

# **Wrexham's assessment of local well-being**

**Wrexham Public Services  
Board**

**December 2016  
Consultation Draft**

# Assessment of local well-being (December 2016)

## Wrexham Public Services Board

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### Contents

#### Page

#### **4 Introduction**

4 The Well-being of Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015

5 The seven well-being goals for Wales

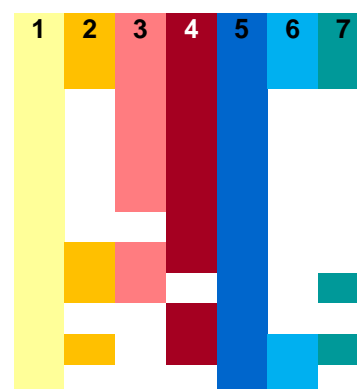
6 Consultation and engagement

#### **9 Wrexham County Borough Demographics**

#### **13 Well-being throughout life**

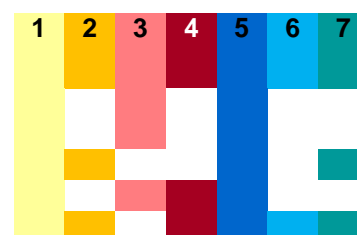
#### **15 Wellbeing Goal 1 - Prosperous**

- 15 1 Improving education and school achievement
- 17 2 Tackling poverty and deprivation
- 19 3 Improving skills for employment
- 20 4 Local employment opportunities
- 22 5 Supporting small businesses
- 23 6 Key employment sector – social care and health
- 24 7 Key economic asset – Wrexham Industrial Estate
- 25 8 Key economic asset – HMP Berwyn
- 25 9 Key economic asset – Wrexham Glyndŵr University
- 26 10 Wrexham Town Centre



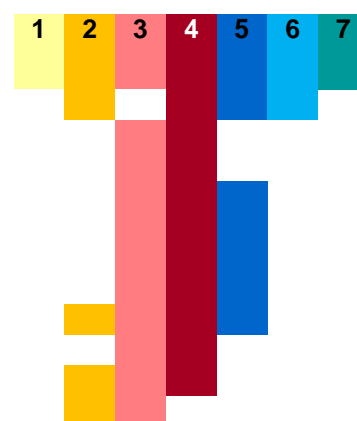
#### **29 Wellbeing Goal 2 - Resilient**

- 29 1 Protecting the natural environment and biodiversity creating resilience
- 31 2 Climate change and reducing carbon emissions
- 32 3 Protection from flooding
- 33 4 Supporting the rural economy



#### **35 Wellbeing Goal 3 - Healthier**

- 35 1 Giving every child the best start
- 37 2 Encouraging healthy lifestyle choices
- 39 3 Tackling obesity (including childhood obesity)
- 40 4 Supporting those with poor mental health
- 42 5 People living in isolation and their access to services
- 43 6 Increase in the number of people living with dementia
- 45 7 Supporting carers
- 46 8 Healthy life expectancy for all
- 48 9 Increasing pressure on the health service
- 50 10 Emerging threats to health and well-being



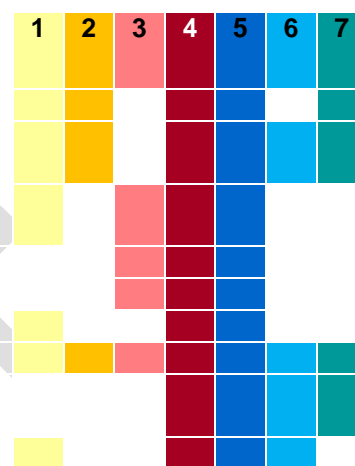
## 51 Wellbeing Goal 4 – More Equal

- 51 1 Growing up with deprivation
- 53 2 Ability to support those in housing need
- 56 3 Tackling fuel poverty



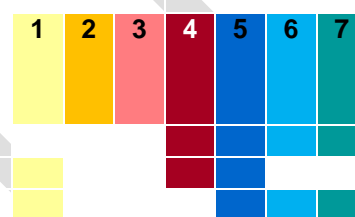
## 58 Wellbeing Goal 5 – Cohesive Communities

- 58 1 Transport and road safety
- 61 2 Growth of new technology (including internet access and social challenges such as cyber bullying)
- 63 3 Housing and the increasing reliance on renting in the private sector
- 65 4 Tackling domestic abuse
- 68 5 Impact of drug abuse and anti-social behaviour
- 69 6 Integration of HMP Berwyn
- 70 7 Volunteering
- 72 8 Community spirit, empowerment and a sense of pride
- 74 9 Making Wrexham attractive



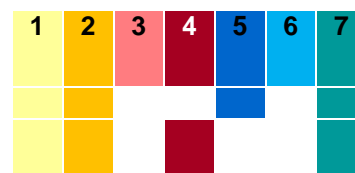
## 76 Wellbeing Goal 6 – Vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

- 76 1 Promoting the Welsh language
- 78 2 Supporting tourism
- 80 3 Thriving culture



## 83 Wellbeing Goal 7 – Globally Responsible

- 83 1 Promoting recycling and reducing waste
- 84 2 Energy and carbon emissions in housing and transport



## 87 What the community thinks of public services

## 90 What we know or predict about the future

## 91 Appendix One – Data sources

Prosperous (1)	Resilient (2)	Healthier (3)	More equal (4)	Cohesive (5)	Culture (6)	Global (7)
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# 1 Introduction

## The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

### Background to the Assessment

- 1.1 Wales faces a number of challenges now and in the future, such as climate change, poverty, health inequalities and jobs and growth. To tackle these we need to work together. To give current and future generations a good quality of life we need to think about the long-term impact of the decisions we make.
- 1.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 gives a legally-binding common purpose – the seven well-being goals – for national government, local government, local health boards and other specified public bodies. It details the ways in which specified public bodies must work, and work together, to improve the well-being of Wales.
- 1.3 The Act states that an Assessment of Local Well-being must be produced to support these public bodies to set well-being objectives and to produce plans to improve the well-being of the people who live in their area. This report is the first part in producing that Well-being Assessment.

### How has this Assessment been produced?

- 1.4 To describe all aspects of well-being would be an enormous task, so this Assessment aims to provide only an outline of the more strategic issues affecting Wrexham County Borough. In producing the Assessment we have taken an ‘engagement led’ approach. The journey has not started with pre-conceived ideas or abstract data analysis, but with extensive engagement both with local communities and the staff who work in the different public sector organisations. People were encouraged to talk about the strengths and weaknesses of living in Wrexham or providing public services to the people of Wrexham.
- 1.5 We have looked into the data and available supporting research papers to see where there is sound evidence to support the perceptions and feelings and we have collected data (where available) to track progress over time and consider how the future may look if current trends continue. See appendix one for list of data sources.
- 1.6 We have grouped what we have found into topics under each of the seven well-being goals – although many of the topics overlap into more than one well-being goal we have tried to put them under the one that they contribute most to. See the contents page for a table showing all the well-being goals each key theme contributes to.
- 1.7 The PSB will use the assessment to develop the new ‘Wrexham Well-being Plan’, which will set out how everyone will work together to achieve well-being for

the people and communities of the County Borough. However first the PSB need to make sure the assessment has identified Wrexham's strengths and weaknesses and pinpointed the issues and challenges that local people really care about. Therefore the next stage is to carry out consultation with all stakeholders to check the well-being assessment is right. Taking into account this feedback the PSB can then develop a list of priorities for Wrexham to consult further on, before developing the new 'Wrexham Well-Being Plan' to set out how to improve them.

## **The seven well-being goals for Wales**

- 1.8 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 outlines seven well-being goals which need to be considered when drawing up local objectives. A description of each well-being goal and the issues identified within that theme is provided below. All of the issues identified in this needs analysis are cross-cutting and impact on more than one of these spheres of well-being.

<b>Prosperous (1)</b>	<b>An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.</b>
<b>Resilient (2)</b>	<b>A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).</b>
<b>Healthier (3)</b>	<b>A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.</b>
<b>More equal (4)</b>	<b>A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).</b>
<b>Cohesive communities (5)</b>	<b>Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.</b>
<b>Vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language (6)</b>	<b>A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.</b>

**Globally responsible (7)**

**A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.**

## **Consultation and engagement**

1.9 The aim at the onset was to make this assessment engagement led. Staff working within the public sector, members of the public, community groups and local businesses have been encouraged to contribute their experiences of visiting, living or working in Wrexham. They were encouraged to consider not only the negatives – those weakness that we should work together to address, but also the positives, the assets and strengths that this area has to offer.

1.10 Consultation was carried out in the following ways:

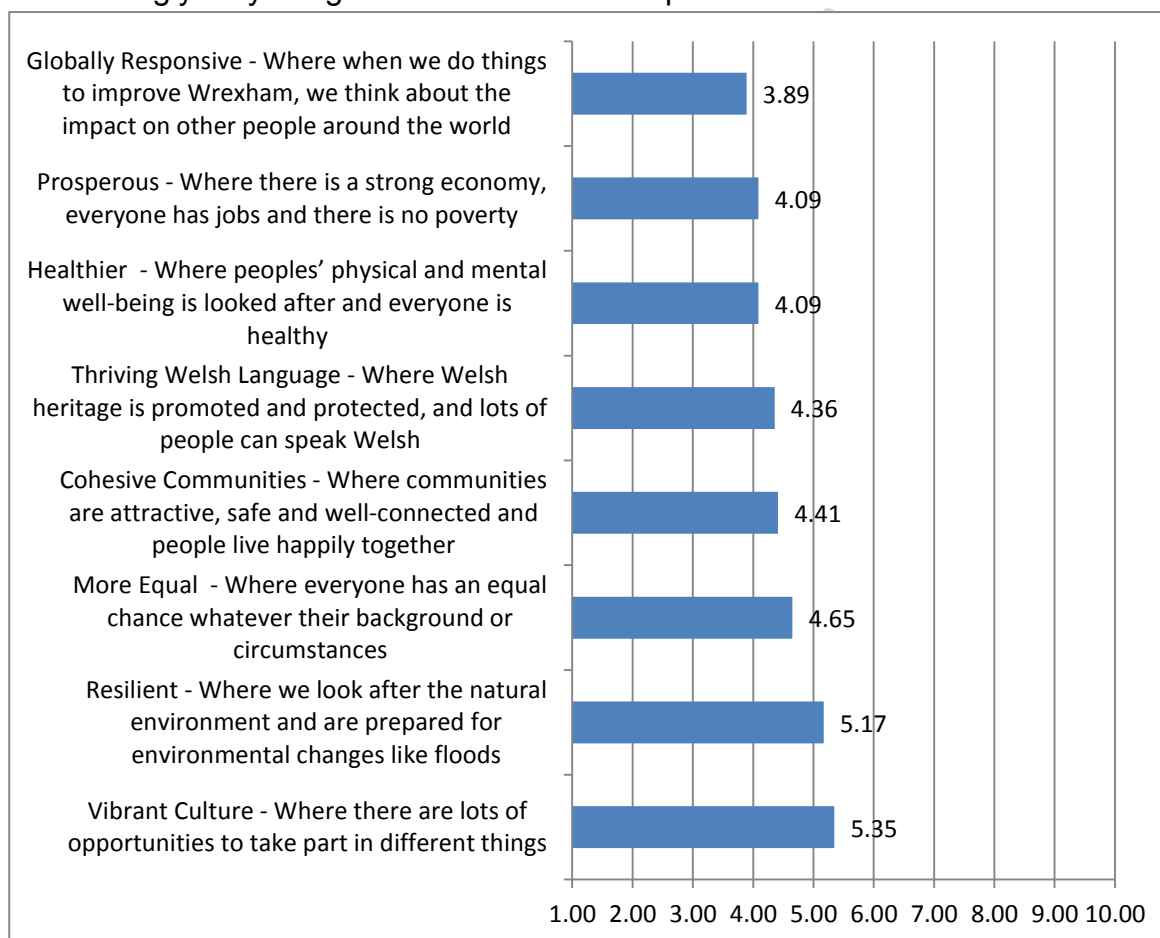
- A consultation via single question, survey and market place events entitled 'The Wrexham We Want' during October and November 2016
- A Council run survey and events entitled 'What's Important To You' during January 2016
- BCUHB 'Living Healthier, Staying Well' survey in early 2016
- Engagement with hard to reach groups including: Physical disability Group, Carer's Group, Alzheimer's society, BAWSO, North Wales Race & Equality Network, Visually Impaired Support Group, LGBT Group and Deaf Association
- The engagement work under the Social Care and Well-being Act 2014 included responses from over 110 third sector organisations and workshops with Social Care and Health staff across North Wales
- Representatives from all partner organisations listed as part of the PSB below have had the opportunity to contribute to this assessment. These include:
  - North Wales Police
  - North Wales Probation Service
  - Wrexham County Borough Council
  - Natural Resources Wales
  - Association of Voluntary Organisations in Wrexham (AVOW)
  - Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
  - Public Health Wales
  - Welsh Government
  - Coleg Cambria
  - Wrexham Glyndwr University

## **The Wrexham We Want consultation on the seven well-being goals**

1.11 Respondents were asked how strongly they agree that Wrexham is a place that reflects each of the seven well-being goals set out in the Act. They were asked to score each goal on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 = strongly disagree and 10 = strongly agree. Please note that goal 6 'a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language' was spilt into two goals for the purpose of the survey, so that respondents were able to score the differing elements of this goal separately.

- 1.12 As illustrated below, the results indicate that respondents feel Wrexham still has a long way to go to achieve each of the seven well-being goals. Being 'A Globally Responsive Place' was the goal Wrexham is perceived to be furthest from achieving (score 3.89) followed by being a 'Prosperous Place' (score 4.09) and being a 'Healthier Place' (also 4.09). Being 'A Place with a Vibrant Culture' (score 5.35) was the goal Wrexham is perceived to be nearest to achieving followed by being a 'Resilient Place' (score 5.17). However these goals still received low agreement scores overall.

How strongly do you agree that Wrexham is a place that is...



## Future Aspirations Summary

- 1.13 Over 900 people took part in the consultation and the feedback gathered from the single survey question, detailed survey and market stalls were analysed together to summarise the key future aspirations for Wrexham for the general public.
- 1.14 Overall 44 themes were identified relating to respondents future aspirations for Wrexham. The table below highlights the future aspirations for Wrexham that came out as the top priorities overall, as they were identified by the greatest number of respondents.

- 1.15 Key aspirations for particular stakeholder groups and people with specific protected characteristics, identified through the workshops and focus groups, have also been fed into the detailed analysis for each top priority aspiration.

<b>Aspiration Theme</b>	<b>Brief description</b>	<b>No. of times identified</b>
1. Thriving town-centre	Regenerate town-centre, reduce empty shops, increase variety of shops, improve layout and have a mixed economy	218
2. Tackle and reduce anti-social behaviour	Including drink, drugs, begging and homelessness	91
3. Listen to and act on public opinion	Listen to the wants and needs of local people, take into account the interests of whole County Borough, improve / change politicians, and political structures / processes	77
4. Make Wrexham attractive	Improve appearance and cleanliness	62
5. More 'things to do'	Activities / events / festivals / cultural activities – and in particular for children and young people	47
6. Encourage community spirit and pride	Encourage community spirit, empowerment and a sense of pride	41
7. Improve public transport	Improve public transport - accessibility, availability and connections in and outside Wrexham	41



## 2 Wrexham County Borough Demographics

Equality group	Description	Wrexham		Wales	Reference population	Source & date
		No.	%			
Ethnicity	White British	125,477	93.1 %	93.2 %	All people	Census 2011
	Other white	5,170	3.8 %	2.4 %		
	Mixed ethnic group	1,010	0.7 %	1.0 %		
	Other ethnic group	3,187	2.4 %	3.4 %		
National identity	Born in Wales	93,366	69.2 %	72.7 %	All people	Census 2011
	Born in rest of UK	33,010	24.5 %	21.9 %		
	Born outside UK	8,468	6.3 %	5.5 %		
	Welsh / English / Scottish / Northern Irish / British identities only	127,747	94.7 %	96.1 %		
	Mixed identity - English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British and other	482	0.4 %	0.4 %		
	Other national identities only	6,615	4.9 %	3.4 %		
	All with Welsh identity	81,310	60.3 %	65.9 %		
Age	0-15	26,364	19.3 %	17.9 %	All people	Mid year population estimates, Office for National Statistics 2015
	16-24	13,945	10.2 %	11.8 %		
	25-44	34,761	25.4 %	23.8 %		
	45-64	35,838	26.2 %	26.3 %		
	65+	25,739	18.8 %	20.2 %		
	85+	3,114	2.3 %	2.6 %		

Equality group	Description	Wrexham		Wales	Reference population	Source & date
		No.	%			
Gender	Males	68,113	49.8 %	49.2 %	All people	
	Females	68,534	50.2 %	50.8 %		
Disability	Limiting long term illness	27,905	20.7 %	23.7 %	All people	Census 2011
	Work-limiting disabled	21,300	25.2 %	22.8 %	Working age	Annual Population Survey 2015/16
Religion / belief	Christian	85,576	63.5 %	57.6 %	All people	Census 2011
	No religion	36,927	27.4 %	32.1 %		
	Other religion	2,170	1.6 %	2.7 %		
	No response	10,171	7.5 %	7.6 %		
Sexual orientation	Heterosexual			95.0 %	All people aged 16+	Annual Population Survey 2015
	Gay or lesbian			1.0 %		
	Bisexual			0.6 %		
	Other			0.5 %		
Welsh language	Welsh speakers	16,659	12.9 %	19.0 %	All people aged 3+	Census 2011
	No knowledge of Welsh	101,886	78.7 %	73.3 %		
	Welsh speakers	37,500	27.7 %	27.3 %	All people aged 3+	Annual Population Survey 2015/16

## Population characteristics in Wrexham

2.1 Ethnicity – The White British ethnic group made up 93.1% of the population in Wrexham according to the 2011 Census – in 2001 this group made up 96.0% of the population. The ‘other white’ ethnic group was 3.8% of the population compared to 1.5% in 2001. People with mixed ethnicity accounted for 0.7% of the population in 2011 compared to 0.4% in 2001. All other ethnicities together were 2.4% of the population.

2.2 National identity – About 94.7% of people in Wrexham identified as having a national identity which was solely attached to UK nations (Welsh / English / Scottish /

Northern Irish / British) according to the 2011 Census. There is no historical data to compare how this has changed over time. However, in 2001 2.5% of the resident population of Wrexham was born outside the UK, compared to 6.3% in 2011.

- 2.3 Age – Wrexham's age structure is similar to the UK average.
- 2.4 Gender – There are more females than males in the population, due mainly to the fact women live longer than men. Males:females ratio for children in Wrexham is 100:94. This ratio is not quite equal, as more baby boys are born than baby girls. Males:females ratio for the working age group is 100:99, which is slightly lower than for Wales as a whole and the UK (100:101). Males:females ratio for the 65+ age group is 100:114. This is lower than the figure for Wales as a whole, which is 100:119 (UK ratio is 100:121).
- 2.5 Disability – The number of people with limiting long-term illness has grown from 27,550 in 2001 to 27,900 in 2011. Those with limiting long-term illness make up 20.7% of the population, compared to a Wales figure of 23.7%. The number of people with limiting long-term illnesses in Wrexham is predicted to rise by about 5,700 between 2015 and 2035.
- 2.6 Religion – Despite falling numbers since 2001, Christianity remained the largest religion with 63.5% of the population identifying themselves as Christian in 2011. Between 2001 and 2011 there has been a decrease in the proportion of people who identify as Christian and an increase in those reporting to have no religion. In 2011 Muslims made up the other largest religious group with 0.6% of the population.
- 2.7 Sexual orientation – There is no reliable data about the size of the gay, lesbian or bisexual population in the UK. Estimates from various sources range from 0.3% to 10% – the Department of Trade and Industry gives an official estimate that 5-7% of the British population are gay, lesbian or bisexual.
- 2.8 Welsh language – The 2011 Census estimates that there are 16,659 people aged 3 or over who are able to speak Welsh in Wrexham – this is 12.9% of the population. For Wales as a whole 19% of the population are able to speak Welsh.

### **Other demographic information**

- 2.9 Life expectancy – in Wrexham this is lower than the England and Wales figures for both males and females, at birth and at age 65. The difference is most notable for females, particularly at birth when the life expectancy gap between Wrexham and the England and Wales figure is 1.3 years. There is a life expectancy gap between men and women of about 3.3 years at birth, though this gap narrows to 1.9 years at age 65.
- 2.10 The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (2014) – this measures relative deprivation across a range of domains (income; employment; health; education; access to services; community safety; physical environment; housing) at the lower super output area (LSOA) level for the whole of Wales. An area is multiply deprived if, for more than one of these domains, the area has a concentration of people experiencing that type of deprivation.

