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Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol a
Democrataidd



**TO: Councillor: Arnold Woolley
(Chairman)**

Councillors: Carol Ellis, Mel Higham, Dennis Hutchinson,
Nancy Matthews, Neville Phillips OBE, Tony Sharps,
Nigel Steele-Mortimer, Helen Yale

Your Ref /
Eich Cyf

ur Ref / Ein Cyf ^{NGO}

Date / Dyddiad 15/06/2011

Ask for / Gofynner am Nicola Gittins

Direct Dial / Rhif Union 01352 702345

Fax / Ffacs

Dear Sir / Madam,

A meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** will be held in the **CLWYD COMMITTEE ROOM, COUNTY HALL, MOLD** on **TUESDAY, 18 NOVEMBER 2008** at **09:30** to consider the following items.

Yours faithfully

Democracy and Governance Manager

AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES**

2. **MINUTES**

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on 21 October 2008 and 29 October 2008 (copies enclosed).

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING REPORTS

STRATEGIC REPORTS

4. COUNCILLOR WARD GRANTS

Report of the Chief Executive - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Corporate Governance and Strategy

County Hall, Mold. CH7 6NA
Tel. 01352 702400 DX 708591 Mold 4
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5. POLICE GREEN PAPER: 'FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD TO THE NATIONAL'. CONSULTATION RESPONSE
Report of the Chief Executive - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Corporate Governance and Strategy
6. PROCUREMENT STRATEGY 2008/09 - 2010/11
Report of the County Finance Officer - Portfolio of the Leader and Executive Member for Finance and Asset Management
7. PEOPLE STRATEGY 2006-2009 UPDATE ON PROGRESS
Report of the Interim Assistant Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Corporate Governance and Strategy
8. STRATEGY FOR OLDER PEOPLE IN WALES UPDATE
Report of the Director of Community Services - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Social Services
9. GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME- ANNUAL REPORT 2007-2008
Report of the Chief Executive - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Corporate Governance and Strategy
10. MAKING THE CONNECTIONS - NORTH WALES ADOPTION CONSORTIUM
Report of the Director of Community Services - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Social Services
11. DISPOSAL OF PART OF THE SITE OF THE BELMONT SPECIAL SCHOOL, BUCKLEY TO FACILITATE THE CONSTRUCTION OF A PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CENTRE
Report of the Director of Environment - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Environment
12. THE DISPOSAL OF LAND FRONTING GLANRAFON ROAD, MOLD, TO APOLLO CAPITAL PROJECTS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CENTRE.
Report of the Director of Environment - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Environment

OPERATIONAL REPORTS

13. RESPONSE TO PROVISIONAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT SETTLEMENT 2009/10
Report of the County Finance Officer and Chief Executive - Portfolio of the Leader and Executive Member for Finance and Asset Management
14. COUNCIL TAX BASE FOR 2009-10
Report of the County Finance Officer - Portfolio of the Leader and Executive Member for Finance and Asset Management
15. LOCAL TAXATION POLICIES 2009-10
Report of the County Finance Officer - Portfolio of the Leader of the Council

16. UPDATE ON MOLD EXTRA CARE SCHEME
Report of the Director of Community Services - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Social Services and Executive Member for Estate Management (Housing and Industrial/Commercial and Agricultural)
17. SUPPORTING PEOPLE UPDATE
Report of the Director of Community Services - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Social Services and Executive Member for Estate Management (Housing and Industrial/Commercial and Agricultural)
18. PROCEDURE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF LEA GOVERNORS TO SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES
Report of the Director of Lifelong Learning - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Education and Youth
19. FOURTH, FIFTH AND SIXTH ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE FLINTSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM
Report of the County Legal and Democratic Services Officer - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Corporate Governance and Strategy
20. PROPOSED WAITING RESTRICTIONS - MOLD ROAD, GREEN LANE, BROADWAY AND MOLD WAY, EWLOE
Report of the Director of Environment - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Environment
21. A541 HENDRE - 30/40 MPH SPEED LIMIT
Report of the Director of Environment - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Environment
22. PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL TEMPORARY ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT PERSON FOR THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SERVICE
Report of the Director of Lifelong Learning - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Education and Youth
23. DEESIDE LEISURE CENTRE
Report of the Director of Lifelong Learning - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Leisure and Public Protection
24. EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS
Report of the Chief Executive enclosed.
25. FOR INFORMATION
A copy of the Executive Forward Work Programme (Months 09/08 to 11/08) (as considered by the Executive on 5 August, 2008) together with an update are enclosed for information.

EXECUTIVE
21ST OCTOBER 2008

Minutes of the meeting of the Executive of Flintshire County Council held in County Hall, Mold on Tuesday, 21st October, 2008.

PRESENT: Councillor A. Woolley (Chairman)

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors: J.B. Attridge, A. Davies-Cooke, R. Hampson, R. Jones, D. Mackie and Doreen Mackie.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Executive, Director of Community Services, Director of Environment, Director of Lifelong Learning, County Legal & Democratic Services Officer, County Finance Officer, Assistant Director of ICT and Customer Services, Policy, Performance and Partnerships Manager and Head of Committee, Member and Electoral Services.

APOLOGY

Councillor M. Higham.

133. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

134. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2007/08

A report of the Chief Executive, copies of which had been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The Chief Executive presented the report, the purpose of which was to endorse the draft 2007/08 Annual Performance Report prior to approval by the County Council on 28th October, 2008.

The Chief Executive referred to the draft Annual Performance Report 2007/08 which had been circulated to the Executive Members prior to the meeting and that copies would be made available to all Members.

The Chief Executive gave a short presentation to the Executive and referred to this report being a Statutory Improvement Plan and representing a performance overview for 2007/08. It gave a position against strategic risks and the regulatory plan for 2007/08. It was required to be published by 31st October and a public summary made available by 30th November. Progress against strategic risks for community leadership, council delivery and council governance was to be reflected in the performance plan.

The presentation included a performance overview which showed that Flintshire County Council was in the top three in Wales in 40 indicators, 32 indicators had significantly improved by over 20% and there were 19 indicators in which Flintshire were in the bottom three in Wales.

The next steps were for the report to be considered at the County Council on 28th October 2008, the report to be published as a word document on 31st October and then re-formatted as a web based document with a public summary to be in the "Your Community, Your Council" publication on 30th November.

Councillor P.G. Heesom referred to the considerable improvement and was in respect of performance for the year April 2007 to March 2008. He did have continual concerns on housing performance.

In response, the Chief Executive explained that the mechanism to set out more specific improvements/intentions was in the Council Plan and the Performance Review document contained historic improvements for housing together with a mid-year review. This was a working draft and a further presentation would be made to the County Council on 28th October and would provide more information from the mid-year review.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the draft 2007/08 Annual Performance Report, be endorsed and
- b) That final approval of the 2007/08 Annual Performance Report be sought from County Council on 28th October 2008.

135. DURATION OF MEETING

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm at ended at 2.17pm.

136. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

There no members of the press or public in attendance.

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Chairman

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

EXECUTIVE	DATE: 21st October 2008
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MEMBER	ITEM	MIN. NO. REFERS
NO DECLARATIONS WERE MADE		

EXECUTIVE
29TH OCTOBER 2008

Minutes of the meeting of the Executive of Flintshire County Council held in County Hall, Mold on Wednesday, 29th October, 2008.

PRESENT: Councillor A. Woolley (Chairman)

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors: J.B. Attridge, S.R. Baker, G.H. Bateman, R.C. Bithell, E.G. Cooke, R.G. Hampson, R. Hughes, Mrs C.M. Jones, R.P. MacFarlane, D.I. Mackie, A.P. Shotton and D.E. Wisinger.

APOLOGY:

Councillors: M. Higham, L.A. Sharps and Chief Executive.

IN ATTENDANCE:

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

133. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th October 2008 were confirmed as a correct record.

Matters Arising

Members Present

Councillor N. Phillips said that he had submitted an apology for this meeting and asked for this to be recorded.

Minute 102 Post Office Closures

In response to a question regarding an update provided at the County Council the previous day the County Legal and Democratic Services Officer referred to the action agreed and Members would be circulated with the response received from the Post Office to date.

134. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were received.

135. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY/BUDGET 2009/10 PROCESS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT 2009/10

A report of the County Finance Officer, copies of which have been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The County Finance Officer presented the report the purpose of which was to provide the Executive with an update on the work being undertaken on both the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the 2009/10 budget. The report also provided details of the provisional Welsh Local Government settlement 2009/10 which had been announced by the Welsh Assembly Government on 15th October 2008.

The County Finance Officer highlighted sections of the report and to the action plan to implement the principles and activities of the strategy which had been referred to in the 16th September 2008 Executive. This had now been completed and work was underway to enable the deadlines to be met. Service Managers had completed their mid year business reviews which required managers to address the areas of risk, performance, internal/external influences and funding issues as well as identifying future pressures and possible and achievable efficiencies.

Details of the provisional settlement was set out in the report and in addition to this financial support from the Welsh Assembly Government there were two other important aspects in establishing the overall resources available. The first of these was the Local Taxation policy which would set the Council Tax base and upon which a report would be submitted to the Executive on 18th November, 2008. This would review the Council Tax discounts and exemptions and to set the Council Tax base of 2009/10 prior to submission to the Assembly by 30th November, 2008. Secondly, it had previously been agreed that the position as at month six (end of September) would form the basis of planning for 2009/10. Budget monitoring for month six and the resultant estimated level of reserves and balances at 31st March, 2009 would be completed by mid November and would be reported formally to the Executive on 9th December, 2008.

A presentation on the Medium Term Financial Strategy had previously been made to Overview and Scrutiny and a further presentation would be made to the Corporate Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held the following day. In addition, the School Budget Forum had received a presentation at its meeting on 2nd October, 2008. The Forum had been asked to submit items it wished the Council to consider when setting the 2009/10 budget. Paragraph 3.09 of the report set out five items which the Forum had requested to be considered as part of the MTFS/budget process.

Members were reminded that the settlement at this stage was provisional and it was expected that the final details would be received on 10th December, 2008. The formal consultation period on the provisional settlement was from 15th October to 18th November and arrangements would be made to co-ordinate the Council's formal response to the Welsh Assembly Government and to include comments from both Executive and Overview and Scrutiny.

The County Finance Officer referred to Aggregate External Finance (AEF) and that the overall increase was 2.9% across Wales. Flintshire's increase was 2.7% bringing the total AEF to £181.502m and Flintshire's calculated SSA had increased by 2.7% to £232.590m. The Assembly had retained a "floor funding" arrangement for 2009/10 which would ensure that all Authorities received a minimum increase in AEF of 1.5%. There were three Authorities receiving additional funding under this arrangement which were Anglesey, Blaenau Gwent and Powys.

The County Finance Officer referred to the Assembly's draft budget which had announced an additional £10.0m of funding for Local Government across Wales which included the floor funding (£3.0m), LABGI funding (£3.0m) and pay and price pressures (£4.0m). The settlement details highlighted the inclusion of additional responsibilities across Wales for learner travel which was an extension of free school transport and Flintshire would receive £0.154m. Details were still awaited for the specific grants – revenue but additional specific grant funding had been announced to support the role out of the Foundation Phase which would provide £20.0m at the all Wales level. In respect of unhyphocated grants Flintshire would receive deprivation grants of £0.225m and improvement agreement grants of £1.497m. In respect of the capital settlement Flintshire, for general capital funding had remained unchanged at £10.431m which was divided into general capital grant of £2.604m and £7.827m support within the settlement for borrowing.

In conclusion, the County Finance Officer referred to the recommendations of the report and for Members to provide her with any comments on the provisional settlement by 10th November in order that these comments, together with those of Overview and Scrutiny, could be reported to the Welsh Assembly Government by 18th November, 2008 which was the end of the consultation period.

Councillors P.G. Heesom and N.R. Steele-Mortimer referred to the submission from the School Budget Forum to address the gap between the revenue expenditure and the Indicator Based Assessment and this needed to be seen as an emerging issue and to be taken on board.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the work already undertaken and planned to develop the MTFS and establish the 2009/10 budget proposals and timetable, be noted.
- (b) That the 2009/10 provisional settlement information, be noted.
- (c) That the County Finance Officer be provided with any comments on the provisional Local Government settlement by 10th November in order that these comments together with those of Overview and Scrutiny could be reported to the Welsh Assembly Government by 18th November, 2008 which was the end of the consultation period.
- (d) That the County Finance Officer collate comments on the provisional settlement and that they be shared with Executive Members before they are reported to the Welsh Assembly Government.

136. DRAFT IMPROVEMENT AGREEMENT WITH WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT

A report of the Chief Executive, copies of which have been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The Executive Member for Corporate Governance and Strategy presented the report the purpose of which was to provide Members with a clear process for approving the Council's improvement agreement and accessing the improvement agreement grant.

RESOLVED:

That the process for approving the improvement agreement as outlined in section 3.05 of the report, be endorsed.

137. COUNCIL PLAN REVIEW

A report of the Chief Executive, copies of which have been previously circulated to Members was submitted. The Executive Member for Corporate Governance and Strategy, presented the report the purpose of which was to update Members on the review of the Council Plan and to outline a clear process for its development and approval.

The Director of Lifelong Learning reported that the Council had had a Council Plan since 2005 which had been reviewed each year. Its served two main purposes, firstly to inform ongoing business planning within services and secondly to provide part 1 of the Council's Improvement Plan as the annual forward planning document. Since 2008, the Council Plan 2008-2012 had been under review pending a number of interlinking and formative developments. These included the adoption and review of the strategic assessment of risks and challenges, a categorisation of indicator targets and the development of the Council's improvement agreement with the Welsh Assembly Government. The priorities of the new administration also needed to be reflected within the emerging Council Plan.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed process as outlined in paragraph 3.03 of the report for the development and approval of the Council Plan, be approved.

138. "PLANNING POLICY CHANGES TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL AREAS – MEETING HOUSING NEEDS" – WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT DRAFT POLICY CONSULTATION

A report of the Director of Environment, copies of which have been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The Executive Member for Housing Strategy and Planning presented the report the purpose of which was to inform Members of the main issues raised by the Welsh Assembly Government recent consultation on "Planning Policy Changes to Support Sustainable Development in Rural Areas – Meeting Housing Needs" which

had been issued in July 2008 and sought Members approval for the proposed response to the consultation.

The Executive Member referred to the report which reflected some Officers concerns that it was weakening the existing policies and that their observations should be supported. These related to the issues of essential dwellings in the countryside for farm or forestry workers and affordable housing in rural areas and these would be a matter for consideration in the Local Development Plans.

Councillors N.R. Steele-Mortimer and N. Matthews said that they wished to support the recommendations from the Welsh Assembly Government and could not support the recommendations of the report and would be voting against them.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the comments and responses to the Welsh Assembly Government consultation document as set out in the report and contained within Appendix 1 and 2 of the report, be endorsed.
- (b) That the Welsh Assembly Government be informed that the draft to these comments already submitted by the deadline represent the formal views of the Council.

139. EMERGING FLINTSHIRE UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN: PUBLIC ENQUIRY FEES – ADDITIONAL COSTS

A report of the Director of Environment, copies of which have been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The Executive Member for Housing Strategy and Planning presented the report the purpose of which was to seek Members approval to finance the additional costs incurred by the UDP Public Inquiry process from the contingency reserve fund.

The Director of Environment referred to the high number of objections arising from the consultation which had necessitated the Inspector spending a considerable amount of time to consider each objection. An estimate of the cost had been received and there was a shortfall of £0.240m for which there was no budget provision. The Inspectors report was expected in March 2009 and the final sum may be less than estimated.

RESOLVED:

That the UDP Public Inquiry additional costs identified in the report in the sum of £0.240m be financed from the Council's contingency reserve fund.

140. FLINT TOWNSCAPE HERITAGE INITIATIVE BID UPDATE

A report of the Director of Environment, copies of which have been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The Director presented the report the purpose of which was to provide an update on the progression of the Stage 2 development work for the Flint Townscape Heritage Initiative, to

seek delegated powers for the Director to approve the content of the Stage 2 bid and submit the bid by 1st December on behalf of the Authority and to advise Members on the current position regarding funding partners and their contributions to the proposed THI common fund and the implications for the Authority as lead partner.

The Director referred to the background to this report and to the authorisation for Officers to bid for the proposed scheme which had been approved by the Executive on 24th April, 2007. This Stage 1 bid had been submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund in May 2007 who had announced in October 2007 that the Flint scheme was one of only three towns in Wales and one of 13 in the UK to be successful in its Stage 1 application. As part of the submission process a more detailed Stage 2 application bid required submission to the Heritage Lottery Fund by 1st December, 2008.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Heritage Lottery Funds decision to approve the commencement of the Stage 2 development work be noted and that this would require a conservation area appraisal, boundary review and management plan to be produced as part of the Stage 2 submission bid.
- (b) That delegated authority be given to the Director of Environment to agree and submit the contents of the bid in order that the deadline for the Heritage Lottery Funds submission on 1st December, 2008 could be met; and
- (c) That the reduction in the common fund as a result of the Welsh Assembly Government Department for the Economy and Transport withdrawal from the scheme subject to written confirmation and that the agreed contribution from Flintshire County Council would remain at £305,000.

141. ESTYN REPORT ON THE QUALITY OF ADULT COMMUNITY BASED LEARNING IN FLINTSHIRE

A report of the Director of Lifelong Learning, copies of which have been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The Executive Member for Education and Youth presented the report the purpose of which was to provide Members with information on the outcome of Estyn's inspection of adult community based learning in Flintshire which was conducted in May 2008. The results of the inspection team and their judgments were set out in paragraph 3.01 and 3.02 of the report and also made a number of recommendations which were set out in paragraph 3.03.

RESOLVED:

That the conclusions and recommendations of the Estyn inspection report be noted.

142. OUT OF COUNTY PLACEMENTS

A joint report of the Director of Lifelong Learning and Director of Community Services, copies of which have been previously circulated to Members, was submitted.

The Director of Lifelong Learning presented the report the purpose of which was to provide an update on the ring fenced joint “out of authority” placements budget. The Director in presenting the report explained that the over spend was not a new position and was not unique to Flintshire County Council. Work was ongoing to monitor the budget through procurement and that there was scope to work sub regionally and to develop commissioning strategies.

The Executive Members for Education and Youth and Social Services supported the recommendations of the report and emphasised the need for this budget to be considered carefully as part of the 2009/10 budget preparation.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the contents of the report and the steps taken to reduce the dependency on this budget wherever possible, be noted.
- (b) That it be noted that the Directors of Lifelong Learning and Community Services would commission further work in accordance with paragraphs 3.05 and 3.06 of the report.

143. LEISURE CENTRE ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY: MOLD SPORTS CENTRE

A report of the Director of Lifelong Learning, copies of which have been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The Executive Member for Leisure and Public Protection presented the report the purpose of which was to advise on the outcome of the tender process with regard to the refurbishment works at Mold Sports Centre. He referred to the tendering exercise for this project and had previously suggested that a re-tendering exercise be undertaken but had been persuaded by the Officers that they could negotiate a reduction in the tender price and this report reflected that action.

The Director of Lifelong Learning referred to the work being completed on the preparation of a leisure strategy which would provide a clear and prioritised programme of leisure provision. This particular project needed to be considered in isolation and the reasons for this was much needed work on the Mold Sports Centre for which a sum of £200,000 had been awarded from the Pool Improvement Fund operated by the Sports Council for Wales. This grant needed to be used in the current financial year.

The Director referred to the tender process and to the lowest tender being considerably higher than expected. Negotiations had been entered into

with the lowest tenderer and a reduction of £55,000 had been achieved. It was recommended that an allocation of a maximum £150,000 from within the existing Leisure Enhancement Capital Fund be approved to enable this project to proceed with immediate effect and with completion within the current financial year.

RESOLVED:

That the allocation of a maximum £150,000 from within the existing Leisure Enhancement Capital Fund of £500,000, to enable this project to proceed with immediate effect and with completion with the current financial year, be approved.

144. RACE EQUALITY SCHEME – ANNUAL REPORT 2007-2008

A report of the Chief Executive, copies of which have been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The Executive Member for Corporate Governance and Strategy presented the report the purpose of which was to present the Race Equality Scheme Annual report for May 2007 – May 2008 for consideration and approval.

The Director of Lifelong Learning referred to the report and to the Race Equality Scheme being a key strategic policy. A number of improvements had been made across the Council and these were highlighted in the annual report and referred to in paragraph 3.01 of the report. Although progress was being made it was not always consistent across the Council and there remained key areas where continued progress and outcomes were now required. These included training, interpretation, equality monitoring and equality impact assessments details of which were contained in section 3.02 of the report.

The Leader of the Council referred to the reference to training which sought to ensure every employee and elected Member understood their responsibilities. A training and awareness programme across the Authority was essential and he had attended this course and recommended it for all Members.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the annual report be approved before it was published and made available to the public.
- (b) That the areas for improvement be noted.

145. HOUSING REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE SERVICE MID YEAR REVIEW

A report of the Director of Community Services, copies of which have been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The Executive Member for Estate Management presented the report which provided the Executive with a mid year review of the housing maintenance service which included updates in relation to the public interest report on the housing repair

service, an update on the progress being made in the implementation of key areas of activity within the housing repair service and an update on the current projected financial position of the building maintenance trading account.

The Director of Community Services referred to the considerable efforts that were being made to improve the housing repair and maintenance service. The report provided information on the schedule of rates update, diagnostic reporting and vehicle locator/tracking system. The report also provided information on other initiatives including financial management which was the subject of a further report on the Agenda.

The Executive Member for Education and Youth commended the diagnostic reporting and welcomed the new repairs handbook.

RESOLVED:

That the service improvements that had been undertaken and challenges that remained be noted and that support be given to the ongoing management initiatives designed to rectify the current financial position whilst continuously improving the service to customers.

146. BUILDING MAINTENANCE TRADING ACCOUNT 2008/09

A report of the Director of Community Services, copies of which have been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The Director presented the report the purpose of which was to inform Members of the current projected financial position of the building maintenance trading account and to confirm measures to control expenditure within the available budget as the position had worsened since the last reported position at Month 04.

The Director explained that this was a high volume service and served approximately 7,500 houses. As indicated in a previous report a number of new approaches had been adopted to improve effectiveness and efficiency of service. This together with the appointment of a temporary Head of Housing and a new DSO Manager would assist this process. An analysis was also being undertaken into the level of activity that was not in line with budget provision. Performance reports in relation to trade activity had been developed through the new management systems linked to the IBS computerised system. One of the highest levels of expenditure and cause for concern was sub-contractors where it appeared that financial controls had failed. There was a challenge to try and mitigate the overspend.

The Director referred to paragraph 3.10 of the report which set out a number of measures which were being deployed to bring the trading account into budget or to minimise the deficit.

Members referred to the current unacceptable length of time for repairs and renewals and it was hoped that the six bullet points referred to in paragraph 3.10 would help achieve an improvement.

The Executive Member for Housing Strategy and Planning referred to the failure of financial control and issues of productivity and he and the Executive Member for Estate Management would support the new officer structure but it was important that financial control and productivity were sorted. He paid tribute to the previous administration and their attempt to address this problem.

