to the local transport network in Wrexham.
In 2018/19 this priority outcome was judged to be GREEN because the proportion of customers who find it easy to access council services continues to increase. The number of services available to customers through the online digital platform is above target at the end of 2018/19.

The council continues to support those customers, who are less comfortable, or are unable to use digital channels, through the continued provision of traditional channels such as face-to-face and telephony.

**Percentage of customers who feel it is easy to access council services**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Wrexham</th>
<th>Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018/19</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019/20</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The percentage of interactions received via digital channels has doubled in 2018/19, supporting improvements in the delivery, performance and management of council services.
01: Continue to modernise Services

Increased availability of digital channels enables the council to make more effective use of data to improve services. In December 2018, the Wales Audit Office Report: Local Government Use of data, Wrexham County Borough Council, found that Wrexham had already experienced some of the benefits of making data-led decisions and that a change in culture to develop a more united and corporate approach would help to build on this and extend the benefits of data-led decisions to all service areas.

Number of service requests received from customer’s through the online digital platform

![Graph showing number of service requests from 2017/18 to 2020/21]

79% Percentage of all customers satisfied with all council services

14,345 GREEN UP

KEY ISSUES

- Enhancements are underway to ensure that the council has a modern and resilient ICT infrastructure. During 2019/20 the contact centre will move to a new technology platform which will enable the council to both improve services and drive efficiencies within the contact centre.

- There is a need to further encourage customers to contact the council through the medium of Welsh and for our response to this to be continuously improved.

- Wrexham Council’s ICT and Digital Strategy includes an aim to remove barriers to the use of digital including improving connectivity and digital skills. Work is underway to improve the availability of fibre broadband for public sector premises, homes and businesses in the local area.

- Work on office accommodation and systems is progressing in order to utilise technology so that employees can more easily communicate, share and develop ideas.

Analysis of complaints, compliments and customer experience through the contact centre has led to a number of improvements to processes and services.
In 2018/19 this priority outcome was judged to be GREEN, because results indicated an increase in the positive responses to questions posed in the annual employee staff survey. Reducing levels of absence and agency spend remain a key priority for the council, and a significant amount of times continues to be invested on well-being and preventative initiatives which address these two issues.

**51%**

Percentage of staff agreeing with the statement that ‘communications are good in my department’

**GREEN**

**52% GREEN**

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- The appraisal process continues to identify the various training and development needs of employees, alongside routine supervision. The Workforce development programme is routinely promoted to all employees.

- An awards ceremony for over 70 employees was held in March 2019 to recognise individual achievements and qualification certificates were presented. This included employees working in Social Care, Housing, Corporate and Customer services, Environment and Finance.

- Coaching continues to be offered across the council, a pool of 12 qualified coaches has been established with five due to qualify in September 2019. These courses have provided approximately 78 hours of coaching to colleagues within the council.

- There are 39 eLearning modules available, 11 of these are for mandatory topics. There have been over 1,200 completions. Fourteen modules are currently under review and will be launched in 2019, this includes Health and Safety eLearning and other mandatory modules which have been prioritised.

The council is improving its approach to workforce planning to enable a flexible and well-trained workforce through a blended learning approach, including coaching and e-learning.
Employee engagement is measured by an amalgamation of employee engagement measures taken from the annual employee survey. The next survey is due to take place in September 2019.

**Level of employee engagement**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014/15</td>
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<td>2015/16</td>
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<td>2016/17</td>
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<td>2017/18</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018/19</td>
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</table>

**KEY ISSUES**

- The level of employee engagement shows marginal fluctuation and no significant changes. Across the majority of departments the score is between 61% to 68% with just one department less than 50%, and this remains an improvement from the 2016 level of 59%.
- The next employee survey is planned for September 2019.
- The new Chief Executive started in autumn 2018, and employee workshops were planned during spring 2019, at which the vision would be shared and contributions sought from the workforce on the in-year council priorities, and other areas of interest to employees.
- Further workshops will take place in the autumn 2019.
- Digital ways of working continue to be developed in various areas of the workforce and tools provided for managers.
- Following a recent audit of the Health and Safety Policy by the Health and Safety Executive, the Leader and the Chief Executive responded:

  "WCBC have a commitment to improve health and safety performance through strong leadership and increasing levels of consultation with employees. Over 600 staff recently attended ‘Moving Forward Together’ employee briefings and these are a positive sign that consultation with employees is being taken seriously."