LSOAs amongst top 10% most deprived for overall index  
Source: Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation

Wrexham	
W01000413	Queensway 1
W01000425	Wynnstay
W01000409	Plas Madoc
W01000414	Queensway 2
W01000353	Cartrefle 2

- 2.11 Annual average (median) household income – fell by about £1,100 between 2011 and 2015 from £26,300 to £25,200. Household incomes also fell in Wales and Great Britain between 2011 and 2015 (-£900 for Wales and -£300 for GB). In the same period the households with lowest incomes in the area also became worse off.
- 2.12 Children living in low income households – between 2009 and 2014 the number of children living in low income households increased by 145 – to around 6,000.
- 2.13 Housing – Wrexham contains around 59,850 dwellings to support a population of 136,650. In the year ending March 2016 only 199 new homes were built in the area, despite Welsh Government's 2011-based projections predicting a new dwelling requirement of between 650-700 each year in order to keep pace with population growth. This suggests a significant under provision of new housing, and is in part due to the contraction of the construction industry since the global economic downturn of 2008.

### 3 Well-being throughout life

#### Childhood

- 3.1 Giving children the best start in life, protecting them and preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) as much as possible is a key plank of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act. Adverse Childhood Experiences in particular can damage a child's chances for living a good life. A tough start can affect physical and mental health, resilience and well-being. This in turn affects educational achievement, employability, risks of getting into the criminal justice system, use of health and social care services and risk of early parenthood and continuing the intergenerational cycle of disadvantage.
- 3.2 As well as physical health, social, economic and environmental differences have a wider impact on life chances for parents, children and families. These include quality of housing, access to services, family income / poverty / deprivation and family behaviours such as having a routine, being read to and the mental health of family members and themselves.
- 3.3 The first 1,000 days of a child's life (from conception to a child's second birthday) are considered to be particularly important as this period of development can significantly influence the outcomes for children throughout the life course and from generation to generation. There is a strong body of evidence of the importance of the first 1,000 days of a child's life; addressing inequalities and intervening early to prevent health problems can help people make the best health choices for themselves now and for their children in the future.
- 3.4 Research from Public Health Wales shows the potential health and societal gains if childhood experiences are improved. In population terms, if there were no adverse childhood experiences, there could be 125,000 fewer smokers across Wales and some 55,000 fewer people who have ever used heroin and crack cocaine. This is cost-effective; the evidence shows that just over £100 invested in prevention of ACEs will result in over £6000 of savings when measured across all public services over the next five years.
- 3.5 There are a number of ways in which ACEs can be prevented or their impact lessened, including raising awareness of their importance, providing appropriate services for all families and reliable access to additional support for those who need it most. The benefits from this work points to the value of joint investments and partnerships between the NHS, local authorities and other services and agencies to effectively prevent ACEs in the future.

#### Post retirement pressures

- 3.6 The number of older people in the county is projected to increase significantly over the next 20 years as a result of increased life expectancy, and the people born during the second UK baby boom of the late 1950s / early 1960s entering the retirement age groups alongside the post-WW2 baby boomers. In particular there will be a large increase in the number of people aged 85 and over, as the baby boomers start to move into that age group.
- 3.7 By 2039 people aged 65 and over will make up 24.5% of the population, and people aged 85 and over will make up 5.7% of the population. The impact of the baby boomer generations on populations should start to diminish from the mid 2040s onward.
- 3.8 Much of the costs of old age have arisen because growth in total life expectancy has outpaced growth in healthy life expectancy (i.e. the number of years we can expect to live in good health). Policies that improve preventative healthcare, and help people to remain active and healthy in later life, could help increase the proportion of life spent in good health and reduce costs. A healthier old-age population would also allow greater numbers to remain in the labour market for longer, thereby mitigating the impact of an ageing population on the dependency ratio.
- 3.9 The Welsh Government's Ageing Well in Wales programme ([www.ageingwellinwales.com](http://www.ageingwellinwales.com)) and the Local Government Association's 'Ageing well' agenda have identified what needs to be done to develop good places to grow old and ensure a healthy and socially inclusive old age.

## 4 Well-being goal 1 – Prosperous

### Introduction to this goal

- 4.1 Prosperous is about having a County Borough that is an innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately; and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.

### Key theme Prosperous 1 – School achievement and wider social development / employability skills / life skills

#### Why this is important:

- 4.2 Two of the key themes of Welsh Government's early years strategy (pre-birth to seven-years-old) is the provision of high-quality early education and childcare, and providing effective primary education. The provision of appropriate childcare plays a major part in achieving these aims, particularly in the pre-school years. It also helps parents, both through providing advice and guidance by demonstrating practical child care skills and through offering the childcare support needed to allow parents to take up work opportunities.
- 4.3 The most important outcome for any school is to give as many pupils as possible the knowledge and skills to flourish in the later phases of life, including providing qualifications for continuing education and employment. However, they also need to consider the other ways they need to educate and nurture the children in their care, including through personal development, and the teaching of life skills.
- 4.4 Academic success has a strong positive impact on children's subjective sense of how good they feel their lives are (life satisfaction) and is linked to higher levels of well-being in adulthood. Some of the markers of educational development show distinct differences between the attainment of children in the most deprived families (indicated by those in receipt of free school meals) and the rest of the school population.
- 4.5 Research evidence shows that education and health are closely linked. So promoting the health and well-being of pupils and students within schools and colleges has the potential to improve their educational outcomes and their health and well-being outcomes.

#### What we know:

- 4.6 Exam results for all pupils who are leaving compulsory education at the end of year 11 (usually aged 15 or 16) are measured against an attainment standard called the key stage 4 level 2 threshold in core subjects indicator. This is equivalent to 5 GCSEs at grade A\*-C including one in English or Welsh first language, one in

mathematics and one in science. Overall, Wrexham has attainment levels six percentage points below the Wales level, though has seen a four percentage point improvement since 2012. With attainment levels for this measure at only 49%, there is considerable room for improvement.

- 4.7 The attainment gap between those receiving free school meals and those who don't is nearly 28% (27% compared to 55%). The all-Wales attainment gap is 32%. This is a much bigger gap than seen at the foundation phase or key stage 2, suggesting that inequalities widen as children move through the education system. The gap between those who received free school meals and those who don't has narrowed since 2010/11 by about 3.5 percentage points, however, the general trend appears to be towards only marginal improvement in closing the gap.
- 4.8 Evidence from international comparators suggests a need to improve significantly beyond the current Wales levels of educational performance, in order to compete globally. In addition, improving educational attainment is needed for the future development of the economy in the area.

What you have told us:

- 4.9 In the 'What's Important to You?' consultation 'People doing well at primary school, secondary school and going onto further education' was rated as highly important by respondents, but the level of satisfaction in relation to this outcome was also higher than the other outcomes, meaning that it only ranked as a mid-level priority. However it is important to note that key messages from the comments received in relation to this outcome suggest some people do have concerns about the quality of education, reducing budgets in schools, the need for more school places with a growing population, the number of children educated out of county, growing class sizes and training for teachers.
- 4.10 'Stopping bullying in schools' was cited as an important issue for young people, as well as 'having more advice and guidance on the different opportunities available after you finish school in year 11' and 'more free part-time education opportunities after finishing school in year 11'.



- 4.11 The strategic equality plan consultation also highlighted a number of issues in relation to reducing inequalities in education such as: 'reducing attainment gaps'; 'tackling bullying in schools'; 'increasing diversity of school governors'; 'improving access to schools and the availability of wheelchairs' and 'increasing access to ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) classes'.
- 4.12 In 'The Wrexham We Want' consultation, numerous comments were made about improving education and prospects because children and young people are the future generation of Wrexham.

## **Key theme Prosperous 2 – Tackling poverty and deprivation**

### Why this is important:

- 4.13 Living with poverty and deprivation can be defined as being in a situation where a person or household's resources are well below their minimum needs. These needs include food, clothes and shelter, but also what is needed in order to have the opportunities and choices necessary to participate in society. As well as considering levels of income and access to employment opportunities, which are key to measuring poverty, other considerations might include education levels, health, community safety and access to services.
- 4.14 Social and economic disadvantages in early life in particular increase the risk of having lower earnings, lower standards of health and lower skills in adulthood. This in turn can perpetuate disadvantage across generations. Childhood experiences have a profound effect not only on children's current lives, but also on their future opportunities and prospects.
- 4.15 Recognised links between poverty and poor health suggest that predicted increases in the prevalence of chronic health conditions may lead to increases in people living in poverty. Changes to state welfare arrangements are disproportionately affecting those in the greatest poverty, particularly families with children. Recent reductions in the benefit caps, reductions in tax credit entitlements and the introduction of Universal Credit will all have an impact on poverty levels.
- 4.16 The impacts on income and poverty level changes in the wider economy is incredibly difficult to predict, and is heavily influenced by national and international market conditions which are outside of the sphere of influence of local and, increasingly, national government.

### What we know:

- 4.17 Overall household income levels in Wrexham are significantly below the national average for a range of measures. In 2015 it was estimated that median household income for the area was only 88% of the GB average.

## Annual household income (2015)

Source: CACI

	Wrexham	Wales	Great Britain
Median income	£25,200	£24,250	£28,700
Lower quartile income	£14,000	£13,600	£15,450
% households with income below 60% of GB median	26.0%	27.1%	22.5%

Measures of household income include wages, welfare support, investments, pensions and other income for all household members

4.18 A household is taken to be in poverty if the total annual household income (including any benefits received) is below 60% of the average for Great Britain, which puts the official poverty line at around £17,200. A significantly greater proportion of households in Wrexham are estimated to have income below this level than the GB average – about 26% of all households or around 15,400 households in total.

4.19 Direct measures of child poverty are hard to collect, so we have to look at proxy data to help us understand this issue at the local level.

## Children living in poverty (proxy measures) – August 2014

Source: children in low-income families local measure; child and working tax credit statistics, HMRC

	Wrexham	Wales	Great Britain
<b>Children living in a household earning less than 60% of the average for GB</b>			
Children in low income families	6,090 20.4%	22.5%	19.9%
<b>Children in families receiving tax credits</b>			
Children in in-work families	11,535 39.8%	40.0%	38.8%
Children in out-of-work families	5,855 20.2%	22.1%	19.8%
Total	17,390 60.1%	62.1%	58.6%

4.20 One proxy measure is household poverty. HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) data shows that there are 6,090 children in Wrexham who are living in poverty. This is 20.4% of all children in families which are eligible for child benefit, and slightly above the average GB rate.

4.21 The Wrexham ward of Queensway contains over 450 children living in poverty according to this measure. In addition the wards of Plas Madoc, Wynnstay and Cartrefle have around 300 children living in poverty, with over 200 each in Coedpoeth, Llay, Cefn, New Broughton, Pant, Ponciau, Penycae and Whitegate.

4.22 Another useful indicator also published by the HMRC is the number of families with children who are claiming tax credits. There are about 17,400 children in Wrexham living in families that receive tax credits to help supplement their wages or benefit income. This is about 60% of all children. The majority of these families are in work but on low incomes and for this measure the rate for Wrexham is slightly higher than the GB level.

### What you have told us:

- 4.23 In 'The Wrexham We Want' consultation, a few comments were made in relation to tackling and reducing poverty.

## **Key theme Prosperous 3 – Improving skills for employment**

### Why this is important:

- 4.24 There is an inarguable connection between skills and employment, both for the individual and for the wider workforce. Enhancing skills significantly improves the ability of the unemployed to find work. At the same time enhancing skills helps those in lower paid jobs to progress within the labour market. As the skills base of the local workforce increases, the area becomes more attractive to prospective investors looking to bring in new business.
- 4.25 A fast pace of change in the national and world economy coupled with rapidly evolving technology means that the modern workforce needs to be more skilled than ever before. These skills need to be flexible, adaptable and portable between jobs and even between employment sectors. The continuing move away from a production to a service based economy also means the workforce is increasingly having to develop its social skills, as employment becomes much more customer focussed.
- 4.26 For the public sector, as well as contributing to the apprenticeship levy they will also be required to meet the legislative requirements contained within the Enterprise Bill. This legislation will stipulate that all public sector organisations will be required to make sure that 2.3% of their workforce are apprentices at any one time. This will potentially be a significant change to the way public sector organisations recruit and train staff.

### What we know:

- 4.27 The working age population in Wrexham has levels of qualification that are generally similar to the Welsh average. Though figures for those with no qualification are more or less equal to the UK figure, a smaller proportion of the population is qualified to degree level or above (NVQ4+) than is seen nationally. Women are generally more qualified than men.
- 4.28 Included within the suite of skills for employment are a whole range of academic and work related qualifications. The route to higher education and a university degree are not suitable for all school leavers or adult learners, and apprenticeships and other work based learning opportunities form a large part of the local skills base.
- 4.29 Compared to the national rate, Wrexham has slightly better provision for apprenticeships and work-based learning programmes than the national average for the 16-24 age group. However it is under-provided for the population as a whole.

- 4.30 The area has a slightly higher than average provision of programmes within the engineering sector – 11% of apprenticeships (8% for Wales) and 9% of all programmes (6% for Wales). Other sectors which have a higher proportion of learning programmes than the Wales average are healthcare and public services and manufacturing. This reflects the area's employment structures, and is also influenced by the courses available at local further education institutions.
- 4.31 Qualification levels in Wrexham have generally been improving year on year, and figures for those with NVQ4 level qualifications or above are now similar to the Welsh average. Figures for those with no qualifications have also shown a positive trend. The most recent data shows levels lower than the Welsh average and equal to the UK figure.
- 4.32 There are issues around unfilled vacancies for some employers in the manufacturing and engineering sectors on the Wrexham Industrial Estate, pointing to a skills deficit in the area. Additional work needs to be done via the Wrexham Employers Pledge to develop clear career paths for school leavers to pursue advanced manufacturing and engineering occupations, including stimulating the take up of associated subjects.

What you have told us:

- 4.33 In the 'What's Important to You?' consultation 'Having a wider variety of apprenticeships with no age cap on them' and 'having more opportunities for young people to gain employment and work experience' were cited as important issues for young people, to 'improve their skills and help them get jobs in the future'.

## **Key theme Prosperous 4 – Local employment opportunities**

Why this is important:

- 4.34 There is a growing body of evidence to demonstrate the links between material deprivation and poor overall well-being. Good employment is the most common, and often the most effective means of providing a family with the finances needed to improve many areas of well-being.
- 4.35 It's not just about the number of jobs that are available, but also what types of employment opportunities they offer, and how well they keep up with changes in the global economy as well as local priorities. Secure well paid employment affects not just the economic well-being of individuals and communities, but can also help with mental well-being as it fosters a sense of purpose and a sense of belonging within society.

What we know:

- 4.36 There are approximately 56,000 PAYE jobs within the area and 69,100 economically active residents. This is a mismatch of about -13,100 jobs. Some of this imbalance between supply and demand for jobs is met by out commuting – around 16,100 people travel out of Wrexham for employment – about 24% of working residents. However, Wrexham has a complex pattern of in- and out-commuting, and has a

significant number of people who live outside the area who travel to Wrexham to work.

- 4.37 It is difficult to assess how much outward commuting is out of necessity when looking for better paid or higher status jobs, and how much is out of choice. However as well as the mismatch between number of jobs and number of working residents the area has significantly lower average weekly wages for full-time jobs than the national average – £486 compared to £540 for GB as a whole. Wages for jobs based in the area are also lower than the average wage for Wrexham residents (£486 compared to £499), again suggesting that out-commuting provides better employment opportunities.
- 4.38 The employment structure in the area differs from that of Great Britain as a whole. Employment in the high skills, high wage sectors of information & communication, finance & insurance, professional, scientific & technical, and business administration & support services is relatively low, totalling just 12% of all employment compared to 24% across GB as a whole.
- 4.39 Reliance on public sector employment is relatively high at 35% across the area as a whole compared to 32% for Wales and 26% for GB. This difference is mainly driven by employment in the health sector, in particular due to the presence of Wrexham Maelor Hospital which contributes significantly to the 20% of employment in the health sector.
- 4.40 In Wrexham employment in manufacturing is well above the national rate at 20% compared to 8% for GB and 11% for Wales as a whole.
- 4.41 The total number of PAYE jobs in Wrexham increased by 1,600 (3.0%) between 2009 and 2015. Some sectors saw declining job numbers – the highest losses since 2009 are in the public administration & defence sector (-700 jobs), construction (-450), wholesale (-350) and retail (-250). The health sector saw the biggest growth (about +1,100 jobs). The biggest proportional growth was in the information & communication sector which has increased by 79% since 2009 (about 450 jobs). Other significant growth sectors since 2009 are education (+850), construction (+300), manufacturing (+550), arts/entertainment/recreation and finance/insurance (+200 each).
- 4.42 The local economy shows an over reliance on the public sector to provide employment. In a time of continued austerity and pressures on public spending, some of these jobs are under threat. There are also likely to be secondary effects from any contraction of public sector employment and/or services within the wider economy, as many local small business and trades people base much of their business on the supply of goods and services to larger public sector organisations.

#### What you have told us:

- 4.43 In the 'What's Important to You?' consultation, 'creating jobs and reducing unemployment', 'helping businesses to start up and grow' and 'attracting businesses and investment' were all rated as highly important by respondents, but the level of

satisfaction in relation to these outcomes was very low, meaning that they were all ranked as high priorities.

- 4.44 The strategic equality plan consultation also highlighted a number of issues in relation to reducing inequalities in employment and pay such as: 'promoting positive perceptions of diversity in the workplace'; 'flexible working including the private sector'; 'promoting equal pay and employment rights'; 'raising awareness of institutional discrimination'; and 'improving access to work experience, training and job opportunities'.
- 4.45 In 'The Wrexham We Want' consultation, numerous comments were made about having more jobs and better job prospects; and several comments about attracting more businesses.

## **Key theme Prosperous 5 – Supporting small businesses**

### Why this is important:

- 4.46 While small businesses may not generate as much income for the local economy or employ as many people as large companies and organisations, they often form the backbone of the local economy. They fill gaps that big business cannot operate within or are not interested in, and can also respond to limited or niche markets (for example local window cleaners or designer jewellery makers).
- 4.47 Small businesses are also more likely to recycle their income within the local economy than both large local businesses and national/global companies and organisations. Other larger employers in the area benefit from the presence of a strong small business sector, as they are often providers of goods, services, and out-sourced contract work for big companies and institutions.
- 4.48 Small businesses can be better able to respond and adapt quickly to changing economic climates, as their smaller capital/revenue accumulations can make them more flexible. However, small capital/revenue reserves can also limit ability to adapt and expand, and small operations can sometimes lack skills outside of their core business areas.
- 4.49 Small businesses do not always stay small, and small businesses that grow into large businesses often remain in the community in which the business was first established. Support for, and investment in, small businesses can be an investment in the future of the local, and even national or global, – economy.

### What we know:

- 4.50 A high proportion of the known businesses operating in the area are relatively small in size. Some 74% of businesses (2,650) employ fewer than four people and a further 14% (500) employ between five and nine people. Around 40% of small businesses operate below the VAT threshold. About 7,700 people or 8.0% of the working population are self-employed.

4.51 Since 2011, the number of small business has increased by about 9% – there are about 250 more businesses with fewer than four employees and 50 more who employ between five and nine people.

What you have told us:

4.52 We are currently sourcing feedback from consultations that may have taken place on this theme. Any information we find will be included in the final assessment.

**Key theme Prosperous 6 – Key employment sector – social care and health**

Why this is important:

- 4.53 The health and social care sector provides over 10,750 jobs in Wrexham. Overall, this is one in five jobs in the area (20%) and is the joint biggest employment sector in the area, alongside manufacturing.
- 4.54 North Wales is experiencing on-going and significant recruitment difficulties with both GPs and nurses. This has been identified as a significant short and long-term risk to the provision of primary care services.
- 4.55 Recruitment problems become even more worrying when you consider the age profile of the current workforce. Data collected in May 2016 shows that 19% of the GPs in North Wales and 22% in BCUHB East area (Wrexham and Flintshire) are over the age of 55. The potential for these GPs to retire early has increased following changes to pension legislation, which benefits highly paid individuals to take early retirement.
- 4.56 The number of places for training for GPs, nurses and allied health professionals is not sufficient to meet the requirements across the whole of the UK, as well as North Wales. The Welsh GP trainee system which sources trainees from Cardiff Medical School struggles to meet the workforce demands of the North Wales Primary Care workforce economy. Good relationships exist with the North West, both in Liverpool and Manchester Medical Schools, which could be developed further. The development of the emergent medical school in Chester may also prove beneficial.

