

Conwy County Borough Council Summary Annual Report

Evaluating Our Performance: 2012-2013



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alternative formats and languages



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Summary Report Evaluating Our Performance: 2012 - 2013

1 Introduction

Welcome to Conwy County Borough Council's Summary Annual Report. This report provides summary information on the performance of the council during the financial year 1st April 2012 to 31st March 2013. The report serves to condense the public account for how the Council has performed as detailed in the Annual Report 2012 – 2013 – Evaluating Our Performance. A copy of the full report and all performance measures can be obtained on our website www.conwy.gov.uk/accountability.

We hope that you will find this report an informative and balanced evaluation of our performance. The report aims to provide assurance that Conwy is committed to working with all its partners to provide good services and to minimise the impact of the financial challenges by working innovatively to meet the needs of the citizens and visitors of Conwy County.

2 What the Council Does

The Council is responsible for a wide range of public services which aim to support the every day lives of the residents of, and visitors to, the county borough. This is a snap shot of the various services and the level of demand we have to meet:

On a typical day the Council:

- Teaches over 16,000 children in 67 primary and secondary schools.
- Has over 2,000 visitors to its 10 leisure centres and swimming pools.
- Has its website pages viewed over 6,700 times.
- Empties around 6,000 domestic bins.

In a week the Council:

- a) Has around 9,100 visitors to its libraries
- b) Receives on average 66 applications for employment.

In a month the Council:

- Receives an average of 67 planning applications.
- Helps around 80 households on to benefits.
- Provides support to around 2,800 people to remain independent in their own home through its Social Services department.

In a year the Council:

- Recycles and composts 30,000 tonnes of material from kerbside collections, recycling centres and 'bring sites' (bottle banks, clothes banks etc).
-
- Cleans 2,000 streets.
- Maintains 17,700 street lamps.
- Collects over 430,000 payments of council tax and 17,700 payments of non-domestic rates.
- Has over 570,000 unique visitors to its website.
- Looks after around 250 children through its social services department.

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- Attracts over 32,300 people to live performances (many by local companies) and cinema screenings at Theatr Colwyn.
- Hosts conferences and events from around the UK and stages around 300 performances at Venue Cymru together attracting over 300,000 visitors. Events at Venue Cymru achieve a significant impact on the local economy with some 53,000 overnight stays in hotels and B&Bs generated.

The area we maintain

Conwy County Borough Council manages 795 hectares of parks, woodland and open spaces. Conwy has 75 km of coastline including the largest length of artificially protected coastline in Wales, at just over 23km which represents 20% of the entire artificially protected coastline in Wales.

Conwy County Borough Council maintains 124 km of trunk roads, 119 km of principal roads, 716 km of non principal roads and 837 km of unclassified roads.

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3 Summary of Corporate Plan Progress

The information below details the progress made to deliver the Corporate Plan Objectives during the financial year 2012/13. The progress has been referenced to the Citizen Outcomes that the improvement objectives support, as detailed in the Integrated Community Plan, **One Conwy 2012 - 2025**.

