

EXECUTIVE
9TH DECEMBER 2008

Minutes of the meeting of the Executive of Flintshire County Council held at County Hall, Mold on Tuesday, 9th December 2008.

PRESENT: Councillor A Woolley (Chairman)

Councillors: C. Ellis, P.G Heesom, M. Higham, H.D Hutchinson, N. Matthews, N. Phillips, L.A Sharps, N.R Steele-Mortimer and H. Yale.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors: J.B Attridge, K. Armstrong-Braun, R. Baker, R.C Bithell, D. Mackie, Doreen Mackie, and A.P Shotton.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Executive, Director of Community Services, Director of Environment, Director of Lifelong Learning, County Legal and Democratic Services Officer, County Finance Officer and Head of Committee, Member and Electoral Services.

189. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 18th November 2008 were confirmed as a correct record.

Matters Arising

Minute number 176 – Supporting People update.

The Executive Member for Social Services referred to resolution (c) and asked whether any progress had been made for a member seminar to be held on the Supporting People programme. The Director of Community Services referred to the work of the Supporting People Project Group which was nearing a conclusion and there was a need for a member seminar to give further consideration to this matter. A provisional date was being considered.

The Executive Member for Housing Strategy and Planning referred to the impact of supporting people on housing and asked for this to be considered at a future meeting of the Leader Strategy Group which was agreed.

190. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The County Legal and Democratic Services reported that the Standards Committee at its meeting the previous evening had agreed to allow dispensations for Councillors Carol Ellis, H.D Hutchinson, Neville Phillips and Arnold Woolley to speak and vote at this meeting and any subsequent Overview and Scrutiny Committee Call-In in relation to the item on the old Buckley baths building.

The Leader referred to the call-ins by Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to disposal of part of the site of the Belmont Special School Buckley, the disposal of land fronting Glanrafon Road, Mold and the procedure for the appointment of LEA Governors to School Governing Bodies. The County Legal and Democratic Services Officer reported that the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee had considered each of the call-ins and were satisfied that the decision of the Executive in relation to each call-in had received a satisfactory explanation at the meeting and the decisions could be implemented.

Change to the Agenda for the Meeting

The Chairman referred to agenda item number 10 on the Supporting People Operational Plan 2009/10 and that it was proposed to defer consideration of this report to allow Members to give further consideration and to hold a Working Group/Seminar in January prior to a further report being made to a future Executive.

The Chief Executive referred to the financial implications of this report and that it was important that Members noted these at this stage to enable officer consideration to be given to the phased reduction in eligibility for funding.

The Leader also referred to agenda item number 13 on the Flint Conservation Area Appraisal and Conservation Area Management Plan. As the full Plan had not circulated to or been considered by Members this report was to be deferred. The Director of Environment apologised for the omission of the Appraisal and Management Plan and asked for agreement in principle to the report recommendations to enable the Conservation Area Action Plan to be submitted before Christmas, and suggested that the decision be delegated to him in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing Strategy and Planning. This was agreed.

191. DRAFT IMPROVEMENT AGREEMENT

The Chief Executive presented a report the purpose of which was for Members to agree the themes of the draft improvement agreement with the Welsh Assembly Government and to endorse the approach to finalising the agreement. The report outlined the strategic themes set for the agreement which were A Healthy, Fair and Just Society – Adults; A Healthy, Fair and Just Society – Children; Sustainable Communities and a Prosperous, Cultural and Diverse Society. Two outcomes were to be selected from each of these themes. It was recognised that all the possible outcomes listed for selection were important; three criteria to assess the proposed outcomes had been set and were highlighted in the report. The Improvement Agreement needed to be agreed before the end of the current financial year and this would replace the former performance incentive grant and would equate to a grant stream of £1.47m per year over a three year period.

RESOLVED

That the themes of the draft Improvement Agreement with the Welsh Assembly Government be agreed and the approach to finalising the Agreement be endorsed.

192. MID YEAR STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP PERFORMANCE – SUMMARY

The Chief Executive presented a report the purpose of which gave a mid year overview of the critical importance of the five Strategic Partnerships and the key priorities for each one highlighting the progress made in the last year and the key milestones for the year ahead. He also made reference to the Flintshire Local Service Board and the five key Strategic Partnerships which were Children and Young Peoples Partnership and Plan 2008-2011; Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Partnership and the Good Health, Good Care Strategy – 2008-2011; the Regeneration Partnership and the Voluntary Sector Compact.