What we know:

- 4.57 Within the total jobs in this sector, 6,450 jobs are in hospitals, 3,100 are in other health care sectors, 3,750 are in residential care activities, and 3,950 are in the non-residential social care sector.
- 4.58 Changes within the sector are being driven by demographic change (increased demand for care), social and political factors (including the push for resource efficiency), technology and innovation (advances in treatments and opportunities for patients to manage their own health), and growing patient and service user expectations. These drivers are generating skills and performance challenges in all of the key health and social care occupations, as the sector responds to changing demands.



4.59 Since 2009 employment in health and social care in Wrexham has increased by about 600 jobs, primarily in the residential care sector.

4.60 Over the next five to ten years, the sector faces rising demand and reduced availability of resources, as well as structural reform. Such changes are likely to lead to a more diverse set of employers operating in the sector and a more joined up approach to service delivery by health and social care staff.

What you have told us:

4.61 In 'The Wrexham We Want' consultation, numerous comments were made stating there should be more investment in health services.

### **Key theme Prosperous 7 – Key economic asset – Wrexham Industrial Estate**

Why this is important:

4.62 There are over 25 different industrial estate and business parks in Wrexham, of which Wrexham Industrial Estate is the largest. It is the largest in Wales and amongst the top ten, by size, in the UK. There are around 360 businesses, providing employment for approximately 10,000 people, which includes a diverse mix of businesses involved in a range of activities including banking and finance, automotive, engineering, pharmaceutical, aerospace, and food and drink sectors. It is an important employment hub not only for Wales and the North West of England but also for the wider UK economy.

What we know:

4.63 The industrial estate has seen healthy growth in recent years increasing provision from 300 businesses providing around 7,000 jobs in 2011 to 10,000 currently. Currently more than a million pounds a day is being invested into Wrexham Industrial Estate, creating over 2,500 jobs over the next three years.

4.64 There are issues around unfilled vacancies for some employers in the manufacturing and engineering sectors on the industrial estate, pointing to a skills deficit in the area.

What you have told us:

4.65 We are currently sourcing feedback from consultations that may have taken place on this theme. Any information we find will be included in the final assessment.

### **Key theme Prosperous 8 – Key economic asset – HMP Berwyn**

Why this is important:



4.66 During the construction phase, Lendlease, the main contractor committed to delivering a number of local (50 mile radius/1 hour commute) economic and community benefits; including £30 million to be spent on local businesses, half of all labour utilised on the project to be recruited locally, 100 apprenticeships covering all age groups with the opportunity to progress into employment, a commitment to up-skill workers, and to work with local schools.

What we know:

4.67 Though much of this benefit has now been realised, as HMP enters the final stages of construction, one major future benefit for local employment and skills development comes from the creation of the Learning & Ambition Academy/National Skills Academy for Construction. This is a physical building based on the construction site, funded through Lendlease, the Ministry of Justice and the North Wales Economic Ambition Board. It is available for use by local partners to deliver training on site.

4.68 The prison offers potential employment and development opportunities for the local economy outside of the prison itself. As well as acting as suppliers of goods and services to HMP Berwyn, there are opportunities within the hospitality sectors to provide accommodation and food services to prison visitors.

What you have told us:

4.69 There is no specific consultation feedback on this theme.

**Key theme Prosperous 9 – Key asset – Wrexham Glyndŵr University**

Why this is important:

4.70 Wrexham Glyndŵr University is the only university in North East Wales, and from its earliest beginnings as Wrexham School of Science and Art, has played a key role in Wrexham and the wider region. This role has been as a major economic driver in its own right (contributing millions of pounds annually to the economy) as a supplier of skills and knowledge and research base, supporting and attracting business to the region.

4.71 Wrexham Glyndŵr University is one of the UK's newest universities. Established in 2008 from the former North East Wales Institute of Higher Education.

4.72 The University is at an exciting phase in its development and growth, guided by a new Strategic Framework and senior management team. It is developing new course provision that will place the University clearly as the key higher education provider in the region, with a unique offer that provides work related learning, delivered by practitioners and informed by industrial and professional research.

What we know:

4.73 With nearly 6,800 full- and part-time students it meets the needs of local learners as well as bringing in those from further afield, including from across the world. This

helps bring in new ideas and talent, and also helps to promote the “Wrexham Brand” much more widely. The university runs 150 programmes, offering foundation, HND/Cs, honours and masters degrees and doctorates over a broad variety of qualifications.

- 4.74 Wrexham Glyndŵr University is also number one in North Wales for getting its students jobs after graduation. The institution achieved an employability figure of 92.1% and is also above the sector average for graduate level employment, according to the latest Destination of Leavers Survey (DLHE).

What you have told us:

- 4.75 We are currently sourcing feedback from consultations that may have taken place on this theme. Any information we find will be included in the final assessment.

### **Key theme Prosperous 10 – Wrexham town-centre**

Why this is important:

- 4.76 The old model of retail continually driving town centre growth has broken. Changes in modern retail, the way people shop and wider economic changes mean that town centre regeneration needs a different way forward. In the future growth will come from a greater diversity of town centre uses.

What we know:

- 4.77 Wrexham has much to be positive about. As the largest town in North Wales serving an important sub-regional role Wrexham town centre has a strong and healthy mid-market retail offer supported by a wide range of significant sub-regional services including Glyndwr University, Coleg Cambria and Wrexham Maelor Hospital. Its accessibility, countryside, industrial estate and tourism attractions are real assets.
- 4.78 The town’s strategic position as a driver of the sub-regional economy, together with projected population growth, an attractive historic core and public sector regeneration investment, provide confidence that the town has great potential for growth.
- 4.79 Through extensive evidence gathering and partnership working a vision for the town centre responsive to its challenges emerged. Central to this vision is the need for a new town centre heart with a diverse range of accessible shopping, leisure uses such as family restaurants, arts and cultural attractions, niche speciality retail in a quality public realm and environment that is identifiable as being ‘Wrexham’.
- 4.80 Actions to deliver an improved shopping and visitor experience need to be supported by improvements in accessibility, the public realm, housing and work opportunities to provide a mutually supportive and holistic response to the town centres issues.
- 4.81 The public sector partners, local businesses and the wider community have worked together on a masterplan to identify opportunities for actions and interventions that

will help deliver these within a framework that will help shape and prioritise future investment.

#### What you have told us:

- 4.82 In the 'What's Important to You' consultation (in January/February 2016), 'supporting shop owners and reducing numbers of empty shops' was rated as highly important by respondents, but the level of satisfaction in relation to this outcome was very low, meaning that it was a high priority. Key messages were that some people feel:
- There are too many empty shops
  - The quality and variety of shops is poor
  - The town-centre needs to be regenerated and 'brought together'
  - The cost of parking is too high
  - Business rates are too high
- 4.83 By far the greatest number of future aspirations for Wrexham received from respondents to October's 'The Wrexham We Want' consultation related to having a thriving town-centre. A number of improvements were cited under this theme including:
- Regenerating and revitalising the old town-centre – bring the town-centre back to life
  - Reducing the number of empty shops – reduce rates and encourage uses other than retail
  - Improving the quality and variety of shops on offer – less cheap shops and more independent shops
  - Having a more mixed economy – shops, restaurants and culture and leisure opportunities
  - Improving the town-centre layout – in particular the disconnect between new developments such as Eagles Meadow and the old town-centre.
- 4.84 Other frequently cited aspiration themes related to the town-centre included maximising the potential of being a market town - returning to Wrexham's market town roots and improving the cost, availability and accessibility of car parking.
- 4.85 Respondents were asked to identify what they thought would get in the way of this aspiration being achieved. The key barriers were perceived to be poor planning, lack of vision and innovation and not listening to what the public want, business rates being too high, landlords not caring that shops are empty and untidy, the town image being deprived and depressed and unattractive to businesses, there being no money and no public sector investment in the town and people going to neighbouring towns such as Chester and Shrewsbury for a better experience.
- 4.86 Respondents were also asked what they thought the public sector and other organisations need to do to make this aspiration a reality. Solutions identified included reducing business rates and negotiating with landlords to reduce rent/offer incentives, encouraging large shops back into the town-centre, turning Eagles Meadow into a leisure and entertainment complex rather than retail, working with local people and listening to their ideas to come up with a long-term vision for the town-centre, having more police presence to make it feel safer and learning from other small towns such as Mold and Oswestry.

4.87 Respondents were also asked what they thought they and their community could do to make this aspiration a reality. Very few respondents felt that there was anything that they could do and those that did offer solutions felt that the only thing they could do was to continue to visit the town and shops/support events (but commented that it needed better shops to enable them to do so). However some did comment that they would like to get involved in improving the town-centre but that they did not know how.

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## 5 Well-being goal 2 – Resilient

### Introduction to this goal

- 5.1 Resilient is about having a nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change.
- 5.2 The 2010 Climate Strategy for Wales states ‘without immediate, radical and sustained reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions, there will be severe consequences for human society, as well as the biodiversity and ecosystems that provide essential services for human livelihoods. Moreover, economic analysis suggests that action now will substantially reduce future costs of cutting emissions. In terms of adapting to future climate impacts too, the earlier we start to prepare, by understanding our vulnerability and building our capacity to adapt, the better equipped we will be to respond appropriately’
- 5.3 There are a number of big challenges that we will need to work on together as a community such as climate change, poverty, health inequalities and jobs and growth. Recent cuts across the public sector make it even more important that resilient communities tackle:
- the impact of rising energy and fuel costs on households and businesses
  - the effect of temperature extremes on children and younger people at school and older people at home
  - the health impact on workers who work outdoors in hot temperatures, or have to provide an emergency service in extreme weather
  - the impact of snow, localised flooding or very hot weather on our homes office buildings, schools, community centres
  - temperature extremes causing power cuts or affecting roads and our broadband services

### Key theme Resilient 1 – Protecting the natural environment and biodiversity creating resilience

#### Why this is important:

- 5.4 Many of Wales’ landscape areas and characteristics are rare, unique and valued. Our natural environment and natural resources provide us with our basic needs. They provide clean air and water; help protect us from flooding; provide us with food, timber minerals and a landscape that both residents and visitors can enjoy.
- 5.5 A healthy, resilient environment creates the conditions for a thriving and sustainable society. However, evidence shows that our natural environment continues to be put under pressure from a variety of sources such as climate change, new pests and diseases, pollution, overuse and development pressure.

- 5.6 We can help ensure that the area is fit for the future by ensuring that our environment is as resilient as possible so that it can better cope with current and future pressures.
- 5.7 Peatland habitats can play an important role in water management, slowing down flood waters and naturally reducing flood-risk downstream. By slowly releasing water during dry periods, peatland helps to reduce the impact of droughts on water supplies and on river and stream flows. Peat occurs in four main areas across the County Borough.
- 5.8 Our experience and interaction with landscape can have a positive effect on our health and well-being. Attractive landscapes, natural beauty, cultural heritage and tranquillity provide opportunities and benefits for healthy communities, recreation, tourism and economic activity.
- 5.9 As well as health benefits, walking and cycling can play a key role in serving local transport needs and helping address the issues of congestion, pollution and climate change associated with car dependency. What are sometimes classed as 'everyday journeys' to work by foot or bike cost less and help to keep people fit as well as being enjoyable. This type of journey is sometimes known as 'active travel'.

What we know:

- 5.10 The county is largely urban / industrial compared with many areas in Wales and is characterised by small blocks of farm woodland and larger rural estates. Woodlands cover 9.4% of the county – well below the Wales average of 14%. Urban trees are important in Wrexham and projects, such as in Caia Park, have further engaged the community in tree planting.
- 5.11 Issues include social pressures – such as off-road motorcycling and anti-social behaviour; fly tipping; pressure from development and lack of available land for planting new woodlands.
- 5.12 The area has a diverse landscape ranging from lowland valleys to upland exposed plateaux. There are a number outstanding landscapes in the area including Chirk Castle and Erddig as well as the Glyn Ceriog Valley and Fenn's Whixall and Bettisfield Mosses. There are many areas of green space including seven country parks, two National Nature Reserves and 20 Sites of Special Scientific Interest.
- 5.13 Issues include access to green space from towns and villages as several of the above require a car to access them. There are opportunities throughout the county to improve access to green space closer to where people live and work.

What you have told us:

- 5.14 In 'The Wrexham We Want' consultation, numerous comments were made stating there should be preservation/investment in parks, play areas and green spaces and

several comments were made stating there should be better cycle paths and pedestrian routes.

## **Key theme Resilient 2 – Climate change and reducing carbon emissions**

### Why this is important:

- 5.15 The 2010 Climate Strategy for Wales concluded that: “without immediate, radical and sustained reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions, there will be severe consequences for human society, as well as the biodiversity and ecosystems that provide essential services for human livelihoods. Moreover, economic analysis suggests that action now will substantially reduce future costs of cutting emissions. In terms of adapting to future climate impacts too, the earlier we start to prepare, by understanding our vulnerability and building our capacity to adapt, the better equipped we will be to respond appropriately.”
- 5.16 The UK Government has set targets to reduce carbon emissions by 34% by 2020 and 80% by 2050 (against a 1990 baseline) as part of the Climate Change Act 2008. These are very challenging targets for reducing carbon emissions and apply to domestic, commercial and public sector bodies. As such the Welsh Government set a 3% year-on-year reduction target with the public sector expected to lead by example.
- 5.17 Though the public sector itself has a relatively low CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (only about 2% of the UK total) its role is not just about reducing the carbon footprint within its organisations, but in leading by example and assisting the wider community to change its behaviour.
- 5.18 Renewable energy is any source of energy that occurs naturally and is not exhaustible, such as wind, solar, tidal and hydro power. As well as reducing reliance on fossil fuels and providing cleaner power, developing renewable energy sources for electricity generation is necessary to meet EU and UK Government targets on greenhouse gas emissions and to ensure fuel security.

### What we know:

- 5.19 The UK is consuming 17% less energy than it did in 1998, and more of the energy we are consuming is coming from renewable sources. At the same time, the percentage of energy coming from renewable and waste sources (such as wind, hydro power and biomass) has risen from 1% of total UK energy consumption to 9%. However, the decline in North Sea oil and gas production has meant the UK has become increasingly dependent on imports of energy. All EU countries are currently net importers of energy.
- 5.20 Action the Council has taken to reduce carbon emissions in its housing stock has resulted in a 10.7% reduction in carbon emissions from 2014/15 to 2015/16.

Reductions have also been made in emissions from the Council's non-domestic buildings.

What you have told us:

- 5.21 In 'The Wrexham We Want' consultation, a few comments were made stating we should be environmentally friendly.

### **Key theme Resilient 3 – Protection from flooding**

Why this is important:

- 5.15 Natural Resources Wales (NRW) are responsible for managing flood risk from the sea and main rivers.
- 5.16 Climate change is expected to increase river flooding, cause sea level rise and increase the flood and coastal erosion risk. The 2004 Foresight Future Flooding report suggested that the annual economic damages in Wales will rise from £70 million in 2004 to £1,235 million in the 2080s under the most likely scenario. Flood prevention is now high on the national political agenda, and with scientists predicting more such extreme weather events in coming years as a result of climate change, this remains an area of key concern for the Public Services Board.

What we know:

- 5.17 In Wrexham County, there are 1,610 properties at risk and NRW provide a direct warning service to 537 properties in three areas within the extreme flood outline. This means that not all properties within these areas are signed up to the Flood Warning Service.
- 5.18 NRW have one failing asset in Wrexham that will require capital investment. A flood risk based approach has been taken, prioritising people and properties, to manage repairs and improvements to assets. NRW are currently investigating flood improvement opportunities within one area that is high on the communities at risk register.
- 5.19 Within the 2011 Wrexham County Borough Council Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA), 200 properties, 20 businesses and one critical infrastructure have been identified as at risk. There are other areas of concern around the Llay Industrial Estate, Wrexham Industrial Estate and urban villages of Gwersyllt, Rhosllanerchrugog, Ruabon, Coedpoeth, Cefn Mawr, Acrefair, Chirk and Glyn Ceiriog, Ceiriog Valley.
- 5.20 The main sources of flood risk in Wrexham County Borough include river flooding, surface water flooding, some sewer, ground water and ordinary watercourse flooding. Flooding has occurred at many locations throughout the River Dee Catchment Flood



Management area, mostly from the main River Dee and its major tributaries but also from several smaller watercourses. Significant floods were recorded in 1890, 1946, and 2000. In 2000, flooding was widespread across the catchment to places which have never flooded before. The affected areas included Rossett, Holt, Wrexham, Coedpoeth and Rhosllanerchrugog.

#### What you have told us:

- 5.21 We are currently sourcing feedback from consultations that may have taken place on this theme. Any information we find will be included in the final assessment.

### **Key theme Resilient 4 – Supporting the rural economy**

#### Why this is important:

- 5.22 Farmers grow the raw ingredients that underpin the UK's food supply chain – whether providing produce for the local organic market or big supermarkets. Their crops and livestock contribute to our local and national food security, as well as providing export goods. Locally sourced produce supplies many of our food producers and restaurants which are important to the wider economy. A thriving local food economy also helps support and promote healthy eating initiatives.
- 5.23 Succession planning remains a key issue for the sector. Traditionally farms and related employment in the sector would pass from parents to children, but in recent years younger generations have tended to pursue different career choices. This is partly due to changing expectations, but also in response to the changing national economy, which makes farming less profitable than in previous generations.

#### What we know:

- 5.24 Farmers manage over 75% of the total land in Wrexham, with the average farmer spending two and a half weeks per year maintaining hedges and walls. Management of agricultural land, common land, forests, water courses and other landscapes by farmers and agricultural workers can contribute to environmental goals, and helps maintain the countryside as the lungs of the UK.
- 5.25 The links between farming and tourism are very strong. Many of our areas of outstanding natural beauty are maintained and managed by our farmers, and are in big part responsible for attracting nearly 2 million visitors to Wrexham each year.
- 5.26 Agriculture, forestry and fishing make up over 9% of all VAT and PAYE registered businesses in Wrexham. Though overall numbers working in agriculture have risen slightly between 2003 and 2013 (from 1,501 to 1,531), the number of full-time farmers has dropped by nearly 100. This is balanced out by comparable level of increase in the number of casual agricultural labourers, suggesting a significant shift in the security of employment in the agricultural sector, and a probable change in the tenancy/ownership of agricultural land.

5.27 The impact of the Brexit vote on the rural economy has the potential to be very significant. Currently Wrexham's agricultural sector receives millions of pounds each year in direct payments as part of the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy, and rural areas benefit from various other EU funding programmes and initiatives. It is not yet known how this support will be replaced.

What you have told us:

5.28 We are currently sourcing feedback from consultations that may have taken place on this theme. Any information we find will be included in the final assessment.

DRAFT

## 6 Well-being goal 3 – Healthier

### Introduction to this goal

- 6.1 Healthier is about having a society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.

### Key theme Healthier 1 – Giving every child a best start

#### Why this is important:

- 6.2 In its public health strategy document 'Our Healthy Future', Welsh Government states that: "(t)he foundations of good health are laid during pregnancy and infancy and built upon in the school-age years. A range of risk factors, such as maternal smoking and poor nutrition in pregnancy, poverty in childhood, poor educational attainment, and neglect and rejection by families, have been associated with negative health and well-being outcomes both in the short term and over the lifespan. Conversely, positive outcomes have been linked to a number of protective factors, such as a supportive family environment. Tackling risk factors for lifelong health and well-being in the early years and building children's resilience to adversity will therefore be central in taking this agenda forward."
- 6.3 Pregnancy can be a positive life choice for some teenagers; however for many it is unplanned and can be associated with negative health outcomes for both mother and baby. Young mothers are more likely to suffer postnatal depression and less likely to complete their education. Children born to teenage parents are less likely to be breastfed, more likely to live in poverty and are twice as likely to become teenage parents themselves. The provision of sex and relationships education in schools can have a beneficial effect in terms of sexual health behaviour, including delaying sexual activity, reducing the numbers of partners and increasing knowledge about methods and availability of contraception.
- 6.4 Babies who weigh less than 2.5 kg at birth are classed as being of low birth weight. These babies are more at risk of suffering from health problems in childhood and, in particular, the development of cognitive skills. It is also related to illness in adult life, such as diabetes, stroke and lung disease. However, the health and social impacts on low birthweight babies also depend on the reason for low birthweight and the other life chances a baby experiences. The biggest risk factor for low birth weights is exposure to tobacco smoke during pregnancy (both maternal smoking and second hand smoke). Other risks are maternal substance misuse, diet, sexual health and low body mass index (BMI).
- 6.5 Major health concerns for the first two years of life are breast feeding, immunisation and maternal mental health.