The Leader of the Council referred to the restructuring of housing which had not yet been finalised and emphasised the need for knowledge and understanding of budget control to be disseminated down to all levels in the staff structure.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be noted and that regular update reports be received on tracking progress of activities being undertaken to control expenditure; and
- (b) That a further report be made to the next meeting concerning the financial management issues identified in the report.

147. VACANT DESIGNATED WARDEN ACCOMMODATION

A report of the Director of Community and Services, copies of which have been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The Executive Member for Estate Management presented the report the purpose of which was to update Members on the current position regarding vacant designated resident warden service accommodation and to recommend that these properties be brought back into tenanted use as soon as practical.

Members supported the recommendations of the report and consultation with elected Members from the Ward where the schemes were sited.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the proposal to return to use, at the earliest possible opportunity, the 16 vacant designated warden properties, be supported.
- (b) That the proposal to provide secure tenancies to three ex wardens who were currently still residing in their old service accommodation, be supported.

148. FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR ADOPTERS AND GUARDIANS

A report of the Director of Community Services, copies of which have been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The Director presented the report the purpose of which was to agree the use of a financial assessment tool which determined the level of financial support to adopters

and those who sought to look after children under a special guardianship order.

The Director referred to the Family Placement Team which operated as a Registered Adoption Agency and was regulated by the CSSIW. In September 2007 the team had introduced the standardised means test model for adoption and special guardianship. This was recommended by the Department for Children, Schools and Families as it was deemed to be fair and sought to deliver a standard approach to arriving at the level of financial support given to adopters by Local Authorities. Internal audit, in May 2008, had also recommended the use of this assessment tool and to support it with a number of guidance and policy documents. It was also recognised that the budget impact could not be determined until further reassessment of applying the tool to historical adoptions had been completed.

The Executive Member for Social Services supported the report which would allow the Family Placement Team to demonstrate compliance with best practice and provide applicants with full information about a complex arrangement.

RESOLVED:

That the sensitive introduction of the new policy for allowances for adoption and special guardianship orders be endorsed.

149. DESIGN CONSULTANCY FEE INCOME FOR 2008/09

A report of the Director of Environment, copies of which have been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The Director presented the report the purpose of which was to advise on the current position regarding the Design Consultancy fee income projections for the financial year 2008/2009 and the impact on end of year projections.

The Director explained that Design Services was a business unit where fee income recovered should, as a minimum, cover the running costs. He referred to the financial implications of the report and to a projected overspend of £0.165m. Discussions were ongoing and he was confident that this situation would improve and further reports would be made as part of the budget monitoring process.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That a budget pressure be noted at this stage.
- (c) That further consideration be given to this matter during the budget process.

150. BUSINESS RATES – WRITE-OFFS

A report of the County Finance Officer, copies of which have been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The Executive Member for Finance and Asset Management presented the report the purpose of which was to request authorisation to write-off two business rates debts relating to the same company to the value of £55,297.25. She explained that there would be no financial implications to the Council or to Tax payers as the Council collected business rates on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government through the National Collection Pool for Wales.

RESOLVED:

That the write-off of this debt, amounting to £55,297.25 be approved.

151. BUSINESS RATES – SMALL BUSINESS RATE RELIEF SCHEME

A report of the County Finance Officer, copies of which have been previously been circulated to Members, was submitted. The Executive Member for Finance and Asset Management presented the report the purpose of which was to provide Members with a further update on the Welsh Assembly proposals to enhance the small business rate relief scheme.

The County Finance Officer explained that there were no direct financial implications to the Council Tax payers since the cost of awarding small business rate relief was borne by the Assembly Government and offset against the Council's contribution to the National Collection Pool for Wales. The scheme, would however, have benefits for small businesses in Flintshire provided they met the eligibility to receive rate relief.

RESOLVED:

That the final details of the enhanced rate relief scheme be noted.

152. EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS

An information report of the Chief Executive, copies of which have been previously circulated, was submitted. The purpose of the report was to inform Members of the actions taken in the delegated powers.

The actions taken were set out as below:-

(a) Community and Housing.

- approval of a temporary fixed term appointment for an additional Customers Services Officer to assist with the increase in customer demand relating to the introduction of new kerbside schemes.
- transfer freehold title of CAB premises, Post Office Lane, Holywell to the CAB.

- (b) Community Services – Capital Minor Works Programme 2008/09
- (c) Environment and Regeneration – Temporary conversion of post within Trading Standards.
 - adoption of Rights of Way Improvement Plan.
- (d) Legal and Democratic Services – change of duties to a vacant post of Corporate Solicitor. Post had been accordingly changed to Solicitor “Childcare” to reflect the services required by the Council.

153. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 – TO CONSIDER THE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting as the following items were considered to be exempt by virtue of paragraphs 12, 13, 14 and 15 of Part 1 or Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

154. AD WASTE

A report of the Chief Executive, County Finance Officer, Monitoring Officer and Director of Environment, copies of which have been previously been circulated to Members, was submitted.

The Executive Member for Waste Strategy and Management presented the report the purpose of which was to inform Members of the findings of the Strategic Business Review of the Council’s Local Authority Waste Disposal Company AD Waste undertaken by KPMG and to recommend a course of action to protect service continuity and protect the Council’s interests (risks and liabilities) as the sole shareholder.

RESOLVED:

That the company be taken in-house and the Director of Environment be given delegated authority to arrange a valuation of the company’s assets and liabilities.

155. NORTH WALES WASTE TREATMENT PROJECTS

A joint report of the Chief Executive, County Finance Officer, Monitoring Officer and Director of Environment, copies of which have been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The Executive Member for Waste Strategy and Management presented the report the purpose of which was to update the Executive on the progress of the North Wales Waste Treatment Project. The report also sought approval to continue to progress the partnership for the procurement of a residual waste treatment solution as detailed in the project initiation document which was attached as an appendix to the report. The report also sought to continue to progress the procurement

of food waste treatment infrastructure as a separate procurement project as negotiated amongst the partnership and supported by advice by Partnership UK and the Welsh Assembly Government.

RESOLVED:

That the recommendations be agreed noting that the draft inter-authority agreement attached to the report was likely to be further amended to focus on this specific project.

156. SENIOR MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE – ORGANISATIONAL DESIGN PHASE II

A report of the Chief Executive, copies of which have been previously circulated to Members was submitted. The Executive Member for Corporate Governance and Strategy presented the report the purpose of which was to seek endorsements of the approach to, and contents of Phase 2 of organisation change and redesign.

The Leader of the Council referred to the recommendations of the report and supported the involvement of Overview and Scrutiny and emphasised the importance of open consultation including staff, Trade Unions and Members.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the approach to Phase 2 of organisational change and redesign be endorsed.
- (b) That the selection of services and functions for Phase 2 of organisational change and redesign be endorsed.
- (c) That further work on the scopings for each of the reviews be commissioned.
- (d) That the approach for the respective Overview and Scrutiny Committee be consulted on the scopings for each review be endorsed and that it be noted that initial consultation would be held with the Trade Unions.

157. VOLUNTARY SECTOR GRANT MANAGEMENT PRACTICE

A report of the Chief Executive, copies of which have been previously circulated to Members, was submitted.

The Executive Member for Corporate Governance and Strategy presented the report the purpose of which was to advise Members of the proposed principles and model for future voluntary sector funding arrangements. Secondly, to propose recommendations for those voluntary organisations which would receive a three year core funding arrangement from 1st April, 2009 as these organisations were currently funded corporately through either corporate service level agreements or development grants.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the principles and model for future funding arrangements for voluntary organisations be approved.
- (b) That the recommendations for those voluntary organisations which would receive a one or three year core funding arrangement from 1st April, 2009 be approved.

158. SCHOOL PLAYING FIELDS GROUND MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

A report of the Director of Lifelong Learning, copies of which have been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The Director presented the report the purpose of which was to inform Members of the outcomes of the tendering process and to approve the award of the contract from 1st January, 2009 onwards.

RESOLVED:

That the award of the grounds maintenance contract for school playing fields to P&W Maintenance Limited with effect from 1st January, 2009 be approved subject to satisfactory completion of all arrangements.

159. DURATION OF MEETING

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am and ended at 11.45 am.

160. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

There were two members of the press and two members of the public present.

.....
Chairman

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

EXECUTIVE	DATE: 29th October 2008
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MEMBER	ITEM	MIN. NO. REFERS
NO DECLARATIONS WERE MADE		

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 4

REPORT TO: **EXECUTIVE**
DATE : **18 NOVEMBER 2008**
REPORT BY: **CHIEF EXECUTIVE**
SUBJECT : **COUNCILLOR WARD GRANTS**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.01 To inform Executive of the findings of the consultation exercise carried out with County Councillors on Councillor Ward Grants.
- 1.02 To provide options for members to consider how the grants scheme could be progressed.

2.00 BACKGROUND

- 2.01 At the Executive meeting on 5th August 2008 a report was presented providing information on Councillor Ward Grants schemes that have been introduced by a number of councils in the UK. Councillor ward grants are a way of enhancing the role of ward members as Community Champions, providing support to local community groups and voluntary organisations that provide services within the community.
- 2.02 The recommendations adopted were :
- That the Executive consider supporting a ward grants scheme for Flintshire Councillors.
 - If the Executive support the implementation of a ward grants scheme a Consultation Exercise be undertaken with all County Councillors over the considerations set out in section 3 of the report .

This included the ramifications of introducing such a scheme.

- 2.03 This report provides members with the results of the consultation and provides options for progressing the scheme.
- 2.04 The grants scheme would provide all elected members with an annual budget for community projects which are of benefit to residents living in their ward. Projects would not necessarily be confined to one electoral ward if the initiative spans more than one ward, councillors could choose to join funds together.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.01 These are the key points from the consultation exercise carried out with members.

74% (52 of 70 of members) responded to the consultation, it should be noted that not all members answered every question, hence the number of respondents vary for different sections of the questionnaire as detailed below.

Response to introducing the scheme

- 81% (42 of 52 respondents) were in favour of introducing a ward grants scheme

Distribution of Funding

- 49% (24 of 49 members) supported the option that individual elected members within the ward should be allocated a set amount of funds each financial year.
- 26% (13 of 49 members) supported the option that funding should be on a per capita basis i.e. numbers of people residing in the ward.
- 24% (12 of 49 members) supported the option that funding should be made available to the ward and that members representing the area should share the amount available.

Level of Funding

- 73% (36 of 49 members) support £5000 as the amount to be made available each year to each member.
- 58% (28 of 48 members) disagreed that a maximum amount of funding should be set for any one project / initiative.
- 20% (4 of 20 members) agreed that a maximum of £1000 should be allocated to any one project / initiative.
- 75% (37 of 49 members) support pooling funds where projects span more than one ward.

Eligibility

- 83% (40 of 48 members) agreed that the grant should be made available only to voluntary or community not for profit organisations and that they did not have to be a registered charity in order to be eligible to apply for the grant.

- 3.02 Members were asked to provide any further comments they had on the scheme. Generally comments were favourable in terms of the introduction of the scheme. Additional comments on specific points included the following:

- 8 members wanted to ensure that safeguards would be put into place for issues such as allocation of grants in the run up to elections.
- Rather than introducing new an additional scheme extending existing Council Grants schemes to distribute additional funding e.g. Community Chest.
- Future developments could involve Town & Community Councils in fund distribution.
- The proposed £0.3m could be better allocated elsewhere.
- The impact the additional expenditure may have on Council Tax.

3.03 **Criteria for the Grant**

Should Executive wish to implement the scheme it is proposed that the grant will need to be based on criteria that are not currently provided for by the council through other grant schemes e.g Community Chest and Welsh Church Act Fund. Further work to differentiate the various grant schemes would need to be undertaken to ensure that there is no duplication. A meeting of the Members Grants Panel on 24th October discussed initial proposals for principles and criteria of funding schemes.

In addition the criteria would need to include:

- Providing funding to projects/initiatives that demonstrate contribution to council priorities.
- Grants would only be available to voluntary and community not for profit organisations operating within a council ward.
- Community Projects/initiatives that can demonstrate the specific benefits to the ward or the community.
- Providing " kick start " or start up funding for local projects/initiatives.

3.04 **Proposed Grants Application Process**

The following indicates how each application would be processed.

- A completed application form would be scrutinised by the relevant ward Councillor(s) to ensure it meets with the criteria before signing to highlight their support of the project / initiative.
- The administration of the scheme would be managed a single department and this will include :
 - Marketing and support for the scheme
 - Dealing with enquiries from potential grant recipients and Members
 - Grants application processing
 - Raising payments

- o Ensuring that organisations provide evidence of how funding has benefited the community
 - The sponsoring councillor(s) would be responsible for monitoring the delivery of the projects/ initiatives and appropriate use of the funding and would liaise with the relevant department.
 - The Members Grants panel will have a role in scrutinising the scheme. However it would be impractical for them to consider all applications due to likely volumes and the need for grants to be processed in a timely manner on an on-going basis
- 3.05 Research undertaken into similar schemes in other authorities showed that capacity for managing and administering the schemes was underestimated. Given that this scheme, if approved, will necessitate the administration of a minimum of 350 applications (based on £1000 per project) each year. This along with feedback from other Councils appears to suggest it is likely that capacity equating to a part or full time officer post would be required to administer and manage the scheme, this capacity will be found from existing staff resources.
- 3.06 If Executive agree to a scheme being introduced it is important that the amount provided to each councillor be affordable and also sufficient to make the scheme worthwhile.
- 3.07 Further work will be required in designing the scheme; agreeing criteria; roles and responsibilities for the management of the scheme. It is suggested that should the scheme be introduced it is launched in summer 2009 for a trial period initially. The scheme would be monitored and reviewed during this trial period to ensure it met the expectations of councillors and grant applicants.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 That Members consider the findings of the consultation exercise.
- 4.02 That Members resolve if a Councillor Ward Grants Scheme is to be introduced. If so Members are asked to agree:
- the amount to be allocated to each Councillor or Ward.
 - the scheme to be implemented from July 2009
 - budget provision be considered as part of the 2009/2010 budget
 - further work is undertaken by officers to design the scheme and determine grant criteria which will then be agreed by the Member Grants Panel.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 The introduction of such a scheme will have budgetary implications which will vary in scale depending on the size of grant and whether grants are provided on a councillor or ward basis. For instance if we were to provide £5,000 per

member the total funding required would be £350,000; on a ward basis this would be reduced to £285,000.

5.02 If the scheme was agreed we would introduce it from 2009/10 as a budget growth bid.

5.03 Capacity to manage and administer the scheme would be found from existing resources, so there will be no additional staffing costs.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 Ward grants could be used to fund projects and initiatives designed to address poverty and deprivation within communities.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 Ward grants could be used to fund projects and initiatives designed for environmental improvements within communities.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 A ward grants scheme would give community groups an opportunity to secure funding for projects and initiatives which would not meet the criteria of other funding streams available such as voluntary sector grants.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 The Members Grants Panel is considering the principles and criteria for grant funding.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Consultation with all County Councillors.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 5

REPORT TO: **EXECUTIVE**
DATE : **18 NOVEMBER 2008**
REPORT BY: **CHIEF EXECUTIVE**
SUBJECT : **POLICE GREEN PAPER: 'FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD TO THE NATIONAL'. CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.01 To report the response of the Community Safety Partnership to the consultation on the Green Paper on Policing entitled 'From the Neighbourhood to the National'.
- 1.02 To provide an overview of this document, and highlight particular areas that will impact upon the work of the Community Safety Partnership.

2.00 BACKGROUND

- 2.01 The Home Office recently published a Policing Green Paper entitled 'From the neighbourhood to the national'. The consultation period ended on 10th October 2008. The response of the Community Safety Partnership is attached to this report.
- 2.02 The Green Paper presents a new vision for a modern Police Service, that is fit for purpose. The proposals set out in the document are intended to give the police greater power to enable them to respond to public expectations. It also sets out proposals to empower citizens through an enhanced role for the public's voice in policing.
- 2.03 The emphasis of the Green Paper is on improving the Police Service. However, it also has direct implications for Police Authorities, Local Authorities and Community Safety Partnerships.
- 2.04 Key issues of note for local authorities are:
- Greater integration of neighbourhood policing and neighbourhood management. To underpin this development the Home Office will work with local authorities to pilot 'Community Safety Participatory Budgets'.
 - Support for community groups to enable them to play a stronger role in tackling crime through a Community Crime Fighter programme.
 - Introduction of new 'Crime Watch' style information packs. These will incorporate details on what individuals, families and communities can do to make their communities safer.

- The remit of Community Safety Partnerships will be extended to incorporate the re-offending agenda. This will mean that the Probation Service will formally be added as a 'responsible authority', as defined by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.
- Introduction of a 'Policing Pledge' with national and local components. The Pledge will set out a national standard on what people can expect from the police, underpinned by a set of local priorities agreed in each area.
- The Home Office will legislate to reform Police Authorities, by replacing all but one local councillor on each Police Authority with directly elected Crime and Policing Representatives (CPR's).
- A 'Community Safety Fund' will be established, utilising the resources from the current Basic Command Unit Fund.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 A copy of the Community Safety Partnership's response to this Green Paper is attached. Some of the main issues are:

3.02 Participatory budgets to support local initiatives

The Community Safety Partnership supports the concept of allocating resources to locally identified initiatives. This is an approach that the Flintshire Community Safety Partnership have adopted since 2004 through the activities of its Joint Action Group (JAG).

In terms of making the most effective use of resources, the governance and management arrangements surrounding this funding would need to be clear from the outset. If there is an expectation for Community Safety Partnership's to oversee the expenditure, assistance and support would be required from the regional Home Office teams.

Another consideration would be the extent to which local initiatives should address the needs highlighted in the Community Safety Partnership's Strategic Assessment, and complement the three year Strategic Plan. Local groups will have their own priorities which may not necessarily echo those set on a county level.

3.03 Community 'Crime Fighter' programme

The concept of rolling out the 'Crime Fighter' programme in local communities is a positive development. It would enable and empower local groups to take ownership of issues that affect their quality of life, and should increase the visibility and effectiveness of the many diverse local groups already in the community. However, mechanisms should be established to oversee the activities of these groups to avoid the influence of groups espousing extremist views or promoting vigilantism.

This could also be an opportunity to engage existing elected members, giving them ownership of this programme at ward level. An obvious outcome of such a development would be the further mainstreaming of Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 within the local political system.

3.04 Inclusion of the Probation Service as a 'responsible authority' & expansion of the CSP's remit to include re-offending

Extending the remit of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships and Community Safety Partnerships to incorporate re-offending is a logical development. In North Wales partnerships have already incorporated this element into their mainstream work, and include the Probation Service when agreeing their high level strategic policies. The inclusion of the Probation Service as a 'responsible authority' is long overdue.

These sentiments are also shared by the WLGA Council, however they emphasize the importance of providing additional resources if the remit is extended formally.

3.05 Reform of the Police Authority & introduction of Crime and Policing Representatives

The proposed reform of the Police Authority structure and the introduction of Crime and Policing Representatives (CPR's), is the most contentious issue for the Flintshire Community Safety Partnership. There is the potential for fundamental problems to arise, which could undermine the Partnership and damage relations that have taken many years to establish. The Community Safety Partnership have posed some key questions for consideration in their response to the Home Office. In summary, the issues and risks identified by the Partnership are:

- How will the Home Office ensure that CPR's have the appropriate expertise and knowledge to fulfil their role?
- How will the Police Authority be able to ensure that CPR's are committed to delivering the requirements and expectations of the Home Office, particularly in relation to the Public Service Agreements and the Assessment of Police and Community Safety (APACS) framework?
- What powers will the Police Authority be able to exercise to prevent extremist groups from trying to infiltrate this process, particularly if a CPR is elected with a low number of votes?

In terms of reducing the numbers of councillors who comprise the Police Authority, it should be acknowledged that standing Members have already received a direct democratic mandate to represent their constituents. Therefore, creating a parallel system could lead to confusion and frustration, not just for Members but also for those whom they represent.

These issues have also been identified by the WLGA Council, on 26th

September 2008, as risks and noted that they have the potential to 'derail highly successful CSP's'.

3.06 **Creation of the 'Community Safety Fund'**

The creation of a 'Community Safety Fund' is to be welcomed, however not at the expense of the Basic Command Unit Fund. At present the Basic Command Unit Fund fulfils an important role supporting a number of posts which are crucial to the success of the Partnership. In the event of this fund coming to an end, the effectiveness of many Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships and Community Safety Partnerships will be compromised.

Should a 'Community Safety Fund' be established, it is the contention of the Partnership that its expenditure should be agreed in relation to the Community Safety Partnership's Strategic Plan, complementing projects and initiatives that support the Home Office's Public Service Agreements.

3.07 **Performance Issues**

The considerations identified above could introduce greater tension between the local priorities of the Community Safety Partnership and the national drivers of the Home Office. The influence of CPR's are potentially far reaching in terms of influencing the Partnership's local agenda and its commissioning function. There is a potential for local priorities and targets to conflict with those set nationally. If these proposals are incorporated in the ensuing White Paper, the Home Office will need to ensure that an appropriate framework is in place to overcome potential tensions.

3.08 **Changes to the Police Service**

In terms of the proposed changes to policing, the Partnership is supportive of the overall thrust of the Green Paper. Although, it should be noted that many of the proposals that are presented have already been introduced by North Wales Police. For example, Neighbourhood Policing has been central to the work of the Police Service in recent years, along with a commitment to optimise the use of technology in order to reduce 'bureaucracy and red-tape'.

4.00 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 Members are requested to note the response prepared by the Community Safety Partnership to the recent Policing Green Paper, 'From the neighbourhood to the national'.

4.02 Members are requested to note the possible implications of the Green Paper, as stated.

5.00 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 None at present

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None at present

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None at present

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None at present

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None at present

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 None at present

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 The report has been approved by members of the Community Safety Executive.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1: Flintshire Community Safety Partnership's response to the Policing Green Paper: 'From the neighbourhood to the national'.

12.02 Appendix 2: WLGA Council Report, 26th September 2008

12.03 Appendix 3: WLGA Resolution, 26th September 2008

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 6

REPORT TO: **EXECUTIVE**
DATE : **18 NOVEMBER 2008**
REPORT BY: **COUNTY FINANCE OFFICER**
SUBJECT : **PROCUREMENT STRATEGY 2008/09 - 2010/11**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for Flintshire County Council's Corporate Procurement Strategy 2008/09 to 2010/11. The strategy provides a three year framework for improving procurement within the Council.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 All Service Areas rely on the external procurement of goods, services and works in the delivery of their services, and the Council's external spend is estimated to be in excess of £50m per annum. It is vital that this money is spent wisely and that the Council manages its market position sensibly to ensure that we make the best use of available resources through smarter, sustainable procurement.

2.02 There are growing expectations on the role procurement can play in helping to promote and deliver the aims and objectives of Flintshire County Council and the wider Welsh Assembly Government agenda. In particular help in securing value for money and efficiency gains required by the Council to meet its ever increasing budgetary pressures and to respond to the aspirations contained within 'Making the Connections'.

2.03 The Procurement Strategy is a significant building block in the development of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The procurement gains and efficiencies identified will be essential elements in the setting of robust future budgets.