1) People in Conwy are educated and skilled. We have:	2) People in Conwy are safe and feel safe. We have:	3) People in Conwy live in safe and appropriate housing. We have:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) supported a total of 23 social enterprises b) assisted 1132 people through our 'Let's Get Working' scheme c) provided a total of 256 work experience placements in 2012/13. This is open to all ages and backgrounds. d) increased the number of modern apprenticeships from 3 to 21, and set up a skills strategic board to co-ordinate skills across the county. e) invited local businesses to complete a skills survey which highlighted gap in apprenticeship opportunities locally. Work will now commence to address this gap. f) supported schools to implement new technology. g) set up a system to monitor children's attainment in order to reduce the number of children reaching the end of their Key Stage 2 courses who fail to achieve the standard of work they are capable of attaining. h) commenced the construction of the new Ysgol y Gogarth in Llandudno. i) reviewed science and technology subjects offered in schools in order to develop future training and employment in the region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) employed a company on a fixed term contract to enhance our enforcement role and to work with communities to raise awareness about littering. b) exceeded targets set for the timely removal of needles, graffiti and fly tipping, c) held 12 environment action days across the County, where more than 65 tonnes of material was collected, 53% of which was recycled d) a community safety partnership which is working to reduce crime. The reduction in crime is communicated to the public at every opportunity. The year on year crime reductions show that working together is having a desired outcome of making Conwy a safe place to live. e) reviewed our adult and child protection processes to improve the way we work in partnership to protect vulnerable people. f) commissioned many drug and alcohol services and an Independent Domestic Violence advisor. One of our main projects is the safer homes scheme which targets the homes of victims of domestic abuse. <p>started to develop an Integrated Family Support Service (IFSS). The team will work with families to try to prevent children being taken into care..</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) started a Conwy Housing Solutions Project in partnership with Social Landlords. This will see the development of a Social Lettings Agency to help gain greater access into the Private Rented Sector. b) a Single Access Route To Housing (SARTH) Project which is developing a Common Allocations Framework. c) submitted the Local Development Plan (LDP) to Welsh Government for examination. We await the Inspector's decision. d) a new Local Housing Strategy in development which will guide the Authority's approach to the future development of affordable housing. e) established the first Local Authority mortgage scheme in Wales to enable Conwy residents to access mortgages with a 5% deposit. The first year of the scheme has been very successful with 29 mortgages completed and 3 being processed. f) set up additional houses in multiple occupation Licensing Areas in Pensarn and Colwyn Bay in order to improve housing conditions. g) brought 39 empty properties back into occupation by direct action during 2012/2013. h) held 11 Flood awareness events. i) gained funding to start an energy efficiency scheme for Colwyn Bay.

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4) <i>People in Conwy are healthy and independent</i> <i>We have:</i>	5) <i>People in Conwy live in a county which has a thriving economy</i> <i>We have:</i>	6) <i>People in Conwy live in a sustainable environment</i> <i>We have:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) established a Social Services Transformation programme. The programme, supported via 6 projects, will provide an options appraisal of business and system changes that can be made to ensure that service users can remain independent for as long as possible. b) progressed plans for a combined children's residential service to be delivered by Education and Social Services. c) made a significant effort to identify more carers and offer them carers assessments. The service is creating a Carers Outcome Framework that measures access to timely support and information to support positive outcomes for Carers d) every school in Conwy in the Healthy Schools Initiative. The Conwy Active for Life action plan is progressing under each of the priority areas. Although there was a 6% increase in pupils able to swim, this was slightly below target. e) secured funding to undertake an assessment of transport needs in rural Conwy f) achieved the target for the % of older people, who after 6 weeks enablement care, are well enough that they no longer need care or can be transferred to a less intensive care plan. We will work to roll this out to all service users. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) been successful in attracting a number of events of major significance (Wales Rally GB, Olympic Torch, Access All Eirias concert) that have brought valuable economic benefits to the County. b) reviewed community benefit and social clauses with the view to including them where legally possible, in all procurement processes throughout the Council. This has included apprenticeships and employing local people. c) used business directory newflashes and newsletters to communicate with local businesses when courses/events are taking place. A review of Conwy's business support arrangements is underway and a Rural Business Network has been established. d) focused on key regional sectors; Energy/Environment, Advanced Manufacturing and Destination North Wales for Tourism and Inward Investment. e) worked through the North Wales Economic Ambition Board to establish a North Wales Economic Strategy programmes for Communities First, Flying Start and Families First which have been delivering initiatives to help families get out of poverty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) met our targets for waste recycling b) achieved beach awards for 11 out of 13 of our beaches. 8 green flags have been achieved for our parks and 3 green flags have been achieved for our nature reserves. c) Removed 29 eyesore sites from the eyesore site list. d) approved a carbon management plan and completed a programme of alterations to our lighting systems. We did not achieve our carbon target, and we will be working to improve this. e) achieved level 3 out of 5 for the environmental management Green Dragon standard. . f) established a business transformation programme to support the implementation of new ways of working. g) commenced a trial of the new trolibocs recycling units.