- 6.6 Breastfeeding – protects the health of mothers and babies and breastfed babies are less likely to have to go to hospital with infections, and are more likely to grow up with a healthy weight and without allergies. Low maternal age, low educational attainment and low socioeconomic position all have a strong impact on patterns of infant feeding.
- 6.7 Immunisation – a proven tool for controlling and eliminating life threatening infectious diseases is one of the most cost effective health interventions. It is a primary health consideration for the first 1,000 days of a child's life.
- 6.8 The mental health of the mother has an impact on the child during and after pregnancy. If the mother is stressed or anxious while she is pregnant, the child is more likely to be anxious. Mental ill health impacts on the ability to provide positive parenting and this is particularly important in the first two years of life when attachments are forming and brain development is most rapid.
- 6.9 Emergency admissions for injury are used as a general indicator of health and health inequality. Injuries are a key cause of death and disability among children and place significant burden on individuals, families, health services and wider society. The 0-4 age group are exceptionally vulnerable to injuries within the home environment.
- 6.10 Despite the fact that it is largely preventable, dental caries (tooth decay) is the main oral disease in early childhood. Dental decay in young children is strongly linked to deprivation and frequently leads to pain and infection necessitating hospitalisations for dental extractions under general anaesthesia as well as the discomfort of pain and infection.
- 6.11 Globally, there is an increasing body of evidence examining how experiences during childhood have long term impacts on health. Chronic stressful experiences in childhood, termed adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) can happen directly to the child or the child can be witness to them within the family. They include: verbal abuse; physical abuse; sexual abuse; parental separation; domestic violence; mental illness; alcohol abuse; drug use and incarceration.
- 6.12 Exposure to these can set individuals on a health-harming life course; increasing their risks of smoking, problem drinking, poor diet, low levels of exercise and risky sexual behaviour. Such behaviours can lead to premature ill health through increasing risks of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and cancers. The same chronic stressors in early childhood can also lead to individuals developing anti-social behaviours, including a propensity for aggressive and violent behaviour and ultimately problems with criminal justice services.

#### What we know:

- 6.13 Teenage conceptions in Wrexham are slightly above the national average, but tend to fluctuate from year-to-year due to relatively small numbers. The published data is lagging two years behind, but shows that rates for teen conceptions in 2014 were

26.7 per 1,000 females aged 15-17. This compares to the all-Wales rate of 25.4. In 2014 there were 59 conceptions for young women aged under 18, and 24 births to mothers in the same age group. There has been a general downward trend in the last 20 years.

- 6.14 The percent of new-born babies who are underweight is higher in Wrexham than for the local health authority and Wales as a whole. In 2014, there were 142 low weight births in Wrexham, 8.9% of all live births (Wales = 6.7%). Babies born in disadvantaged families are more likely to be born early and be born underweight and low birthweight is sometimes used as a general measure of poverty in a community. The reduction of low birth weights was one of the objectives set by Welsh Government to measure local progress against child poverty targets.
- 6.15 Uptake rates for the 5 in 1 primary immunisation (by age 1) is 97.7% in Wrexham. The Wales figure is 96.8%. This has fallen slightly since 2013/14 (from 97.8% to 97.7%).
- 6.16 Uptake rates for the pneumococcal (PVC) primary immunisation by age 1 is 97.5%. The Wales figure is 96.6%. At age four, 91% of all children are up-to-date with their immunisations in Wrexham. This is better than the Wales average of 86%, but below the target rate of 95%.
- 6.17 The number of emergency hospital admissions for injuries that occur in children aged 0-4 years in Wrexham is 110 per 10,000. The Wales average is 177 per 10,000.
- 6.18 Wrexham has seen a slight reduction in the average number of decayed, missing or filled teeth amongst 5-year-olds from 1.8 in 2007/08 to 1.7 in 2011/12. The Welsh average for 2011/12 is 1.6 teeth.

#### What you have told us:

- 6.19 We are currently sourcing feedback from consultations that may have taken place on this theme. Any information we find will be included in the final assessment.

### **Key theme Healthier 2 – People make healthy lifestyle choices**

#### Why this is important:

- 6.20 Health inequities are avoidable inequalities in health between groups of people. In its public health strategy 'Our Healthy Future' Welsh Government notes that "where such differences could be avoided, it is unfair and immoral that we tolerate them". Promoting healthy lifestyles helps to reduce health inequities.
- 6.21 Studies also suggest that the likelihood of obesity can be higher in binge drinkers and heavy drinkers than in other people, but that this may be due as much to adverse

behaviours including poor diet, unhealthy weight control, body dissatisfaction and sedentary lifestyles as to the calorific intake from alcohol.

- 6.22 Prevention of health harming behaviour and promotion of healthy behaviour is a priority. However, support for those with unhealthy lifestyles, in particularly obesity and alcohol misuse, also needs to be provided.

What we know:

- 6.23 Around 59% of adults in Wrexham are overweight or obese (the level is Wales 57.8%) – this has risen from 58% in 2003/04.
- 6.24 19% of the adults in Wrexham are smokers (compared to 21% in Wales) – this has fallen since 2003/04.
- 6.25 31% of the adult population in Wrexham meet the recommended physical activity guidelines of five 30 minute exercise sessions a week, slightly above the Welsh average of 30%.
- 6.26 35% of adults in Wrexham report eating the recommended five-a-day fruit or vegetable portions (above the Wales average of 32%) – this has risen slightly in the last five years.
- 6.27 Referrals to health services for substance abuse (all types) in the area totalled nearly 1,600 in 2014/15. Per 100,000 population this gave a referral rate of 1,165 for Wrexham, compared to a Welsh average of 822. Wrexham is ranked 2nd highest in Wales, although it is recognised that this does not reflect the many people who do not present themselves to the health service.
- 6.28 The biggest concerns about substance misuse are connected to alcohol. Wrexham has a high rate for alcohol specific hospital admissions, with an age standardised rate of 366 admissions per 100,000 population in 2014/15. This ranks them as the eleventh highest in Wales, and is above the Welsh average of 333 admissions. 42% of adults resident in Wrexham reported drinking above the recommended guidelines at least once each week, and 24% reported binge drinking at least once in the last week. There is a lack of data on the prevalence of drinking among children and young people. In addition, alcohol and drug use can be contributory factors in susceptibility to injury or death from fire in the home. Many substances affect people's ability to judge and react to danger – cooking after drinking alcohol can be a specific risk, for example. Alcohol interferes with normal response, impairs judgement, decreases perception and, in sufficient quantity, can lead to unconsciousness. Medication or illegal drugs can have similar effects, and a combination of drugs and alcohol can make people particularly vulnerable.

What you have told us:

- 6.29 In the 'What's Important to You?' consultation 'Encouraging people to live healthy lifestyles' was ranked as a lower priority, as the importance of this outcome was fairly low, and the level of satisfaction in relation to this outcome was closer to meeting the level of importance. Key messages from the comments received in relation to this outcome were split, with some feeling that 'encouraging and supporting people to be healthy is an important preventative service', and others suggesting that 'people should be doing more for themselves'.
- 6.30 'Having more health and mental health services' and 'more support for young people dealing with self-harm' were cited as important issues for young people, as well as 'having more information on how young people can control their own health'.
- 6.31 In 'The Wrexham We Want' consultation, a few comments were made stating there should be more prevention and more activities/opportunities to be healthy.

### **Key theme Healthier 3 – Tackling obesity (including childhood obesity)**

#### Why this is important:

- 6.32 Research has suggested that being overweight or obese in childhood is linked to immediate and long-term physical and mental health risks. Mental health risks can arise from body dissatisfaction, social discrimination, low self-esteem and low quality of life. Obese children rate their personal well-being low, because of problems such as bullying at school, fatigue and difficulties in doing physical activities. The UK Government's Foresight Programme suggested that 25% of all children under 16 could be obese by 2050.
- 6.33 Obesity reduces life expectancy by an average of three to 10 years, depending on how severe it is. Obesity tends to be a socially unequal health issue, affecting lower socio-economic groups disproportionately – if it is not challenged it will increase health inequalities.
- 6.34 As well as causing physical changes to the body which affect general fitness and mobility, being obese or overweight increases the likelihood of suffering from life threatening illnesses such as type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease, some cancers (for example breast and bowel cancer), asthma, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and strokes. Obesity can also affect quality of life and lead to psychological problems, such as depression and low self-esteem. This all leads to increased pressure on health and care services.

#### What we know:

- 6.35 27.4% of 4-5 year old children in Wrexham were found to be obese or over weight – a total of about 443 children. This was higher than the all-Wales percentage of 26.2% (England = 21.9%). Of these, 186 (11.5% of all children) were obese and 257 (15.9%) were overweight but not obese. (Wales = 11.6% obese, 14.5% overweight)

but not obese). Boys aged 4-5 in Wrexham are more likely to be obese or overweight than girls of the same age. Levels of obesity have fallen slightly, but rose slightly for those who are overweight but not obese – 13.7% of 4-5 year olds were overweight in 2011-12, and 12.9% were obese (26.7% combined).

- 6.36 59.0% of adults are obese or overweight in Wrexham. This compares to 57.8% as a Welsh average (England = 60.5%). Despite active campaigning on healthy lifestyles from the public sector and its partners in Wales, the proportion of adults who are overweight or obese has still increased over the past decade – from 58.0%.

#### What you have told us:

- 6.37 We are currently sourcing feedback from consultations that may have taken place on this theme. Any information we find will be included in the final assessment.

### **Key theme Healthier 4 – Supporting those with poor mental health**

#### Why this is important:

- 6.38 The World Health Organisation (2014) has defined mental health as: 'a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community'
- 6.39 Feelings of well-being and life satisfaction are linked with good health. Mental health problems range from the worries we all experience as part of everyday life to serious long-term conditions. They can start early in life, often as a result of deprivation including poverty, insecure attachments, trauma, loss or abuse. Risk factors for poor mental health in adulthood include: unemployment; lower income; debt; violence; stressful life events; and inadequate housing. A person's mental health can impact on physical well-being.
- 6.40 The mental health and well-being of individuals can be improved by increasing emotional resilience through interventions designed to promote self-esteem and life coping skills across all stages of life, from infancy to old age.
- 6.41 A lack of co-ordination between health, social care and other welfare providers (e.g. social housing) can cause compound problems for sufferers, their family, friends and the community they live in, and for the service providers.
- 6.42 Suicide and self-harming are usually a response to a complex series of factors that are both personal and related to wider social and community influences. The likelihood of suffering from this sort of mental illness is measured as a lifetime likelihood.

#### What we know:



- 6.43 The Welsh Health Survey reports on mental health, and for 2013/14 the mental health component scores for Wrexham was 49.6 – very slightly better than the Welsh average of 49.5. A higher score indicates better mental health.
- 6.44 About 11.6% of Wrexham's population report being treated for a mental illness. The Welsh average is about 12.1%.
- 6.45 A fifth of the NHS expenditure for Wales is on mental health services. A large proportion of attendances at Emergency Departments and general admissions to hospital are related to mental health problems.
- 6.46 Wrexham has suicide rates of 11.2 per 100,000 population, compared to a Wales average of 9.2.
- 6.47 The number of self-harming assessments for children and young people in North Wales has more than doubled between 2012/13 and 2015/16. Over half of people who die by suicide have a history of self-harm.
- 6.48 The number of people with mental health problems is likely to increase across North Wales in the next 20 years. Prevalence's from the Welsh Health Survey can be used to predict how the total number of people with common mental health problems will change. For Wrexham the number is forecast to increase from 18,000 to 22,000 between 2015 and 2035.
- 6.49 Because poor mental health impacts across such a wide range of public service delivery, cross-agency approaches are needed to help those with poor mental health. In particular a joined-up approach would help prevent people from falling through the support gaps which can exist between the trigger points for different levels or types of support.

#### What you have told us:

- 6.50 We are currently sourcing feedback from consultations that may have taken place on this theme. Any information we find will be included in the final assessment.

### **Key theme Healthier 5 – People living in isolation and their access to services**

#### Why this is important:

- 6.51 Social isolation and loneliness have been identified as risk factors for poor health (especially poor mental health) and lower well-being, including morbidity and mortality, depression and cognitive decline. Loneliness increases the risk of high blood pressure, and individuals are also at risk of physical deterioration.

- 6.52 Older people who are socially isolated are also more vulnerable to the complicating effects of unforeseen events such as falls. In addition, people are more likely to be injured or killed by fire if they are home alone as this increases the risk of a fire starting or spreading unnoticed, and also reduces the person's chances of escaping unharmed.
- 6.53 This is particularly the case for those people over 80. Poor mobility, poor sense of smell and a reduced tolerance of smoke and burns contribute to these casualties. Major sources of ignition include cookers, materials, candles, coal fires, heaters and electric blankets. Fire prevention work undertaken by the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service concentrates on older people – particularly lone pensioners and the older elderly (those aged 80+).
- 6.54 Social isolation is also a problem for both children and adults who are carers. It is also suggested that higher loneliness and isolation barriers are for men, people who live by themselves, recently bereaved individuals, and the most elderly people in our communities. Disability or illness can trigger loneliness, as this changes how people access their social networks.
- 6.55 Isolation within the rural community is a particular issue for those who are older, younger or on lower incomes, and can contribute to other health and well-being problems. Isolation for the elderly is, of course, not limited to rural communities with almost one in seven households in Wrexham occupied by a single pensioner.
- 6.56 Some of the groups which are recognised as being most at risk of social isolation have grown significantly in recent years. Though this is not direct evidence of increasing social isolation, the number of single person households (particularly lone pensioner households), carers, and people with chronic illnesses have all risen in recent years.
- 6.57 Reducing loneliness and isolation is one of the main challenges identified in consultation and engagement work undertaken for the North Wales Population Assessment and is a priority for Welsh Government's Ageing Well in Wales Programme.

#### What we know:

- 6.58 Between 2001 and 2015 the number of single person households in Wrexham increased by 2,350 and between 2001 and 2011 the number of carers increased by 300.
- 6.59 Projections show that some groups that are particularly vulnerable to social isolation are likely to increase in the next two decades. The number of single person households in Wrexham are projected to increase by 5,050 between 2015 and 2039 and within this single household figure most of the increase comes from lone pensioner households (3,500).

6.60 For the year 2015/16, fire incident statistics for North Wales show that 12% of all casualties were in the 80+ age group, though they make up only 6% of the population. This was a rate of 8.4 per 10,000 people compared to a rate of 3.2 for the whole population.

6.61 The number of people suffering with poor mental health is predicted to increase by about 3,000 across the area between 2015 and 2035.

6.62 The number of carers providing 50+ hours of care a week will increase by 1,150 between 2011 and 2035.

What you have told us:

6.63 We are currently sourcing feedback from consultations that may have taken place on this theme. Any information we find will be included in the final assessment.

**Key theme Healthier 6 – Increase in the number of people living with dementia**

Why this is important:

6.64 Dementia and Alzheimer's disease became the leading cause of death in England and Wales in 2015 accounting for 11.6% of all deaths registered – primarily due to better life expectancies and medical advances in the treatment of many other diseases and illnesses.

6.65 Dementia is not a disease in itself, but is a description of a group of symptoms that occur when brain cells stop working properly. Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia, but other diseases, which can occur concurrently, include vascular dementia and dementia with Lewy bodies. These diseases affect the brain and have an impact on how people communicate, think and remember.

6.66 The rising numbers of people with dementia in Wales is a trend which is common across the world. There are some challenges that are specific to Wales, including the need to address the impact on rural communities, as well as the Welsh Language which is especially important for those who may only understand or be able to communicate in their first language as their illness progresses.

6.67 Dementia has a bigger impact on women than on men, mainly because it is a disease of older ages and women tend to live longer than men. Women are also more likely to take on unpaid caring roles for other people with dementia and are more than twice as likely as men to provide intensive, 24-hour care.

6.68 Though it is primarily a disease of older age, it is not inevitable that all older people will be susceptible to dementia and it is not a normal part of getting older. Prevalence

only top 10% after age 80, and current research suggests that these rates are decreasing, perhaps in relation to other improvements in general health and lifestyle behaviours such as reductions in smoking rates. Though dementia related illnesses are most common in older people, it can affect younger people too – in the UK over 40,000 people under 65 have dementia.

#### What we know:

- 6.69 GP register data for 2016 shows 850 patients with dementia registered with GP surgeries in Wrexham. This is 0.6% of all patients registered with GPs in Wrexham. Dementia figures have risen since 2011 (first year of available data), when there were 650 patients with dementia in Wrexham.
- 6.70 Forecasts based on Welsh Government's 2011-based population projections and UK dementia prevalence rates predict that between 2015 and 2030 the number of people with dementia in Wrexham will rise by about 1100.
- 6.71 Most of the increase will be due to the growing number of older people in the population. Dementia is more common in older people – one in 14 people over 65, one in 6 people aged over 80 and one in three people aged over 95 have some form of dementia.
- 6.72 In the older age groups the prevalence of dementia is slightly higher in women than in men – perhaps due to longer life expectancies. However, the number of older men with dementia is expected to increase faster than for women due to predicted improvements in male life expectancies.
- 6.73 Cases of early onset dementia (in people under the age of 65) will remain relatively stable. The causes of early onset dementias include Alzheimer's Disease, dementias relating to alcohol misuse and conditions such as Parkinson's Disease.

#### What you have told us:

- 6.74 Welsh Government's public consultation on its dementia action plan identified priority areas for improvement including improved service provision through better joint working across health, social care, the third sector and other agencies; improved early diagnosis and timely interventions; improved access to better information and support for people with the illness and their carers, including a greater awareness of the need for advocacy; and improved training for those delivering care, including research.
- 6.75 As part of 'The Wrexham We Want' consultation a focus group was held with representatives from 'Dementia Friendly Wrexham'. The main priority they identified was that people should be more aware of dementia as this would enable people to help and treat people with this illness in the right way. Also important was public transport and that villages / rural areas should not be isolated. It was also identified that more support / respite should be available for carers, and health professionals

needed to be more aware of memory loss issues when working with people with dementia.

- 6.76 They felt organisations should improve signposting and signage (particularly in the town-centre), ensure transport services are dementia aware, and facilitate dementia training for staff who work in public organisations, shops and restaurants.

## **Key theme Healthier 7 – Supporting carers**

### Why this is important:

- 6.77 Unpaid carers are the single largest provider of care to people with support needs in our communities, and they save the NHS and social services millions of pounds a year. One estimate puts the value of unpaid care in the UK at £132 billion per year – almost twice what it was in 2001, and close to the annual UK health spend of £134.1 billion.
- 6.78 Caring for someone else can be demanding, and can lead to physical health problems for carers themselves (from physical exertion such as lifting or carrying, and from general fatigue). Carers can also be faced with pressures on their mental health such as dealing with stress and worry about the person being cared for and the impact of their illness; social isolation and lack time to focus on themselves; money worries due to reduced household income and/or increasing care costs; and feelings of frustration and anger with the person they are caring for and with the situation they find themselves in.
- 6.79 In recent decades the number and proportion of people born with disabilities and surviving into adulthood and later life has increased significantly. Improvements in health care and general health also mean more people are surviving serious illnesses like cancer or stroke. The increase in the number of people living with long-term conditions creates new and more complex demands on our health and social care services which are already under pressure from already stretched NHS and social care budgets. Unpaid care provided by family, friends and neighbours is increasingly helping to meet growing demand and plugging gaps in services.
- 6.80 However, the UK's rapidly ageing population structure and longer life expectancies mean that the numbers of those in need of care and support is beginning to exceed the numbers of working age family members able to provide it.

### What we know:

- 6.81 According to the 2011 Census, nearly 15,150 people in Wrexham provide unpaid care. Almost 30% of these carers (nearly 4,050 people) provide 50 or more hours of care a week. Such high levels of unpaid care provision will have a huge impact on the economic and social well-being of the carers as well as those being cared for. About two thirds of all unpaid carers are aged 50 or over – over 20% are aged 65+.

6.82 The number of people providing 50 or more hours of care increased by over 650, whilst the number providing shorter amounts of care decreased. The increase has been mainly in the number of people aged 65+ who provide unpaid care, which increased by nearly 900. This was an increase from 12.0% to 14.0% of all people aged 65+ in Wrexham between 2001 and 2011.

6.83 It is difficult to make a reasonable prediction about future provision of unpaid care, however it is expected to continue to rise – these predictions have significant implications for the public sector in Wrexham. Supporting carers by providing respite care and other services is a key priority for helping people maintain their independence in their own home and reducing the longer term burden on the NHS and council services.