- Health and well-being events are held throughout the year for all employees. Wrexham’s Employee Assistance Programme enables employees to access counselling support and offers the use of a dedicated website providing information, guidance and advice on a range of subjects that impact on employee health and well-being.
Sustainable Wrexham

Sustainable development is about ensuring that the needs of the present are met (focusing on improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of an area) without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. In Wrexham we focus on three strategic planning themes – Economy, People and Place. These are enabled by a corporate theme of Organisation – building an efficient and effective organisation that can best support local well-being.

These planning themes are distinct and are reflected in the council’s political and organisational structures, but they are also interdependent and cannot be viewed in isolation from each other. Informing all these themes is the knowledge of what has worked in Wrexham – the approaches and interventions that fit with Wrexham’s culture and the communities which make it.

The Wrexham Way of Working

The challenge is how to best meet growing current and future needs given a changing and unpredictable world, finite natural resources, and shrinking public sector finances. We must be realistic about what can and cannot be done, but also aware of the risks and opportunities in the choices we take. Is the way that we plan and deliver services allowing individuals and communities to do more? Are we maximising the potential benefit, and minimising the potential harm, of actions undertaken by the council? The less that we are able to do, the more important it is that what we do is effective.

To support us in these decisions, we have developed a set of planning principles which are based on those set out in the Well-Being of Future Generations and other Acts and that are worded in a way that reflects Wrexham.

Ensure Wrexham and its people are supported and enabled to fulfil their potential, prosper and achieve a high standard of well-being
Our Planning Principles
This report includes information on how we have considered our planning principles – and so the five ways of working set out within the Well-being of Future Generations Act. Our Council Plan includes the council’s well-being statement and this report is increasingly focusing on judging the progress we are making in supporting improved well-being and sustainable development for and with local people and communities.
Wrexham County Borough Council’s Annual Improvement Report (AIR) 2018-19, produced by the Wales Audit Office found that the council:

Is meeting its statutory requirements in relation to continuous improvement but, as with all councils in Wales, it faces challenges going forward

- Has acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle in developing the step to develop and deliver an ambitious arts and cultural offer within Tŷ Pawb and there are opportunities to further embed the five ways of working.

The full assessment is available at [www.wao.gov.uk](http://www.wao.gov.uk).

Comparative Performance

- National Performance Indicators are defined by Welsh Government, or through the Welsh Local Government Association, to provide a set of measures by which performance can be compared across local authorities. The data shows absolute performance (e.g. the speed of a particular process) and comparative performance (e.g. the speed of a process compared to other areas in Wales) and groups all indicators into quartiles (i.e. if a council is top quartile for performance, its performance falls into the top 25% performing authorities). This enables a quick and easy comparison across authorities, although not all indicators are an equal priority for all local authority areas in Wales.

A full breakdown of comparative performance follows. Certain indicators, particularly around social services, have not yet been made available.

The graphs below show:
- the trend in Wrexham County Borough Council’s year on year performance for 2018/19 in comparison to 2017/18;
- the number of indicators in each quartile of performance (‘Quartile 1’ represents performance which is in the top 25% of all 22 Welsh authorities); and
- 8 out of the 13 available indicators of ‘actual performance’ have improved when compared to 2017/18

![Trends in actual performance since 2017/18](image1)