The Executive Member for Housing Strategy and Planning referred to the partnerships which were intended to maintain the fabric of society and were Welsh Assembly Government driven. He believed that the Assembly was being restrictive in its financial support to these projects. The Executive Member for Regeneration and Tourism endorsed these views and referred to the workshop that had recently been held on regeneration. The Chief Executive responded and explained that the Regeneration Partnership was a discretionary partnership and commented on the costs of administering strategic partnerships.

RESOLVED

That the mid year review of the Strategic Partnerships be noted and that support to the key priorities and work programme support to the attainment of the priorities listed be continued.

193. LEISURE SERVICES STRATEGY

The Executive Member for Leisure and Public Protection introduced a report the purpose of which was to set out a draft Leisure Strategy for Flintshire which was based on the County Council's developing plans in this field for consultation with the community, user groups and wider sports interests.

The Executive Member referred to the wide range of sports and leisure facilities available in the County many of which were operated by the County Council. The strategy had been prepared in order to bring all of the different aspects of sport and leisure together and he referred to the links with health, education, young people the environment and the economy. The strategy recognised the need for further investment in some of the leisure buildings and he welcomed the views on the overall strategy that would be forthcoming from the consultation process.

The Leader, referred to the recommendations of the report and proposed that recommendation one be amended that the Executive agree that the Sports and Leisure Strategy goes for consultation and recommendation three that a further report be presented to the Leader Strategy Group and County Council following consultation in the spring of 2009. The County Legal and Democratic Services Officer referred to the status of the Leader Strategy Group and suggested that the further report be submitted to the County Council following the consultation process and this was agreed.

The Director of Lifelong Learning referred to the Leisure Services Strategy which had been circulated as an appendix to the report which was based on all known information on usage and key actions which were outlined. He emphasised that this was a draft document at this stage and it was important to have full consultation to enable further information to be made available and incorporated.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the Sports and Leisure Strategy goes for consultation;
- (b) That Overview and Scrutiny be invited to comment on the Strategy; and
- (c) That a further report be presented to the County Council following consultation in the Spring 2009.

194. DEESIDE LEISURE CENTRE

The Executive Member for Leisure and Public Protection introduced a report the purpose of which was to report on progress of the redevelopment project for Deeside Leisure Centre site and to commission the next steps of the project. He said that he was very encouraged with the proposals and referred to meetings that had been held and welcomed the proposals to develop this facility.

Members supported the need for consultation with all stakeholders and sports organisations and suggested that consultation be undertaken with schools.

The Chief Executive referred to the long standing commitment to redevelop this site and referred to the enormous potential that was available for both leisure and a mix of other public services on the site. He suggested that the Welsh Assembly Government be asked to recognise this as a project of regional strategic significance. He referred to support that had been announced for regional projects other areas of Wales and it would be necessary to engage with both the Welsh Assembly Government and the Sports Council for Wales.

The Chief Executive responded to comments made by the Executive Member for the Environment in respect of national capital funding (Strategic

Capital Investment Fund) that might be available for this and a number of other strategic projects in Flintshire such as the Welsh College of Horticulture and Warren Hall. The Executive Member for Housing Strategy and Planning also suggested that Housing could be included in this consideration.

RESOLVED

That the report be received and authorisation be given to further works identified in paragraph 3.05 of the report with full details and costings being reported back in early 2009.

195. WELSH PUBLIC LIBRARY STANDARDS ANNUAL REPORT 2007/08

The Executive Member for Education and Youth introduced a report the purpose of which was to present the response of the Welsh Assembly Government to the County Council's Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Report for 2007/08 which had been approved for submission to the Assembly by the Lifelong Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4th September 2008.

RESOLVED

That the response of the Welsh Assembly Government to the Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Report 2007/08 be noted.

196. NATIONAL SERVICE FRAMEWORK FOR OLDER PEOPLE – FLINTSHIRE PROGRESS

The Director of Community Services introduced a report the purpose of which was to inform the Executive of Flintshire's progress in relation to the National Service Framework for Older People.