2.04 A draft Procurement Strategy was submitted to Executive on the 7th October, 2008. Members subsequently sent comments on this draft through to the Corporate Procurement Unit. The draft has also been considered by Corporate Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee and any further comments have been documented. All comments have been reported back to the Procurement Board and those adopted have been included in the final Strategy.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The final Strategy is attached at Appendix A and is recommended for adoption immediately.

3.02 Quarterly updates thereafter, will be provided to Executive and Corporate Management Overview and Scrutiny via the Procurement Board..

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That the Executive adopt the Procurement Strategy 2008/09 to 2010/11.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 None.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Procurement Board.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Procurement Board.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Procurement Strategy

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Various

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 7

REPORT TO: **EXECUTIVE**
DATE : **18 NOVEMBER 2008**
REPORT BY: **INTERIM ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES
AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**
SUBJECT : **PEOPLE STRATEGY 2006-2009 UPDATE ON PROGRESS**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To report to the Executive on the progress of the People Strategy Action Plan 2008/2009.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The People Strategy was written in the summer of 2006 to provide the bridge between the Council Plan and the work required to develop people management to improve the organisation. It was written in plain language and widely consulted upon and circulated to employees.

2.02 The People Strategy was written to include the project plans for the two strategic Human Resources (HR) projects scoped at the time; HRMIS/Payroll system and Single Status. It has since been expanded to include projects on the Managed Agency Staff Solution Project (MASS) and the Senior Management Review and Organisational Change and Re-Design Work.

2.03 The People Strategy Action Plan provides the link between the People Strategy and Directorate Service Plans. The HR Managers work closely with Directorate Senior Management Teams to develop Directorate level People Plans that concentrate on delivering improvements in attendance management, appraisal, use of agency staff and recruitment etc. The plans for this year 2008/2009 have also included objectives that have arisen as a result of the employee opinion survey conducted in the summer of 2007.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The HR Managers have been working with the new Strategic Management Team to agree how the Directorate People Plans will develop now that the three new service directorates have been formed. There has been renewed focus on planning to reduce sickness absence and working towards the target of 100% completion of annual employee appraisals.

3.02 The MASS Project went 'live' on 20th October through the appointed managed service provider, Matrix SCM. An intensive programme of training has been provided for Line Managers to ensure that they are confident in using the new system and a costing of savings model has been developed

jointly with finance colleagues. A further report will be presented to Executive in three months with an early review of how the new arrangement is working and first indications of savings.

- 3.03 The HRMIS/Payroll Project is in the final stages of parallel running. An extensive clean up of payroll and personnel data has been completed and a new establishment control process introduced, together with re-designed HR forms to ensure that the system remains up to date and accurate after 'go live'. The new system is planned to be implemented in November and the newly designed workforce reports will be available by the New Year.
- 3.04 The Single Status Project has now completed the job evaluation and pay and grading design work and negotiations are currently taking place with joint trades unions colleagues with a view to reaching agreement and communicating results to employees before Christmas. This is a hugely complex piece of work and although an outline timetable describes the critical steps to take the project through to completion, each step is dependent upon variable factors, for example, approval of the agreement by the trades unions national offices and a successful employee ballot. The partnership working between management and trades unions colleagues on this project has been exemplary: both "sides" are hopeful that the project will be completed broadly on target.
- 3.05 The senior management review work has been completed with the conclusion of the 2nd Tier Pay and Grading Review. Once the Single Status Agreement is completed most employee groups within the Council will be covered by a modernised pay and grading structure.
- 3.06 The second phase of wider organisation change and re-design is currently being scoped and a change management process is under development, with consultation with the Trade Unions, to manage, communicate and implement change in service design and delivery. The Executive has endorsed a selective list of services and functions for review and redesign. It is the intention to train and support senior managers to utilise this change method to ensure consistency.
- 3.07 A new recruitment policy has been developed and consulted upon and will be implemented in the New Year following a training programme for recruiting managers. The policies that govern disciplinary, capability, grievance, bullying and harassment and sickness absence matters are being jointly reviewed and modernised with Unison through sessions facilitated by ACAS.
- 3.08 The Council is exploring the concept of agile working with neighbouring North Wales Councils and the expert support of British Telecom. Through supporting remote, flexible and IT enabled working methods the Council can improve productivity and reduce overhead costs.

3.09 The current People Strategy will expire in the summer of 2009. A renewed People Strategy will be developed to reflect the changes to the Council Plan and the content of the Corporate Assessment of Risks and Challenges and any other directive strategic documents. The new version of the People Strategy will be designed to build upon the foundations now created to support organisation change and will reflect the aspiration of Flintshire to be an exemplar employer.

3.10 The timetable for the production of the new People Strategy will be as follows:

January 2009 - Review current People Strategy achievements and any outstanding items contained within the People Strategy Action Plan.

February/March 2009 - Consult with Service Directorates, Corporate Services, People and Performance Scrutiny Committee and FJTUC on proposals for content and design of new People Strategy.

April 2009 - Prepare final draft People Strategy document for approval by Corporate Management Team and Executive.

June 2009 - Publish new People Strategy and undertake Council-wide briefing programme through HR management team. Develop People Strategy Action Plan for 2009-2010 and in partnership with directorates implement replacement People Plans linked to their Service Plans.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That the Executive note and endorse the progress of the People Strategy Action Plan 2008/2009 and the proposals to review and renew the People Strategy for 2009 onwards.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 None directly arising as a result of this report. All project budgets are monitored and managed separately.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 All contained within the People Strategy Action Plan and Project Plans

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 All contained within the People Strategy Action Plan and Project Plans

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Ongoing depending upon projects status

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Completed according to project requirements

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 8

REPORT TO: **EXECUTIVE**
DATE : **18 NOVEMBER 2008**
REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**
SUBJECT : **STRATEGY FOR OLDER PEOPLE IN WALES UPDATE**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.01 To update Executive on the local implementation of the Strategy for Older People in Wales including the development of the 50+ Advisory Group facilitating the involvement of older people in the planning and development of services in Flintshire.
- 1.02 To highlight the changes in Welsh Assembly Government funding for the implementation of the strategy during Phase 2 (2008 - 2013).

2.00 BACKGROUND

- 2.01 In 2003 the Welsh Assembly Government produced a Strategy for Older People in Wales. It provides a structured basis for the Assembly, other public bodies and the independent sector to develop future policies and plans which better reflect the needs of older people, recognising changing demography and social circumstances. Set in a 10-year framework, the Strategy has an Action Plan with detailed objectives and programmes.
- 2.02 Over the last 6 years Flintshire has produced annual spending/action plans detailing how it is implementing the strategy locally. Work supported through the strategy has included physical activity, information provision, income maximisation, intergenerational projects, education and learning opportunities and forum development.
- 2.03 Assembly Government Ministers have agreed that this next phase of the Strategy should concentrate on four key strategic and cross-cutting themes and the Flintshire Older Peoples Partnership Network (OPPN) have set up subgroups to facilitate implementation of the themes locally. The four themes are:
- Valuing Older People - Maintaining and Developing Engagement,
 - Changing Society – The Economic Status of Older People,
 - Well-Being and Independence
 - Making it happen – Implementation

- 2.04 The Strategy identifies a number of key areas of action for the Local Authority and partners during Phase 2 implementation:
- To take a strategic approach to older people's issues, tackle age discrimination and plan for an ageing society at a local level – **mainstreaming age**
 - To take concerted and targeted effort to engage older people more effectively and ensure they can participate in decisions affecting their lives and communities
 - Each LA Executive to designate an Older People's "Champion" and to develop local forums for older people

2.05 In Flintshire County Council Cllr Carol Ellis, Executive Member for Social Services, is the nominated Older People's Champion and within the Local Health Board this role is undertaken by Barry Harrison.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.01 In April 2008 the OPPN held a multi agency planning day, which included older people representatives, to identify local priorities for the implementation of the strategy during phase 2. As a result of this work each subgroup has considered their theme and developed draft action plans (2008-2010) to facilitate implementation. In addition to these plans the OPPN have held meetings to consider a range of issues including the National Service Framework (for older people), Transport, Forum Development, Activities Within Care Homes and Doorstep Crime.
- 3.02 Significant progress has been made on the implementation of the strategy in Flintshire specifically with regards to the engagement of older people and building links with the Forums and Older People's Champions. Attached in appendix 1 is the 6 month Report 2008/09 submitted to the Welsh Assembly Government at the end of October 2008 detailing progress made on the implementation of the strategy.
- 3.03 **50+ Advisory Group Development in Flintshire** - This work has progressed well since the report to Executive on the 1st April 2008. The Advisory Group were instrumental in the development of the tendering documentation for the Forum Development Worker and were involved in awarding the tender to the successful applicant, Flintshire Neighbourhood Watch Association. The post holder has been recruited and is working across Flintshire to increase membership of the group and develop the opportunities for engagement and involvement of older people. In addition to the original three groups that formed the Advisory Group two new groups have joined and they now meet on a monthly basis to consider a range of local issues affecting older people. Examples of some of the activities the group have been involved in include:

- Advising the OPPN and its subgroups on older peoples' representation at meetings and subsequently attending those meetings
- Local implementation of the NSF
- Research into services for social care service users who are self-funding their care
- Consultation on local post office closures
- Consultation on the WAG Draft Intergenerational Strategy
- Consultation on the reform of the NHS in Wales
- Organisation of the Doorstep Crime Conference
- Development of the Joint Older Peoples' Commissioning Strategy

3.04 **Funding** - Nationally £13m was committed over the first 5 year period up to March 2008, to ensure effective implementation of the Strategy. The total budget available to local authorities for implementation of the Strategy during 2008-09 amounts to £2.4m. In 2009-10 this will reduce to £1.7m and £1m for 2010-11 when it is planned that these resources should transfer into the Revenue Support Grant (RSG). For 2008-09 Flintshire's allocation is £103,741. Older people's forums and OPPN are keen to ensure that plans are in place for the effective implementation of the strategy following the tapering of the grant and subsequent incorporation into RSG.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 That Executive notes the content of the report and progress made in Flintshire.
- 4.02 That Executive notes the implications of the tapered funding for the implementation of Phase 2 of the Strategy for Older People as set out in paragraph 3.04 and considers the implementation from 2010 onwards once funding is incorporated into RSG.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 For 2008-09 the funding available for implementation of the Strategy in Flintshire is £103,741 by way of a specific grant from WAG. In 2009/10 and 2010/11 this amount will significantly reduce and WAG have indicated that it is likely to be incorporated in RSG by 2010/11.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 The strategy is intended to combat poverty and poor housing, promote greater uptake of benefits and remove the barriers to employment of older people.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 The work of the strategy gives older people an independent voice to represent their views and promote social inclusion. A key aim of the strategy nationally is to tackle discrimination against older people wherever it occurs, promote positive images of ageing and give older people a stronger voice in society.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 Funding for the Strategy Co-ordinator post is available for the next 2 years in grant format and hence their contract of employment has been extended until the end of March 2010 to reflect this. Consideration is needed regarding the future of the post beyond this time.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Strategy development in Flintshire is subject to ongoing consultation with partner organisations and residents of Flintshire.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Ongoing consultation with key groups e.g. OPPN and its subgroups, Flintshire 50+ Advisory Group, Older Peoples Forums.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1 - 6 monthly progress report submitted to WAG.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Report to Executive on 1st April 2008
Report to Executive on 30th October 2007
Report to Executive on 19th September 2006
Report to Executive on 20th February 2006
Strategy for Older People in Wales
Living Longer Living Better 2008 - 2013

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50+ in Flintshire

Half Year Report and Financial Update October 2008

Flintshire County Council

Six monthly Progress Report April 08 – October 08

Below are brief bullet points detailing progress made locally under each themed area of the strategy for older people. Further information on any of the schemes is available on request.

Making it Happen

- The Older Peoples Partnership Network and its Subgroups have been reviewed including terms of reference and membership.
- Older people continue to be members of the Older People's Partnership Network and actively participate in its meetings.
- A new Local Authority Older Peoples Champion has been nominated and is actively involved in the OPPN, Forums and NSF Age Discrimination Scrutiny Group.
- In April 2008 the OPPN held a multi agency Away Day (including older people representatives) to identify local priorities for the implementation of the strategy during phase 2. As a result of this work each subgroup has considered their theme and developed draft action plans (2008-2010) to facilitate implementation.
- The OPPN have held meetings to consider a range of issues including the NSF, Transport, Forum Development, Activities within Care Homes and Doorstep Crime.
- The OPPN and Forums took part in the consultation process for the WAG draft Intergenerational Strategy. Responses were submitted for consideration by WAG.
- Gareth Morgan NSF Project Manager for Wales attended the Older People's Partnership Network meeting on the 11th September 2008 to update the group on developments.

Valuing Older People

- 50+ Advisory Group Development in Flintshire – work has progressed well with the successful public recruitment of the Chair and three independent members of the group. Each of the three recognised local forums were initially invited to send two representatives to join the group and since then 2 additional groups/forums have joined. The group now meets on a monthly basis, have developed their own constitution and have had the opportunity to be involved in a range of planning and development opportunities, a few of which are detailed below:
 - advising the OPPN and its subgroups on older peoples representation at meetings and subsequently attending those meetings
 - the development of the Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Strategy
 - the tendering process of the 50+ Forum Development Service
 - research into services for self-funding social care service users
 - consultation on post office closures

- consultation on the Intergenerational Strategy
 - consultation on the restructure of the NHS in Wales
 - Doorstep Crime Conference
 - Consultation on the reorganisation of services at Glan Clwyd
 - a member of the advisory group has taken on the role of Chair of the Valuing Older People Information Subgroup
 - The group are also looking into the possibility of setting up a local Climate Change Council possibly in partnership with the Youth Forum.
- Forum Development – a formal tendering process was instigated to identify an appropriate organisation to deliver the Forum Development role locally. The Advisory Group were instrumental in the development of the tendering documentation for the role/contract and were actively involved in awarding the tender to the successful applicant Flintshire Neighbourhood Watch Association. The post holder has been recruited and is working across Flintshire to increase membership of the Advisory Group and develop the opportunities for engagement and involvement of older people. An action plan for this post has now been developed and agreed by the project steering group.
 - Local forums – linked to the forum development role is the support for local communities to develop a local forum where needed. The post holder has already developed a new group in Ewloe and is meeting with interested members of the Flint community in the coming weeks. It is hoped this post will expand the number of local forums to feed into the Advisory Group thus providing representation from across the whole of Flintshire. Existing local forums have representation on the OPPN group and regularly report progress to and raise issues through the network.
 - Flintshire Community Safety Partnership in partnership with the OPPN and funded by the Older People's Strategy held a conference on doorstep crime in recognition of International Older People's Day on 1 October. The event was and is the first of several events to be held across the county aimed at reducing the fear of crime amongst older people and ensuring that older people in Flintshire are provided necessary support to prevent doorstep crimes. It was a very successful conference attended by over 100 people from different agencies, older people and their representatives. Delegates at the conference were addressed by ex-DCI Brian Steele, an expert in the prevention and detection of such crimes. Following the success of this conference, representatives of the Community Safety Partnership and the OPPN will be holding events across the county to discuss the issue of doorstep crime and the fear of crime with older people and to seek their advice on these issues.
 - The Valuing Older People subgroup is actively involved in taking forward the Rooting out Age Discrimination standard of the NSF. In response to this further rounds of Listening Events have been held asking peoples views of Age Discrimination in Health and Social Care Services. In order to consider the outcomes of the events the Voluntary Sector and Local Authority have set up an Age Discrimination Scrutiny Group to develop an action plan aimed at combating any discrimination locally. A report has been drafted considering the outcomes of the listening events which are being considered by all key organisations locally. An action plan will be in place by March 09.

- An Information sub group has been set up to review information provision for older people in Flintshire in response to action 7.1 of the NSF. The group is chaired by an older people's representative, Carol Madden and invites have been extended to all statutory and voluntary organisations which have an interest in the provision of information for older people. The group have agreed their terms of reference and their action plan for the next 12 months. At their last meeting they drafted key considerations and principles for the development of information for older people to assist all organisations in providing high quality, accessible information.
- Listening Events have been held locally at the request of the Local Authority so that a better understanding of the position of older people funding their own social care can be gained. Aims of the events were to help clarify what currently happens, if there any gaps and how the authority can improve practice. A report has been produced and is currently being considered by Social Services for Adults.
- The NSF LIT has completed an audit of advocacy services for older people in Flintshire in order to get a baseline of what is in existence currently. Everyone who purchases or provides advocacy services in Flintshire were asked to provide information about advocacy services for older people so that a full picture could be mapped. A small working group is now considering this audit identifying gaps in services and considering how well services are publicised and accessed. A pathway to accessing Advocacy services has been developed.
- In a partnership project with Denbighshire and Conwy, Flintshire commissioned NIACE Dysgu Cymru to deliver 'train the trainer' training locally for older people representatives, the forum development worker and the strategy co-ordinator on the subject of getting your voice heard. The aim of this project was to equip local representatives with the skills to engage with local residents and assist them in getting their voices heard.

A Changing Society

- Strong links with Flintshire University of Third Age (U3A) have been developed to help promote a wider range of learning opportunities in the area. Representatives regularly attend the Changing Society Subgroup meetings. A partnership project between Flintshire U3A and Social Services for Adults has been developed as a result called Project Enigma. FCC Care Homes and Day Care Services have teamed up with U3A volunteers who are visiting the centres and recording service user's memories and experiences particularly during the Second World War. As part of the Strategy for Older People and funded by NIACE Dysgu Cymru the project is launching a book of stories on the 7th November celebrating the lives of local residents.
- Joint working between Social Services for Adults and the Department of Work and Pensions is ongoing to progress the formalised LinkAge partnership.
- Benefits Network - The Changing Society Subgroup have developed a benefits network locally to co-ordinate all the services available in Flintshire that provide benefits information and advice. The aims of the group are to improve partnership working, cross refer where relevant and make best use of resources available locally. Agencies involved include Flintshire County

Council Social Services for Adults, The Pension Service, CAB, and Age Concern amongst others.

- Work is continuing in partnership with Friends of Flintshire Citizens Advice Bureaux on the development of the community café and the learning opportunities provided at the centre.

Well-being and Independence

- Phase 2 of the Strategy for Older People was launched in April 2008. One of changes to the strategy is the previous 'Living Longer and Healthier' and 'Coping with Increasing Dependency' themes combined into a new theme called 'Well Being and Independence'. In Flintshire the group has met to consider how this theme will continue to be implemented locally. A draft action plan and meeting plan is in place to drive the work forward.
- Falls Prevention – A Falls workshop was held on the 30th July where the draft Flintshire Falls Prevention Pathway was considered.
- National Falls Awareness Day 2008. This is an annual event promoted by Help the Aged, and this year's theme was "Stepping out". The Flintshire event was hosted by the Deeside over 50s Forum and the Rhydymwyn over 50s Forum, and supported by Flintshire LHB. Held at Connahs Quay Civic Hall, the main attraction was the Sloppy Slipper Exchange. Four podiatrists from North East Wales NHS Trust examined feet, gave advice on foot care, and provided free slippers to seventy five people aged 65 and over who had a fall risk. Eighteen information stands from a number of local and national organisations provided information on a wide range of issues related to falls and injury and a quiz was provided as the impetus for people to visit every stand.
- A new Falls Reduction project has been funded in Flintshire through the wellbeing and independence special grant. The project aims to give people over 50 information and advice on how to reduce their risk of falling. This is done in group settings and also through the provision of safety checks in the individual older person's home. These one to one checks help the older person to minimise the factors that might contribute to them having a fall in and around their home.
- Keep Well This Winter Campaign – NPHS are currently leading on the campaign locally and are arranging a partnership meeting to discuss activity in Flintshire. Packs which will contain a flu leaflet, thermometer, fire safety leaflet and a new generic hand book giving comprehensive advice and information on heating the home and financial support to help with heating and insulation will be delivered to local residents. As part of the strategy for older people Flintshire has received an additional 2000 handbooks on fuel poverty for distribution locally.
- Prevention and early detection of malnutrition in older people – Following a bid submitted to the Local Health Board and Food Standard Agency a project has been funded locally to develop a tool for the prevention and early detection of malnutrition in older people in the community. Links are actively being made with the Unified Assessment process.
- Flintshire Unintentional Injury Prevention Group held a workshop and planning day in September aimed at bring together all parties with a

contribution to make regarding the prevention of unintentional injuries in the home setting and on the roads to share information and develop a county-wide multi-agency strategic action plan.

- Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People. The Adult Partnership Group, which is a partnership between health, social care and the voluntary sector, has agreed to bring together all the strategies / plans that relate to / affect older people in Flintshire into one brief overview document – a joint commissioning strategy which will set Flintshire's direction for Health and Social Care Services for older people. Different agencies currently work to a variety of different plans, most of which are generic and not focused specifically on older people; therefore, this document should give a clear picture of what's available for older people in Flintshire. The work is due for completion towards the end of 2008.
- Work on an Extra Care Housing Facility in Shotton is progressing well with a proposed opening in January 2009. Criteria, allocations procedure, service planning and tenure arrangements have all been planned in preparation for the scheme.
- Flintshire is beginning the planning processes for a second Extra Care Scheme based in Mold. It is hoped this will provide self-contained accommodation of 40, two bedroom apartments for older people with care needs and 20, 1 and 2 bedrooms, specifically designed apartments for older people living with dementia. The design will offer a feeling of 'domestic homeliness' offering familiar features that will support independence, communal facilities and also links with the community nearby.
- The Local Health Board has appointed another 3 Case Managers to work with patients with chronic conditions in the primary care setting taking their complement up to 8 within the county.
- Communication training for carers of people with dementia - the Flintshire Implementation Group of the Elderly Mental Health Strategy for older people and North East Wales NHS Trust Speech and Language Therapy Services are embarking on a joint project to provide communication training to carers of people with dementia. This will be provided both in group and in individual settings by a Highly Specialist Speech and Language Therapist and a Speech and Language Therapy Technical Instructor. Contact with carers started at a coffee morning held on 8th May. Carers attended to find out more about the project and complete a questionnaire that will be used by the speech and language therapist to choose the candidates that will benefit most from the training. Candidates will receive general information about communication in dementia and the likely problems that occur as the disease progresses, an individual assessment in the client's home, general communication advice, a person-centred programme and therapeutic input to support the development. Each situation will be reviewed to see whether positive changes have been made in communication and wellbeing. The project is at its initial stages and is set to run for 12 months. Outcomes will be made available towards the end of April '09 along with consideration for further work.
- Flintshire Sounds continues - this is a weekly therapeutic musical experience for older people with memory problems, carers, family and friends. People have the opportunity to play simple percussion instruments, to move and dance wherever appropriate, but most importantly to reminisce, make new

friends and build new memories. Following two successful rounds of six week sessions in five areas of Mold, the project continues over the summer with sessions being held during July and August in Buckley, Flint, Holywell, Shotton and Mold.