#### What you have told us:

6.84 In the 'What's Important to You?' consultation 'Enabling older people to live independently and supporting carers' was ranked as a fairly high priority, as it was rated as fairly important by respondents, and satisfaction in relation to this outcome fell short of meeting the level of importance. Key messages from the comments received in relation to this outcome suggest some people feel 'more needs to be done to prioritise the vulnerable', 'older people and their carers need more support to remain healthy and independent' and that 'information about the support available and access to support could be improved'. The strategic equality plan consultation also highlighted the need to 'increase support for young carers'.

### **Key theme Healthier 8 – Healthy life expectancy for all**

#### Why this is important:

6.85 People are living longer due to improvements in health care and a range of other life style improvements such as better nutrition, fewer people working in heavy or dirty industries, falling smoking rates, cleaner air and water and better housing conditions. However, many chronic health conditions are particularly associated with older age, so ensuring a healthier old age is an important concern.

6.86 Being in good health is, obviously, closely related to how well people retain their independence throughout their life, and particularly in old age. It will impact on how much formal and informal support and care they need, and will affect their ability to fully participate in their community and contribute to the local economy.

6.87 As well as being determined by age, ill health is also influenced by experience of deprivation. Achieving a reduction in health inequalities and maintaining health and well-being throughout life are two of the six strategic themes within the Welsh Government's public health framework 'Our Healthy Future'.

#### What we know:

6.88 Analysis of healthy life expectancy for 2010-14 (from Public Health Wales) show that overall, the proportion of life spent in good health for males is comparable to the Wales average for Wrexham. For females, healthy life expectancy is above the Welsh average (+1.1 years overall).

#### **Total life expectancy 2012-14**

Source: period life expectancy tables, ONS

	<b>Wrexham</b>	<b>Wales</b>	<b>England and Wales</b>
<b>Male - at birth</b>	78.5	78.5	79.4
<b>Male - at age 65</b>	18.3	18.2	18.7
<b>Female - at birth</b>	81.8	82.3	83.1
<b>Female - at age 65</b>	20.2	20.6	21.1

**Note:** life expectancy at birth is for babies born in that period, and life expectancy at age 65 is the additional years of life that someone aged 65 would expect to have.

6.89 Over time, life expectancy is improving for all groups in Wrexham. Male life expectancy has increased from 73.0 years in 1991-93 to 78.5 years in 2012-14 with female life expectancy rising from 78.8 to 81.8 in the same period.

6.90 The number of people with chronic conditions (e.g. high blood pressure, asthma, diabetes, heart failure and lung diseases) who are registered with GPs in Wrexham increased in the five years between 2011 and 2016.

6.91 Life expectancy is predicted to continue to improve, and the population of those aged 65 in Wrexham is expected to grow from 25,700 in 2015 to 38,800 by 2039. Because most chronic health conditions are associated with older ages, we can expect the prevalence of chronic illnesses to increase in the same period. Improved life expectancies also mean that people with complex needs are living longer than ever before, and this too could lead to increased demands on health and social care services, and on unpaid carers.

6.92 The long term upward trend in the proportion of people who are overweight or obese is also likely to cause a rise in chronic health problems, and this will impact on healthy life expectancies in the future.

6.93 Because the rate of improvement in healthy life expectancy has not increased as quickly as overall life expectancy, there is a danger that changes in state pension age will lead to a situation where instead of people retiring there will be more people on incapacity benefit as they are not well enough to remain in the workforce.

6.94 The number of people aged 65 and over who receive residential based services is expected to almost double by 2035. This is a result of both the ageing population and the increasing number of people with complex care needs such as dementia. The number receiving standard residential care services is expected to decrease or stay the same, but the number requiring specialist nursing care is expected to show significant increase.

6.95 Research predicts that by 2030, there will be an under supply of nursing home, sheltered housing and housing with care in Wrexham. This suggests there is potential for future employment growth in this sector.

#### What you have told us:

6.96 We are currently sourcing feedback from consultations that may have taken place on this theme. Any information we find will be included in the final assessment.

### **Key theme Healthier 9 – Increasing pressures on the Health Service**

#### Why this is important:

6.97 Many of the issues discussed elsewhere in this assessment, such as the ageing population, increasing number of carers, social isolation and living in deprivation, are increasing the pressure on public services. There is high public interest around waiting times and the potential for the public sector to work together in a different way to reduce this demand.

#### What we know:

6.98 While the number of people attending at Wrexham Maelor Hospital emergency department has remained fairly constant, the number and proportion who have been seen within four hours has seen significant decline.

6.99 Research and analysis is still ongoing to properly understand this trend, but there are concerns around whether the needs of these patients could have been met in a different way, reducing the pressure on the Emergency Departments (ED).

6.100 Across the three main hospital sites in North Wales, 248 people were found to have attended more than 10 times in a 12 month period, with some patients attending a very large number of times. This starts to raise a question around whether all of these admissions needed services from ED.

6.101 This is supported by data produced by Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB), looking at the proportion of attendances at Hospital Emergency Departments where it was deemed necessary that further admittance was necessary for additional treatment or investigations. Across North Wales, the number admitted



was found to be under 30% between April and September 2016. While it is accepted that a proportion of attendances will be discharged, such a low proportion appears to support the premise that many of these needs could perhaps have been met in a different way.

#### What you have told us:

6.102 In the 'Living healthier, staying well' consultation, 'Access to services' emerged as a strong theme when respondents were asked about what is important to them in terms of healthcare. The following specific aspects of access to services were mentioned most frequently:

- Speed of access: respondents want prompt access to healthcare generally, although many specifically mentioned a need for shorter waiting lists for appointments and shorter waiting Accident and Emergency waiting times;
- Ease of access: respondents identified a need for accessible services, for example, through local provision and a better range of appointment slots;
- Access to General Practitioners and Specialists: similar issues to those mentioned above were frequently identified in relation to these services specifically i.e. shorter waiting times, a wider range of appointment slots (including appointments outside regular 9am-5pm working hours) and local provision of services where possible.

6.103 Other respondents identified standards of care in general, and others discussed staffing, specifically the importance of compassionate, caring and polite staff and staff who are well trained and suitably qualified. There were also many comments about communication and approach e.g. the need to communicate effectively with, and listen to, patients; the provision of adequate information and advice; joined up care and good inter-departmental communication; continuity of contact; and adequate provision for Welsh language speakers.

6.104 When asked what the health service does well, many respondents mentioned good standards of care: in GP surgeries, hospitals, Accident and Emergency, and also in general. A number of respondents also identified the quality and attitude of BCUHB's staff. Other respondents made comments relating to speed of access to healthcare, and good access to GP services.

6.105 In 'The Wrexham We Want' consultation, several comments were made stating availability and accessibility of health care needs improving.

### **Key theme Healthier 10 – Emerging threats to health and well-being**

#### Why this is important:

6.106 Emerging threats to health and well-being which are of specific concern are: developing resistance to antibiotics and other drugs and medicines; the potential for

the rapid spread of infectious diseases in an increasingly interdependent and interconnected world (pandemics); and the potential impact of climate change and extreme weather events on public health.

6.107 Although these threats are likely to originate elsewhere, the response to an epidemic or pandemic relies on rapid assessment and response to limit local spread. Multi agency emergency response systems are in place and regularly tested and updated by all organisations likely to be involved. However, in a serious epidemic or pandemic situation, all organisations should have plans in place for business continuity when many of their staff and service users are likely to be affected. A failure to develop and test plans could lead to a greater mortality and distress, and have a wide ranging impact on many other vital services on which people depend.

#### What we know:

6.108 Since the 1970s, newly emerging diseases have been identified at the unprecedented rate of one or more per year. There are now nearly 40 diseases that were unknown a generation ago. Some of these diseases are prone to becoming epidemic or pandemic, and would pose a risk to future generations. In the response to infectious diseases, both old ones and new emerging ones, one crucial aspect is having effective anti-microbial treatments, such as antibiotics and anti-viral medicines – however resistance to these is one of the greatest health threats to humans and animals.

#### What you have told us:

6.109 We are currently sourcing feedback from consultations that may have taken place on this theme. Any information we find will be included in the final assessment.

## **7 Well-being goal 4 – More Equal**

### **Introduction to this goal**

- 7.1 More equal is about having a society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstance (including their socio-economic background and circumstance).
- 7.2 Please note this is a particularly cross-cutting goal and therefore information in relation to this goal is also covered under many of the other goals in this Assessment.

## Key theme More Equal 1 – Growing up with deprivation

### Why this is important:

- 7.3 Public bodies in Wales have a statutory duty to consider how they can positively contribute to a fairer society in their day-to-day activities through paying due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations.
- 7.4 Exposure to inequality can happen very early in life and it can become a barrier which prevents children from reaching their potential from the outset, and potentially remain a persistent presence which hangs over them as they progress through life.
- 7.5 All figures are pointing to growing diversity in our population. We need to ensure that we recognise the diverse characteristics of our population when delivering our services, to ensure equality of access and opportunity for all. We also need to recognise this diversity when involving people in decision making for our communities and our public services, and ensure representation from all our people.
- 7.6 Flying Start, a Welsh Government programme targeted at reducing child poverty, has had great success in ensuring children between the ages of 0 to 4 years living in deprived areas are school ready, by supporting parents through an intensive health visitor service, child care and parenting programmes.
- 7.7 Parenting skills are normally learnt skills from our own experiences growing up as children. If these experiences lack some of the core elements of bringing up children in a safe and nurturing environment it can have a detrimental effect on the child as they grow and so the cycle of inappropriate parenting continues. Flying Start provides parenting courses to families who live within the post code areas deemed to be the most deprived in Wales.
- 7.8 Foundation phase assessment by teachers of all children aged 3-7 measures personal and social development for all children, as well as language and numeracy skills, and physical and creative development. The Foundation Stage Indicator sets a level 5 achievement threshold for all areas of development.
- 7.9 All learners in their final year of Key Stage 2 – the stage at which pupils leave primary school and move on to secondary education – are assessed by their teachers. The general expectation is that the majority of 11 year olds will attain level 4 in each subject. Key stage 2 core subject indicator measures the percentage of pupils achieving at least level 4 in English or Welsh (first language), mathematics and science in combination.
- 7.10 Exam results for all pupils who are leaving compulsory education at the end of year 11 (usually aged 15 or 16) are measured against an attainment standard called the key stage 4 level 2 threshold in core subjects indicator. This is equivalent to 5

GCSEs at grade A\*-C including one in English or Welsh first language, one in mathematics and one in science.

#### What we know:

- 7.11 Information on the diversity of the makeup of Wrexham's population is included in the Demographics section of this assessment.
- 7.12 People living in the areas in the most deprived fifth of Wrexham not only have a shorter lifespan, but also spend less of it in good health compared to those living in the least deprived fifth. There is a difference of over 14 years of healthy life expectancy for females in Wrexham's most deprived areas when compared to the least deprived.
- 7.13 Despite overall increases in life expectancy, the gap between the proportion of life expected to be spent in good health in the most and least deprived areas has shown no clear sign of reducing in the last 10 years.
- 7.14 In 2015/16 over 1,400 children benefitted from Flying Start services in Wrexham.
- 7.15 In 2015 the difference between children receiving free school meals (FSM) and those not receiving FSM was about twenty percentage points (69% compared to 86%). The attainment gap for Wales was fifteen percentage points. Wrexham has performance levels around the Welsh average for children not receiving free school meals, but attainment is lower than the national average for FSM children, and has actually fallen since 2012.
- 7.16 Overall, attainment levels at Key Stage 2 (leaving primary school) were around the Wales averages for 2015, and pupils in receipt of free school meals are about three percentage points better than the national average. The gap in attainment between those receiving free school meals and those who don't is narrower at age 10-11 than at the foundation stage (aged 3-7). The gap between those who received free school meals and those who don't has narrowed since 2012 by about 8 percentage points in Wrexham (average Wales reduction was 4.3 percentage points).
- 7.17 The attainment gap at Key stage 4 between those receiving free school meals and those who don't is nearly 28% (27% compared to 55%). The all-Wales attainment gap is 32%. This is a much bigger gap than seen at the foundation phase or key stage 2, suggesting that inequalities widen as children move through the education system. The gap between those who received free school meals and those who don't has narrowed since 2010/11 by about 3.5 percentage points. The general trend appears to be towards only marginal improvement in closing the gap, however.

#### What you have told us:

- 7.18 In the 'What's Important to You?' consultation 'Supporting families in need and protecting children and young people who may be at risk of harm' was rated as fairly

important by respondents, but the level of satisfaction in relation to this outcome was closer to meeting the level of importance, meaning that it only ranked as a mid-level priority.

- 7.19 In 'The Wrexham We Want' consultation, several comments were made stating everyone should have equal opportunities to thrive.

## **Key theme More Equal 2 – Ability to support those in housing need**

### Why this is important:

- 7.20 Social housing plays a key role in providing affordable housing for vulnerable and low income households. Most social housing properties are let on lifetime tenancies and at rents set below market rent levels (the rent that private landlords charge). The allocation of housing is through a waiting list system, and is made available to those who are most in need – usually those who are homeless, severely overcrowded or whose current home is unsuitable for health reasons.
- 7.21 Increasingly, as pressures on the general availability of affordable homes within the housing market have increased any social housing that becomes available tends to be allocated to the most vulnerable in our society – people with health problems, complex social needs and on low incomes. Under current legislation, being unable to afford to buy a house or rent within the private market is not, on its own, sufficient indicator of housing need and does not mean social housing will be available.
- 7.22 Welfare Reforms have meant that for many unemployed or low income families, whether in the social and private housing sectors, access to many state benefits has been reduced or removed completely. Where they are still awarded, benefit levels are frozen, whilst housing costs rise.
- 7.23 The number of people presenting as homeless has become more complex as other services which previously helped support vulnerable residents have reduced in size and scope. There has been an increase in the proportion of households that require assistance from the local authority that contain people with mental health or other health problems; people with alcohol or drug dependency problems; those with chaotic lifestyles.
- 7.24 In the new Housing (Wales) Act 2014, which came into force 1st April 2015, new responsibilities regarding homelessness prevention were given to local authorities and their partners. It places a duty on local authorities to work with people who are at risk of losing their home within 56 days to help find a solution to their problems and hopes to prevent three out of four people at risk of homelessness from losing their home. This duty is towards all seeking help, not just those with a local connection.

- 7.25 Demand for help with homelessness under the terms of the new Act has increased slightly whilst the overall amount of casework involved in preventative work has increased more significantly.
- 7.26 Because the provision of social housing is now focussed on the most vulnerable individuals and families, it can often concentrate these groups in the same area. This can create neighbourhoods which are isolated from the community at large, increasing levels of social exclusion and the risk of antisocial behaviour. Research by Shelter draws a link between deprived neighbourhoods and reduced life chances, meaning that children who grow up in such areas can lack the resources, reasons, skills and confidence to move on.

What we know:

- 7.27 At 31st March 2015, there were 13,538 dwellings within the social housing sector in the area. This was 194 for every 1,000 households, which was significantly above the all-Wales level of 175 for every 1,000 households. The main social housing provider in the area is Wrexham County Borough Council, which provides 84% of all social housing. Other major providers are Clwyd Alyn Housing Association (7%) and Wales and West Housing (7%).
- 7.28 Nearly half of the area's social housing stock has at least three-bedrooms (45%). This is comparable to the all-Wales figure (48%). Overall only 19% of stock is in one-bedroomed accommodation, which limits the opportunities for tenants to downsize if they are affected by caps on housing benefits due to under occupation in their existing accommodation (the so-called 'bedroom tax').
- 7.29 In February 2016, the spare room subsidy/bedroom tax reduced housing benefit payments by an average of £14.41 a week for 1,427 recipients in Wrexham. This was 16.7% of all housing benefit recipients within the social rented sector. The reduction isn't applicable to tenants in the private rented sector.
- 7.30 The under supply of one bedroomed accommodation in the housing stock makes it difficult to find adequate social housing for some of the most vulnerable people in housing need, including those who have mental health issues, recovering addicts, veterans and ex-offenders. Single men in particular are disadvantaged by the lack of one bedroom properties.
- 7.31 Social housing stock has decreased by 16% – around 2,500 dwellings – in the twenty five years since 1991. Housing stock in the private sector (rented and owner occupied) increased by 48% or about 15,350 dwellings in the same period. This has led to a proportional decrease in the amount of social housing available within the overall housing stock, and has meant that social provision has had to focus on those in the very greatest need, and affordability alone is no longer a criteria for acceptance to local housing waiting lists.

- 7.32 Since 1996 over 3,000 social housing properties have been sold in Wrexham under right-to-buy schemes. Though some of this stock has been replaced this has fallen short of a direct one-for-one replacement. Over all this has depleted the stock available to meet social housing need.
- 7.33 As part of their planning duties, Local Authorities also have a specific requirement to provide affordable housing, and the total provision of new dwellings is so low there is a serious risk that this duty is not being met.
- 7.34 At April 2016 the average house price for a property in Wrexham was £144,100. The average house price is currently 5.7 times the average household income of £25,200 and 10.3 times the lower quartile household income of £14,000. This suggests that entering the housing market as a home owner is well out of the reach of the average household.
- 7.35 House prices have risen considerably since 2000, even taking into account the slowdown in the housing market that was seen after the 2007/08 recession. In April 2016 house prices were about a third higher than they were in 2006 (wages increased by about a sixth or 15% in the same period). April 2016 house prices were over two and a half times higher than they were in 2000 (about 258% higher) though wages only increased by about 42%.

What you have told us:

- 7.36 In the 'What's Important to You?' consultation, 'Supporting people at risk of homelessness' was ranked as a mid-table priority. Although this outcome was of fairly low importance, satisfaction in relation to this outcome was also fairly low, and fell short of meeting the level of importance. Key messages from the comments received in relation to this outcome suggest some people feel 'more support is needed for people who are genuinely homeless'.
- 7.37 'Having more homes that are affordable' was ranked as a lower priority overall, as the importance of this outcome was low, and the level of satisfaction was closer to meeting the level of importance. However, it is important to note that it was a much higher priority for respondents aged between 16 and 34, and respondents who are Council housing tenants. Key messages from the comments suggest some respondents feel 'there is a need for more affordable housing' and that 'affordable housing should be developed in more desirable areas'.
- 7.38 'Providing warm, safe, modern Council houses' was ranked as a lower priority overall by respondents, as the importance of this outcome was low, and the level of satisfaction was far closer to meeting the level of importance. However it is important to note that it was a much higher priority for respondents who are Council housing tenants and key messages from the comments received in relation to this outcome suggest that some people are concerned about the 'condition and maintenance of Council houses'.

7.39 In 'The Wrexham We Want' consultation, numerous comments were made stating that we should support the homeless and reduce homelessness; several comments that there should be more housing and that it is affordable, and a few comments that there should be less Houses of Multiple Occupation.

### **Key theme More Equal 3 – Tackling fuel poverty**

#### Why this is important:

- 7.40 Households are considered to be in fuel poverty if they have to spend more than 10% of their household income on fuel to keep their home in a 'satisfactory' condition.
- 7.41 There is a social gradient in fuel poverty: the lower your income the more likely you are to be at risk of fuel poverty and this has a significant impact on the health, social and economic well-being of people living in cold homes.
- 7.42 Those most vulnerable to fuel poverty and cold homes include older people, lone parents with dependent children, families who are unemployed or on low incomes, children and young people, disabled people, people with existing illnesses and long-term conditions, and single unemployed people.
- 7.43 Respiratory diseases are worse for people living in cold homes, and other chronic health conditions are aggravated, alongside a greater risk of strokes and heart attacks. Cold homes also has a negative impact on the emotional and mental well-being of all members of the household (including worrying about bills and health) and can have an effect on children's performance at school.
- 7.44 Health and well-being inequalities caused by living in fuel poverty potentially lead to a greater reliance on public services for health and other well-being support. By reducing the risk of people living in fuel poverty in Wales we can help reduce the negative impact on people's lives and the pressure on public services.
- 7.45 Tackling fuel poverty is a key sustainable development priority for Welsh Government because it focuses on a key social issue by targeting those who are most in need; stimulates economic activity through generating opportunities for local businesses as well as employment and training opportunities; and makes homes more energy efficient and reduces greenhouse gas emissions and contributes to reducing Wales' ecological footprint.

#### What we know:

- 7.46 The average electricity bill across all payment types decreased by £8 (1.4 per cent) between 2015 and 2014, giving an average total bill of £584. The average 2015 gas bill fell by £38 (5.1 per cent), to £714.



7.47 The Welsh Government estimated in 2012 that 29% of all households across Wales were considered to be in fuel poverty.

7.48 Though prices in 2015 started to fall after a long period of high fuel-price inflation, for most fuel types they have not fallen as much as might be expected from the continuing decline in the international price of oil. By the end of 2015, average electricity prices have increased by 65% and average gas prices by over 98% compared to 2005. Overall CPI inflation over the same period was only 28%.