The Director referred to the framework for older people which had been published in March 2006 and was a set of 10 Standards for Health and Social Care Services for older people in Wales.

RESOLVED

That Flintshire's progress in relation to the actions reported upon in this report and the news letter attached as an Appendix and the areas for further development be noted.

197. SUPPORTING PEOPLE OPERATIONAL PLAN 2009-10

A report of the Director of Community Services, as referred to at the commencement of the meeting by the Chairman, was deferred to enable Members to take part in a proposed workshop before deliberating on the report.

RESOLVED

That the item be deferred but the financial implications be noted.

198. NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL ASSESSMENT

The Executive Member for Housing Strategy and Planning introduced a report the purpose of which was to:-

- (a) Inform the Executive of a bid to the Welsh Assembly Government for the declaration of a renewal area as a key component of the Council's private sector housing renewal policy;
- (b) To seek Executive approval for the necessary large neighbourhood Renewal Assessment for the declaration of the renewal area; and
- (c) To ask the Executive to agree to a further report being presented following the completion of the necessary Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment in order to consider its declaration by no later than September 2009.

The Director of Community Services explained that this was an enabling report and would allow officers to undertake works to focus on specific areas and that further reports would be submitted to the Executive. The Chief Executive emphasised the importance of having a long term strategy for a wider area and that there were a number of renewal areas that would be considered over a period of years.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the undertaking of the necessary large Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment be approved; and
- (b) That the Executive receives a further report following the large Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment and considers whether it would formally declare a renewal area.

199. NORTH WALES RESIDUAL WASTE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

The County Legal and Democratic Services Officer, as the Monitoring Officer, presented a report the purpose of which was to seek approval from the Executive to:-

- (a) Set up a Joint Committee with Conwy County Borough Council, Denbighshire County Council, Gwynedd County Council and the Isle of Anglesey County Council called the "The North Wales Residual Waste Treatment Partnership"; and
- (b) To approve the draft agreement set out in Appendix A to the report comprising the governance provisions and terms of reference on the Joint Committee and to formally nominate one of the two Council representatives (Councillors N. Matthews and P.G Heesom) to be the representative entitled to vote at the meetings of the Joint Committee

and to formally nominate two deputies in the event that either of those two representatives were unable to attend.

The County Legal and Democratic Services Officer explained that this was an update to the report considered at the last meeting and related to governance issues and similar reports would need to be considered by all partner authorities in North Wales. He noted that the agreement circulated as an Appendix required some further editing and he would circulate a revised agreement to Members. The Chief Executive also referred to the first shadow joint committee meeting that had been held which had confirmed Flintshire County Council's role as the lead authority.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the formation of a Joint Committee of the five North Wales Authorities concerned in the North Wales Treatment Project to be called "The North Wales Residual Treatment Partnership" be agreed;
- (b) That the draft agreement attached as Appendix A to the report be agreed and that delegated authority be given to the Monitoring Officer to approve any necessary amendments to the draft in consultation with the Executive Member for waste management;
- (c) That Councillor Nancy Matthews, being one of the two Council representatives on the Joint Committee be the Council's voting representative on the Joint Committee and that in her absence Councillor P.G Heesom shall be entitled to exercise those voting rights; and
- (d) That Councillors A. Woolley and N. Phillips be appointed deputies to attend the Joint Committee in the absence of either or both nominated Members with Councillor Woolley be entitled to vote in the absence of both Councillor Nancy Matthews and Councillor P.G Heesom and should he also be absent then Councillor Phillips shall be entitled to vote.

200. FLINT CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Director of Environment referred to the statement of the Chairman at the commencement of the meeting that this item be deferred to enable Members to have the opportunity to consider the plan in detail and make observations to him before a decision was made. He sought confirmation that the decision be delegated to him in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and this was confirmed.

RESOLVED

That the report be deferred and that delegation to finalise the documents be given to the Director of Environment in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing Strategy and Planning.