- Intermediate Care – Following the planning day agreement was reached to take on an Intermediate Care Manager to work 2-days per week on secondment to the LHB. The key role of the new manager is to update the Intermediate Care Strategy.
- A second phase of work is currently being planned to promote the importance of adequate hydration amongst older people within residential and nursing homes.
- The “Old Brewery” has stood as an empty building within a residential street for many years. The owner was keen to see the building take on a new lease of life and to benefit the community. In November, 2008 the building will reopened after extensive refurbishment to provide adapted affordable housing for people who have a physical disability and a resource centre for younger people with dementia, carers and professionals. The centre utilises the latest telecare technology and research methods and is the first of its kind in Wales. The SYD (Services for Younger People with Dementia) team will be based at the resource centre, delivering community based support and services to younger people (under 65) with dementia and their carers / families. The Resource Centre allows the team to provide an enhanced service and will have a number of uses and functions:
 - a therapeutic environment,
 - space for individual consultation,
 - a Flintshire Alzheimer’s cafe,
 - carer training venue,
 - an information resource.

Budget

The budget is expected to be fully spent. A couple of the projects may show an under spend and if this is the case a request for virement to a project identified as a priority in one of the strategy action plans will be made.

For more information about the Strategy for Older people in Flintshire please contact:

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Flintshire's Outline Spending Plan Update 2008 – 09

Strategic Objective	Project	Milestones and Targets	Allocated	Expenditure to date	Balance
Making it Happen					
Implementation of the Strategy for Older People in Flintshire	Continuing appointment of Older People's Strategy Co-ordinator to facilitate the implementation	Oversee implementation of Strategy in Flintshire including projects listed below. Deliver within time and on budget	£44,000	£21,150	£22,850
	Hold Planning Event to take stock and identify priorities moving into Phase 2 of the Strategy (24th April 2008)	Event Held Priorities Identified Action Plan Produced	£1,000	£850	£150
	From planning away day identify areas of development for 2008/09 and agree action plan to take forward this work.	Developments Commissioned	£15,000	£0	£15,000
Link strategy to practice	Facilitate strategy meetings and networks. Budget for training.	Planning network maintained through the year. Training opportunities accessed through the year.	£3,125	£325	£2,800
	Future Policy Development Research Project – Produce a well-researched document that can inform future policy development including putting forward a case for future funding.	Agency Appointed Research Completed Report Produced Report fed back to OPPN, FCC, LHB, APG, HSCWP. Report used to influence future commissioning priorities.	£12,000	£0	£12,000
Raise awareness of the Strategy	Produce materials e.g. Briefing sheet, newsletter	At least one publication of minimum 2000 copies per annum	£2,500	£0	£2,500

Valuing Older People.					
To support older people in having their voices heard through the development of local forums	Supporting the 50+ Advisory Group	Coherent structure of 50+ Advisory Group and local forums	£3,000	£600	£2,400
	Employ a worker to support older people to have their voices heard	Local Forums developed and supported	£35,000	£23,000	£12,000
Support local groups have their voices heard.	Purchase equipment to facilitate effective running of groups and forums e.g. hearing loops and microphones.	FNWA consult on equipment that groups would find useful. Set-up booking system etc Equipment purchased and being used by groups.	£3,000	£3,000	£0
Provide ongoing opportunities for service providers to listen to the views of older people	Roll out programme of Listening Events Minimum of 5 events and one full report annually	Set dates for events Events held Report produced	£2,000	£250	£1,750
	Older People and Partnership Organisations Conference on the theme of Doorstep Crime		£5,000	£0	£5,000
A Changing Society / Wellbeing and Independence					
Lifelong Learning, Physical Activity, Social Inclusion	Purchase IT and leisure equipment for use in the new Extra Care Housing Facility in Shotton	Items purchased and being used by residents	£5,000	£0	£5,000
Budget			Total Cost	Total Expenditure to date	Total Balance to date
08/09 - £103,741					
07/08 - £26,884 (Carried Forward)					
Total Budget = £130,625			£130,625	£49,175	£81,450

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 9

REPORT TO: **EXECUTIVE**
DATE : **18 NOVEMBER 2008**
REPORT BY: **CHIEF EXECUTIVE**
SUBJECT : **GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME- ANNUAL REPORT 2007-2008**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To present to Executive the first annual report on progress of the implementation of the Council's Gender Equality Scheme and action plan 2007-2010.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Gender Equality Duty to promote equality of opportunity between women and men was introduced under the Sex Discrimination Act (SDA), as amended by the Equality Act 2006, and requires all public bodies to have 'due regard' to:

- the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment; and
- the need to promote equality of opportunity between women and men.

2.02 Gender equality cuts across all the functions of the Council as an employer, provider of services (including education) and a purchaser of services. The Gender Equality Duty was introduced to address the inequalities that still exist between girls and boys and women and men.

2.03 At a meeting of the Executive on 18th September 2007 the Council's Gender Equality Scheme and action plan was approved for implementation and publication. The Council's Gender Equality Scheme sets out our arrangements to address the duties contained within the Equalities Act 2006.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The Annual Report, set out as Appendix 1, details the progress the Council has made in relation to the Gender Equality Duty, these include:-

- introducing a Childcare Voucher scheme which enables staff to purchase child care vouchers, which can then be used to pay childcare costs. Staff benefit because the amount they pay is exempt from tax and national insurance, therefore reducing the costs of childcare.

- extending the flexible working periods available to staff to allow for greater flexibility in working times, thus improving employee's ability to manage their work/life balance responsibilities outside of the workplace.
- implementing a new pilot project allowing staff IT access from home, is allowing a growing number of employees to work from home. This allows increased flexibility as well as reducing carbon emissions / traffic congestion from reducing commuting.
- developing and implementing systems to monitor the profile of our customers to ensure equal access for men and women. Community Services are using this data to review the under representation of men in domiciliary services.
- implementing various initiatives under the Flintshire Community Safety Partnership umbrella to address and reduce incidents of domestic violence.

3.02 Equal pay between men and women is a legal right under the Equal Pay Act. Equal pay between the Council's male and female employees is being addressed as part of the Single Status process.

3.03 Next Steps

Although significant progress has been made over the last year, the annual review has highlighted a number of areas requiring further attention. The following will be the Council's next steps to ensure continuous improvement in promoting gender equality:-

- continue to undertake equality impact assessments across services and on new and revised policies;
- use data from equality monitoring to identify and address areas of potential or actual inequality in both employment and services; and
- promote awareness of gender inequality and domestic violence.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 It is recommended that the Executive approve the Gender Equality Scheme Annual Report.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 Promoting equality throughout the work of the council will have a positive impact on those people who experience poverty.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None identified in this report

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 A full equality impact assessment is not required for this report.

8.02 Making equality central to the way the council provides services will benefit all groups of people who visit, live and work in Flintshire.

8.03 To make sure the report is accessible to every one it will published bilingually, in English and Welsh. It will also be available in different formats and languages on request.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None identified in this report

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 None required for this report

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 None required for this report. Extensive consultation was undertaken with stakeholders including members of the public and employees as part of the development of the scheme.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Gender Equality Scheme Annual Report

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Report To Executive 18 September 2007
Gender Equality Scheme

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 10

REPORT TO: **EXECUTIVE**
DATE : **18 NOVEMBER 2008**
REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**
SUBJECT : **MAKING THE CONNECTIONS - NORTH WALES ADOPTION CONSORTIUM**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To inform the Executive about the progress of the work of the North Wales Adoption Consortium and to seek endorsement for the project.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 An Adoption Consortium based on finding new families for children needing adoptive placements is already in existence and has successfully run for three years. New legislation requires now an expanded range of services to be delivered. Small authorities will find it hard to meet the standards required on their own, given the small numbers of children involved in adoptions each year. However, it should be noted that new rights given to birth families, for access to records and for assistance in contacting birth relatives is unquantifiable.

2.02 The figures for children placed for adoption are small as highlighted in this table.

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN ADOPTED BY LOCAL AUTHORITY

Local Authority	04/05	05/06	06/07	Total
Anglesey	10	5	0	15
Gwynedd	0	5	5	10
Conwy	5	5	0	10
Denbighshire	10	10	5	25
Flintshire	10	10	5	25
Wrexham	10	5	15	30
Total	45	40	30	115

There is however a high level of activity involved in adoption work, undertaken by the Family Placement Team which is intensive and specialist in nature. This involves:

- recruiting and training prospective adopters,
 - matching children to those adopters,
 - approval by the Adoption Panel,
 - endorsement by the Head of Children's Services as agency decision maker and
 - post-adoption support work under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 also accounts for a large amount of the Family Placement Team's workload.
- 2.03 The current North Wales Adoption Consortium was the focus of work under the "Making the Connections" agenda during 2007-08 and an external consultancy (IPC - Institute of Public Care) were employed following a formal tendering process to lead developments, funded by the Social Services Improvement Agency (SSIA).
- 2.04 The view of the North Wales Heads of Service was that the advent of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (implemented on 30.12.05) brought with it considerable additional statutory duties, the breadth of which could prove onerous if quality services were to be delivered on a single authority basis. This is compounded by the small numbers of children requiring a service and the fact that skills and expertise in this area of practice is usually located within a small cohort of practitioners within each local authority, leading to problems when posts are vacant due to sickness absence or natural wastage.
- 2.05 Adoption services are subject to three - yearly inspection by our regulators, Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales. Flintshire's adoption services were last inspected in August 2005. Services must conform to the National Minimum Standards of Section 23 of the Care Standards Act.
- 2.06 The work conducted by I.P.C concluded by identifying several options for the way forward. These are included at Appendix 1. The consensus was for a comprehensive, fully integrated North Wales Adoption Service through a staged implementation plan from 2008 (OPTION 3).
- 2.07 The staged approach will build on existing expertise in this specialist field against a background of an ever increasing range of statutory duties with limited resources, people and budgets at our disposal. It will ensure that children are maintained as the central focus, implementing change gradually in order that the change process does not detract from the service delivery and outcomes for children. It will enable a more accurate picture of local needs and priorities to be developed to inform future commissioning.
- 2.08 The reporting arrangements have been agreed:

North Wales Social Services Improvement Collaborative (NWSSIC)

Gwen Carrington,
Gwynedd

Link Director

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE/ HEADS Nicola Francis
OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES GROUP Denbighshire
Chair of NWHOCS Group
(Quarterly reports)

OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT GROUP Carol Salmon
Flintshire
Link Head of Service
(Monthly meetings)

PRACTITIONERS GROUP

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.01 The benefits of the extended consortium arrangements can be summarised as follows:-
- 3.1.1 The securing of a specialist high quality adoption service should help to release capacity in the Family Placement Teams to undertake additional placement support work with carers and prevent placement breakdown.
 - 3.1.2 The creation of a standardised data system will inform commissioning decisions and increase placement choice.
 - 3.1.3 Improvements to advertising, recruitment and assessment will reduce the need to purchase adoption placements outside the consortium. The current difference between an in-consortium/ ex-consortium placement fee ranges from £10,160 (local authority placement outside the consortium) to £17,389 (voluntary adoption agency placement).
 - 3.1.4 The creation of a further post of Adoption Training and Development Officer will coordinate functions and contribute to policy, procedural and public information campaigns. Individual authorities currently spend between £3,000 - £10,000 per year on training which, if pooled on a regional basis, would contribute to the cost of this post.
 - 3.1.5 The development of post adoption support services will draw upon an extensive knowledge base and service delivery and will bring consistency and added value to the development of such initiatives.

- 3.1.6 The Adoption Advisor will be charged with the task of reviewing the current Adoption Panel arrangements across North Wales where 6 separate panels currently operate. Consideration will be given to future panel structures to increase efficiency (e.g moving from 6 panels to 2 or 3) without compromising the quality of the current panel decision making processes

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 That endorsement is given to the new consortium arrangements on a North Wales basis.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 The costs of the previous consortium arrangements across North Wales were £4,000 per local authority per annum the cost of which is met from the existing base budget. The costs of the new consortium per local authority is as follows:

2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
£5K	£10K	£17K

The costs for years 1 and 2 reflect the subsidised amount, taking into account the grant to Wrexham as coordinating authority from the Making the Connections Improvement Fund of £59,000, and a further grant from SSIA to Wrexham of £25k (Demonstrating Improvement).

- 5.02 The same fund also provided approximately £57,000 to Wrexham in 2006 to commission a service provider to undertake a study of the feasibility and benefits of local authorities jointly commissioning all, or aspects of adoption service provision in the North Wales region. Due to delays caused by the tendering process the Making the Connection Team at WAG agreed to carry forward the grant funding until 31.08.07.
- 5.03 Year 2 and 3 costs are expected to be met by efficiency gains from increased consortium placement and training, recruitment activity.
- 5.04 There will be cost implications arising from the creation of a standardised data system, (See 3.1.2 above) and from making a contribution to the Training and Development Officer (see 3.1.4). These will be met from within existing resources, including from efficiency gains available to us as a Consortium member

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 None.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 Expanding the pool of adopters available will benefit children placed for adoption across North Wales and assist them to maintain links with their country and region of origin.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 Wrexham is the host authority for the consortium arrangement.

9.02 Close liaison with Human Resources will be required as the staged approach progresses and services are rationalised.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 None.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 A great deal of consultation work has been done across the 6 North Wales authorities at all levels of officer. Member events have also been held.

11.02 The project is supported by the Directors across North Wales, the Social Services Improvement Agency and the Welsh Local Government Association.

11.03 Progress is reported via the North Wales Heads of Children's Services to the North Wales Social Services Improvement Collaborative.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1 only.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS)**

North Wales Adoption Consortium; Feasibility Study into Commissioning Adoption Services (IPC-Oxford and Bath) JANUARY 2008.

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

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North Wales Adoption Consortium

Feasibility Study into Commissioning Adoption Services

Final Report

December 2007

Draft - for consultation on 10 December '07

Executive Summary

Under the Welsh Assembly policy initiative 'Making the Connections' an improvement grant has been made available to the consortium to produce a feasibility study into the expansion of the North Wales Adoption Consortium arrangements. The study's key aims are to:

- Review current arrangements for adoption services across the authorities involved in the North Wales Adoption Consortium.
- Test the feasibility of various options for improving the effectiveness of adoption services across the region.
- Propose a preferred option, consider the risks involved, and outline an implementation plan.

1 REVIEW OF CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS

The following business case arguments for expansion of the Consortium have emerged from the study:

Business Case 1

There is much will and commitment from adoption workers across the region to operate collaboratively. While they see the strengths of working in local teams they also recognise the weaknesses of small service teams needing to undertake an ever increasing range of statutory responsibilities with limited resources, people and budgets, at their disposal.

Business Case 2

Any expansion of the Consortium's role and activities will be building on the 'tried and tested' experience of Local Authorities in the Region already working together in this specialist field.

Business Case 3

Authorities across the region have indicated they are struggling to meet the full range of new statutory requirements. This could place individual Authority's at risk of challenge and complaint or legal action from children, birth families and adopters in failing to meet service expectations and requirements under the 2002 Act.

Business Case 4

The Region is evidencing its commitment to the principles of 'Making the Connections' agenda by taking the opportunity to commission this feasibility study. In responding to the recommendations in this report the Region will be providing leadership to the vision of future services which are based on increased joint working across local authority boundaries via delivery mechanisms which are '*innovative*' and '*radical*'.

Business Case 5

There is a growing body of evidence across the U.K. that a consortium approach is the best way of delivering adoption services for reasons of reducing cost, maximising investment, providing a greater resource base of placements and support services and better concentration of knowledge and skills. Any investment in the short term should be viewed as invest to save over a three to five year period.

Business Case 6

Each Local Authority has increased statutory expectations placed on its adoption services by the 2002 Act which will be subject to regular inspection. Poor inspection outcomes have implications both for services and staff morale as well as proving damaging to Local Authorities public reputation and confidence, potentially deterring people from coming forward as adopters.

2 OPTIONS APPRAISAL

The study in analysing all the information available, considering all the points made in interviews and collating the wealth of views expressed at two stakeholder events identified three options for change:

Option 1: To build on current Consortium activities but in a limited way. This was assessed not to deliver the changes required to meet many of the business arguments above.

Option 2: This is the more radical and risky option in moving quickly to an integrated regional adoption service. This was assessed as the future vision for the service which needs to be worked towards.

Option 3: This option takes a staged approach to the expansion/change process in allowing services with increased investment to be developed over time. Option 3 is the preferred model being recommended from this study.

3 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The implementation plan is built around option 3 and covers the period 2008 – 2010. The following are key steps to be taken in turning the plan into a reality:

Step 1

Review of current Consortium hosting arrangements.

Step 2

Review governance arrangements leading to the creation of a new Consortium Board chaired at Head of Service level with terms of reference to reflect commissioning and managerial responsibilities.

Step 3

Create and appoint to Adoption Advisor and Adoption Administrator posts.

Step 4

Review existing Consortium Co-ordinator post.

Step 5

Apply to the Making the Connections Improvement Fund for 50% match funding – year 1.

Step 6

Create and appoint to Adoption Training and Development Officer post.

Step 7

Apply to the Making the Connections Improvement Fund for 25% funding - year 2.

North Wales Adoption Consortium

Feasibility Study into Commissioning

Adoption Services

Final Report

1 INTRODUCTION

The 6 North Wales Authorities of Gwynedd, Conwy, Isle of Anglesey, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham have been working together since 2004, under consortium arrangements, in sharing and negotiating adoption placements. The service has been operational since July 2005. Wrexham CBC has acted as the lead authority for the consortium.

Under the Welsh Assembly policy initiative 'Making the Connections' an improvement grant has been made available to the consortium to produce a feasibility study into the expansion of the consortium arrangements. The study's key aims are to:

- Review current arrangements for adoption services across the authorities involved in the North Wales Adoption Consortium.
- Test the feasibility of various options for improving the effectiveness of adoption services across the region.
- Propose a preferred option, consider the risks involved, and outline an implementation plan.

The report lays out findings from the work undertaken to date in considering current adoption consortium arrangements in North Wales. It is set both within the broader national context and the priority being given to adoption as well as the 'local' Welsh agenda under 'Making the Connections'. The report lays out three options which have been considered both by the Project Board, at a joint meeting with Heads of Service on 4 October 2007 and at a larger stakeholder event on 24 October 2007. A business case for a preferred option is presented supported by an implementation plan.

The report will build an argument for change. Each section concludes with a summary point that contributes to the business case for the current consortium arrangements to be developed to provide a comprehensive range of adoption services.

2 REVIEW OF CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR ADOPTION SERVICES

In preparation for this study all adoption/family placement teams were asked to undertake a SWOT analysis of their adoption service. The following headlines emerged across the authorities:

Strengths

- Experienced/hardworking/committed/dedicated workers.
- Good quality assessments using the competency based model.
- Good working relationships with the children's social workers.
- Experienced adoption panels.
- Good links with local agencies.
- Commitment to being a member of the consortium.

Opportunities

- Re-launching adoption services in response to new 2002 Act.
- Building relationships/expectations with other services e.g. CAMHS.
- More suitable policy environment to work collaboratively.
- Some increase in resources in some authority's enabling more activities.

Weaknesses

- Lack of resources for Section 98 work.
- Team members trying to be all things to all people/jack of all trades etc.
- Lack of resources for support to birth families.
- Lack of accredited bi-lingual local practitioners to counsel birth relatives.
- Variable budget year on year.
- Lengthy court processes.

Threats

- Lack of placement choice e.g. sibling groups, Welsh speaking families.
- Reduction in budgets but increase in expectations of range of services to be delivered.
- Not meeting new legal requirements due to delays in updating policy/procedures/guidance.
- Not providing range of services required under changed legislation.

Many of these issues were reinforced in the interviews held with staff and most recognised the potential for the consortium under revised and enhanced arrangements to be able to address some of the above weaknesses and threats.

Business Case 1

There is much will and commitment from adoption workers across the region to operate collaboratively. While they see the strengths of working in local teams they also recognise the weaknesses of small service teams needing to undertake an ever increasing range of statutory responsibilities with limited resources, people and budgets, at their disposal.

3 REVIEW OF CURRENT CONSORTIUM ARRANGEMENTS

The Consortium grew from an informal arrangement that developed between adoption managers in the North Wales area, partly in response to the problems of scale resulting from Local Government reorganisation in 1996.

It consists of 6 member Local Authorities, as noted above, together with Barnardos, St David's Adoption Society and Adoption Matters as associate members. It is supported by BAAF who employ the Co-ordinator on the Consortium's behalf. The Consortium has been established since the autumn of 2004 and operational since July 2005.

The Consortium's aims are to:

- To increase the adoptive placement choice of looked after children for whom adoption is planned within the consortium area.
- Establish a pool of approved prospective adopters who reside in the Consortium area and match children with prospective adopters.
- Facilitate adoption placements between member adoption agencies on a reduced fee basis (Currently, £2,500).
- Develop joint activities that will contribute to improving practice and outcomes for children being adopted.
- Maintain a close liaison with the National Adoption Register to ensure compatibility with the Consortium's procedures.

An internal review of the Consortium in August 2005 identified the following as key issues for consideration:

1. The Adoption and Children Act 2002, National Minimum Standards for Local Authority Adoption Services and regular CSIW inspections have placed pressure on Agencies to examine and adapt their policies and procedures in adoption practice. The resource implications are significant, particularly at a time when there is a lack of expertise in childcare teams about adoption procedures. These factors have a direct impact on the work of the Consortium and reinforce the benefits of partnership and joint initiatives.
2. The current nature of adoption practice also reinforces the need for partnership working as most children requiring adoption placements are placed outside of their 'home' area, making a regional inter-dependency essential.

The review recognised the future potential of the Consortium and concluded by saying:

'All North Wales authorities have limited resources at their disposal and will inevitably struggle to meet CSSIW and other regulatory requirements. By 'pooling' resources, effective and robust adoption services can be created that will benefit from economies of scale and the avoidance of duplication.'

Two years on this feasibility study will constitute a further review in helping to decide how the consortium can best be taken forward. This is in terms of both meeting national expectations about the quality and range of adoption services that should be being provided as well as meeting Welsh Assembly Government expectations under the Making the Connections agenda.

The Consortium **strengths** as identified by staff can be summarised as follows:

- Plays an important role in the matching/ placement of children – more choice.
- Helps in keeping children local to N. Wales with the benefits culturally this brings. As one worker said, *'local children linked to local people linked to local culture'*.
- Small investment for positive and bigger gains.

- BAAF's involvement provides access to a wider training and knowledge base which helps to keep a national perspective.
- Strength in networking, problem solving but also sharing best practice.
- Link worker sub-group of the consortium responds positively to moving practice issues forward.

The Consortium's **potential** as identified by staff can be summarised as follows:

- Enhanced opportunity to deal with problems in relation to economies of scale and capacity for change within each Authority.
- To take on more activities/functions to reduce the level of duplication e.g. common policy and procedures.
- Joint training initiatives for pre-approval preparation sessions and post approval training.
- Joint adoption training for adoption panel members and child care staff
- Co-ordination of a recruitment strategy.
- Wider pool of expertise and knowledge to draw upon.
- Development of a broader range of post adoption services.
- Development of a regional intermediary service.
- Recruitment/retention of staff more attractive in a larger service – greater career opportunities.
- Draw on a bigger pool when staff go and therefore not leave gaps in service delivery as a result. Sometimes planning gets put on hold until knowledge is rebuilt.

Areas of work thought beneficial to keep a **local** focus:

- Working with child care teams - important to see adoption as part of the broader child welfare system.
- Local service can respond quickly to local enquiries/interest in adoption.
- Applicants may identify more easily with their local area/LA.
- Reputation of the local service may be important in gaining confidence of potential applicants and families generally.