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7) <i>People in Conwy live in a county where heritage, culture and the Welsh language thrive</i> <i>We have:</i>	8) <i>People in Conwy are informed, included and listened to</i> <i>We have:</i>	General: <i>Conwy County Borough Council is Efficient and Well Managed</i> <i>We have:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) submitted the Conwy Welsh Language Strategy for 2013/14. b) increased the number from 9 to 10 Welsh Medium/ bilingual courses for 103 learners. c) seen an increase in welsh language attainment at key stages 2 & 3. d) held a free, fun bilingual weekend for families at Venue Cymru called 'TakePart'. e) Supported 130 staff to attend welsh language courses. f) continued to support schools who are delivering 25% curriculum through the medium of welsh. g) completed the majority of the Destination Conwy Action Plan. h) Worked in partnerships to establish the Princes of Gwynedd project and the 'Our Heritage' project. i) Established the Outdoor Tourism Interreg project which includes the development of an apprenticeship programme. The project has targeted disadvantaged individuals and those with health problems and is creating links between the GP referral scheme and Outdoor activities. j) Agreed an action plan to improve the number of youth service events to promote Welsh Culture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) revised the Council's Engagement Strategy in line with the National Principles for Public Engagement. b) signed up 24 out of 33 Town & Community Councils up to the Council Charter c) started a project to pilot webcasting of some Council meetings and Social Media Training for Members d) 15 Members who have written annual reports on the work they have undertaken during the year. e) established a Customer Programme. The projects include modernising libraries, supporting people to adapt to the Welfare reform changes, revising and updating the customer charter, improving the way we consult and engage with communities, improving online customer access to services and improving the analysis of complaints. f) completed 111 projects in the locality plans. g) approved a Strategic Equality Plan and actions are underway. h) completed a satisfaction survey for the website.. i) analysed the complaints we have received to make sure we learn from them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) service modernisation programmes in place to review Social Services and the integration of the environmental, highways and property services into an integrated Environment, Roads and Facilities Service (ERF). b) joined the Regional School Improvement Service (GwE) which came into operation on April 1st. As a result, various internal restructures have taken place. c) increased the sign up to e-billing for council tax d) established an office group to determine the Authority's future office accommodation requirements e) prepared bids to maximise European funding in order to improve services and draw more business investment to the county. f) completed a benefits appraisal of collaborative projects. g) worked to improve the number of staff who have an annual personal development review. We have not achieved our target and will continue to focus on this.

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3.1 Where We Need to Improve / Develop

We are pleased with these achievements, but self evaluation also means looking at where we still need to improve or continue to develop. Therefore we will also be aiming to progress work in the following areas:

- The financial pressures continue to be a significant issue for the authority. We will continue to monitor these closely and work together to make the necessary financial savings.
- We will also review financial pressures for areas of growth in demand – ie for older people and learning disability clients in need of social service support. Changes in the law may also place further financial pressure on social services who will now have responsibility for 16/17 year olds presenting as homelessness, and for children on remand, which will move from the responsibility of the Home Office. These may incur additional costs.
- We need to improve under performance in some of our measures. We need to work to increase the percentage of vacant private sector dwellings that are returned to occupation, and the time taken to find suitable accommodation for people who have become homeless. We need to improve the percentage of building control 'full plan' applications checked within 15 working days and reduce the carbon dioxide emissions within Conwy County Borough Council. In terms of supporting young people, we need to work in partnership with schools to improve the percent of pupils in Conwy County Borough achieving grade A* to C in GCSE Core Subjects, the percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact at the age of 19, and the percentage of statutory visits to looked after children due in the year that took place in accordance with regulations. We also need do more to promote the welsh culture through the work of the youth service. Services have put actions in place to improve these areas and their progress will be monitored.
- Work is being undertaken to comply with the requirements of Flood and Water Management Act 2010 to manage flood risk within the county.
- We are observing the progression of the Housing White Paper to ensure we anticipate how the proposed changes will impact on service delivery.
- The implications of the Welfare reform are also being reviewed regularly and families who will be affected have been contacted to provide support with the financial changes.
- We are continuing to assess the Home to School Transport Service with the aim of making improvements and financial savings.
- Budget review groups have been set up for each service area. Efficiencies have been achieved for 2012/13 but further challenges lie ahead to meet future efficiency targets.
- We will continue with the development of the project plan for efficient and cost effective office accommodation.
- We have been actively working with WLGA and WEFO regarding Conwy and North Wales's emerging key projects for the new 2014 European funding.
- A project is in place to address the Information Commissioner's Office Audit recommendations and to improve a council wide approach to information management.
- We will continue with the modernisation and financial efficiency of the Council through the various transformation programmes which are in place for social services, environment, roads and facilities, libraries, business support and customer services. Proposals for efficient and cost effective office accommodation are also being developed.