7.49 Energy efficiency investment in Wrexham's Council own homes has taken place through the Welsh Housing Quality Scheme as well as the installation of solar panels on more than 3,000 Council homes. In addition, there has been considerable investment through schemes such as Arbed Warm Homes to tackle the levels of fuel poverty across the County Borough.

What you have told us:

7.50 We are currently sourcing feedback from consultations that may have taken place on this theme. Any information we find will be included in the final assessment.

## 8 Well-being goal 5 – Cohesive Communities

### Introduction to this goal

- 8.1 Cohesive communities are about having attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.

### Key theme Cohesive Communities 1 – Transport and road safety

#### Why this is important:

- 8.2 Access to efficient, affordable transport options is a key issue underpinning well-being and improves social inclusion and connectivity. Good transport links facilitate existing relationships and can help develop new ones – both in an economic context for businesses, service providers and their workforce, but also for people and communities, as transport connectivity effects social interaction, access to retail and essential services, and the opportunities to participate in cultural and leisure activities.
- 8.3 In particular people at risk of being socially excluded often experience real difficulties in getting to places. Regular and reliable public transport services are not always available in every community, are sometimes unaffordable for people on low incomes or simply do not take people where they need to go. Walking and cycling may not be suitable options for accessing services which are distant or in environments where traffic levels and accident rates are high.
- 8.4 Within the economy, transport affects the ability of businesses to undertake trade with customers and suppliers and to recruit a workforce. The availability of good transportation routes in an area can influence the location of business and encourage new investment. Shifts within the wider UK economy from industries based on transporting primary/secondary sectors to the service sector means that many of our existing transport routes may not fit new ways of working.

#### What we know:

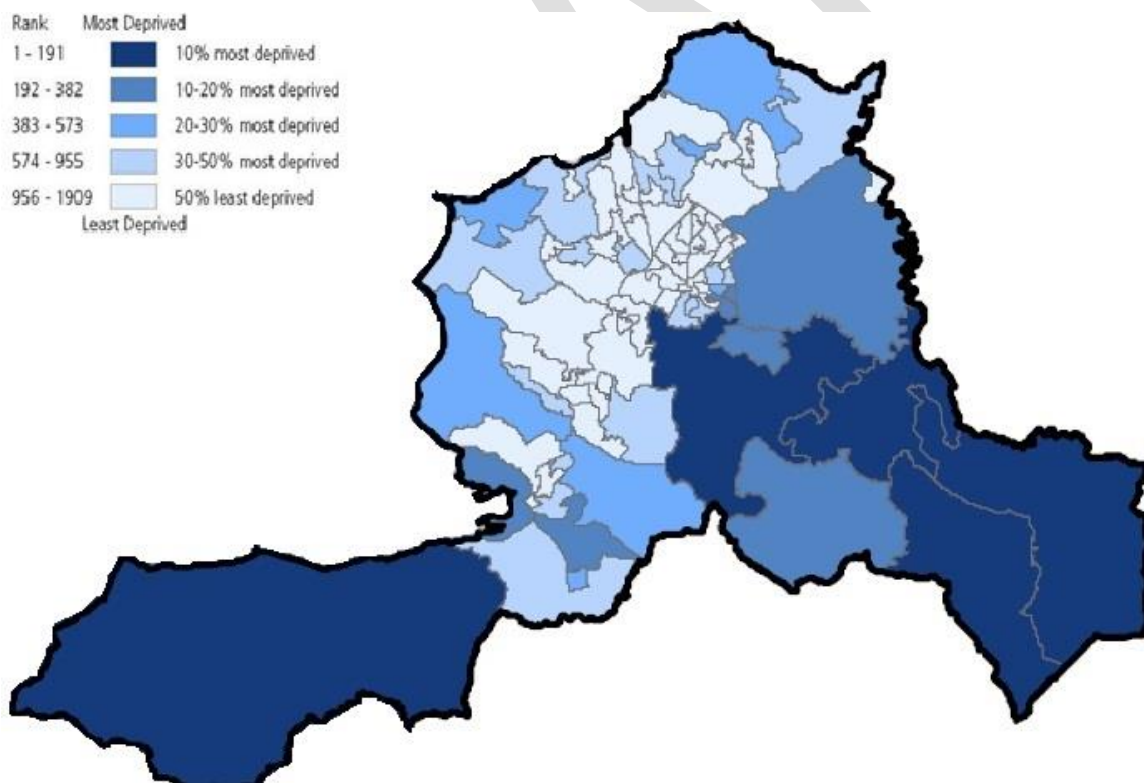
- 8.5 The A483 is Wrexham's principal road route. It skirts the western edge of Wrexham town, dividing it from the urban villages to the west. The road has connections with major roads (A55(M53), A5(M54)). The A5156 leads to the A534 and on to the Wrexham Industrial Estate. The A541 road is the main route into Wrexham from Mold and the town's western urban area.
- 8.6 Further research is required to understand some of the issues around transport including: road capacity; lack of integrated public transport particularly for peripheral

communities; safe walking and cycling routes; safe school transport routes; environmental impacts; and the impact of tourism on local transport.

- 8.7 Despite increasing traffic volumes overall figures suggest road traffic accidents and casualties are generally both reducing over time. The rise in accidents caused by driver distraction due to mobile phone usage are a concern however.
- 8.8 Geographical access to key services forms part of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2014 (WIMD 2014), which is the official measure of deprivation in Wales. This domain of the WIMD considers the average travelling time to access a range of services considered necessary for day-to-day living. These include: pharmacy & GP surgery, post office, primary school, food shop, public library and leisure centre.
- 8.9 Five lower super output areas (LSOAs) in Wrexham feature in the 10% most deprived in Wales for access to services, as shown in the map below (those coloured in dark blue – LSOA Overton1, LSOA Bronington2, LSOA Ceiriog Valley 3, LSOA Bronington1 and LSOA Marchweil1). These areas cover a population of about 8,000 people.

**Areas of Wrexham in the 10% most deprived in Wales for access to key services (coloured in dark blue)**

Source: Welsh Government 2014



- 8.10 There are currently concerns about the connectivity of the industrial estate and the rest of the County Borough. There are issues around capacity for the main access roads, and public transport from the town-centre is a problem. There is a need for

well targeted transport investment to support communities to prosper and flourish and take advantage of the employment opportunities offered by Wrexham Industrial Estate.

What you have told us:

- 8.11 In the 'What's Important to You?' consultation, 'Maintaining our roads' was ranked as a high priority, as it was rated as highly important by respondents, and the level of satisfaction in relation to this outcome was very low. The key messages from the comments received in relation to this outcome suggest some people feel 'road conditions are poor', 'pot holes are causing problems' and that 'long-term resurfacing would be better than patching up'.
- 8.12 In addition, 'Having accessible public transport' was ranked as a mid-table priority, as both the importance and satisfaction ratings in relation to this outcome were mid-level. However key messages from the comments received in relation to this outcome suggest some people feel 'services need improving, particularly in the evenings and at weekends, and in rural areas' and that 'the condition of the bus station and bus shelters is deteriorating'.
- 8.13 Transport is a recurrent issue for young people and was cited again as one of the most important issues to young people. Comments suggest young people find the availability and cost of public transport barriers to them getting out and about.
- 8.14 In 'The Wrexham We Want' consultation, a large number of respondents cited improving public transport (accessibility, availability and connections in and outside Wrexham) as their aspiration for the future. A number of improvements were suggested in relation to this theme: improving accessibility – more frequent and reliable services; increasing usage would be better for the environment; better services into the town from all areas, particularly rural areas and those areas affected by the collapse of a local bus company; better connections both within and outside the County Borough.
- 8.15 Respondents were asked to identify what they thought would get in the way of this aspiration being achieved. The key barriers were perceived to be a lack of money to invest in improving services and the Council's role in ensuring that all areas of the borough are connected.
- 8.16 Respondents were also asked what they thought the public sector and other organisations need to do to make this aspiration a reality. Solutions identified included lobbying MPs/AMs for more funding and private operators and the Council working more closely together to ensure that no communities are 'cut off'.
- 8.17 Respondents were asked what they thought they and their community could do to make this aspiration a reality. Very few respondents felt there was anything that they could do and those that did offer solutions felt that the only thing they could do was to

use the public transport when it was improved/available, and perhaps attend public meetings and send petitions to operators and the Council.

## **Key theme Cohesive Communities 2 – Growth of new technology (including internet access and social challenges such as cyber bullying)**

### Why this is important:

- 8.18 The importance of having access to the internet and the World Wide Web has grown exponentially in the last decade or so. Whereas in its earliest incarnation the internet was used mainly for information exchange or online communications, nowadays computers, smart phones, smart TVs and other digital appliances access the web, internet apps, media and use cloud storage as part of daily life. They can provide a means of social interaction, accessing news and information, and these new technologies also have a wider role in leisure & cultural activities.
- 8.19 Commercial and business access to the internet is also essential. In addition to providing online marketing and sales opportunities the internet offers a means of remote working, long distance co-operation, access to online work tools and data storage, access to knowledge sharing and research work, and international connectivity through instant communications technology – all of which can be much more productive and cost-effective than their offline equivalents.
- 8.20 The public and third sectors also increasingly rely on new technology to help deliver their services, either through online transaction or as an information tool. Some examples include the NHS Direct Wales website, online DWP benefits applications, requests for new recycling bins, circulating school newsletters, or reporting minor incidents to the police.
- 8.21 As well as the social and economic opportunities offered by digital technologies, there are some negative aspects around online safety which are increasingly causing concern, and which public authorities, providers of technology and society as a whole are still developing means of dealing with. These include controlling access to inappropriate content for children and young people, on-line grooming (including radicalisation), cyberbullying and online fraud/identity theft.
- 8.22 Cyberbullying is when someone bullies others over the internet or on a mobile phone by sending abusive emails or texts directly to the victim, or by posting or sharing nasty comments or humiliating images where other people can see them. Cyberbullying can have negative effect on mental well-being, and is a particular problem for young people.
- 8.23 One of the biggest differences between cyberbullying and face-to-face bullying is that it can be hard to get away from. Victims could be bullied anywhere, anytime – even when they're at home. Cyberbullying can have a large audience too. Posts on social networks, emails or group chats can be seen by lots of people very quickly.

Cyberbullies can also remain anonymous, by using fake profiles on social networks or blocking their phone numbers. This can make it harder to identify the bullies.

- 8.24 Online fraud and identity theft are also particular areas of concern. Though these are new twists on longstanding criminal activity, as with cyberbullying the growth of new technology means that these forms of abuse are now potentially everywhere, all the time. Threats include viruses, which can infect your computer and damage it, and online scams. Anyone can become a victim of scams but older people may be particularly targeted, often because it is assumed that they have more money than younger people. Age UK is particularly concerned that recent changes to private pensions allowing people aged 55+ to take all their pension savings in cash will encourage the scammers to target this age group even more.

What we know:

- 8.25 Compared to national figures, the Flintshire and Wrexham area has a lower internet take-up rate than the national average. By the start of 2016, about 16% of all residents aged 16+ had either never used the internet or had not used it for over three months. For Wales as a whole this figure was 14%, and the average was only 12% across the UK.
- 8.26 There are geographical 'not-spots' throughout the area (those places where internet access is restricted, slow or non-existent). Traditionally rural areas are expected to suffer from poor broadband service and 3G/4G reception compared to the more urban areas, but it is worth noting that these internet not-spots are not confined to the more remote and inaccessible areas. There are also many low income families who are unable to afford subscriptions to broadband services. Mobile data can be a more affordable and flexible option compared to fixed broadband packages as it can be accessed without installation costs, line rental, or long term contracts. Without access to all providers of 4G mobile data, many customers will not benefit from the same offers or deals that others receive throughout the UK.
- 8.27 Only 80% of premises in Wrexham can receive reliable 3G from all of the four main mobile phone operators (overall UK coverage is 88%). There are no areas within Wrexham that receive reliable 4G coverage for all operators (UK level coverage is 46%).
- 8.28 It is estimated that 7% of households in Wrexham do not receive broadband speeds of at least 10 megabits per second (Mbps). The government believes that it should be everyone's legal right to request a 10 Mbps connection. Superfast broadband is available to 79% of premises in Wrexham (UK coverage is 83%).
- 8.29 Tackling digital exclusion involves looking at the range of barriers to accessing the internet. Those who are socially and economically excluded – poorer households, the disabled, and the elderly, for example – are much less likely to be internet users than the population as a whole. Overall, OfCom's report 'Connected Nation 2015'

estimates the likelihood of digital exclusion in Wrexham as 'extremely high' for digital indicators and 'high' for social indicators.

- 8.30 The way people access information has changed significantly in recent years with internet usage in Wales increasing from 42% of households in 2004 to 78% of households in 2015. It is estimated that 99% of homes in Wales potentially have access to broadband which has increased from just 12% in 2004. This coupled with the recent rapid increase in the use of smart phones and their associated apps has made a wide range of information and digital services far more accessible than at any point in history.
- 8.31 Individual internet usage for those aged 16+ in the Flintshire and Wrexham area increased from 82% in 2011 to 84% by 2016.
- 8.32 If the current rate of growth continues it is predicted that almost all households in Wales will have access to the internet inside the next 10 years.
- 8.33 In December 2010 the Welsh Government published 'Delivering a Digital Wales', a strategy for all stakeholders and partners in Wales to realise the benefits of digital communications, recognising the central place digital communications now have in the growth of our economy and quality of life. In particular for the public sector, the Welsh Government want to see more public and government services delivered digitally so they are easier to access and become more efficient and convenient.

What you have told us:

- 8.34 We are currently sourcing feedback from consultations that may have taken place on this theme. Any information we find will be included in the final assessment.

**Key theme Cohesive Communities 3 – Housing and the increasing reliance on renting in the private sector**

Why this is important:

- 8.35 Good housing provides shelter, security, space for family life and activities, privacy, personal identity and development. It is a keystone of individual and community well-being. Good housing can be considered an essential part of a successful neighbourhood and local community. Good design can help to create a positive appearance and make provision for, or help to ensure, accessible links to shops, schools, other local facilities, open space and the countryside and employment opportunities.
- 8.36 It is essential to allow employees to move to areas where jobs exist. Investment in housing also generates substantial employment.

- 8.37 The private rented sector houses a diverse range of households, with a wide range of needs from their housing. It can provide flexibility for people with changing accommodation needs or who need to move house frequently for work reasons or such like. However, it can also lead to insecurity of tenure and has additional up-front costs as well as rents, which may be problematic for tenants at the lower end of the market (for example finding money for deposits/bonds, providing several weeks' rent in advance to secure a tenancy, or paying agency fees which may need to be paid each time a tenancy is renewed).
- 8.38 Privately rented housing is the fastest growing sector in the housing market. As well as being the only housing option available for those who cannot afford to buy their own home but are not in need of social housing assistance, it is now possible for local authorities in Wales to discharge their homelessness duties within the private sector.
- 8.39 Privately rented housing can be difficult to regulate, both in terms of compliance with housing standards and health and safety, and in terms of security of tenure and managing rent levels. The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 hopes to improve this situation by requiring all landlords with property in Wales to register with Rent Smart Wales and to either be licensed themselves if they're 'self-managing' or use a licensed agent.
- 8.40 As the population increases in size and the average household size continues to decrease, demand for housing is expected to grow. By far the biggest factor affecting the number of households and average household size in the future is the expected growth in the number of single person households.

What we know:

- 8.41 The private rented sector accounts for about 14% of the housing stock across Wrexham – about 8,200 dwellings in total. This is close to the Welsh average of 15%.
- 8.42 Between April 2006 and March 2016 the average completion rate for new dwellings and conversions has been around 390 units per year in Wrexham. Since the economic downturn in 2007/08 there has been a general downward trend in the number of new dwellings which are built annually.
- 8.43 In Wrexham, for each year since April 2011 (the start date for the current Welsh Government household projections) the provision of new dwellings has fallen below the annual figure needed to reach the identified requirement of 650-700 additional dwellings a year. In the five years to April 2016 only 1,321 additional dwellings have been provided – if the requirement was shared equally across that period, that figure should be closer to 3,250-3,500.



- 8.44 The private rented sector has grown significantly over the last 25 years, growing from a total of about 3,050 dwellings in 1991 to an estimated 8,200 by 2015 – an increase of 170%.
- 8.45 The owner occupied housing sector has seen proportionately much slower growth (35%) in the same period. The amount of social housing that is available to rent has decreased by nearly 2,500 dwellings – a decline of 16%. News reports in August 2016 reported that home ownership is, nationally, at its lowest level for 30 years.
- 8.46 Almost half of all single person households are pensioners living alone. In 2014 there were 7,900 lone pensioner households in Wrexham – this was 13.5% of all households, and 45% of all single person households. As life expectancy increases and the large post-World War II baby-boomer generation reaches pension age we can expect to see the number of lone pensioner households increase.
- 8.47 Other factors which have led to smaller average household sizes over past decades have been the trends towards smaller family size and the increase in the number of family break-downs. These trends are expected to continue.
- 8.48 The trend towards smaller households may also be an indicator of the type of housing that needs to be built. In particular the provision of housing that will be suitable to meet the needs of older age groups needs to be considered.
- 8.49 If the need for additional housing continues to outstrip the rate at which extra provision is provided, then there will be an ever increasing back-log of unmet need which will have to be provided for at some stage, as well as all newly arising need. This is likely to put additional pressure on an already overpriced housing market.
- 8.50 Issues around affordability may in part be addressed by simple supply-demand economics. If more houses, of the right type, are built then the upward pressure on house prices caused by a demand that outstrips supply will be relieved.

What you have told us:

- 8.51 Please refer to 'Key theme More Equal 2 – Ability to support those in housing need' for consultation feedback on housing.

## **Key theme Cohesive Communities 4 – Tackling domestic abuse**

Why this is important:

- 8.52 The UK Government definition of domestic violence and abuse is: “Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not

limited to, the following types of abuse: psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional.

- 8.53 Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.
- 8.54 Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.
- 8.55 Domestic violence has a significant impact on the health and well-being of victims both in the immediate and longer term, continuing even after the relationship has ended. The psychological consequences of violence can be as serious as the physical effects. Exposure to violence leads to poorer physical health overall compared with women who have not experienced violence, and it increases the risk of women developing a range of health problems.
- 8.56 Children who live in homes where there is domestic violence grow up in an environment that is unpredictable, filled with tension and anxiety and dominated by fear. This can lead to significant emotional and psychological trauma. They are also at risk of physical harm themselves, either when caught in the middle of an assault or as direct victims of abuse themselves. Dealing with the effects of exposure to domestic violence is a significant element of work around mitigating adverse childhood experiences.
- 8.57 A considerable proportion of safeguarding children and adults work relates to the abuse or neglect of people with care and support needs who are living in their own homes. Domestic abuse is most commonly thought of as violence between intimate partners, but it can take many other forms and be perpetrated by a range of people. Much safeguarding is therefore also related to domestic abuse.
- 8.58 An estimated 1 in 4 women experience violence in their lifetime and 1 in 6 men. About 8.5% of women and 4.5% of men report having experienced domestic abuse in the previous year. This is equivalent to an estimated 16,000 female victims and 8,000 male victims in North Wales each year.

#### What we know:

- 8.59 Domestic abuse is under-reported. The number of domestic violent crimes with injury in North Wales is much lower than the estimated number of people likely to have experienced the crime. For 2015/16 data from North Wales Police shows that there were 1,700 recorded domestic crimes with violence.
- 8.60 In Wrexham there were around 380 domestic crimes with violence recorded. Over 50% of cases involved in some way children aged under 16. Around 40%

involved children under five. There were 280 sexual offences recorded in the same period. About 80% of victims of both crimes were women.

- 8.61 It is estimated that the total costs of domestic abuse in North Wales is £66 million. This includes the costs to health care, criminal justice, social services, housing and refuges, legal costs and lost economic output. The overall rate of domestic violence also fell between 2001 and 2008, concluding that investment in public services was cost effective for the country as a whole, during that time.
- 8.62 Domestic abuse has long been under-reported and the increase in the number of crimes over the past three years is likely to be due to an increase in reporting rather than incidence. The number of reported sexual crimes has also seen an increase over the past few years. The proportion of victims who are female has remained fairly consistent at around 80%.
- 8.63 If recent trends in reporting crimes persist, reporting of incidences of domestic violence may increase, though it is not clear if recent upward trends are due to increase in occurrences or increase in willingness to report the crimes.
- 8.64 The introduction of the benefit cap and other welfare reforms may make victims more likely to stay with their abuser if they can't afford to move. Universal credit will be paid to one partner which may increase a victim's financial reliance on their abuser.
- 8.65 Changes to legal aid rules may mean that more victims may stay with the perpetrator because legal aid will not be routinely available in separation, divorce and child contact cases, or for non-British victims not on a spousal visa.
- 8.66 The primary concern when tackling domestic abuse must be the welfare and safety of victims and any affected children. However, consideration also needs to be given to providing help for those who are abusive and violent toward their partners, in particular prevention programmes which deal with behavioural change.