Following interviews with representatives from all 6 LAs ranging from senior managers to front line staff the overwhelming view of the consortium was 'so far so good' with many recognising its potential to be developed further. No one commented that the consortium should fold following the initial 3 year agreement.

Staff commented on the consortium's 'fragility' and need to be 'revitalised' but all conveyed a sense of commitment to it continuing. A number of people commented that the Consortium has assisted with keeping adoption as a priority issue within their Authority. As one senior manager succinctly phrased it:

"Adoption is now part of the landscape and operational culture of children's services".

Business Case 2

Any expansion of the Consortium's role and activities will be building on the 'tried and tested' experience of Local Authorities in the Region already working together in this specialist field.

4 ADOPTION – THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

Over recent years the Government agenda has been to promote the greater use of adoption as a solution to the care of children who cannot live with their birth families. In England and Wales, the Government has set ambitious targets of increasing the number of children in care placed for adoption. In 2005-06, 900 more children were adopted than in 1999-00, which represents an increase of 34%.

In Wales, the number of children in care who were adopted during the year ending 31 March 2006 was 249, which represents 5.5% of the total population. Within the region 40 out of 750 children looked after were adopted bringing it broadly in line with the Welsh average. This is slightly lower than England where 6% of children were adopted from care. However in 2006/07 despite increases in looked after numbers regionally (Table2) the numbers of adoptions had fallen back to 30.

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN ADOPTED BY LOCAL AUTHORITY (Table 1)				
Local Authority	04/05	05/06	06/07	Total
Anglesey	10	5	0	15
Gwynedd	0	5	5	10
Conwy	5	5	0	10
Denbighshire	10	10	5	25
Flintshire	10	10	5	25
Wrexham	10	5	15	30
Total	45	40	30	-

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN BY LOCAL AUTHORITY (Table 2)				
Local Authority	04/05	05/06	06/07	Total
Anglesey	65	70	75	210
Gwynedd	140	135	155	430
Conwy	135	140	145	420
Denbighshire	145	145	140	430
Flintshire	135	145	155	435
Wrexham	115	115	120	350
Total	735	750	790	-

Table 1 serves to evidence that adoption activity within each Authority is small. Even combined across the region it does not amount to significant numbers and raises questions about efficiency of resources (people and budgets) when such levels of activity at Local Authority level are so low.

Compounding this position has been new adoption legislation placing increased statutory responsibilities on local authorities to deliver a broader range of adoption services.

On 30 December 2005 the Adoption and Children Act 2002 was fully implemented. It replaces the Adoption Act 1976 and modernises the entire legal framework for domestic and inter-country adoption. Local authorities and voluntary adoption agencies must comply with the new provisions. In summary the Act aims to ensure that¹:

- The needs of the child are put at the centre of the adoption process.

¹ HMCS (2006). A quick guide to the Adoption and Children Act 2002

- Birth parents understand the impact of consenting to adoption.
- Disputes are resolved early so adoption does not become a *fait accompli*.
- The voice of the child may be heard, directly or indirectly through reports to the court.
- There is effective case management without delay to the decision-making process.

The Act contains key provisions which²:

- Align adoption law with the relevant provisions of the Children Act 1989 to ensure that the child's welfare is the paramount consideration in all decisions relating to adoption.
- Place a duty on local authorities to maintain an adoption service, including arrangements for the provision of adoption support services.
- Provide a new right to an assessment of needs for adoption support services for adoptive families and others.
- Set out a new regulatory structure for adoption support agencies.
- Enable the appropriate minister to establish an independent review mechanism in relation to qualifying determinations made by an adoption agency.
- Make provision for the process of adoption, including new measures for placement for adoption with consent and placement orders.
- Provide for adoption orders to be made in favour of single people, married couples and, for the first time, unmarried couples.
- Provide a new framework designed to ensure adoption agencies have a more consistent approach to accessing information held about adoptions which take place after the act comes into force.
- Provide a new regulatory framework to enable intermediary agencies to help adopted adults obtain information about their adoption and facilitate contact between them and their adult birth relatives, where the person was adopted before the 2002 Act came into force.
- Provide additional restrictions on bringing a child into the UK in connection with adoption.
- Provide for restrictions on arranging adoptions and advertising children for adoption, other than through adoption agencies.
- Amend the Children Act 1989 to introduce a new special guardianship order, intended to provide permanence for children for whom adoption is not appropriate.

Business Case 3

Authorities across the region have indicated they are struggling to meet the full range of new statutory requirements. This could place individual Authority's at risk of challenge and complaint or legal action from children, birth families and adopters in failing to meet service expectations and requirements under the 2002 Act.

5 ADOPTION - THE WELSH CONTEXT - 'MAKING THE CONNECTIONS'

The Welsh Assembly Government published '**Making the Connections**'³ in 2004 setting out how they were going to deliver (with partners) public services which reflect the distinctive nature, needs and values of Wales. The vision was:

² Summary from Every Child Matters website www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/socialcare/lookedafterchildren/adoption/act2002/

³ Welsh Assembly Government (2004). Making the Connections: Delivering Better Services for Wales.

- Excellent public services are essential to a prosperous, sustainable, bilingual, healthier and better educated Wales.
- More joint working to deliver public services of top quality: they must be responsive to the needs of individuals and communities, delivered efficiently and driven by a commitment to equality and social justice.
- Identify improvements in the arrangements for local service delivery, which are as radical and innovative as necessary.
- Examine how existing arrangements for accountability can be used, developed and adapted to support this innovation.

There are four principles for better services:

- **Citizens at the Centre:** services more responsive to users with people and communities involved in designing the way services are delivered.
- **Equality and Social Justice:** every person to have the opportunity to contribute and connect with the hardest to reach.
- **Working together as the Welsh Public Service:** more co-ordination between providers to deliver sustainable, quality and responsive services; and
- **Value for Money:** making the most of our resources.

The Welsh Assembly Government's response to the **Beecham Review - Making the Connections: Delivering Beyond Boundaries**⁴ was published in 2006. The response sets out an agenda for taking forward the transformation of public services in Wales and is a specific action plan for gaining improvement in the public services.

These above principles apply to this feasibility study in terms of looked after children, their families and adopters receiving high quality responsive adoption services, with agencies working evermore closely together in making best use of limited resources for the greatest impact, i.e. improved adoption outcomes for children.

Business Case 4

The Region is evidencing its commitment to the principles of 'Making the Connections' agenda by taking the opportunity to commission this feasibility study. In responding to the recommendations in this report the Region will be providing leadership to the vision of future services which are based on increased joint working across local authority boundaries via delivery mechanisms which are '*innovative*' and '*radical*'.

6 THE CONSORTIUM APPROACH – A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

In recent times there has been emphasis on developing consortium arrangements for adoption services. In Wales 21 out of the 22 Local Authorities are members of adoption consortium.

⁴ Welsh Assembly Government (2006). Making the Connections: Delivering beyond boundaries.

In the White Paper, *Adoption a New Approach*⁵ it set out changes the government wanted to make to improve council performance on adoption. One of the measures the government encouraged was the co-operation between councils, including facilitating consortia arrangements. The government believes that joint working between councils and voluntary adoption agencies can be a way of achieving more effective recruitment and assessment of adopters, and better organisation and service provision, as well as sharing good practice. This may help councils find families more quickly for children who need them. The government laid out expectations that most council's become members of consortia over time. The government's vision for effective consortia arrangements between councils and voluntary adoption agencies includes:

- A long term (3 or 4 year) view of financial flows, to detach the issue of resources from individual children.
- An agreement on the number of prospective adopters that each agency or council is expected to provide.
- Moves towards the use of a model based upon pooled budgets/joint commissioning.

A survey in 1999⁶ found that three-quarters of social services departments had some form of consortium arrangements and a third had arrangements with voluntary adoption agencies. The consortia appear to operate in a variety of ways such as, lower or no interagency fees between members, agreed recruitment targets, and joint promotional activity/recruitment campaigns. The survey revealed that some of the arrangements appeared to have become very complex and in some cases the effort involved in running the consortia outweighed the benefits they were designed to achieve. However, for some local authorities it is clear that the number of adoptions handled each year is small and therefore would benefit from consortia arrangements.

Furthermore, a review commissioned by the DfES identified a number of benefits for local authorities of the consortium approach:

- The consortium approach provides a ready resource of accessible child placements.
- Consortia are considered to be an effective tool and resource for the promotion of inter-regional adoption, which can be particularly beneficial within smaller local authority areas where it is possibly in a child's best interest to be placed outside of the local authority area but within the same region.
- Within adoption consortia, a reduced scale of fees is often agreed between members that are significantly lower than standards interagency fees.
- Arrangements also exist within some consortia for the exchange of approved prospective adopters.
- The consortium approach provides the opportunity to share ideas and best practice across authorities.

Business Case 5

There is a growing body of evidence across the U.K. that a consortium approach is the best way of delivering adoption services for reasons of reducing cost, maximising

⁵ HM (2000). *Adoption: A new approach*. Cm 5017.

⁶ SSI (2000). LAC (98)20: *Adoption – achieving the right balance*. Responses to issues arising from SSI survey of local authority social services departments' implementation of the circular.

investment, providing a greater resource base of placements and support services and better concentration of knowledge and skills

7 INSPECTION OF ADOPTION SERVICES

Adoption services are underpinned by a range of legislation, regulation and minimum standards. Section 3 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 requires each Local Authority to maintain an adoption service within its area. The pieces of legislation that provide the legal framework for adoption services and those which are particularly relevant to the regulation and inspection of adoption services by CSSIW are listed below:

- Care Standards Act 2000.
- Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003.
- Adoption and Children Act 2002.
- Adoption Agencies (Wales) Regulations 2005.
- The Local Authority Adoption Service (Wales) Regulations 2007.
- The Adoption Support Services (Local Authorities) (Wales) Regulations 2005.
- Adoptions with A Foreign Element Regulations 2005.
- Local Authorities (Prescribed Fees) Adoptions with a Foreign Element (Wales) Regulations 2005.
- The Adoption Information and Intermediary Services (Pre-Commencement Adoptions) (Wales) Regulations 2005.
- The Access to Information (Post Commencement Adoptions) (Wales) Regulations 2005.
- The Independent Review of Determinations (Adoption) (Wales) Regulations 2006.
- The Restrictions on the Preparation of Adoption Reports Regulations 2005.
- The Adopted Children and Adoption Contact Registers Regulations 2005.
- National Minimum Standards for Local Authority Adoption Services for Wales 2007.

The following Welsh Assembly Guidance is also available to support the above regulations:

- Adoption Agencies (Wales) Regulations 2005 Guidance April 2006.
- The Adoption Support Services (Local Authorities) (Wales) Regulations 2005 Guidance April 2006.
- Practice Guidance on Assessing the Support Needs of Adoptive Families (Wales) January 2005.
- The Adoption Information and Intermediary Services (Pre-Commencement Adoptions) (Wales) Regulations 2005 Guidance December 2006.
- Inter-country Adoption Guidance and Information on Processes.
- The Special Guardianship (Wales) Regulations 2005 Guidance, April 2006.
- The Access to Information (Post Commencement Adoptions) (Wales) Regulations 2005 Guidance July 2006.
- Public Leaflet: The Independent Review of Determinations.

The National Minimum Standards (NMS) for Local Authority Adoption Services for Wales, issued in 2007 are issued by the Welsh Ministers under section 23 of the Care Standards Act 2000. They must be taken into account in regulatory decision making. They represent statements of proper practice in meeting regulatory requirements.

Where practices differ from those prescribed in the NMS, inspectors will ensure that they are at least equivalent in terms of safe and proper practice.

All this paints a complex picture which Local Authorities need to ensure has the proper level of understanding and implementation. This often means that for most Authorities this detailed knowledge and skill will be located in one person who when not available or changes jobs can potentially leave the Authority in a vulnerable position.

Authorities under the new legislation and inspection regimes will expect to be compliant with the broader range of service provision and interventions under the 2002 Act. This can include such services as discussion /support groups with birth parents, therapeutic support e.g. family/individual therapy, relationship counselling, support from CAMHS, specialist education services, speech/occupational therapy etc. Most Authorities in the Region are only providing very minimal post adoption support services or services to birth families due to their limited resource base. This leaves services at risk of poor inspection outcomes. The regulations state:

" Where the Local Authority adoption service fails to meet its statutory obligations, the inspector(s) from the Service Regulation and Inspection arm of CSSIW who are conducting the inspection will consult with the Local Authority Inspection Review arm of CSSIW at an early stage. Significant and enduring concerns, particularly where they are symptomatic of concerns across the service could result in the Local Authority being subject to the intervention protocol between the Welsh Assembly Government and the WLGA: "Response to Serious Concerns about Local Authority Services."

Business Case 6

Each Local Authority has increased statutory expectations placed on its adoption services by the 2002 Act which will be subject to regular inspection. Poor inspection outcomes have implications both for services and staff morale as well as proving damaging to Local Authorities public reputation and confidence potentially deterring people from coming forward as adopters.

8 OPTIONS ASSESSMENT

When setting up the feasibility study it was agreed that any options developed will need to address some key questions about adoption services in North Wales, particularly regarding:

- Arrangements which will be both cost-effective and sustainable for all authorities across the large geographical area of the region.
- Arrangements which will ensure that children in no one authority in the Consortium are disadvantaged compared to others.
- Arrangements which will promote greater service efficiency and appropriate accountability to authorities.
- Arrangements which will improve the experience of children being placed for adoption, adopters and potential adopters across the region.
- Arrangements which will increase the number of appropriate adoptions in the region.

Throughout the process of this feasibility study a wide range of staff have been consulted about future options. At a stakeholders event in July '07 mixed Authority

groups were asked to consider the following 6 statements and agree which one might best describe how they saw the consortium developing in the future:

1. A separate organisation maintaining its independence, but working jointly on some activities or functions.
2. An organisation with resources & expertise to offer assistance to other organisations.
3. A new organisation to do joint work on some activities or functions.
4. A group structure where a 'host' organisation governs a group of other organisations.
5. A new organisation working as one body on all activities.
6. Other.

The summary view that emerged was an amalgamation of statements 3 and statement 5. Some questioned whether it was practical or possible to obtain 5. Many liked the flexibility statement 3 offered, with the intention of then moving incrementally towards '*an organisation working as one body on all activities over time*'. Others took the view that statement 5 was too prescriptive and rigid during this current time of evolution in Children Services.

Other key messages/questions to result from consultations and interviews are:

- It was thought while there was a political will to move the consortium forward the ultimate aim would be to develop a model that was fit for purpose, achieving better outcomes for children and families and ensuring mutual respect and co-operation intra and inter agency.
- It was felt important to acknowledge that while adoption services could be centrally operated within a consortium, local delivery of services should not be lost i.e. having a centralised commissioning function/process but local delivery of services which could provide a varied pattern of delivery of services that reflected local need.
- Stakeholders felt that the consortium if not itself a font of knowledge could hold a database of knowledge and be a central point of contact.
- There was a need to be careful that a divide between a centralised body and the fieldwork team (i.e. practice) with a lack of connection and understanding didn't occur.
- Need to ensure that bureaucracy and management costs should not be increased in the process of centralising processes.

Any model for option development should, in commissioning terms, be about looking at needs in relation to resources and what structure and commissioning framework will best deliver improved quality and service outcomes. One possible framework is as follows:

Regional – commissioning across all 6 LAs in partnership with VAAs

Sub-regional – commissioning on a east/west basis i.e. 3/3.

Neighbouring – commissioning on a partnering of 2 Las.

Single – commissioning as a single unit.

Other providers – commissioning of some activities is outsourced to specialist services.

The consortium would act as an overarching commissioning body advising the Consortium Management Board of which commissioning route, based on best available management information, commissioning decisions should be taken.

Principles and Values

Based upon the analysis undertaken for the project, including feedback from stakeholders in seminars and in written feedback, the following principles and values emerged as key to underpinning any new approaches resulting from this feasibility study:

- To improve outcomes for children.
- To improve a uniformed approach to ensure no postcode lottery.
- There should be a critical balance between centralisation and localisation.
- Services should focus on achieving the most timely adoption services and outcomes for children.
- Resources are maximised.
- A consistent approach for quality assuring services.
- A child and adopter centred approach.
- Keeping the child as the central focus.

These in many respects tie in closely with the outcomes to questionnaires completed as part of the interview process when people were asked to identify what they saw as the top 3 benefits to joint working on adoption services. Once the questionnaires had been collated and analysed the following can be identified as those areas which would have the greatest benefit:

1. A more integrated or coordinated approach to meet children their families and adopters needs.
2. Improved knowledge, good practice and information sharing.
3. Potential financial savings and/or better use of existing resources.

When taking into account all the stakeholder comments sought the view is the Consortium should be working towards an arrangement that evidences it is providing an adoption service better for service users, better for staff and better for the organisations.

Risk Assessment of Options

During interviews when asked to risk assess the future development of the consortium the following 3 risk areas came out as critical to keep in mind when considering options:

1. Complexity of decision-making and loss of autonomy.
2. Loss of flexibility in working practices.
3. Damage to organisations and waste of resources if the collaboration is unsuccessful.

Options Framework (appendix 1)

Exploration of the options has been via a pathway approach which lays out key processes and activities followed once a decision has been taken to place a child for adoption. It is by no means exhaustive but paints a picture of the range of activities involved.

3 options have been considered by the Project Board and North Wales Heads of Service at a special meeting held on 4 October leading to a broader stakeholder consultation event on 24 October 2007. What follows is an analysis of the options leading to a preferred model for taking the consortium forward.

Current Consortium Arrangements (appendix 2)

The adoption pathway is adjusted to show how the current consortium arrangement has a defined area of activity in managing a database of adopters across the Region and assisting with the matching of children with adopters on the database. The range of other activities is largely undertaken by Local Authorities separately who sometimes join up in different combinations for purposes such as training adopters and staff. Such arrangements are informal and irregular.

Option One (appendix 3)

This is the 'safe' option which while moving the Consortium forward slightly does not satisfy the level of change aspired to by the majority consulted within this study. This option will not deliver the broader range of activities that Authorities are looking and wanting the Consortium to provide.

Strengths:

- Leaves current arrangements in place but expanded with the Consortium taking on regional responsibility for advertising, recruiting, assessing and training prospective/approved adopters.
- Little investment required for change management processes.
- Improved commissioning arrangements for attracting in range of adopters required to meet the changing needs of children coming through the system

Weaknesses:

- Won't move the Consortium on far enough in developing joint commissioning arrangements for the much broader range of adoption services now required in addressing existing service deficits and potential poor inspection outcomes.
- Doesn't exploit the potential for greater efficiencies across the backroom activities which all agencies have to undertake such as training and development of staff, panel members etc.

- It's not what most staff assess is required to deliver a modern comprehensive adoption service.

Risk Assessment:

- Keeps risks low in terms of organisational change management processes.
- Keeps risks high for Local Authorities in not meeting statutory and regulatory minimum standard requirements and the potential reputation and financial consequences should services be challenged by children, birth families and adopters.

Option Two (appendix 4)

This is the more 'innovative and 'radical' option which lays out a comprehensive fully integrated regional North Wales Adoption Service. It is therefore the most risky option. On a sub-regional basis, east and west, two adoption panels would operate with all other activities being managed, if not always delivered on a regional basis.

Strengths:

- Centralising knowledge and skill in this way creates a powerful model in terms of building up a service of expertise and excellence.
- Helps to create equity of service delivery across Local Authority boundaries.
- Starts to draw immediate efficiencies by having two adoption panels East/West rather than the current 6 panels.
- Has the opportunity to develop a sophisticated commissioning arrangement by operating a whole systems approach in being able to invest/disinvest as needs and demands change over time.
- Economies of scale and capacity are significant barriers to LA's ensuring they are meeting their statutory responsibilities. By joining up on service developments more will be able to be achieved.

Weaknesses:

- A big change agenda demanding a lot of investment in the short-term from both a staffing and funding perspective.
- Will be making commissioning decisions on inadequate and incomplete information data sets.
- Loss of local control and influence which may have the impact of marginalising adoption from mainstream children's services.
- Separating out adoption from fostering may lose flexibility as to how resources are deployed at a local level.

Risks:

- Change of this scale across the number of Local Authorities without any established infrastructure in place may lead to organisational turbulence which poses direct risks to service delivery e.g. delays in recruiting or bringing children to panel.
- Poor or compromised decisions may be made due to weaknesses in data collection and information generally.
- Without the required time to build option 2 this may lead to complex decision making processes needing to be put in place which will act as obstacles to change rather than facilitating increased collaborative working.

Option Three (appendix 5)

This option takes a staged approach to the change process and therefore helps to reduce some of the risks involved in option 2. The destination for option 3 is option 2 in terms of a comprehensive regional Adoption Support and Advisory Service. The journey of option 3 in terms of timescales, priorities for service development and its overall management will need to be carefully agreed.

Strengths:

- Gives space to build an infrastructure for the new service in establishing a staff and resource base ensuring a safe handing over of responsibilities from Local Authorities to the Consortium.
- Will allow opportunities under an action/research type approach to test and evaluate the model as way of working and building up trust and confidence in the service.
- Allows for the service to be built over time with transfer of resources into the Consortium being carefully managed based on available budgets and agreed priorities.
- Provides opportunities to establish improved baseline information on which commissioning decisions can be reached about priorities and which parts of the service are best delivered regionally, sub-regionally etc.
- As option 3 moves towards option 2 it will start to draw down all the strengths option 2 has identified.

Weaknesses

- Competing priorities across the 6 Authorities may lead to lengthy negotiations and disagreements which undermine the intentions behind the Consortium.
- Loss of local control and influence may have the impact of marginalising adoption from mainstream children's services.
- Separating out adoption from fostering may loose flexibility as to how resources are deployed at a local level.

Risks

- The length of time taken to build the Consortium plus any movement of key staff may lead to the current energy and commitment for change to weaken which could put the project at risk or lead to it only realising part rather than its full potential.

Option Recommendation

Consultation on the above options with managers and key stakeholders concluded option 3 as the preferred model. The analysis resulting from this feasibility study is also recommending option 3 as best way of moving adoption services forward within and across all LA's in North Wales. This analysis takes into account the principles, values, risks and success criteria identified in the project. The following are reasons given for the recommendation:

1. Taking into account the number of Local Authorities involved and with experience of joint working in adoption still developing a staged approach to change is advisable.
2. Ensuring children are kept as the central focus, it is important that not all staff time and energy is tied up or distracted with change processes. The pace and timing of change is therefore important so whatever practices are transferred from local to regional services they are achieved safely, with no child being disadvantaged by the change itself.
3. Work is required to gain a more accurate picture of need and priorities on which informed commissioning decisions can be made. This will help to ensure equity across the region with no one child in one Authority being disadvantaged to others. Improved data and intelligence about adoption services within and across LA's will also assist in reaching decisions about how services can best be commissioned e.g. on an East/West basis rather than regionally.
4. By establishing a specialist adoption advisory and support service this will assist with the building of a North Wales Adoption Service in ways which create understanding and consensus and therefore help to reduce risk of fracture within the project. The service will bring benefits in creating a strong professional base and focus for adoption knowledge and best practice.
5. A staged approach will also help address those concerns that exist about achieving the right balance between the benefits of a having a centralised service but still having flexibility around local working practices.