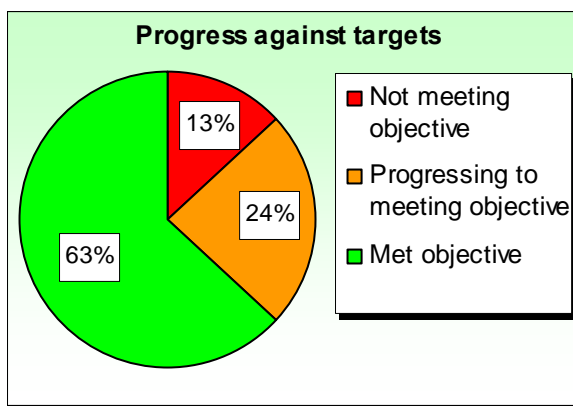
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4 How Do We Compare

The Council is required under the Welsh Government's 'Wales Programme for Improvement' guidance to 'identify need' and 'continuously improve services'. In order to assess how well we are doing, the Welsh Government has set a number of statutory performance measures covering key policy areas e.g. Social Services, Education and the Environment. The performance level is then compared to targets that are set by the Council.

This section provides an overview of our performance against the national measures where comparisons can be made, and also a summary of how we performed against the targets set against the Corporate Plan.

4.1 Achieving our National Targets

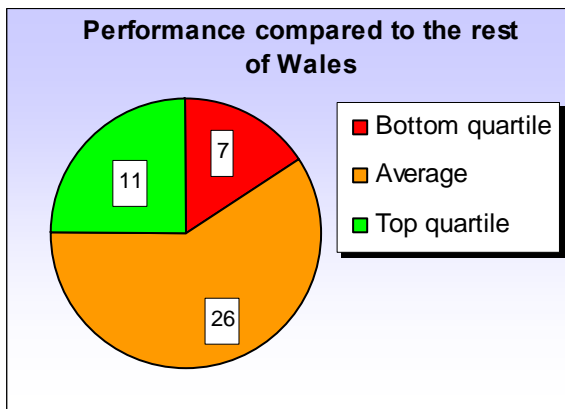


The pie chart left shows our 2012/13 end of year performance for the statutory performance measures compared to targets that the Council set for itself at the beginning of the year.

The Council's understanding of these performance measures and our methods of collecting the data has been checked by our external auditors KPMG. The external auditors had no reservations

regarding the interpretation of the measures. All 44 National Strategic Indicators and Public Accountability Measures have been compared across Wales.

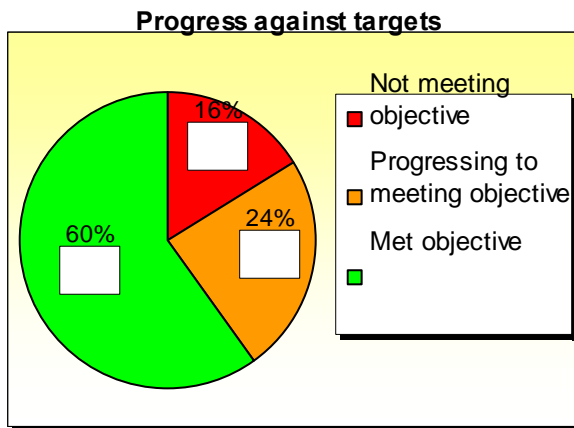
4.2 How do we compare to the rest of Wales?



A large number of our statutory measures place our performance in the top or middle quarter of local authority performance in Wales. We are conscious that we still have performance indicators in the bottom quarter performance for Wales and action is being taken to address this.

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4.3 Achieving our Corporate Plan Targets



The pie chart on the left shows our 2012/13 end of year performance for the corporate plan measures compared to targets that the Council set for itself at the beginning of the year.