![Number of indicators in each quartile](image2)
## National Comparative Performance 2018-19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Measure</th>
<th>2017-18</th>
<th>2018-19</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PAM/001: Number of working days/shifts per full-time equivalent (FTE) local authority employee lost due to sickness absence during the year</td>
<td>10.41</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>For the reporting year 18/19, our absence levels have seen a slight increase, for the first time in 3 years. The management of absence levels continues to be a priority for the council and a significant amount of time continues to be invested on challenging managers, ensuring procedures are adhered to in a timely way, alongside other well-being and preventive initiatives. Due to changes in the performance indicator metrics, it is not possible to make direct comparisons to previous years. Performance is in need of improvement and is a priority of the council alongside GwE, the regional school improvement service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAM/032: Average Capped 9 score for pupils in Year 11</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Primary school attendance decreased by 0.2 percentage points to 94.55 compared to the Wales average, which decreased by 0.3pp to 94.6%. Improving attendance is a priority in the Education Business Plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAM/007: Percentage of pupil attendance in primary schools</td>
<td>94.89</td>
<td>94.5</td>
<td>Secondary school attendance decreased by 0.4 percentage points to 93.8% compared to a Wales average of 93.8% which decreased by 0.2 percentage points. Improving attendance is a priority in the Education Business Plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAM/008: Percentage of pupil attendance in secondary schools</td>
<td>94.11</td>
<td>93.7</td>
<td>Improving attendance is a priority in the Education Business Plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAM/046: Percentage of Year 11 leavers known not to be in education, training or employment (NEET)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Numbers of NEETs are very low. The local authority works closely with partners to ensure that reducing NEETs remains a priority.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
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<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAM/033: Percentage of pupils who received a language, literacy and communication skills teacher’s assessment in Welsh at the end of the Foundation Phase</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAM/034: Percentage of Year 11 pupils entered to sit a GCSE in Welsh (first language)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAM/010: Percentage of highways inspected of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness</td>
<td>95.75</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>91.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAM/035: Average number of working days taken to clear fly-tipping incidents reported to the authority during the year</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAM/012: Percentage of households threatened with homelessness successfully prevented from becoming homeless</td>
<td>66.36</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>42.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAM/013: Percentage of empty private sector properties brought back into use during the year through direct action by the local authority</td>
<td>5.21</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAM/015: Average number of calendar days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)</td>
<td>212.88</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAM/036: Number of additional affordable housing units delivered during the year per 10,000 households</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAM/037: Average number of calendar days taken to complete all repairs</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAM/038: Percentage of local authority self-contained housing stock units that are compliant with the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS), subject to acceptable fails, at 31 March</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAM/039: Percentage of rent debit lost due to lettable units of permanent accommodation being empty during the year</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAM/040: Percentage of Welsh Public Library Standards Quality Indicators (with targets) achieved by the library service</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAM/017: Number of visits to local authority sport and leisure facilities during the year where the visitor will be participating in physical activity per 1,000 population</td>
<td>8,526.70</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8233.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Measure</td>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>Wrexham Quartile</td>
<td>Wrexham Outturn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|------------------|----------------|------|---------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
| PAM/041: Percentage of National Exercise Referral Scheme (NERS) clients who       | -     | n/a              | -              | -    | n/a           | -                | -              | -                                                                   | n/a                                       |      | This is a new indicator which the WG Data Unit are collecting from other data sources. Information has not yet been published                                                                 |
| continued to participate in the exercise programme at 16-weeks                    |       |                  |                |      |               |                  |                |                                                                     |                                           |      |                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| PAM/042: Percentage of National Exercise Referral Scheme (NERS) clients who       | -     | n/a              | -              | -    | n/a           | -                | -              | -                                                                   | n/a                                       |      | This is a new indicator which the WG Data Unit are collecting from other data sources. Information has not yet been published                                                                 |