9 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The implementation plan under option 3 translates the adoption pathway into costed structural arrangements with an end point of a vision for an integrated regional adoption service as identified under option 2. The Plan is staged over a two year period 2008 – 2010.

Year 1 – 08/09

Wrexham currently hold lead hosting responsibility for the Consortium. They have undertaken this role with commitment and good will. It is recommended this is reviewed by the Heads of Service and Directors group as part of the broader change programme.

Step 1

Review of current Consortium hosting arrangements.

The first requirement for implementation is the development of governance arrangements. While a Board (North Wales Consortium Management Committee) is already in existence overseeing current Consortium responsibilities this should be reviewed in light of the outcomes from this study and a decision taken about its membership and terms of reference. It is recommended the Board is chaired at Head of Service level. The Board also needs to have authority to make commissioning and management decisions in overseeing the work of the Consortium. The Board will have responsibility for this implementation plan.

Step 2

Review governance arrangements leading to the creation of a new Consortium Board chaired at Head of Service level with terms of reference to reflect commissioning and managerial responsibilities.

One of the first tasks for the Consortium Board will be to jointly commission an Adoption Advisor post. This post must be at team/service manager grading with the post holder having a proven track record in adoption/family placement work but also a good understanding of the broader strategic children's services agenda. The role is critical in making things happen and moving towards an integrated adoption service. The post holder must work closely with individual Authorities to drive up local standards in meeting statutory and inspection requirements and preparing them for the joining up of services at regional level.

To support this post with its range of responsibilities a full time administrator will be required. Adoption work and processes are heavy on administration. Attention to detail makes a huge impact on the smooth running of adoption services and often saves time and complications further down the line.

Step 3

Create and appoint to Adoption Advisor and Adoption Administrator posts.

The existing Consortium arrangement currently works to a budget of £28k pa employing a Consortium Co-ordinator on 25 hours a week. Within year 1 this post should be subject to review, by the Adoption Advisor, given the changing requirements of the Consortium. The Co-ordinator currently employs, within budget, an administrator on a sessional basis to undertake specific pieces of work. With the appointment of an Adoption Administrator this person, with professional oversight, should be able to undertake many of the responsibilities located within the Co-ordinator post. This will release capacity for the Co-ordinator, under the leadership of the Advisor to start to develop other parts of the service. The priorities identified by the majority of Authorities are adoption support and intermediary services.

Step 4

Review existing Consortium Co-ordinator post.

Work with the Panels with a view to developing, either an East and West model or to twin with neighbouring Panels also needs priority consideration by the Advisor. Timescales will need to be agreed by the Board. The Advisor will manage existing consortium responsibilities but develop these to include advertising, recruiting and co-ordinating the assessment processes to ensure prospective adopters are responded to with speed and efficiency and that demand never outstrips the supply of adopters. This covers all activities under option three currently identified as consortium/regional and sub-regional. The Advisor with support from the Board and drawing on the content of this study will put together a two year business plan, 2008/10, with supporting work programme to oversee the actions resulting from this implementation plan.

Costs/Benefits

The approximate costs to deliver the service under year 1 of the implementation plan are:

	Posts – Year 1	Costs – Year 1
1.	Consortium Co-ordinator	£28,000
2.	Adoption Advisor	£50,000
3.	Adoption Administrator	£20,000
	On costs	£16,000
	Total	£114,000

With £28k as the current budget a further £86k will be needed. A straight split 6 ways will involve each Authority investing about a further £15k a year into the Consortium making total costs per LA for 2008/09 £20k approx.

There is the opportunity for LAs to apply to the Making the Connections Improvement Fund. The work of the project and content of this report should fit neatly with the requirement to complete a Project Initiation Document to access the fund. It is recommended this is actioned and IPC will be happy to advise and support the process. It is suggested that for year 1 match funding at 50% i.e. £43K is applied for thus reducing the extra funding required from LAs for 2008/09 to £8k

Step 5

Apply to the Making the Connections Improvement Fund for 50% match funding for year 1

Decisions will need to be made about location for the service and this in part may be dependent on which Authority assumes hosting responsibility. The spread of costs and criteria to be used across the 6 LAs needs consideration. Based on adoption averages over the last three years then Wrexham, Flintshire and Denbighshire should be investing the larger amounts. However if a percentage figure of looked after children populations is taken in terms of expectations of numbers to be adopted then the profile of LAs would look very different. Wrexham and Anglesey would have lower levels of investment while Gwynedd with one the highest looked after populations but low adoption rates should be investing more in a regional service.

It is reasonable to conclude there are potential efficiencies for Authorities to draw on from a more robust and sophisticated adoption consortium arrangement. The majority of Authorities in the region have reported the need to go outside of current consortium resources to voluntary adoption agencies in finding a suitable match for their children. This incurs average costs per child of between £18,000 - £25,000. A Consortium in receipt of much better information of the needs of children in the system and able to act quickly on targeted recruitment drives should be able to bring down external agency costs.

Improved matching of children's needs to adoptive families should also serve to reduce timescales children wait to be adopted and thereby reducing costs via foster or expensive residential care placements. This also helps to release foster placements at earlier points and in some circumstances may avoid children needing to be placed in the independent sector. The minimum length of time from best interests decision to placement reported on for this study was 6 months with some Authorities reporting anything up to 18 months.

A consequence of this approach is with Authorities knowing they have secured a small but specialist high quality regional adoption service acting as a source of expertise and guidance, being able to release capacity within family placement teams to concentrate more on the preventative family support side of the business. For example, this could be about creating more opportunities for children to be placed within their own families and/or offering a broader range of respite care services which support children and young people remaining with birth families. Such arrangements not only result, in most circumstances, to improved outcomes for children but are also financially cost effective.

Year 2 – 2009/10

Implementation of stages 1 to 6 under option 3 should be put into action during year 2. A further post of Adoption Training and Development Officer is recommended to co-ordinate all training/development functions and contributing to policy, procedural and public information type activities. Most Authorities report spending between £3,000 - £10,000 a year on training which if pooled regionally will make a reasonable contribution to funding this post.

Step 6

Create and appoint to Adoption Training and Development Officer post.

The overall year 2 costs including this post plus inflation will be:

	Posts – Year 2	Costs – Year 2
1.	Consortium Co-ordinator	£30,000
2.	Adoption Advisor	£54,000
3.	Adoption Administrator	£22,000
4.	Adoption Training & Development Officer	£30,000
	On costs	£20,000
	Total	£156,000

It is recommended that a further application is made to the Making the Connections Improvement Fund for year 2. A suggested split in costs of 75% LAs, 25% Improvement Fund is proposed. If agreed and taking out existing allocations into the Consortium then year 2 costs for LAs will be about £15k.

Step 7

Apply to the Making the Connections Improvement Fund for 25% funding for year 2.

The overall budget profile for implementing the plan over the two years based on an even split across the 6 LAs will be:

	Current Commitment (£'s)	With Improvement Fund (50/50% - Yr 1 & 75/25% Yr 2)	Without Improvement Fund
Year 1 – 08/09	£4k	£8k	£16k
Year 2 – 09/10	£4k	£16k	£20k

Total	£8k	£24k	£36k
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The financial implications if not all 6 LA's decide to join the new Consortium arrangements are as follows:

No's of LA's	Total Costs per LA with Improvement Fund (50/50% - Year 1 & 75/25% Year 2)	Total costs per LA without Improvement Fund Year's 1 & 2
6 LA's	£12k Yr 1 & £19k Yr 2	£20k Yr 1 & £24k Yr 2
5 LA's	£15k Yr 1 & £23k Yr 2	£23k Yr 1 & £31k Yr 2
4 LA's	£18k Yr 1 & £29k Yr 2	£29k Yr 1 & £39k Yr 2
3 LA's	£24k Yr 1 & £39k Yr 2	£38k Yr 1 & £52k Yr 2

It is advised that the minimum number of LA's to make the Consortium financially and professionally viable should be agreed at four

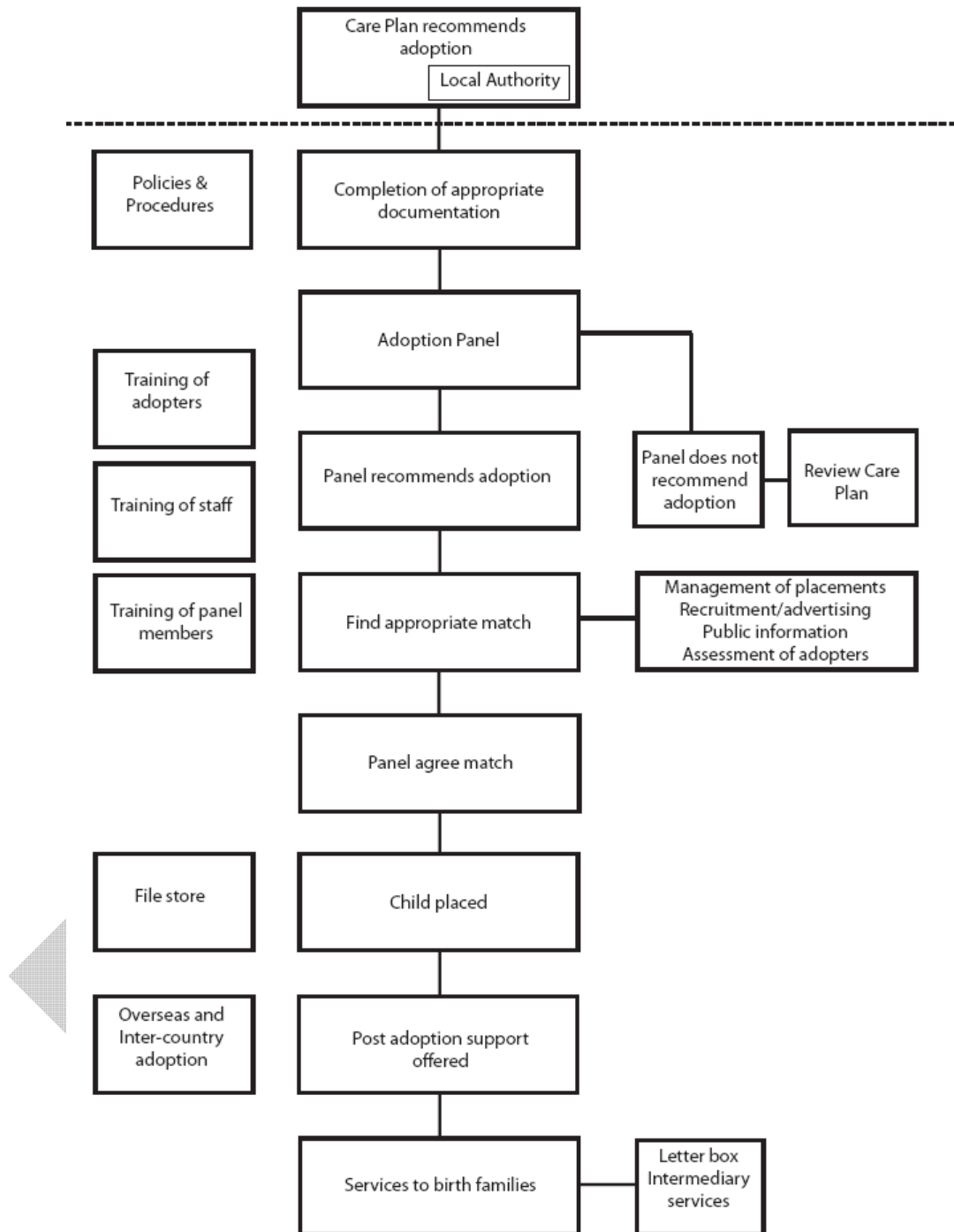
Success Criteria

While the Consortium will be indirectly judged externally by CSSIW via the inspection of LAs adoption services, it will also be important for the Consortium Board to draw up its own local targets linked to expected outcomes resulting from the successful work of the Consortium.

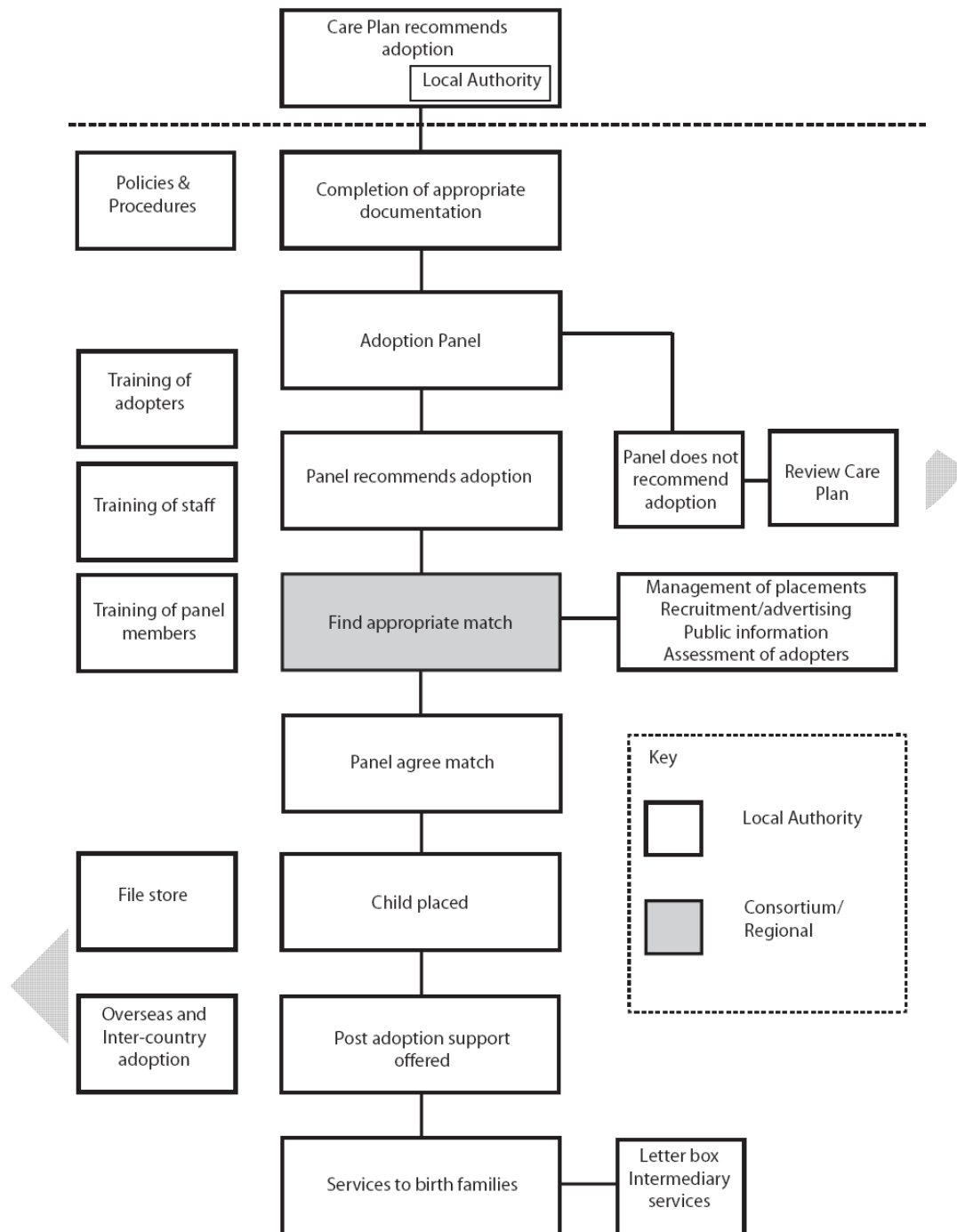
Examples of success criteria which need to include actual measures based on agreed baseline data could be:

- Increased numbers of children being placed for adoption
- Increased numbers of children being placed with Consortium adopters
- Reduced number of children placed with via Voluntary Adoption Agencies
- Decreased wait times from best interests decision to placement
- Reduced number of disruptions
- More adopters being recruited in shorter timescales
- Broader range of post adoption services available
- Intermediary services available for all
- More examples of CAMHS involvement in post adoption services

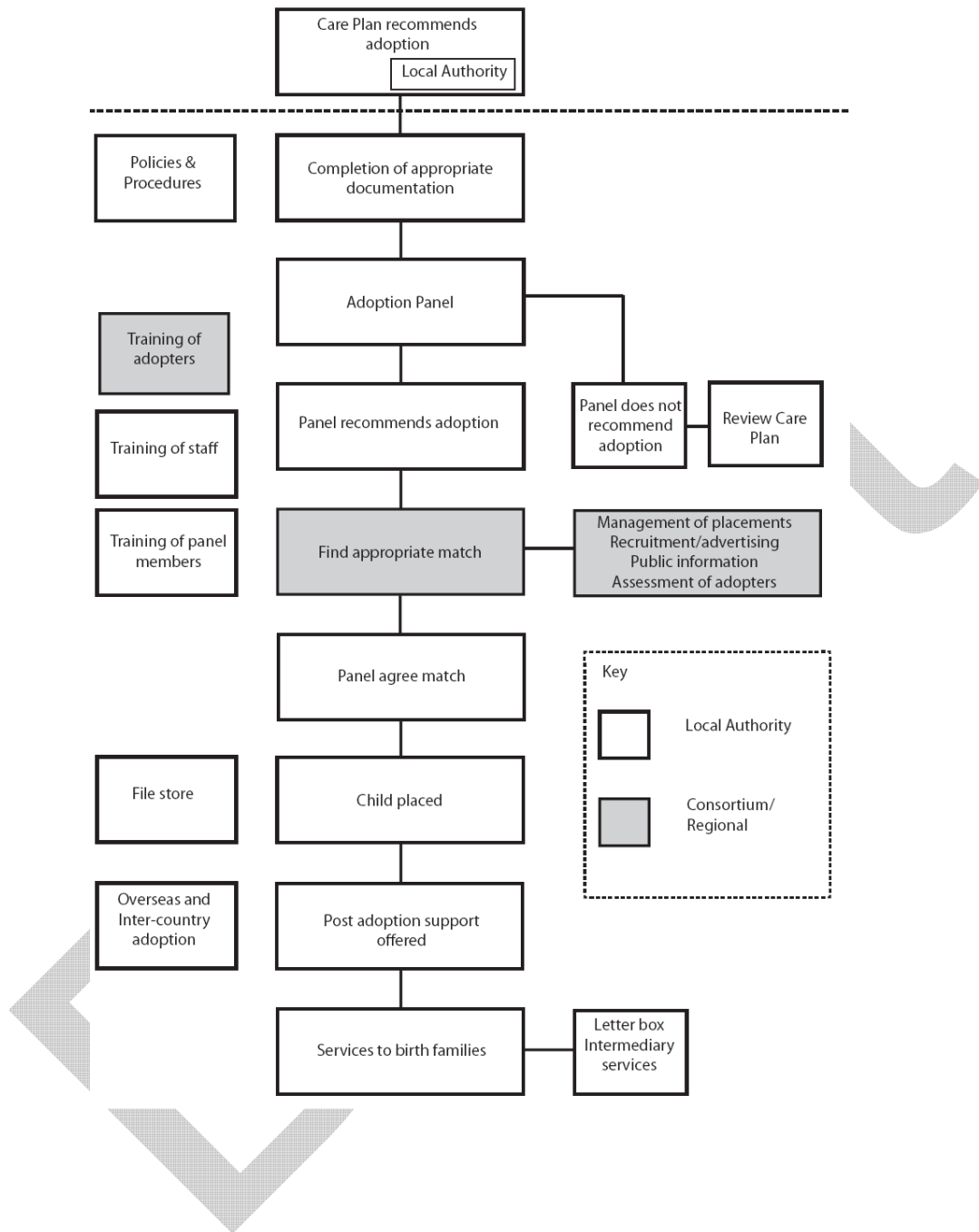
Adoption Pathway appendix 1



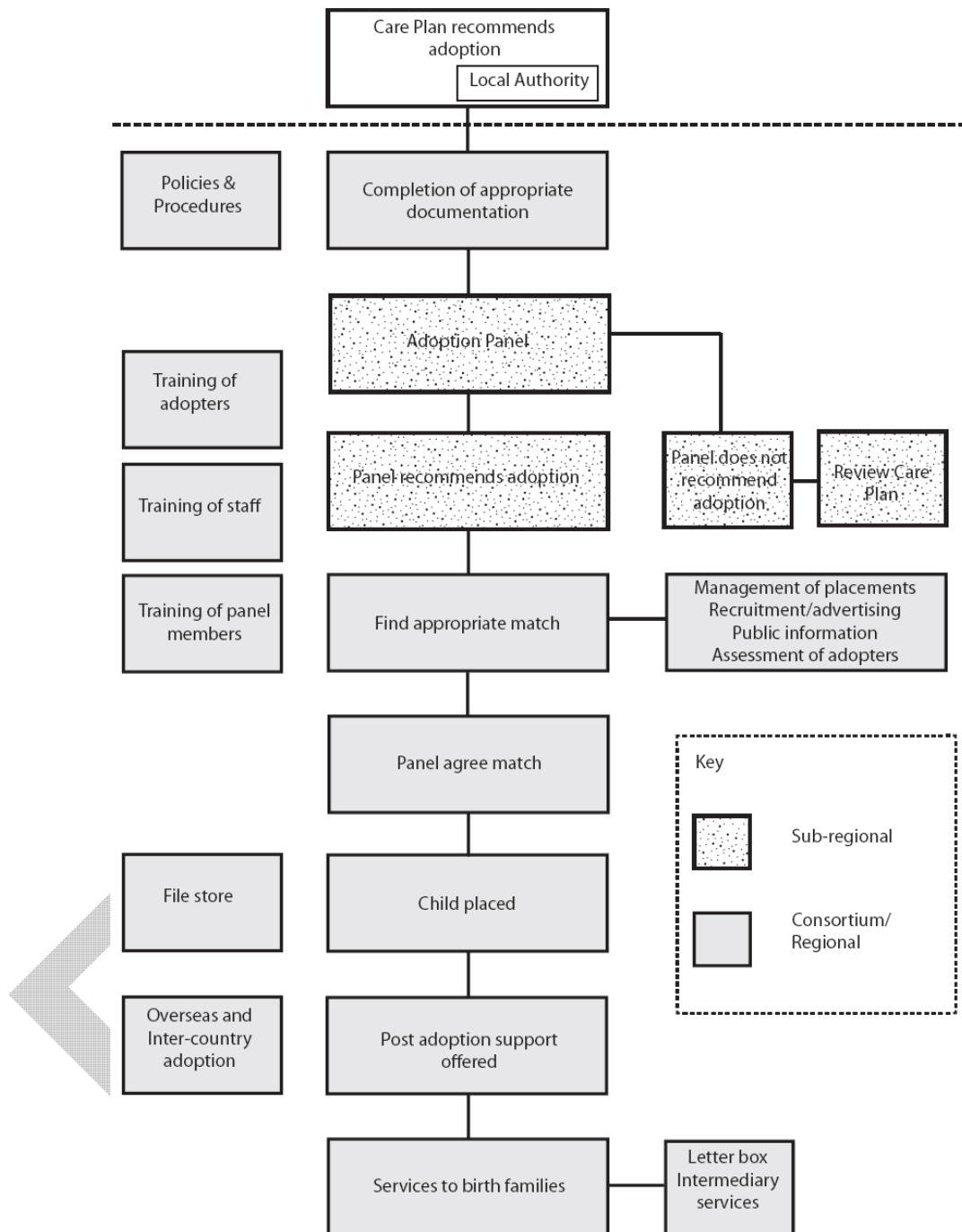
Current Consortium Arrangements appendix 2