#### What you have told us:

- 8.67 We are currently sourcing feedback from consultations that may have taken place on this theme. Any information we find will be included in the final assessment.

### **Key theme Cohesive Communities 5 – Impact of drug abuse and anti-social behaviour**

#### Why this is important:

- 8.68 Until recently, research on the burden of alcohol has focused predominantly on the harms experienced by drinkers themselves. However, there is growing recognition of the harms that an individual's alcohol consumption can place on those around them including family members, friends, co-workers and strangers.
- 8.69 These harms include alcohol-related violence and aggression (including domestic and nightlife violence); neglect, abuse or exploitation (including children); criminal behaviour (property damage and theft to support drinking habits); unintentional injury (e.g. road traffic crashes); and even foetal alcohol spectrum disorder.
- 8.70 People can also experience harm to their mental health and well-being, through anxiety about behaviours of drinkers', including fear of assault and sleep disturbance, care burdens and worries about family/household finances arising from alcohol addiction.

#### What we know:

- 8.71 Drug abuse is sometimes very visible in public places, is of concern to the public, and has an impact on reported acquisitive crime. However, the number of crimes committed and the people involved is quite small (26% of the public in the North Wales Police Force area reported high levels of perceived drug use despite an annual rate of only 2.06 crimes per thousand population). Of greater concern for health and wider community well-being are psychoactive substances and new novel drugs, which are not necessarily illegal. Addiction to prescription drugs is also an issue.
- 8.72 Six in ten (59.7%) adults in Wales have experienced harms due to someone else's drinking in the last 12 months. Nationally, this is estimated to be equivalent to 1,460,151 people aged 18 years and older.
- 8.73 The Crime Survey for England and Wales estimated that in 2013/14 just over half (53%) of all violence was perpetrated by someone who was under the influence of alcohol.

#### What you have told us:

- 8.74 In the 'What's Important to You?' consultation 'Reducing crime and fear of crime' was ranked as a high priority, as it was rated as highly important by respondents, and satisfaction levels in relation to this outcome were low. The key messages from the comments received in relation to this outcome suggest some people feel 'there is a lack of police presence and CCTV' and that 'drugs and alcohol are fuelling the problem'. Comments suggested some people feel 'crime and antisocial behaviour are having a negative effect on the night time economy' and that 'the night time economy needs to be more diverse'.
- 8.75 In 'The Wrexham We Want' consultation, tackling and reducing anti-social behaviour was cited by a large number of respondents. The majority of comments

related to this aspiration concerned the town-centre, however some people also suggested that this is an issue in other areas as well.

- 8.76 A number of improvements were suggested in relation to this theme including: reducing drinking and drink related behaviour; reducing drug use and drug related behaviour including discarded needles; and reducing begging.
- 8.77 Other frequently cited aspiration themes that relate to tackling and reducing anti-social behaviour included: supporting the homeless and reducing homelessness, making Wrexham a safe place and needing more visible policing.
- 8.78 Respondents were asked to identify what they thought would get in the way of tackling and reducing anti-social behaviour. The key barriers were perceived to be: lack of visible policing in the town-centre, lack of resources to tackle the issues, it not being treated as a priority, other areas closing homeless shelters generating an influx of homeless people into Wrexham.
- 8.79 Respondents were also asked what they thought the public sector and other organisations need to do to make this aspiration a reality. Solutions identified included: improving the balance between supporting those with mental health/drug addictions and meeting the needs of the general public, more police presence and more CCTV, public organisations working together to tackle the anti-social behaviour issues and providing support to those with mental health issues.
- 8.80 Respondents were also asked what they thought they and their community could do to tackle this. Very few respondents felt that there was anything they could do and those that did offer solutions felt that the only thing they could do was report issues more often and perhaps pay more Council tax for more police presence to help address this.

## **Key theme Cohesive Communities 6 – Integration of HMP Berwyn**

### Why this is important:

- 8.81 Her Majesty's Prison (HMP) Berwyn is based at the edge of the Wrexham Industrial Estate. It is due to take its first prisoners in February 2017. The prison service took occupation of the first building in August 2016 and prison staff have started working from the prison site already.
- 8.82 Once operational, it is expected that the prison will boost the regional economy by around £23 million a year and create up to 1,000 jobs
- 8.83 While the prison will be operated by the public sector, about a third of service provision will be outsourced. This includes health and education services, and Her Majesty's Prison Service (HMPS) are looking for local partners to help provide

skills and industries workshops. These workshops are part of the rehabilitation and resettlement preparation for offenders and will provide meaningful work and training opportunities.

#### What we know:

8.84 The prison will be at full capacity in February 2018. It will eventually hold up to 2,100 predominately Category C adult male prisoners. Around one third of them will be from North Wales and the prison will be designated a resettlement prison, with a focus on returning the offenders to their community.

8.85 The location of a prison in Wrexham will make the logistics of prison visits easier for the family and friends of offenders across North Wales, and could have positive well-being impacts for these visitors and the prisoners. Maintaining family ties can help to prevent prisoners reoffending and can assist them to settle successfully in the community on release. Maintaining family contact while in prison also reduces isolation and the pain of imprisonment for both prisoners and families.

8.86 Public transport links to the prison and the Wrexham Industrial Estate as a whole have been identified as being of concern, and there is a potential need for further investment in this area.

#### What you have told us:

8.87 We are currently sourcing feedback from consultations that may have taken place on this theme. Any information we find will be included in the final assessment.

### **Key theme Cohesive Communities 7 – Volunteering**

#### Why this is important:

8.88 Volunteering can be described as giving your time and energy freely and by choice without concern for financial gain. It can describe hundreds of different activities that people choose to do to benefit or support others in the community. The word volunteering is used for a range of activities such as community service, self-help, charity, neighbourliness, citizenship, public service, community action, community involvement, trustee, member and helper.

8.89 Volunteering increases community social capital and individual well-being for the volunteers themselves and for the people they support. It can help increase community capacity and build social resilience. For individuals it gives them a greater sense of purpose and meaning and has many health and personal development benefits too.

8.90 The voluntary sector plays an important role delivering public services across the UK – about a third of all voluntary and community sector income comes from the state. Charities are able to fill gaps in service delivery that the public or private sectors are not able, or willing to, and they are the third most trusted group in society after doctors and the police.

8.91 Many challenges to the future of volunteering have been identified by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations including: how can the volunteering infrastructure be strengthened and how can meaningful partnerships between them, statutory and business sectors be developed.

#### What we know:

8.92 The umbrella organisation for the voluntary sector in Wrexham is called the Association of Voluntary Organisations in Wrexham (AVOW). They help to promote, support, enable and develop a sustainable voluntary sector in the area, through the provision of advice on fundraising, best practice in volunteering, good governance, training, and by representing the views of third sector organisations to statutory bodies.

8.93 In 2014/15 AVOW: placed 358 volunteers and provided training courses for nearly 200 participants; received and responded to over 104,500 general enquiries; received and responded to 177 funding advice enquiries; helped local voluntary groups obtain £1.2m of funding; provided nearly £45,000 of funding through local grants and loan schemes; and awarded certificates to recognise over 6,000 hours of volunteering activity.

8.94 Though levels of interest in volunteering are currently as high as they have ever been, funding for volunteering is facing austere times in much the same ways as the public sector.

#### What you have told us:

8.95 We are currently sourcing feedback from consultations that may have taken place on this theme. Any information we find will be included in the final assessment.

### **Key theme Cohesive Communities 8 – Community spirit, empowerment and a sense of pride**

#### Why this is important:

8.96 A strong sense of belonging to communities emerged as a clear asset throughout the national 'The Wales We Want' conversation that took place throughout 2014 and 2015. Many people felt a lack of engagement between the community and

the decision-makers resulted in frustration due to an inability to make the necessary changes.

- 8.97 Creating the conditions within which communities and enterprises can thrive was often felt to be missing from the priorities of public services. Greater empowerment is seen as creating resilience and a greater sense of responsibility, whilst top down interventions can lead to disempowerment.
- 8.98 The conversation highlighted the need to create a Wales where communities find it easier to do things for themselves through for example increasing people's ownership of their community including spending.
- 8.99 On the whole people felt disconnected from the decision-makers that affected their daily lives as decisions felt removed, top-down and with no clear link to outcomes. They reported an increased sense of fatigue and frustration with the way in which they were being engaged.
- 8.100 'The Wales We Want' conversation found that the role of the government needs to be re-imagined. Government needs to see itself as having a different purpose in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and that is one of system stewardship rather than just deliverer of public services and guarantor of security.

#### What we know:

- 8.101 There has been a positive and significant improvement in the profile of consultation and engagement within the Council and the number of respondents getting involved in consultations, however despite the increased number of people getting involved a lower proportion of local people feel they can affect local decisions.

#### What you have told us:

- 8.102 In the 'What's Important to You?' consultation in January/February 2016 'Encouraging people to get on well together in the community' was ranked as a fairly high priority. Although this outcome was of lower importance, satisfaction in relation to this outcome was also fairly low, and fell short of meeting the level of importance. Key messages from the comments received in relation to this outcome suggest some people feel 'community spirit needs to be encouraged and supported' as well as 'a sense of individual and community responsibility'.
- 8.103 'The Wrexham We Want' consultation run in October and November received a large amount of responses on 'encouraging community spirit, empowerment and a sense of pride'. A number of improvements were suggested in relation to this theme including: people having pride in where they live and the communities to which they belong; people having a greater feeling of 'community spirit'; people working together for the benefit of their communities; people getting to know each other and generally helping each other out more.



- 8.104 Respondents were asked to identify what they thought would get in the way of this aspiration being achieved. The key barriers were perceived to be: bureaucracy and legislation (e.g. health and safety and people not knowing what they are 'allowed' to do); a feeling of general apathy, and a lack of pride amongst people in Wrexham.
- 8.105 Respondents were also asked what they thought the public sector and other organisations need to do to make this aspiration a reality. Solutions identified included: learning from other areas who have a strong sense of community spirit; providing information for communities on what they could do; providing mentors and champions in each community to help – perhaps from the public service organisations or businesses.
- 8.106 Respondents were also asked what they thought they and their community could do to make this aspiration a reality. Respondents felt that they could volunteer more, help out local people who need it (e.g. older people living in their own homes), and attend meetings (when given the opportunity) to help develop and deliver plans to improve their areas. Volunteers needed to know what information/support/help is available to them to enable them to do this.
- 8.107 In addition, in 'The Wrexham We Want' consultation, several comments were made about improving community cohesion and promoting diversity.
- 8.108 'The Wrexham We Want' consultation asked respondents what the term 'community' means to them. The strongest themes that came across in respondents' answers were 'a collective of people', 'people coming together and getting involved' and 'the area close to where they live'. Some respondents also associated 'Wrexham' with the term community, but to a lesser extent. Interestingly 'helping, supporting, caring and looking after one another', 'being diverse, inclusive, cohesive and harmonious' and 'being friendly, neighbourly and socialising and taking part in activities' were cited as important facets of a community, along with 'sharing common interests', 'sharing common goals', 'sharing similar values, and beliefs' and 'wanting to improve something'.
- 8.109 Respondents were also asked which communities they feel they belong to. This question also allowed an open answer. The strongest theme that came across in respondents answers was the 'village' where they lived and other nearby villages. A large number of respondents also felt they belonged to 'Wrexham' as a whole. On the other hand a smaller number of respondents felt more of a sense of community with their 'immediate neighbourhood/neighbours'. It is important to note that a large number of respondents also said that they didn't feel they belonged to any community, as they felt the sense of community has been lost. Interestingly some respondents also cited 'work' and 'clubs and associations' they are part of, as types of communities they feel they belong to.

## Key theme Cohesive Communities 9 – Make Wrexham attractive

### Why this is important:

8.110 The people of Wrexham come from a rich heritage of communities. These are both geographical communities (e.g. particular villages) and communities of interest (e.g. faith groups). The places in which these communities live have been shaped by historic patterns of development, which, in more recent times, have been influenced by the planning system.

8.111 Key indicators of the quality of new development in our towns and villages include objective measures like national standards for sustainable homes and commercial buildings and the amount of development permitted in the countryside, as well as subjective measures such as public perceptions of new developments once they are built.

### What we know:

8.112 In 2015/16 the Council made improvements in promoting housebuilding on previously developed land and sustained performance on protecting conservation and special landscape areas. However, this performance will come under pressure in future from demands for development land for both housing and commercial use.

### What you have told us:

8.113 Of great importance to people in 'The Wrexham We Want' consultation was making Wrexham attractive – including keeping it clean and tidy. Comments related to this aspiration covered both the town-centre and other parts of the County Borough. It was felt that if Wrexham was more attractive it would encourage people into the area. A number of improvements were suggested in relation to this theme including: improving the overall appearance of Wrexham; improving the cleanliness of Wrexham; and encouraging a sense of pride in the local area.

8.114 Respondents were asked to identify what they thought would get in the way of this being achieved. The key barriers were perceived to be: resources – lack of people and money to do this; not perceived to be a priority; and public disregard and motivation to make it better.

8.115 Respondents were also asked what they thought the public sector and other organisations need to do to make this aspiration a reality. Solutions identified included: more enforcement of issues contributing to the appearance of the town-centre, such as litter; pubs/landlords taking more responsibility for areas outside their premises; people doing community service, involved with probation services,

or those unemployed helping; and increasing people's sense of pride and responsibility for the area.

8.116 Respondents were also asked what they thought they and their community could do to make this aspiration a reality. Many respondents felt strongly that there was more individuals could do. Some suggested cleaning events/working parties both in the town and other communities, but felt that these would need impetus and drive from the Council to succeed.

8.117 In addition, in the 'What's Important To You?' consultation, 'Promoting development that is attractive and sustainable and improves the local area' was ranked as a fairly high priority. Although this outcome was only rated as being of mid-level importance, satisfaction in relation to this outcome was fairly low. Key messages from the comments received in relation to this outcome suggest some people feel 'concerned about preserving Wrexham's heritage and buildings', that 'the town centre needs to be regenerated and improved' and that 'the local facilities and infrastructure need improving'.

## 9 Well-being goal 6 – Vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

### Introduction to this goal

- 9.1 This is about having a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, sports and recreation.

### Key theme Vibrant & Welsh 1 – Promoting the Welsh language

#### Why this is important:

- 9.2 The Welsh language is one of Europe's most robust minority languages, having survived despite its close proximity to the most dominant world language of the past two centuries (English). The Welsh language is a key part of the region's culture and identity, being the primary language spoken in some of our communities, as well as having a significant presence in many workplaces, learning institutions, and around our town and village streets. Welsh skills are increasingly seen as key employment skills in a number of emerging sectors, such as the media, food and tourism sectors, and the production of digital content.
- 9.3 The encouraging increase in the number of young people speaking Welsh after the Welsh Language Act's introduction of Welsh as a compulsory subject in schools needs to be treated with caution. Most of these young people were learning Welsh as a second language, and their exposure to the language and their level of fluency is likely to be limited compared to children who receive Welsh-medium education. Latest figures from the Census suggest that Welsh language abilities learned as children are not necessarily sustained into adulthood.
- 9.4 In order to survive, the Welsh language needs to be a language of communication. The introduction of Welsh as a compulsory subject in schools halted (or at least slowed) a 1901-1981 trend which would have been heading towards a predicted 'zero Welsh speakers' by 2041, but more needs to be done.
- 9.5 Since the Welsh Language Act, evidence shows that barriers to accessing services in Welsh remain. Main barriers include a lack of supply of services in Welsh, a lack of demand for services due to lack of confidence among non-fluent Welsh speakers and a lack of awareness that services are provided in Welsh. Evidence on the effectiveness of specific ways of addressing these barriers is lacking, although there is some evidence to suggest that marketing of the availability of Welsh-language services can lead to increased uptake.

- 9.6 Research suggests focusing Welsh language marketing and promotional approaches on younger age groups; improving the accessibility to and relevance of available Welsh-language media and resources; and maximising the potential of technology such as the internet and new social media.

What we know:

- 9.7 The 2011 Census estimates that there are 16,659 people aged three or over who are able to speak Welsh in Wrexham. This is 12.9% of the population. For Wales as a whole 19% of the population are able to speak Welsh.
- 9.8 The highest proportion of Welsh speakers is found in the rural electoral division (ward) of Ceiriog valley, with 31.2%. Wynnstay, within Wrexham town, is the ward with the lowest proportion of Welsh speakers at 7.7%. In general, the incidence of Welsh speakers is higher in rural areas.
- 9.9 Data from the Welsh language use survey 2013-15 show that:
- Most Welsh speakers in Wrexham learned to speak Welsh at school (64%), and 31% learned at home as a small child. About 5% learned through Welsh for adults courses. (Wales = 43% at home, 50% at school, 5% at Welsh for adults course).
  - No Welsh speakers in Wrexham reported always or usually use Welsh when dealing with public organisations (Wales = 29%). 67% reported never using Welsh with public organisations, which was significantly higher than the Welsh figure of 49%.
  - No Welsh speakers reported being able to always or usually speak Welsh at work in Wrexham – the Welsh average is 32%. 62% reported never using Welsh at work, which was significantly higher than the Welsh figure of 42%.
- 9.10 In the 2015/16 school year, eight out of 59 primary schools in the area were first language Welsh or bilingual schools. There were 1,700 pupils at these schools, which was 13% of all primary school pupils (Wales = 26%).
- 9.11 Only one of the nine secondary schools provide Welsh medium or bilingual education. There were 750 pupils at this school, which was 12% of all secondary school pupils. (Wales = 33%).
- 9.12 Though the number of Welsh speakers in the area increased between 1991 and 2001 they have decreased in number in more recent years. The proportion of Welsh speakers within the population has been in slow decline for several generations.

What you have told us:

- 9.13 In the 'What's Important to You?' consultation 'Supporting and promoting culture and Welsh language' was ranked as a lower priority overall by respondents, as the importance of this outcome was low, and the level of satisfaction in relation to this outcome was far closer to meeting the level of importance. However it is important to note that it was the highest priority for respondents whose preferred language is Welsh and key messages from the comments received in relation to this outcome were split, with as many suggesting that 'too much time and money is spent on the Welsh language', as those who suggested 'Welsh language is important and should be encouraged'. 'The Welsh Baccalaureate being optional and more relevant' was also cited as an important issue for young people.
- 9.14 In 'The Wrexham We Want' consultation, numerous comments were made about developing, embracing and promoting Welsh language, culture and heritage.

## **Key theme Vibrant & Welsh 2 – Supporting tourism**

### Why this is important:

- 9.15 Tourism touches many areas that the public sector has a responsibility for and an interest in, including skills-training and employment, planning, regeneration, heritage and culture; it also benefits many other sectors of the economy including transport, retail and agriculture.
- 9.16 Tourism isn't just for visitors either. The health and well-being of our residents benefits from access to thriving heritage and culture sites, a well-managed natural environment, and access to adventure and activity opportunities on their doorstep.
- 9.17 In general, tourism businesses are mainly small operations, many of them family run, and are often deeply rooted in the community. In addition tourism supply chain links bring benefits to many small, local businesses. Income from tourism is often the difference between success and failure for many micro businesses.
- 9.18 Tourism is a global industry and is highly competitive. Welsh Government's 'Partnership for Growth' Tourism strategy for Wales 2013-20' identifies the focus of activity needs to be on:
- more luxury and branded hotels
  - more well-being facilities, such as spas
  - more heritage hotels that utilise historic and distinctive buildings
  - more all year round attractions, activities and cultural experiences
  - more innovative, unusual and distinctive products.

9.19 Local landscape can provide an important link to our sense of national pride, culture and local identity. Woodlands and trees provide a variety of benefits to well-being. They help regulate our climate, provide income & jobs from timber and other activities, store carbon; contribute to reducing flood and low river flow risk; safeguard soils; improve air quality; reduce noise; and regulate pests and diseases. They play a major role in pollination, soil formation, nutrient cycling, water cycling and oxygen production, all of which are crucial in supporting well-being.

What we know:

9.20 The County Borough's Destination Management Plan identifies tourism as an important sector for Wrexham – with the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and its World Heritage status seen as the major asset for the future. Other heritage sites include Erddig Hall, Chirk Castle, St Giles and Overton Yew Trees (two of the seven wonders of Wales) and industrial heritage sites such as Minera Quarry, Brymbo, Glyn Valley Tramway Trust and the resources of Wrexham County Borough Museum and Archive.