| reported an increase in leisure minutes at 16-weeks                               |       |                  |                |      |               |                  |                |                                                                     |                                           |      |                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| PAM/018: Percentage of all planning applications determined within required time   | 88.56 | 2                | 91             | 8    | 88.0          | 1                | 92.3           |                                                                   |                                          | 5    |                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| periods                                                                             |       |                  |                |      |               |                  |                |                                                                     |                                           |      | In terms of the A & B road network, Wrexham’s performance is comparable to some of the best performing Local Authorities in Wales (6th). Whilst the picture concerning the lower class C and unclassified roads is not as good, this situation is reflected across the country with Local Authorities prioritising limited funding to those areas of the network which pose the greatest level of risk and are more costly to maintain should they fall into a state of disrepair. On a positive note, trend analysis demonstrates a continued improvement over the last 6 years in the condition of the C classified road network |
| PAM/019: Percentage of appeals against planning application decisions dismissed     | 62.35 | 4                | 50             | 17   | 67.57         | 4                | 50.0           |                                                                   |                                          | 20   |                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| PAM/020: Percentage of principal A roads that are in overall poor condition        | 3.74  | 1                | 2.4            | 4    | 3.92          | 2                | 3.3            |                                                                   |                                          | 8    |                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| PAM/021: Percentage of B roads that are in overall poor condition                 | 4.31  | 1                | 2.4            | 2    | 4.47          | 1                | 2.6            |                                                                   |                                          | 2    |                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| PAM/022: Percentage of C roads that are in overall poor condition                  | 14.09 | 4                | 16.3           | 20   | 14.01         | 4                | 16.2           |                                                                   |                                          | 20   |                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|----------|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| PAM/023: Percentage of food establishments which are ‘broadly compliant’ with food   | Wales            | Wrexham          | Wrexham  | Rank     | Wales                | Wrexham                | Wrexham          | Outturn Rank Wales | Average | Quartile | Outturn | Year on year performance – 2018-19 vs 2017-18 (based on quartile trend) | This reflects a hard working team who over the years have worked alongside food business to ensure that they comply with the law. We offer advice visits to business prior to opening and more recently have started delivering food hygiene training courses again which all goes towards ensuring rating are maintained or improved |
| hygiene standards                                                                  | 95.27            | 4                | 90.3     | 21       | 95.69                | 1                      | 98.7             |                  |          |          |                    | 2                                        |                                               |
| PAM/025: Rate of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons per 1,000        | -                | n/a              | -        | -        | -                   | n/a                    | -                | -                | n/a      | -        |                    | -                                        | This is a new indicator which the WG Data Unit are collecting from other data sources. Information has not yet been published |
| population aged 75 or over                                                          |                  |                  |          |          |                      |                        |                  |                  |          |          |                    |                                          |                                               |
| PAM/028: Percentage of assessments completed for children within statutory           | -                | n/a              | -        | -        | -                   | n/a                    | -                | -                | n/a      | -        |                    | -                                        | The WG Data Unit collect this from other data sources. Information has not yet been published |
| timescales                                                                          |                  |                  |          |          |                      |                        |                  |                  |          |          |                    |                                          |                                               |
| PAM/029: Percentage of looked after children on 31 March who have had three or      | -                | n/a              | -        | -        | -                   | n/a                    | -                | -                | n/a      | -        |                    | -                                        | The WG Data Unit collect this from other data sources. Information has not yet been published |
| more placements during the year                                                     |                  |                  |          |          |                      |                        |                  |                  |          |          |                    |                                          |                                               |
| PAM/030: Percentage of municipal waste collected by local authorities and prepared  | 62.66518         | 1                | 65.4     | 6        | 6                   | n/a                    | -                | -                | n/a      | -        |                    | -                                        | The WG Data Unit collect this from other data sources. Information has not yet been published |
| for reuse and/or recycled, including source segregated bio-wastes that are composted|                  |                  |          |          |                      |                        |                  |                  |          |          |                    |                                          |                                               |
| or treated biologically in another way                                             |                  |                  |          |          |                      |                        |                  |                  |          |          |                    |                                          |                                               |
| PAM/043: Kilograms of residual household waste generated during the year per person | -                | n/a              | -        | -        | -                   | n/a                    | -                | -                | n/a      | -        |                    | -                                        | This is a new indicator which the WG Data Unit are collecting from other data sources. Information has not yet been published |