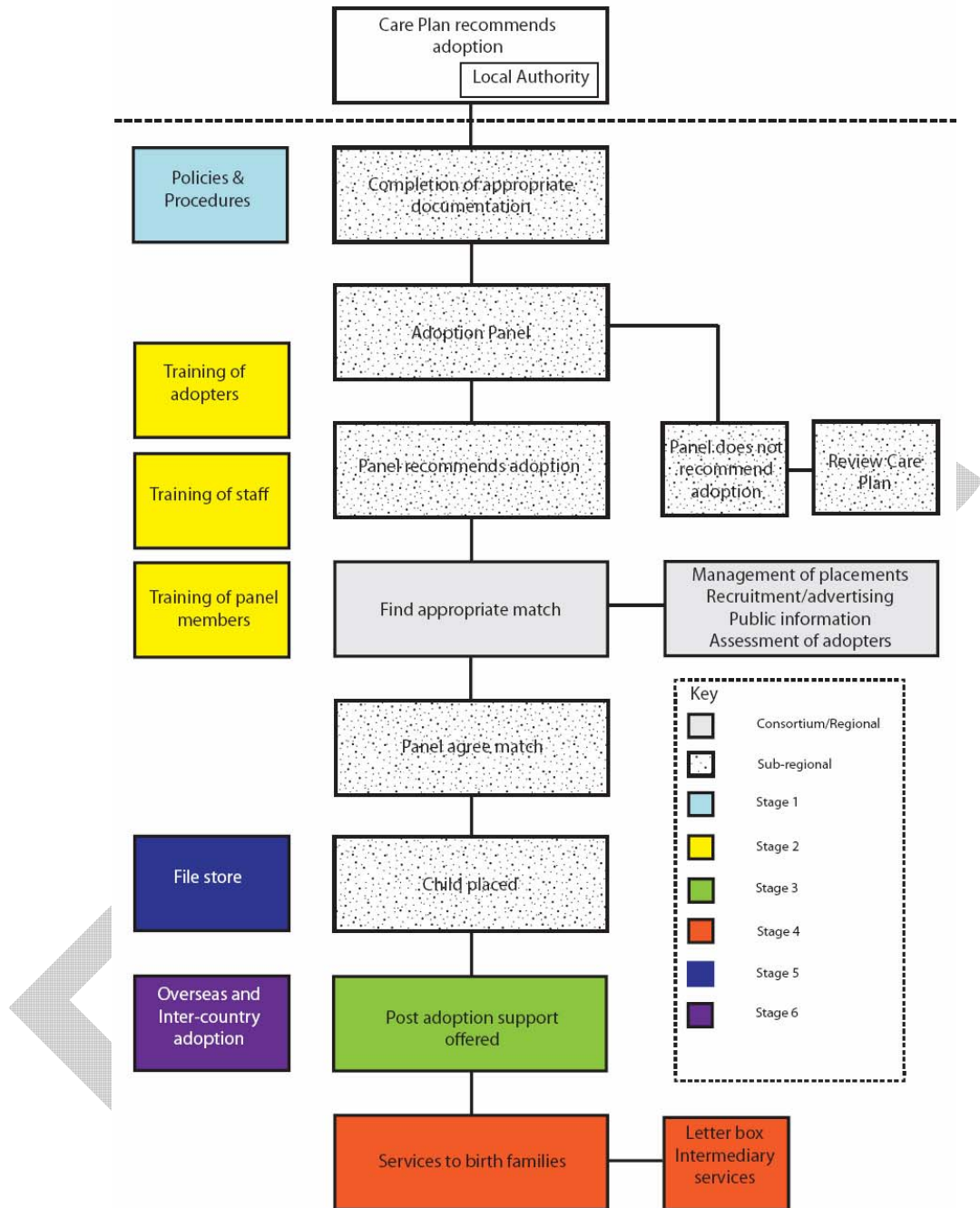
Option One appendix 3



Option two appendix 4



Option three appendix 5



FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 11

REPORT TO: EXECUTIVE
DATE : 18 NOVEMBER 2008
REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT
**SUBJECT : DISPOSAL OF PART OF THE SITE OF THE BELMONT
SPECIAL SCHOOL, BUCKLEY TO FACILITATE THE
CONSTRUCTION OF A PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CENTRE**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.01 To seek approval for the disposal of the 2 acre site shown coloured pink upon the attached plan.

2.00 BACKGROUND

- 2.01 Three sites belonging to Flintshire County Council in the Buckley area were identified by the Local Health Board's nominated developers, HPC Wales for the development of a new medical resource centre, which will house a number of existing doctors practices and related complementary support services.
- 2.02 The two sites on the 'Elfed School land' (Options 1 and 3) were rejected by the Head and the Governors who went on to state that they did not support 'Option 2': the Belmont Special School site.
- 2.03 The Belmont School is not associated with the Elfed School as it comprises part of the County Council's Special School portfolio. As part of the rationalisation of this portfolio it is proposed to close the school in July/August 2009 and then the land will be declared surplus to requirements and will be available for formal disposal.
- 2.04 In the opinion of the developer, the subject site is the only option remaining in the Buckley area, the Precinct Way site being rejected as being unsustainable given the minimum value being sought by the land-owner. In addition, the playing field site at Nant Mawr on Princess Avenue was deemed to be unsuitable in the light of no mitigation land being available.
- 2.05 The proposal on the subject site has been reduced from a 3 acre scheme to a 2 acre scheme, leaving more land available for consideration by Flintshire County Council in the future.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.01 The site is zoned as 'white land' in the Buckley settlement and is considered

to be appropriate for residential development, which would give the site a high 'unrestricted value.'

- 3.02 The proposal would constitute disposing of the site at a 'restricted value'.
- 3.03 The District Valuer has provided valuation figures which show a large discrepancy between the unrestricted and the restricted value of the site.
- 3.04 In the opinion of the District Valuer the site holds an "unrestricted value" of £633,000 per acre and a "restricted value" of £333,000 per acre. The "unrestricted value" represents a residential use, whilst the "restricted value" represents the value of the land as a primary healthcare centre.
- 3.05 The differential is caused by the fact that the land valuation for this use is formulaic, based upon the rents that the doctors can pay for the lease of the completed healthcare centre, the rent levels having been fixed by the Welsh Assembly Government.
- 3.06 Following negotiations, developers have agreed to pay £350,000 per acre subject to contract for this 2 acre site, making the total figure agreed £700,000. The "unrestricted value" assessed by the District Valuer for the same 2 acre site is £1,266,000.
- 3.07 General Disposal Consent (Wales) 2003 allows for an Authority to dispose of an interest in land for a 'less than best' when it considers that the purpose for the interest in land disposed of is likely to contribute to:-
- a. The promotion or improvement of economic wellbeing
 - b. The promotion or improvement of social wellbeing
 - c. The promotion or improvement of environmental wellbeing
- 3.08 The disposal in this instance would comply with item b. and moreover the difference between the 'unrestricted' and 'restricted' value in this instance would be much less than £2,000,000 (two million pounds), thus the matter need not be referred to Welsh Assembly Government.
- 3.09 In finalising the Agreement the Council's long term financial interest would be protected by:
- The Applicant being granted a 150 year Lease instead of the Freehold Title.
 - An unqualified restriction to medical and ancillary use only.
 - A 100% Overage Clause in favour of the Council to cover any future unrestricted use.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 That approval be given to the disposal of the site to HPC Wales at a 'Less than Best' consideration, with the conditions set out in paragraph 3.09.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 The County Council will receive a Capital Receipt of £700,000 from the sale of the land, which is 100% usable for capital programme funding purposes. This amount is already included within the current schedule of anticipated capital receipts in support of approved capital programme expenditure.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 There are no perceived anti-poverty implications.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.01 It is assumed that any environmental impacts will be dealt with during the planning process.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.01 There is no perceived equality impact.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.01 There are no perceived personnel implications.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

- 10.01 Local Member and Buckley Town Council

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

- 11.01 A letter has been received from Buckley Town Council advising that the General Purposes Committee meeting of Buckley Town Council held on 22 July 2008 discussed the proposal and is supportive of the development of a Primary Health Care Centre in this location.
- 11.02 Three 'options' in relation to the development of the site were considered by the Elfed High School Head and the Governors in February of this year.

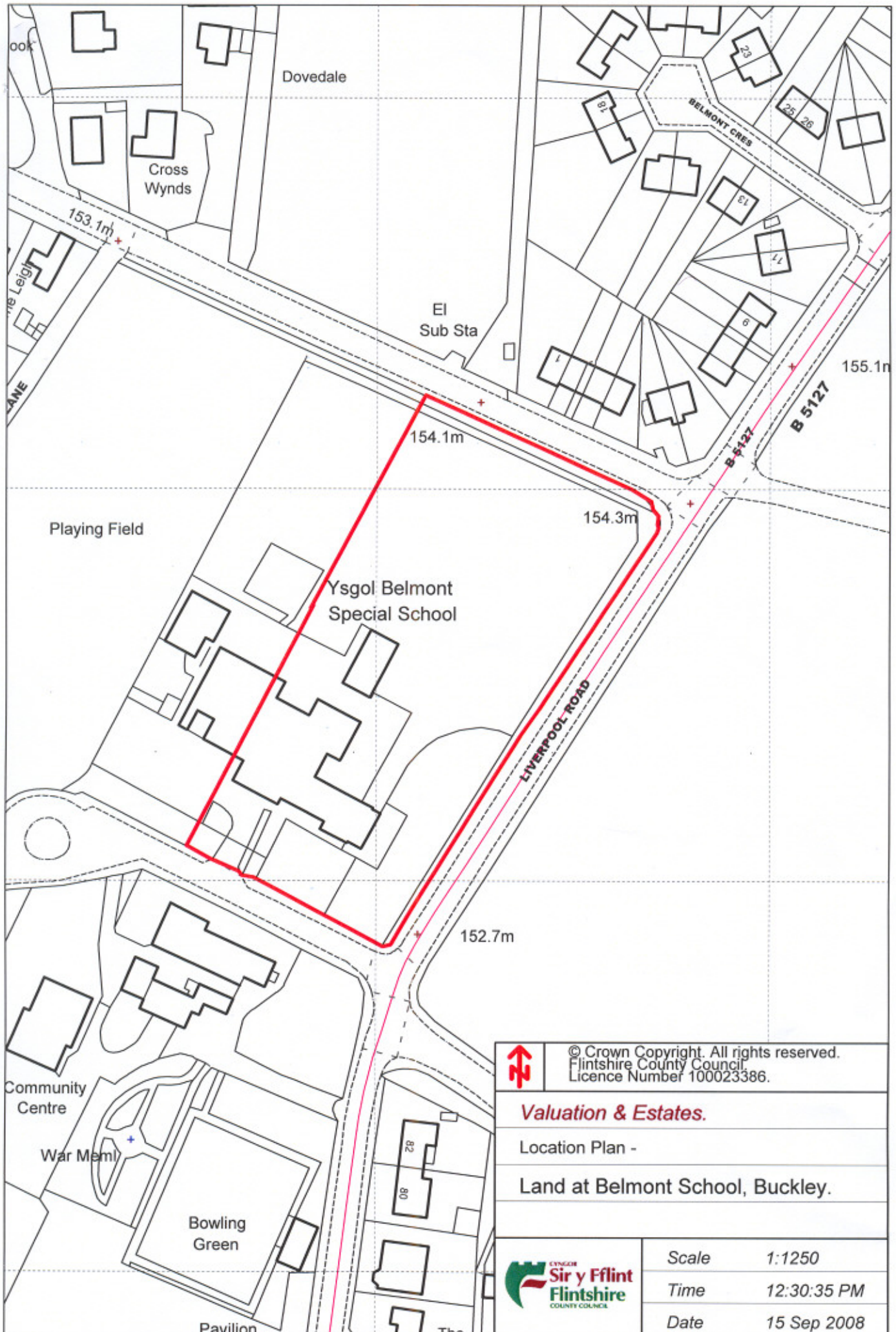
12.00 APPENDICES

- 12.01 Attached.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Action Taken Under Delegated Powers Document
Report and Agreed Terms Action Taken Under Delegated Powers
Document
Location Plan

Contact Officer: John Allen
Telephone: 01352 703117
E-Mail: john_allen@flintshire.gov.uk





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Valuation & Estates.

Location Plan -

Land at Belmont School, Buckley.

	Scale	1:1250
	Time	12:30:35 PM
	Date	15 Sep 2008

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 12

REPORT TO: EXECUTIVE
DATE : 18 NOVEMBER 2008
REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT
SUBJECT : THE DISPOSAL OF LAND FRONTING GLANRAFON ROAD, MOLD, TO APOLLO CAPITAL PROJECTS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CENTRE.

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To seek approval for the disposal of the above property.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 For approximately two years Apollo Capital Projects have been searching for a suitable site in Mold.

2.02 The development project is to re-house two of the four GPs' practices in Mold following the identification by the Local Health Board of an overwhelming need for such a facility, the current doctors' practices being housed in unsatisfactory premises.

2.03 The number of GP practices available in Mold is at or at about capacity, limited through lack of suitable accommodation. The new facility would provide planned expansion space for population growth set out in the UDP and for extended treatment.

2.04 The Planning Division within the Environment Directorate has stated that it has no objection in principle, for the development of a Primary Care Centre on this site.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The site is within the Mold Town Centre, as defined by the Unitary Development Plan. This site therefore has a high 'unrestricted value'.

3.02 The proposal would constitute disposing of the site at a 'restricted value'.

3.03 The District Valuer has provided valuation figures which show a large discrepancy between the 'unrestricted' and the 'restricted' value of the site.

3.04 In the opinion of the District Valuer the site holds "unrestricted value" of £550,000 and a "restricted value" of £220,000. The "unrestricted value" represents residential or retail use, whilst the "restricted value" represents the value of the land for use as a primary healthcare centre.

- 3.05 The differential is caused by the fact that the land valuation for this use is formulaic based upon the rents the doctors can pay for the lease of the completed healthcare centre, the rent levels being fixed by the Welsh Assembly Government.
- 3.06 Following negotiations with developers the purchase price subject to contract of £260,000 has been agreed for the site.
- 3.07 General Disposal Consent (Wales) 2003 allows for an Authority to dispose of an interest in land for a 'less than best' when it considers that the purpose for the interest in land disposed of is likely to contribute to:-
- a. The promotion or improvement of economic wellbeing
 - b. The promotion or improvement of social wellbeing
 - c. The promotion or improvement of environmental wellbeing
- 3.08 The disposal in this instance would comply with item b. and moreover the difference between the 'unrestricted' and 'restricted' value in this instance would be much less than £2,000,000 (two million pounds), thus the matter need not be referred to Welsh Assembly Government.
- 3.09 In finalising the Agreement the Council's long term financial interest would be protected by:
- The Applicant being granted a 150 year Lease instead of the Freehold Title.
 - An unqualified restriction to medical and ancillary use only.
 - A 100% Overage Clause in favour of the Council to cover any future unrestricted use.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 That approval be given to the disposal of the site to Apollo Capital Projects at a 'less than best' consideration, with the conditions set out in paragraph 3.09.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 The County Council will receive a capital receipt of £260,000 from the sale of the land, which is 100% usable for capital programme funding purposes. This amount is already included within the current schedule of anticipated capital receipts in support of approved capital programme expenditure.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 There are no perceived anti-poverty implications.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 The site adjoins a Grade 2 listed building in the ownership of the County Council, and as a result of this the design of the Primary Health Care Centre will have to comply with the requirements of, not only the Planning Department's Development Control Division, but of the Conservation Unit.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 There is no perceived equality impact.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 There are no perceived personnel implications.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Local Member.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 The proposal is fully supported by the Local Member.

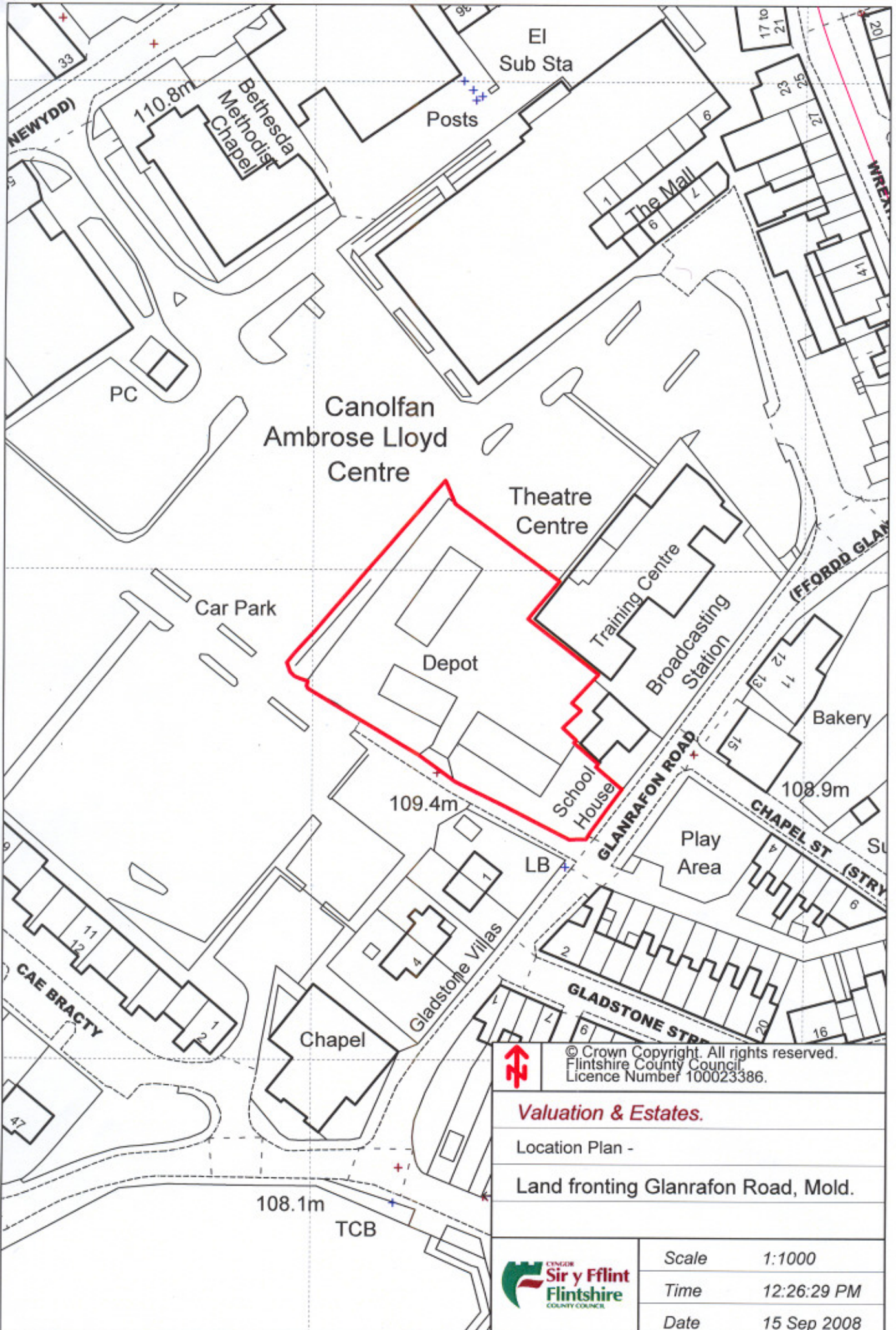
12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Attached.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Actions Taken Under Delegated Powers
Report on Agreed Terms Action Taken Under Delegated Powers
Document
Location Plan

Contact Officer: John Allen
Telephone: 01352 703117
E-Mail: john_allen@flintshire.gov.uk




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Valuation & Estates.

Location Plan -

Land fronting Glanrafon Road, Mold.

	Scale	1:1000
	Time	12:26:29 PM
	Date	15 Sep 2008

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 13

REPORT TO: **EXECUTIVE**
DATE : **18 NOVEMBER 2008**
REPORT BY: **COUNTY FINANCE OFFICER AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE**
SUBJECT : **RESPONSE TO PROVISIONAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT
SETTLEMENT 2009/10**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To provide professional advice on the Provisional Local Government Settlement 2009/10 and to invite the Executive to agree the content of the Council's response to the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) Consultation.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 Details of the Provisional Local Government Settlement for 2009/10 were received on 15th October. The position at the all-Wales level and for Flintshire were reported to the Executive on 29th October.

2.20 The closing date for responses to WAG is 18th November. WAG have been advised that the Authority's response is to be considered at the Executive on 18th November and will follow in final form by 20th November.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The following bullets set out a commentary on the Provisional Settlement.

- At a 2.7% increase, Flintshire's revenue settlement is lower than the average settlement across Wales of 2.9%.
- At the all Wales and Flintshire levels the settlement is well below both the Retail Price Index (RPI) and Consumer Price Index (CPI).
- Although challenging, the settlement is based on the Comprehensive Spending Review predictions and the indicative increase for 2009/10 notified by WAG last year.
- It is not transparent that the revenue settlement fails to set out the provision for pay and price pressures. WAG should be requested to provide this information and include the detail as a matter of routine in future years.
- With prudence and good management, the Council can balance the budget at this level of settlement and largely protect operations

although it does:

- o cause pressures and
- o limits scope for service growth and investment which will need to be funded from locally identified efficiencies.
- The settlement does not take account of significant pressures being experienced by Councils as a result of:
 - o high fuel, energy and other direct and indirect inflationary pressures
 - o the impacts of the economic downturn on the Council, e.g. reduced fee income, investment income and capital receipts.
- In recognition of the current significant pressures on Council budgets, the Council should support the Welsh Local Government Association position in requesting that WAG suspend the "top slicing" of 1% efficiency savings to be deducted from Council budgets at source for 2009/10. Across Wales agreement to this request would add £38m to Council budgets; for Flintshire this would equate to £1.8m.
- The Council will experience other demographic/market pressures (e.g. social care) which add to challenges for prioritisation from within overall resources.
- Specific grant details have not yet been received for many areas of service funded by specific grant. However, there is an expectation that many grants will not be increased in line with actual inflation.
- The Council is achieving/exceeding efficiency targets so is not complacent and must proceed on the assumption that the settlement will not be changed as a worst-case scenario.
- There is a need to invest (with national funds) in invest to save measures for organisational and service modernisation/change.
- The base capital settlement for the Council of £10.4m is standstill on the previous year. This is against the backdrop of asset deterioration (e.g. schools, highways) and requests being made to the public sector to seek to advance capital spending to stimulate the economy.
- There is concern that there needs to be greater transparency in how Councils can access WAG's Strategic Capital Investment Fund of £400m over three years for local/sub-regional defined priorities.

3.02 A copy of the press release issued by the Chief Executive and County Finance Officer after receipt of the Provisional Settlement is attached at Appendix A.