For a full report on our performance measures please refer to our website www.conwy.gov.uk/annualreport

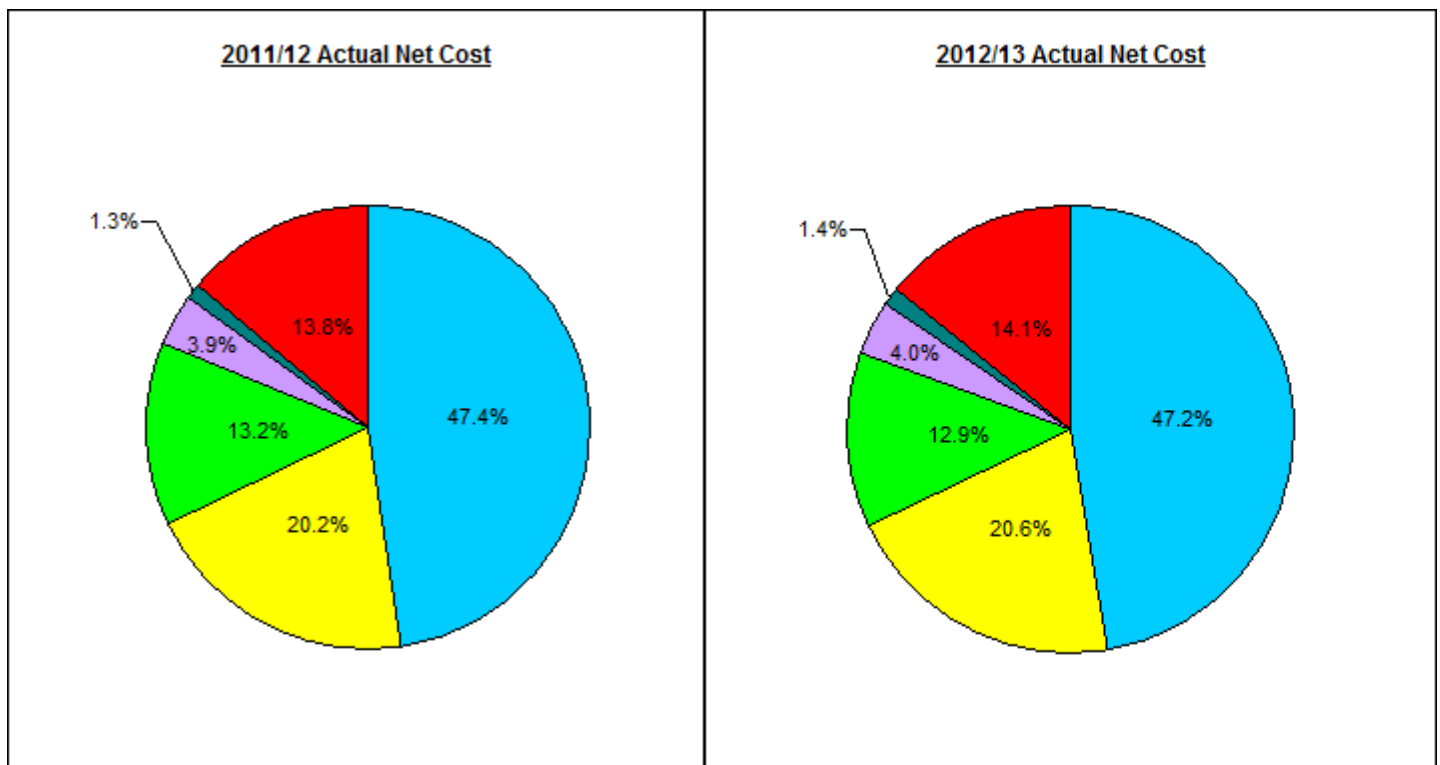
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5 Financial Summary

As a public accountable body, Conwy County Borough Council must provide value for money and charges the fourth lowest Council Tax at Band D in Wales. Each year the Welsh Government provides Local Authorities with a revenue grant settlement which finances a large proportion of the revenue budget. For 2012/13 the settlement was very challenging as it was a real terms cut to funding as a direct result of the economic situation, but with protection built in for Schools and Social Services budgets. This resulted in our forecasted expenditure exceeding the available budget and therefore £5.454 million savings were required to balance the budget. The savings were achieved by a number of initiatives including a revised travel policy for staff in accordance with a Memorandum of Understanding with the Trades Unions, the take up of direct payments within Adult Social Services together with the opening of Extra Care Housing facilities and a number of service re-modelling exercises which achieved staff savings. The table below shows how we spent our budget in 2012/13 and where the money (income) came from.