201. HOLYWELL TOWNSCAPE HERITAGE INITIATIVE PHASE 1 – FINAL REPORT

The Executive Member for Housing Strategy and Planning presented a report the purpose of which was to report that the first phase of the Holywell Townscape Heritage Initiative had been formally completed early in the year and that the report informed Members about the principal outputs of the initiative during its period of operation between 2001 – 2007.

The Executive Member in introducing the report paid compliments to all who had been involved in the project and expressed his appreciation of the quality of the outcomes and emphasised the need to give publicity to this project. The Director of Environment thanked the Executive Member for his kind remarks and reported that the scheme had brought back into use a significant area of previously empty space, around 20 properties together with the creation of a number of jobs. A number of awards had been won and Flintshire's contribution to Phase 1 of the scheme between 2001/02 and 2007/08 had been £172,208 which had levered a total programme value of £4,055,749. In conclusion, the Executive Member for Housing Strategy and Planning acknowledged the role of the previous administration in the success of this project.

RESOLVED

That the achievements of the completed first phase of the Holywell THI, be noted.

202. OLD BUCKLEY BATHS BUILDING

The County Legal and Democratic Services Officer introduced a report the purpose of which was to review the decision of the Executive made on 12th December, 2006 for the sale of the old Buckley baths building and to consider an alternative proposal to create a charitable community trust to undertake a feasibility study to establish whether it was viable to restore and remodel the building for use by the local community.

The County Legal and Democratic Services Officer referred to the background to the report and to the comprehensive research undertaken on behalf of Buckley Town Council and the outcome of a separate research undertaken by the Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation which were attached as Appendix 1 and 2 to the report. The most recent history of the building had been its closure in 2005 following the opening of the new baths and on 12th December, 2006 the Executive considered a report of the then Acting Chief Executive concerning a delegated power following the recommendation of an earlier meeting of the Land Disposal Panel. This Panel had recommended the sale of the baths on terms negotiated with a private developer and the property was to be disposed of and demolished.

The County Legal and Democratic Services Officer informed the Executive that the Buckley Town Council had contested the County Council's

ownership of the land and the Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation had indicated that a trust would have been established when the baths had been built. However, there was no evidence to support this and it was his view that the County Council was the rightful owner. Meetings had been held with local Members and a number of options had been considered which included the establishment of a charitable trust which would allow Buckley Town Council to allocate funds for a feasibility study that would demonstrate that the conversion of the building for community use was viable and affordable. If all parties agreed in principle to create a charitable trust a copy of the model document which could be used was attached as Appendix 3 to the report. Once the feasibility study had been completed and considered by all three parties a report would be made back to the Executive.

RESOLVED

That agreement, in principle, be given to participation in the creation of a charitable community trust in which to vest the old Buckley baths in the event that the proposed feasibility study demonstrated that the conversion of the building for community use was viable and affordable.

203. QUARTER TWO PERFORMANCE REPORT 2008/09 AND PERFORMANCE REPORTING

A report on the progress of the 2008/09 performance at the mid year point was received.

RESOLVED

That the performance information contained within Appendix 1 to the report and specific indicators which could require referral to the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration, was noted.

204. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2008/09 (MONTH 6)

The County Finance Officer presented a report the purpose of which was to update Members on the Council's financial position for 2008/09 in respect of the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account.

The County Finance Officer referred to the projected net under spend of £0.717m on the General Fund and the projected overspend of £0.436m on the Housing Revenue Account. It was emphasised that there were still a number of risks on the projections that could have a significant impact on the final position. For the General Fund these were highlighted in paragraph 2.22 of the report and included the effects of inflation, interest rates and the current unstable economic climate. The direct effects of the current unstable economic climate were estimated to be in the region of £1m and there were other pressures such as the looked after children budget. If the Executive or County Council were to approve that the current projected non ring fenced overspends of £1.360m was to be met from unearmarked reserves, the contingency sum available would reduce from £2.588m to £1.228m.

The County Finance Officer then referred to the Housing Revenue Account and taken into account the projected overspend of £0.436m the level of balance as at 31st March, 2009 would be £0.814m. The significant new variances were the building maintenance trading account overspend of £0.299m and the repairs and maintenance overspend of £0.312m. The net effects of the revised balance brought forward on the projected outturn was that there would be balances in hand at the end of the year of £0.814m which at 3.6% of budget expenditure was greater than the minimum level of 3% recommended by the County Finance Officer.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the overall report be noted.
- (b) That the General Fund Contingency sum available at 31st March, 2009 (Section 4) be noted; and
- (c) That the projected final level of balances on the Housing Revenue Account (paragraph 5.08), be noted.

205. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2008/09 (MONTH 6)

The County Finance Officer presented a report the purpose of which was to provide Members with the latest Capital Programme Information for 2008/09 at month six. The table at paragraph 3.01.1 of the report set out how the programme had changed during 2008/09. From this, it could be seen that the previously reported programme total of £55.625m had decreased to £53.741m which was a net reduction of £1.884m and the reasons for this were set out in paragraph 3.01.2 of the report.

The County Finance Officer referred to General Fund capital receipts and the latest monitoring information indicated a shortfall of £4.054m in 2008/09 receipts against the £10.354m total. Part of this shortfall would be covered by the contractually uncommitted total of £1.956m. The balance of the shortfall would be covered at this stage by a reduced headroom figure. Regular monitoring of capital receipts was undertaken as part of the overall monitoring of the capital programme. The reduction in capital receipts was able to be managed at this stage but would be an issue in the medium to long term if receipts did not come in. The deterioration of the HRA capital receipts position had resulted in the required rephasing of £1.988m of programmed expenditure and this reduced the 2008/09 capital receipts requirement to a total of £2.275m. This figure would also continue to be closely monitored during the second half of the year.

The Executive Member for Housing Strategy and Planning emphasised the importance of the general public and council tax payers being made aware of the effects of the current economic downturn which affected the County Council as well as everyone else. He emphasised the importance of maximising the disposal of the County Council's assets as far as this was possible.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted and approved.

206. HOUSING UPDATE: HOMELESSNESS, TENANT PARTICIPATION AND ALLOCATIONS

The Director of Community Services provided an update to Members of the Executive in relation to the three key areas of housing service which were tenant participation, housing allocations and the homelessness service. The report provided an update on each of the three key areas and she referred to the introduction of the new Housing Allocations Policy and to the proposal to provide a members seminar to be held on 17th December. As a Special County Council had been arranged for this date it would now be necessary to rearrange this meeting for the New Year.

The Executive Member for Estate Management referred to the number of workshops that had been organised in September and expressed her disappointment on the poor attendance by Councillors. She referred to the Tenant Participation Group and suggested that two representatives of the Community and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee be invited to be members of this group and move this as an addition to the recommendations.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the contents of the report be noted and that regular updates on the progress of future meetings be received; and
- (b) That two representatives of the Community and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee be invited to be members of the Tenant Participation Group.

207. APPOINTMENT OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES ASSISTANT TO PROVIDE SERVICES IN RELATION TO THE SUPPORTING PEOPLE REVENUE GRANTS

The Executive Member for Social Services presented a report the purpose of which was to seek approval to employ a full time post holder to undertake work with parents and their dependent children who required housing related support to develop or maintain their skills and confidence to live independently.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the establishment of a Children's Services Assistant post to undertake the aims and tasks as set out in paragraphs 2.03 and 2.04 of the report, be approved; and
- (b) That the remainder of the grant would be used to fund sessional staff to support families, be noted.

208. EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS

An information report of the Chief Executive, the purpose of which was to inform Members of actions taken under delegated powers, was introduced by the Chairman.

The actions taken were as set out below:-

- Environment - disposal of 71 Clivedon Road, Connah's Quay, Deeside.
- disposal of Buckley Little Theatre premises, Mill Lane, Buckley to the Buckley Theatre Group.
- ICT & Customer Services - to introduce private citizenship ceremonies with effect from 1st December, 2008 under the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum act, 2002.

209. DURATION OF MEETING

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am and ended at 11.10 am.

210. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

There were two members of the press present.

.....
Chairman

SUMMARY OF DECLARATIONS MADE BY MEMBERS
IN ACCORDANCE WITH FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S
CODE OF CONDUCT

EXECUTIVE	DATE: 9th December 2008
------------------	---

MEMBER	ITEM	MIN. NO. REFERS
Councillors	C Ellis H D Hutchinson N Phillips A Woolley	190