9.21 The area also contains outstanding landscapes in the Ceiriog Valley, Berwyn Mountains, the Clwydian Range and the River Dee and Dee Valley Borderlands, and offers walking and outdoor activities such as the Offa's Dyke Path National Trail. Its proximity to Chester and other attractive towns like Llangollen, Shrewsbury and Oswestry, and its possible role as a gateway to North Wales's dramatic countryside and Welsh heritage, provide opportunities of overlapping the tourism offer with neighbouring areas.

9.22 The area provided 400,000 overnight stays in 2015. In total it is estimated that tourism brought around £11.9 million into the local economy in 2015. The County Borough is estimated to have attracted over 1.86 million visitors in 2015, made up of 1.46 million day visitors and 0.4 million people who stay overnight with one of the accommodation providers in the area. The money spent by these visitors helps to support nearly 1,650 jobs in total, which is 3% of all employment in the area.

9.23 The employment/business sectors supported by the tourism industry in Wrexham include the visitor attraction, recreation, accommodation, retail and food sectors, as well as the large number of small local businesses such as tradespeople, wholesalers and support services who provide services and goods to those directly involved in tourism.

9.24 In recent years there has been a steady increase in the number of visitors to the area, particularly day visitors. The number of people employed either directly or indirectly has also increased (from 1,500 full-time equivalent jobs in 2004 to 1,650 in 2015). The input to the local economy has increased from £6.6 million to £11.9 million in the same period.

9.25 The changes to the national and international economy combined with the effects of fear of terrorist activity and conflict on international travel, have had a positive impact on the local tourism market, as the 'staycation' becomes more popular.

9.26 While currently performing well, the local tourism industry is fragile. Most of the attractions are weather dependent and the industry is mainly made up of a large number of small businesses, with limited resilience to economic shock. The industry could possibly cope with a poor summer season as a one-off, but successive poor summers could easily cripple this important sector. The threat of damage from flooding to infrastructure and the natural environment is also a concern.

#### What you have told us:

9.27 In the 'What's Important to You?' consultation 'Attracting tourists and visitors' was ranked as a lower priority by respondents, as the importance of this outcome was low, and the level of satisfaction was closer to meeting the level of importance. However key messages from the comments received in relation to this outcome suggest some people feel 'more could be done to attract visitors to the area' and 'we need to make more of Wrexham's heritage and tourist attractions and hold more events'.

9.28 In 'The Wrexham We Want' consultation, several comments were made stating there should be better promotion of the town and surrounding areas.

### **Key theme Vibrant & Welsh 3 – Thriving culture**

#### Why this is important:

9.29 In a 2014 report the Arts Council for England states that: "...art and culture make life better, help to build diverse communities and improve our quality of life. Great art and culture can inspire our education system, boost our economy and give our nation international standing."

9.30 The report lays out some of the positive impacts that access to and participation in arts and cultural events can have on:

- Individual well-being – those who had attended a cultural place or event in the previous 12 months were almost 60 per cent more likely to report good health, compared to those who had not, and theatre-goers were almost 25 per cent more likely to report good health; research has evidenced that a higher frequency of engagement with arts and culture is generally associated with a higher level of subjective well-being; engagement in structured arts and culture improves the cognitive abilities of children and young people; a number of studies have reported findings of applied arts and cultural interventions and measured their positive impact on specific health



conditions which include dementia, depression and Parkinson's disease; the use of art, when delivered effectively, has the power to facilitate social interaction as well as enabling those in receipt of social care to pursue creative interests. The review highlights the benefits of dance for reducing loneliness and alleviating depression and anxiety among people in social care environments.

- Community well-being – there is strong evidence that participation in the arts can contribute to community cohesion, reduce social exclusion and isolation, and/or make communities feel safer and stronger; culture and sport volunteers are more likely than average to be involved and influential in their local communities; high-school students who engage in the arts at school are twice as likely to volunteer as those who don't engage in the arts and are 20 per cent more likely to vote as young adults; employability of students who study arts subjects is higher and they are more likely to stay in employment.
- Education – taking part in drama and library activities improves attainment in literacy; taking part in structured music activities improves attainment in maths, early language acquisition and early literacy; schools that integrate arts across the curriculum in the US have shown consistently higher average reading and mathematics scores compared to similar schools that do not.
- The economy – arts and culture can boost local economies through attracting visitors; creating jobs and developing skills; attracting and retaining businesses; revitalising places; and developing talent; businesses in the UK arts and culture industry generated an aggregate turnover of £12.4 billion in 2011; for every £1 of salary paid by the arts and culture industry, an additional £2.01 is generated in the wider economy through indirect and induced multiplier impacts.

9.31 The impact of culture on well-being is highlighted by the Chief Medical Examiner for Wales' annual report. Social prescribing is a non-medical health and well-being based approach that expands the range of options available to primary care clinicians and patients to improve healthy life behaviours, for example services such as choirs, gardening and walking clubs, debt advice, volunteering networks and befriending. The social prescribing approach can improve self-esteem, mood and self-efficacy, social contact and the development of transferable skills to help the management of chronic conditions. Demand for health services can be decreased where the medical model of care is not the most effective solution.

#### What we know:

9.32 The arts, entertainment, recreation sector employs about 2,450 people in Wrexham. This represents about 4.3% of all employment in the area and is about the Wales and GB average.

#### What you have told us:

- 9.33 In 'The Wrexham We Want' consultation a large number of respondents said an aspiration was having more things to do; and in particular, for children and young people. A number of improvements were suggested in relation to this theme including: having more facilities and activities for children and young people; having more cultural facilities including libraries, museums and arts; holding more street festivals; encouraging and supporting big local events such as concerts.
- 9.34 Respondents were asked to identify what they thought would get in the way of this aspiration being achieved. The key barriers were perceived to be: there is not enough money to provide more; some members of the public have negative attitudes around change/new things; and lack of investment in activities for children and young people.
- 9.35 Respondents were also asked what they thought the public sector and other organisations need to do to make this aspiration a reality. Solutions identified included: keeping facilities such as libraries and youth clubs open; public organisations supporting art and culture; using existing facilities to hold activities and ensure these are well publicised; and lobbying the Government for more funding.
- 9.36 Respondents were also asked what they thought they and their community could do to make this aspiration a reality. Many respondents felt that people should volunteer more and that they could also fundraise, contribute more and pay more Council tax to ensure activities could take place. Respondents felt people should better support community activities and there should be a more positive attitude towards new activities and events taking place.
- 9.37 In addition, in 'The Wrexham We Want' consultation, numerous comments were made stating that local heritage and buildings should be preserved.

## 10 Well-being goal 7 – Globally Responsible

### Introduction to this goal

- 10.1 Globally responsible is about having a nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.
- 10.2 Please note this is a particularly cross-cutting goal and therefore information in relation to this goal is also covered under many of the other goals in this Assessment.

### Key theme Globally Responsible 1 – Promoting recycling and reducing waste

#### Why this is important:

- 10.3 Managing waste is an important tool when trying to reduce our ecological footprint. To live in a more sustainable Wales where we have enough resources, at an affordable price, to sustain our economy and way of life we will need to reduce how much of the world's resources we consume. It is estimated that waste is responsible for about 15% of the country's ecological footprint.
- 10.4 As well as helping to conserve valuable resources, recycling, reusing and in particular composting our waste helps to reduce the production of methane and other emissions from decomposing biodegradable rubbish. Waste contributes around 4.7% of direct greenhouse gas emissions in Wales, which have a major impact on climate change.
- 10.5 The environmental charity, WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme) has identified four major barriers that need to be overcome in order to improve recycling rates and reducing residual waste. Though some of this is about improving the services that the public sector provide, the major challenges are around behavioural and attitudinal changes in our communities.
- 10.6 Waste reduction is a key political driver from the Welsh Government who published their 'Zero Waste' strategy in June 2010 with aims to increase recycling to 70% by 2025, and ambitiously aims for Wales to be a 'zero waste' nation by 2050. 'Zero waste' will be achieved by eliminating residual waste and reusing or recycling all the waste that is produced.

#### What we know:

- 10.7 Around 80,000 tonnes of municipal waste is generated in Wrexham each year. 56.4% of waste was reused, composted or recycled in 2014/15. This rate is just above the all-Wales figure of 56.2%. Wrexham currently ranks tenth highest for recycling rates amongst the 22 Welsh authorities.
- 10.8 Wrexham provides kerbside recycling for all households and collects mixed plastic's, cardboard, paper, cans/tins, clean foil, aerosols, textiles and glass every week and has rolled out a weekly food waste collection to all properties (except flats). Garden waste and residual refuse are collected fortnightly. The Council also provides three household recycling centres which provide recycling facilities for a range of other items including batteries, waxed cartons, furniture and bric-a-brac, hazardous waste, oil, electrical appliances and building rubble.
- 10.9 Reuse/recycling/composting rates have improved since 2004/05, when they were at about 14% in Wrexham. Significant investment is still needed to meet the European target of 70% by 2025.
- 10.10 Between 2004/05 and 2014/15 the annual volume of municipal waste has reduced by about 12,000 tonnes in Wrexham (-12%). The average for Wales as a whole was -20% in the same period.

What you have told us:

- 10.11 In the 'What's Important to You?' consultation, 'Encouraging more waste to be reused, recycled or composted' was ranked as a lower priority, as the level of satisfaction in relation to this outcome was far closer to meeting the level of importance. However it is important to note that key messages from the comments received in relation to this outcome suggest some people feel improvements could be made such as 'having more information about recycling', 'increasing the range of materials recycled' and 'having sturdier recycling receptacles'.
- 10.12 In 'The Wrexham We Want' consultation, several comments were made stating there should be better recycling opportunities and waste management.

**Key theme Globally Responsible 2 – Energy and carbon emissions in housing and transport**

Why this is important:

- 10.13 Housing with a high standard of insulation and efficient heating systems will reduce energy use and result in lower greenhouse gas emissions. New building on brownfield sites and on sites close to centres of employment will reduce land take and will help to minimise car-based commuting.

- 10.14 New building and some major renovation projects may provide opportunities for using natural processes for drainage, the use of sustainable building materials, improved waste management, improved biodiversity and maximising the use of passive energy.
- 10.15 Transport is currently responsible for about 30% of the UK's carbon emissions . There is significant potential for public sector bodies to help reduce transport emissions through local authority funded transport systems and infrastructure, and travel planning which can be undertaken by all public sector organisations. Promoting cleaner vehicles within our own transport fleets and facilitating the provision of alternative fuel points (for example electric car charging points) is also within the remit of public sector organisations.

What we know:

- 10.16 The environmental impacts of climate change, the rising cost of electricity and fossil fuels, Government targets and penalties imposed on carbon emissions and the amount of waste sent to landfill, make environmental responsibility a priority for how we live.
- 10.17 We will need to work together to become a low carbon, low waste, environmentally responsible place. This will mean we optimise energy efficiency, use renewable energy and increase recycling rates where possible across the County Borough. Lowering our carbon emissions and energy use will manage costs for households, businesses and the public sector.
- 10.18 Alongside the energy efficiency investment in Wrexham's Council own homes through the Welsh Housing Quality Standard, there has been considerable investment through schemes such as Arbed Warm Homes to tackle the levels of fuel poverty across the County Borough. There is investment in new LED street lighting at a community level across the County Borough which will be more efficient and effective lighting of our streets, saving money and improving community safety.
- 10.19 Over the last few years Wrexham has led the way in renewable energy. From cutting edge research led by Glyndwr university, Wrexham Council installing solar panels on more than 3,000 homes, building a major solar farm, encouraging development such as the new Moneypenny offices to be sustainable. The forthcoming Local Development Plan will set out a framework for building flourishing communities which reduce our energy demands and realise new income generating opportunities through feed-in tariffs and renewable heat incentives.
- 10.20 Since 2014 Wrexham Council has been developing Wales's first sustainable urban mobility plan called Wrexham Connected. Working with public sector partners this plan sets out the big picture for the travel solutions that we will need across Wrexham and beyond over the next thirty years.
- 10.21 The driving force behind our thinking is how do we increase travel choices so that future growth is sustainable. Wrexham Council, Betsi Cadwaladr UHB and

Coleg Cambria have been working together to massively increase the level of lift-sharing across Wrexham. They plan to quickly involve businesses, third sector and local communities to shape the next steps around personalised travel planning.

What you have told us:

10.22 In the 'What's Important to You?' consultation 'being a green county with a small carbon footprint' was a lower priority as the importance of this outcome was low, and the level of satisfaction in relation to this outcome was closer to meeting the level of importance.

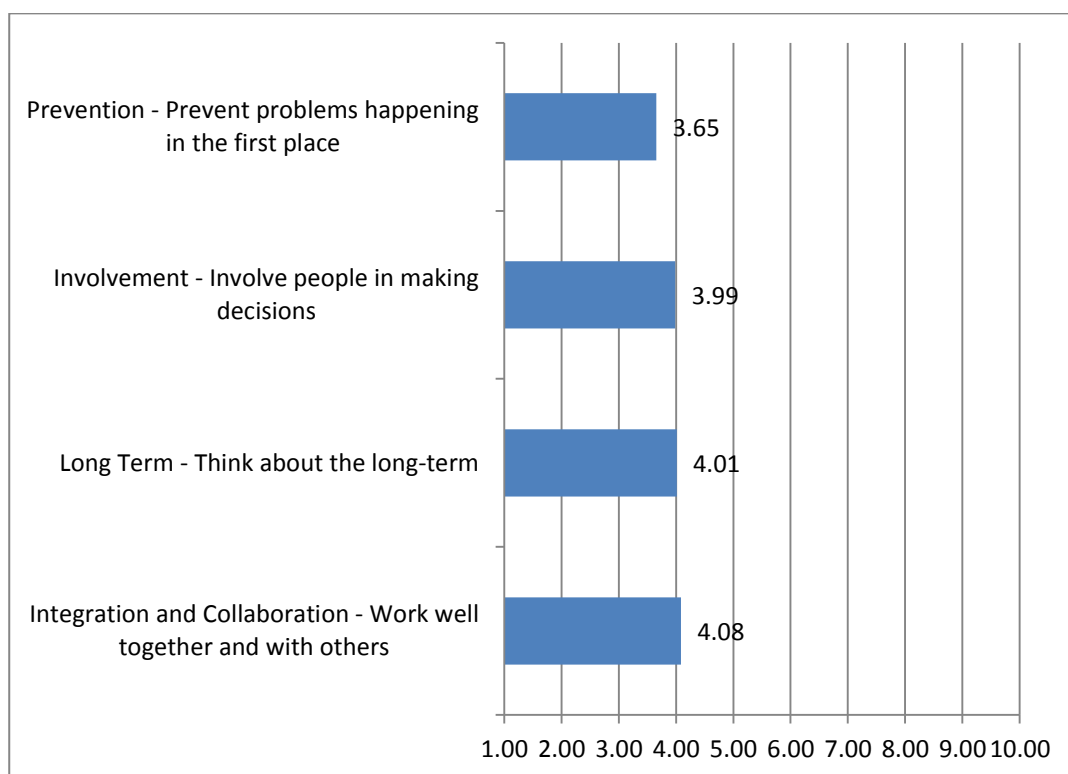
## 11 What the community thinks of public services

### Five ways of working

11.1 The Well-being of Future Generations Act outlines five ways of working for public services organisations. In 'The Wrexham we Want' consultation, respondents were also asked to state how strongly they agree that Wrexham Public Service Board partners practice each of the five ways of working set out in the Act. They were asked to score each way of working on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 = strongly disagree and 10 = strongly agree. Please note that the ways of working 'collaboration' and 'integration' were combined into one way of working for the purpose of the survey, so that respondents were able to score these similar ways of working together.

11.2 As illustrated in the graph below, the results indicate that respondents feel Wrexham Public Service Board partners still have a long way to go to achieve each of the five ways of working. 'Prevention' was the way of working Wrexham Public Service Board partners were perceived to be furthest from achieving (score 3.65), with 'Integration and Collaboration' being the way of working they were perceived to be closest to achieving (score 4.08). However this way of working still received a low agreement score overall.

How strongly do you agree that Wrexham Public Service Board Partners...



## **National Survey for Wales**

- 11.3 The latest National Survey for Wales shows that 45.9% of residents agreed or strongly agreed that Wrexham Council provides quality services. This was well below the Welsh average of 59.3% and gives Wrexham a rank of only 18<sup>th</sup> out of 22 Welsh local authorities.
- 11.4 However, Welsh Government's own analysis of the results of this survey suggest that most of the variance in satisfaction rates is due to the individual characteristics, attitudes and experiences of respondents (98% of variance), rather than being due to the area they live in (2%). This means the social make-up of Wrexham's population will impact on response rate differently than in neighbouring areas, and the gap between satisfaction levels may not be as great as the basic results suggest.
- 11.5 Since 2012/13, the latest figures for local authorities show a decline for Wrexham in those who agree that the local authority provides high quality services, a decrease in those who agree that the local authority is good at letting people know how it is performing, and a decline in those who felt they influence decisions affecting their local area. The National Survey also suggests that the Council needs to improve its communications and engagement strategies.
- 11.6 Individual Council services regularly undertake customer satisfaction surveys, and are improving analysis of complaints so that they can continue to make the services the local authority provide better and more responsive.
- 11.7 With a score of 6.5 out of 10, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board has a slightly higher than average satisfaction with the health service than the Wales average (6.3). However the National Survey also shows they need to improve their communications and engagement strategies as well.
- 11.8 Since 2012/13, the latest figures for Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board show: no change in the overall satisfaction score, an increase in the proportion of respondents who felt they are kept informed about the local health services' performance, and a decrease in the proportion of respondents who felt they could influence decisions affecting their local health services.
- 11.9 Generally there has been an improvement in satisfaction with public services, despite a period of reduction in public sector funding.

## **Listen to and act on public opinion**

- 11.10 In 'The Wrexham We Want' consultation, a large number of respondents said listening to and acting on public opinion was an aspiration for them. A number of improvements were suggested in relation to this theme including: listening to the wants and needs of local people and taking into account the interests of the whole County Borough.
- 11.11 Respondents were asked to identify what they thought would get in the way of this aspiration being achieved. The key barriers were perceived to be: public



services and politicians having too much power; not providing enough opportunities for people to have their say; not listening to what people have to say, which puts people off engaging again; difficulties reaching seldom heard groups and the representativeness of these groups; and difficulties engaging people who don't want to be engaged with.

11.12 Respondents were also asked what they thought the public sector and other organisations need to do to make this aspiration a reality. Solutions identified included: extending decision making powers beyond the Council's Executive Board; political parties working more closely together to benefit of the County as a whole; engaging more, listening to, and acting on, people's views; funding for more officers; lobbying national Government and a joined up approach to engagement across public organisations.

11.13 Respondents were also asked what they thought they and their community could do to make this aspiration a reality. Many respondents felt that they needed to get their voice heard at every opportunity, they should vote at the elections, be more politically aware and hold Councillors to account. Whereas some respondents felt there was nothing they could do to make a difference.

#### **Other general comments on public services from 'The Wrexham We Want'**

11.14 There were a few comments stating that more investment in / across public services was needed, a few comments stating there should be adequate fire and rescue services and a few comments stating the third sector should be encouraged and supported.

## 12 What we know or predict about the future

- 12.1 Expectations of and demands on public services continue to rise and are expected to increase in coming years. Population continues to grow, people are living longer, and key services are expected to deliver continually improving outcomes.
- 12.2 Healthcare is expected to improve so that medical advances don't just keep us alive longer, but also enable us to lead healthier lives; schools are expected to deliver better education so that our children have the best possible start in life; social care demand is rising for older people, both for residential and community based care. Demand is also rising amongst the 16-64 age group, particularly for people with learning difficulties and mental health needs; people want access to services at times that suit work patterns and family/social lives that are increasingly fluid.
- 12.3 Expectations of quality across all public services are rising. At the same time, public services in Wales face unprecedented financial and resource pressures. Spending cuts in the past have tended to be short term. Austerity measures have now been in place since 2010. The most recent spending projections show that government austerity policies are set to continue into the 2020s, which will mean a period of over ten years of public spending cuts. Beyond that, the position is uncertain and depends on the state of the economy and the tax and spending policies of future UK Governments, and the impacts of Brexit on national finances.
- 12.4 These pressures will influence people's opinions of public service, and will need to be mitigated. This could be done through measures such as promoting self-reliance and independence amongst residents; improving co-production and joined-up delivery of services and support; and changing future delivery models, particularly through involving the public in decision making.

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