How the money is spent

2011/12 Actual Net Cost £'000	Service	2012/13 Estimate Net Cost £'000	2012/13 Actual Net Cost £'000
88,466	Education	88,668	88,627
38,035	Social Services	38,691	38,621
24,679	Cultural, Environmental and Planning	24,339	24,184
7,283	Highways, Roads and Transport	7,271	7,449
2,374	Housing	2,548	2,548
25,852	Other Services	26,239	26,412
186,689	TOTAL SERVICES	187,756	187,841



Where the money comes from

2011/12 £'000	Source	2012/13 £'000
117,945	Revenue Support Grant - from WAG	113,351
26,671	Contribution from Non-Domestic Rating Pool - from WAG	30,640
42,073	Met by Council Taxpayers	43,850
186,689	TOTAL FUNDING	187,841
(3,005)	BALANCES (Brought Forward)	(3,005)
(3,005)	BALANCES (Carried Forward)	(2,979)

Capital Expenditure Summary

2011/12 Expenditure £'000	Service	2012/13 Expenditure £'000
3,085	Education	6,552
510	Social Services	608
17,629	Cultural, Environmental and Planning	12,908
3,115	Highways, Roads and Transport	4,718
1,417	Private Sector Housing	1,515
2,160	Other Services	2,104
287	Housing Retained Contracts	23
28,203	TOTAL SERVICES	28,428

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6 Have Your Say

Conwy County Borough Council is committed to improving our services and it is important that we listen to what you, the community, say. We welcome your comments or suggestions for improvements for the Council to consider at any time of the year, so please let us know.

Please contact us if you have:

- Any comments or enquiries regarding the content of the report;
- If you would like to make recommendations as to new improvement objectives the Council should consider;
- Or you would like a copy of the Corporate Plan 2012 – 2017, Annual Governance Statement or Annual Report 2011-12.

Write to **Corporate Improvement & Development Team
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Conwy
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BT Relay Service Customers with hearing or speech impairments can contact any Council service by dialling **18001** before the number they require.

This Summary Report, the Annual Report, the Corporate Plan, the Annual Governance Statement and the Wales Audit Office Annual Improvement Report are all published on our website in English and Welsh.

www.conwy.gov.uk/accountability and www.conwy.gov.uk/corporateplan

You can also access the Reports on our free public access computers which are in all Council Libraries and Bodlondeb and Civic Office Receptions.

Copies of the Summary and Annual Report can be made available in Braille, large print and audio CD. Please call 01492 574000 to arrange a copy.

In order to be sustainable and to reduce printing costs, a limited number of paper copies of the Annual Report are available at these locations:

Council Libraries
Mobile Library
Housebound Service
Bodlondeb, Conwy
Town Hall, Llandudno
The Heath, Llanfairfechan

Civic Office, Colwyn Bay
Government Buildings, Dinerth Road, Colwyn Bay
Bron y Nant Offices, Dinerth Road, Colwyn Bay
Mochdre Council Offices
Glasdir, Llanrwst

A paper copy can be requested by calling 01492 574000.

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7 Where to Get More Information About Your Council

Our Website	www.conwy.gov.uk
Social Networks	You can follow us on Twitter and Face book
The integrated plan for the County Borough of Conwy 'One Conwy' 2012 - 2025	www.conwy.gov.uk/oneconwy
Conwy County Borough Council's Corporate Plan 2012 - 2017 and 6 monthly Performance Reports	www.conwy.gov.uk/corporateplan
The Local Government Data Unit collect, present and compare the National Performance Measurement Framework data for all councils in Wales. A performance measurement report detailing Conwy's progress over a period of years is available on our website:	www.lgdu-wales.gov.uk www.conwy.gov.uk/accountability
Wales Audit Office inspect all Welsh Local Authorities' performance. National and council specific audit reports can be found at:	www.wao.gov.uk
Estyn inspects all primary & secondary schools and Local Education Authorities across Wales. All inspection reports can be accessed at:	www.estyn.co.uk
The Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) inspects the quality of social care establishments and some early years provision across the County. All inspection reports can be accessed at:	www.cssiw.org.uk