- 3.03 Detailed work is underway to quantify the impacts of the current economic downturn in the current year and the likely knock-on impacts of 2009/10. This will be reported verbally at Executive.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 Executive are recommended to determine the response to be made to WAG on the Provisional Local Government Settlement.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 None directly as a result.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 None directly as a result.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.01 None directly as a result.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.01 None directly as a result.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.01 None directly as a result.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

- 10.01 None directly as a result.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

- 11.01 None directly as a result.

12.00 APPENDICES

- 12.01 Appendix A - Press release following the Provisional Local Government Settlement.1

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Provisional Local Government Settlement

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Flintshire County Council Statement re: Provisional Settlement

Colin Everett, Chief Executive and Kerry Feather, County Finance Officer said,

“The national Government and Welsh Assembly Government produce three year indicative budgets for public services. As 2009/10 is the second year of this three year budget cycle the announcement made earlier this week is, overall, as predicted for Wales and Flintshire.

“The 2.7% increase for Flintshire County Council is below the national average for Welsh Councils. In a period of economic stability, and with prudence and good financial house-keeping, the council could manage with such a settlement.

However, the current economic situation is not stable, and there are two critical factors which mean that the 2.7% settlement figure is not adequate:

- the effects of non-standard inflation, notably the high global cost of fuel and energy which increases costs to the council of providing services significantly
- the economic downturn impacts on the Council’s income base, for example, less fees are collected for building regulation and planning services as house-building and industrial and commercial investment slows down. We predict increased demands for services such as social services, housing, business support and welfare benefits advice as the economic slowdown impacts directly on communities and on households.

“Given the challenging economic circumstances Flintshire County Council will be making strong but reasoned representations, both as an individual council and through the Welsh Local Government Association, to the Welsh Assembly Government for an uplift in the settlement for 2009/10.”

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 14

REPORT TO: **EXECUTIVE**
DATE : **18 NOVEMBER 2008**
REPORT BY: **COUNTY FINANCE OFFICER**
SUBJECT : **COUNCIL TAX BASE FOR 2009-10**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To approve the Council Tax Base for the financial year 2009-10.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The setting of the Council Tax Base for the next financial year allows the County Council, North Wales Police Authority and Town/Community Councils to calculate next year's Council Tax charges based on the estimated number of chargeable properties, expressed as the equivalent number of Band 'D' properties in the Council's area.

2.02 The Council Tax base is set as at 31st October each year and for 2009/10 needs to be notified to the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) by 21st November 2008.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The calculation of the Council Tax Base for 2009-10 takes into account allowances for property exemptions, discounts, disabled banding reductions and an estimate to reflect new build properties.

3.02 An assumed collection rate of 99% has been used in the calculation of the Tax Base, which then allows a 1% allowance for uncollectable debts. The 99% collection rate continues to be one of the highest levels in Wales and demonstrates the ongoing successes in the collection of Council Taxes within Flintshire, despite the current economic uncertainty.

3.03 The calculation of the overall Tax Base is based on the following headline data :-

Total Number of Properties	64,670
Estimated Number of New Builds	94
Properties Exempt from Council Tax	1,529
Reductions for Disabled Banding Relief	607
Taxpayers entitled to a 25% discount	20,096
Taxpayers entitled to a 50% discount	65

- 3.04 The Council Tax Base for 2009-10 is 60,328 as shown in Appendix A to this report, this compares with 60,340 in the previous year, a decrease of 0.02%. The reason for the marginal decrease is due to the slowdown in the economy which has seen the rapid decline in the construction of new properties. This is coupled with an increase in the number of exemptions and discounts, meaning that there is no increase in the Tax Base for the next financial year.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 That the Tax Base of 60,328 chargeable Band 'D' equivalent properties (as shown in Appendix A) for 2009-10 be approved.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 There are no direct implications specifically from this report. The Council Tax Base will be used to calculate the average Band 'D' rate for 2009-10 once the Council Tax yield has been determined following publication of the Final Settlement, expected in December 2008.
- 5.02 The Council Tax for the next financial year will be determined as part of the 2009-10 budget considerations.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 None

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.01 None

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.01 None

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.01 None

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

- 10.01 None

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

- 11.01 None

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix A to the report details the breakdown of the Tax Base for 2009-10 by Town/Community Council area.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Local Government Finance Act 1992

Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (Wales) Regulations 1995

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APPENDIX A - COUNCIL TAX BASE FOR 2009/2010

Community	2009/10 Properties Band "D"	2008/09 Properties Band "D"
Argoed	2475.36	2480.75
Bagillt	1467.67	1462.24
Broughton & Bretton	2370.96	2358.95
Brynford	465.45	459.28
Buckley	5983.93	5936.00
Caerwys	605.94	611.43
Cilcain	736.08	737.04
Connahs Quay	5943.90	5973.28
Flint	4410.69	4440.41
Gwernaffield	1007.00	1003.78
Gwernymynydd	552.04	558.22
Halkyn	1352.06	1352.34
Hawarden	6022.86	6004.07
Higher Kinnerton	789.51	785.68
Holywell	3162.69	3178.15
Hope	1787.97	1789.59
Leeswood	815.76	820.86
Llanasa	1869.74	1871.85
Llanfynydd	837.47	832.21
Mold	4060.38	4090.52
Mostyn	701.46	703.22
Nannerch	270.18	267.21
Nercwys	300.57	299.50
Northop	1479.12	1463.85
Northop Hall	713.11	706.87
Penyffordd	1598.39	1605.11
Queensferry	695.62	697.99
Saltney	1734.34	1722.33
Sealand	1117.60	1108.27
Shotton	2113.48	2128.55
Trelawnyd & Gwaenysgor	412.74	413.35
Treuddyn	706.14	716.79
Whitford	1119.67	1115.36
Ysceifiog	648.12	644.95
TOTAL BAND "D" PROPS	60,328.00	60,340.00

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 15

REPORT TO: **EXECUTIVE**
DATE : **18 NOVEMBER 2008**
REPORT BY: **COUNTY FINANCE OFFICER**
SUBJECT : **LOCAL TAXATION POLICIES 2009-10**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 Members are asked to approve various policies for the administration of Council Tax and Business Rates for the financial year 2009-10.

The policies required by statute to be approved each year are :-

Council Tax Discounts on second and long term empty homes (section 2)
Council Tax Discretionary discounts (section 3)
Discretionary Rate Relief for Charities (section 4)
Discretionary Rate Relief for Small Businesses (section 5)

Some policies are detailed for information purposes only, these are :-

Payment dates for Precepting/Levying Bodies (section 6)
Payment dates for Council Tax and Business Rates (section 7)

2.00 COUNCIL TAX ON SECOND AND LONG TERM EMPTY HOMES

2.01 Each year the Council is required to determine what discount, if any, is awarded to second or holiday homes (known as Prescribed Classes A or B) and long term empty properties (known as Prescribed Class C). The prescribed Classes are :-

Class A A property which is unoccupied and furnished but occupation is prohibited by law for over 28 days each year.
Class B A property which is unoccupied but furnished and occupation is not prohibited by law.
Class C A property which is unoccupied and substantially unfurnished beyond the normal exempt period (usually 6 months)

2.02 The current policy is not to award discounts to any Prescribed Class and this applies to the whole of the County area.

2.03 The current policy of charging for long term empty properties (Prescribed Class C), was introduced in April 2006, which brought Flintshire's charging policy in line with local authorities across North Wales. These type of properties qualify for full exemption from Council Tax for a period ranging from a minimum of six months and a maximum of twelve months, after which time they are then chargeable at the full rate. They typically tend to be those which are :

- o Purchased for investment purposes
- o Left empty for over 12 months and in need of major repair to make them habitable
- o Inherited by families of people who have passed away
- o For Sale where the previous occupants have moved to another property

3.00 COUNCIL TAX DISCRETIONARY DISCOUNTS

3.01 In accordance with section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended by section 76 of the Local Government Act 2003), the Council has a general discretion to reduce the amount of Council Tax payable, effectively granting a local Council Tax Discretionary Discount.

3.02 In exercising these discretionary powers the Council must act reasonably having regard to all relevant considerations and the interests of all tax payers as the cost of awarding a Discretionary Discount would in effect be borne by other Council Tax payers.

3.03 The current policy is for the County Finance Officer and Executive Member for Finance to consider discretionary discounts through the use of delegated powers **only** in cases of civil emergencies and natural disasters.

4.00 DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF POLICIES - CHARITIES

4.01 Discretionary Rate Relief for Charitable and Non Profit Making Organisations is currently awarded on a continual basis, subject to 12 months notice if any ratepayer is affected by a change in policy.

4.02 The authority's existing policy for Discretionary awards is determined by the following categories :-

- A Premises that are used for charitable purposes by organisations specifically registered with the Charity Commission.

(20% discretionary 'top up' relief is awarded, with the exception of shops operated by national organisations, who receive 80% Mandatory Relief only).

- B Premises that are used by non-profit making organisations that are treated as charities, for the reason that they bear the same characteristics as those organisations that are registered charities. This category consists of Community Centres, Institutes and Village Hall, other than those occupied by Precepting Authorities.

(20% 'top up' relief is awarded)

- C Premises occupied by sporting clubs, societies or other organisations used for the purpose of non profit making and used for the purpose of recreational, social welfare etc.

(100% Discretionary Relief is awarded with the exception of golf clubs, which are awarded 50% Discretionary Relief)

- D Premises not covered by any of the above categories, occupied by non-profit making organisations but are used for the benefit of the community and who are assessed on an individual basis based on their merits.

(Up to 100% Discretionary Rate Relief can be awarded)

5.00 DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF - SMALL BUSINESSES

5.01 The Welsh Assembly's Small Business Rate Relief scheme was first introduced in April 2007 which coupled with the Assembly's recent proposals to extend rate relief will now provide rate relief, financed entirely by the Assembly Government, as detailed below :

- o 50% rate relief for most businesses with a rateable value limit up to £2,000
- o 25% rate relief for most businesses with a rateable value limit between £2,001 and £6,500
- o 25% rate relief for Small retailers, wholly or mainly selling goods, including shops, cafes, restaurants, public houses and petrol stations until 2012 if their rateable is between £6,501 and £9,000.
- o 50% rate relief for Credit Unions until 2012 if their rateable value is £9,000 or less.
- o 50% rate relief for Child Care providers and day nurseries until 2012 providing that the rateable value of the property is £12,000 or less.
- o 100% rate relief for Post Offices with a rateable value of up to £9,000
- o 50% rate relief for Post Offices with a rateable value between £9,001 and £12,000.

5.02 The Welsh Assembly's Small Business Rate Relief scheme contains provision to award discretionary 'top up' relief to small businesses although the Council is required to meet the costs in full of any 'top-up' awards.

5.03 The current policy is not to award discretionary 'top-up' discounts to small businesses.

6.00 PAYMENT DATES FOR PRECEPTING/LEVYING BODIES

6.01 The following payment dates currently apply to Precepting Authorities and Levying Bodies :-

North Wales Police Authority 12 payments on 15th of each month
Town/Community Councils 3 payments on the last day in April, August,
December

North West & Wales

Sea Fisheries 1st of April

North Wales Fire Service 12 payments on 15th of each month

7.00 PAYMENT DATES FOR COUNCIL TAX AND BUSINESS RATES

7.01 Council Tax and Business Rate customers have a right to pay their bills over 10 months, from April to January. Members have previously agreed that the default payment date will be on the 1st day of each month. For customers who choose to pay their bills by Direct debit, the policy offers customers a choice of four payment dates, the 1st, 8th, 18th or 25th day of each month.

7.02 Flintshire also offers alternative payment dates which provide customers with a range of flexible dates to suit individual finances and circumstances. These are :-

1 Annual Instalment	30 th June
2 Half Yearly Instalments	31 st May and 30 th September
44 Weekly Instalments	1 st April to 31 st January

7.03 For customers who find it increasingly difficult to pay, a discretionary 12 month instalment scheme is offered to help reduce the customer's monthly outgoings and spread the charges over two additional months.

8.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.01 Members are requested to consider continuation of the current Local Taxation Policies for 2009/10, as follows:-

- Not to award Council Tax discounts on any prescribed class and that this applies to the whole of the County area (2.02).

- For the County Finance Officer and Executive Member for Finance to consider discretionary discounts (S.13A) through the use of delegated powers, only in the cases of civil emergencies and natural disasters (3.03).
- Discretionary rate relief for charities as set out (4.02).
- Not to award discretionary 'top-up' discounts to small business (5.03).

8.02 Note the payment dates for Precepting/Levying Bodies (6.01) and payment dates for Council Tax and Business Rates (7.01 - 7.03).

9.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 On the basis of a continuation of existing policies, costs will be contained within the current budget.

10.00 ANTI-POVERTY IMPACT

10.01 None

11.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

11.01 None

12.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

12.01 None

13.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

13.01 None

14.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

14.01 None

15.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

15.01 None

16.00 APPENDICES

16.01 None

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Local Government Finance Acts 1988 & 1992

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 16

REPORT TO: **EXECUTIVE**
DATE : **18 NOVEMBER 2008**
REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**
SUBJECT : **UPDATE ON MOLD EXTRA CARE SCHEME**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To provide an update on the Second Extra Care Scheme for Flintshire, in Jasmine Crescent, Mold.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 A Project Board was established in June 2007 to oversee the future consideration of Jasmine Crescent buildings, including Jasmine Court, the bungalows and Ty'r Binwydden.

2.02 Following an options appraisal of properties in Jasmine Crescent officers sought approval from Executive in January 2008 to consult on closure of current buildings and develop the second Extra Care Scheme on the Jasmine Crescent site. A three month period of consultation followed and approval to close and proceed with the Extra Care Scheme was given by Executive in June 2008.

2.03 Funding to develop an Extra Care Scheme in Mold was sought in October 2007 and secured from the Welsh Assembly Government in February 2008. The funding will be available for 2010/11.

2.04 The Project Board has since developed and is now overseeing the re-housing of tenants and the design and development of the Jasmine Court site. It is proposed the Jasmine Crescent site will include:

2.4.1 40 unit Extra Care Scheme for older people with care and support needs,

2.4.2 20 unit Extra Care wing for older people living with low and medium levels of dementia,

2.4.3 separate and distinct accommodation for people with learning disabilities, comprising 2 x 3 bedroom bungalows and 4 town houses.

2.05 Executive should note that the proposal in 2.4.3 above is in response to the concerns of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and have sought alternatives to general needs housing on the same site as the Extra Care Scheme.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.01 Land requirements for the build include both Housing Revenue Account land - Jasmine Court and Bungalows - and General Fund Land - site of Ty'r Binwydden.
- 3.02 The two sites will offer adequate space for the Extra Care Scheme together with essential car parking spaces. The site of Ty'r Binwydden will also offer separate supported accommodation for up to 15 people with learning disabilities.
- 3.03 A separate Social Housing Grant has been submitted for the supported accommodation for people with learning disabilities. The outcome of this bid may not be known until early 2009. If granted this money will be forthcoming in 2010/11.
- 3.04 Valuation work for the sites is currently under way between the District Valuer for Flintshire County Council and Wales and West Housing Association. Welsh Assembly Government anticipates that Flintshire County Council will offer the overall site for disposal at 'less than best' with Flintshire County Council applying its discretion through the General Disposal Consent (Wales) Act. This is because of the considerable contribution that the Extra Care Scheme and supported accommodation will offer to residents of Flintshire.
- 3.05 Prevailing market conditions suggest that only the Jasmine Court and bungalows site need to be offered at 'less than best' price. It is anticipated that Ty'r Binwydden land will be saleable at the prevailing market value.
- 3.06 The relocation of tenants from Jasmine Court and the bungalows is progressing as well. Tenants are understandably somewhat unsettled and must expect to be treated sensitively by everyone associated with Flintshire County Council. A Relocation Officer is in post and is supporting all tenants with planning their move, arranging adaptations and co-ordinating continuity of care provision when necessary.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 That Executive support the sale of the land and the development of what will be a unique scheme offering the benefits of Extra Care to people in the centre of Flintshire and importantly extending that service to people living with dementia.
- 4.02 That Executive notes and supports the complex nature of this project, including as it does, land from separate FCC accounts, positive joint working with a Housing Association and range of unique and diverse specialist care and support facilities.

- 4.03 That Executive notes that although the relocation of tenants from Jasmine Court and Bungalows is progressing well this will take some time complete.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 The estimated capital cost of the Extra Care Scheme is £8.8m including land value. Approximately 50% of will come from WAG Social Housing Grant and 50% from Wales and West Housing Association.
- 5.02 It is anticipated that the care staffing costs for the Extra Care Scheme for older people with care and support needs will be met from realignment of budgets allocated to residential and domiciliary care.
- 5.03 The capital cost of the Learning Disability accommodation will be met approximately 50% from Social Housing Grant and 50% from Wales and West Housing Association.
- 5.04 Direct care and support staffing costs for the Learning Disability services will be met from existing personal care packages and transition monies.
- 5.05 The relocation of existing tenants of Jasmine Crescent is being funded through HRA and is within expected budget allocation.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 The Extra Care Scheme will include proposals for sale or rent with need being the primary driver for entrance into the scheme.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.01 Supported accommodation close to the town centre will bring visitors into the town and make best use of existing public transport.
- 7.02 All projects funded through Welsh Assembly Government Social Housing Grant are required to meet new build environmental standards.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.01 Building supported accommodation close to Mold Town Centre will help ensure everyone has access to communal facilities that more independent individuals take for granted.
- 8.02 The scheme provides access specifically for people with dementia unlike other similar schemes.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.01 The Jasmine Crescent warden has found alternative employment and housing.
- 9.02 Project Management of new schemes and closure of Jasmine Crescent buildings including relocation of tenants is being managed within existing resources.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

- 10.01 A consultation matrix will be developed to ensure that the rigorous consultation carried out for Flintshire's first Extra Care Scheme in Shotton will be repeated for the Mold scheme.
- 10.02 The Mold Project Board includes the local Ward Councillor as a member.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

- 11.01 A three month consultation was undertaken between February and May 2008.

12.00 APPENDICES

Background documents:

Executive Report Developing a Model for Extra Care Sheltered Housing in Flintshire - 13th July 2004
A Housing Vision for Older People - 7th March 2005
Executive Report Extra Care Housing Development in Flintshire - 11th October 2005
Executive Report - Housing Vision for Older People - 11th October 2005
Executive Report - Proposed Second Extra Care Scheme - Mold - 30th January 2008
Executive Report - Outcome of Consultation on Closure of Jasmine Crescent Group Dwellings, Bungalows and Ty'r Binwydden - 3rd June 2008

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 17

REPORT TO: **EXECUTIVE**
DATE : **18 NOVEMBER 2008**
REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**
SUBJECT : **SUPPORTING PEOPLE UPDATE**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To update Members about the Supporting People Programme in Flintshire

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 A previous report to Executive in July 2005 provided an update about the Supporting People Programme. The report detailed progress against the following key areas of delivery: budget management; the internal audit report; Supporting People Revenue Grant handover by WAG; payments and reviews. In addition, the Supporting People Operational Plan was last approved by Members in 2005.

2.02 Supporting People is a policy and funding framework for delivering accommodation support to vulnerable people. The concept of Supporting People began when a judicial review ruled that housing benefit was being misused nationally and should only be paying for bricks and mortar and rent and not warden support or care costs. Local Authorities were responsible for making claims through Transitional Housing Benefit (THB) for support costs to inform the Supporting People budget allocation,,

2.03 The aim of the programme is to enable people to remain in a more independent living situation avoiding institutional care, hospitals, prison or rough sleeping. It also helps individuals in institutional settings to move to more independent and stable homes in the community. The support is provided to a range of vulnerable groups including people fleeing domestic abuse, people with learning difficulties, offenders and single parents. The support provided is housing related and can include advice on welfare benefits, assistance with neighbour disputes, enabling access to education, employment and training and developing daily living skills.

2.04 Supporting people provides a strategic direction for supported housing and promotes a more efficient and effective use of resources. Under THB supported housing had been developed on an ad hoc basis. It was not planned or targeted and did not link to corporate strategic objectives. The Supporting People Programme encourages local authorities to map need and identify gaps in provision and monitor the performance of support providers. These providers may be in-house or external to the Local Authority in the statutory or voluntary sector.

- 2.05 Supporting People consists of two funding streams. Supporting People Grant is for services linked to Social Care and is administered by the Local Authority. Supporting People Revenue Grant funds short term services and is administered by the Welsh Assembly Government. However, the strategic direction for all Supporting People Services is set by the Supporting People Planning Group in each Local Authority which oversees production of the Supporting People Operational Plan. The Welsh Assembly Government will look to the Supporting People Operational Plan to set the agenda for all Supporting People Services.
- 2.06 In October 2006 officials of the Welsh Assembly Government visited Flintshire County Council's Supporting People Team as part of a national review of Supporting People administration with the intention of identifying and spreading good practice across Wales and to help inform the Minister's decision on the preparedness of Local Authorities to administer Supporting People Revenue Grant. This visit identified a number of areas where Flintshire County Council could improve the way it administered the Supporting People Programme.
- 2.07 In 2007 Internal Audit undertook audits of the way Supporting People Grant was being utilised by the Housing Service and Social Services for Adults. Once again the resulting reports identified areas requiring action.
- 2.08 The main areas identified for improvement are listed below:
- To establish arrangements to involve and update corporate management / Elected Members with the programme.
 - To re-energise and develop the role of the Supporting People Planning group (SPPG) to strengthen the strategic direction and accountability within the programme.
 - To implement robust financial management and control to enable Supporting People budget monitoring and forecasting.
 - To develop robust Supporting People eligibility criteria, to inform the ongoing service review process and future commissioning and value for money decisions.
 - To develop a contracting and performance framework.
 - To ensure the provision of services are based on needs and supply information from a range of sources, with gaps in service identified and agreed.
 - To form a centralised Supporting People Team ensuring it contains or can access the necessary skills and knowledge required to administer the Supporting People Programme.
- 2.9 It was determined that the most effective way to meet the issues raised within the three reports was to produce one project plan and in May 2008 an Away Day was held pulling together senior managers from the Directorates

involved in the Supporting People Programme. A Project Plan was developed to address the areas detailed in 2.8 over the next 2 years.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.01 The Project Plan was accepted by CMT in full. It was determined that the SP programme should be led by the Director of Community Services and that the SP Team should be managed within that Directorate. Many of the tasks in the project plan have now been successfully completed.
- 3.02 The structure of the Supporting People Team has been reviewed and an integrated team has been developed, pulling together the SP posts previously agreed by Executive in April 2003. The Supporting People Team Manager has been recruited and has been in post since August. The full team structure is detailed in appendix A

The posts will be funded within the Supporting People Grant

- 3.03 A revised Terms of Reference has been developed for the Supporting People Planning Group including revised membership to include external members. The new SPPG has been launched and is meeting regularly.
- 3.04 A Supporting People Eligibility Criteria' for Flintshire was agreed earlier this year by the Supporting People Planning Group to comply with national guidance. This provides greater clarity around what Supporting People can fund. Post 2003 the Welsh Assembly Government issued grant conditions and guidance which were interpreted differently in different areas. Local Authorities have now developed criteria, which make clear what is eligible for Supporting People. This was a requirement of the WAG Preparedness visit and the Internal Audit reports.
- 3.05 The implication of developing the eligibility criteria is that existing Supporting People funded services are being reviewed in order to assess whether they are delivering eligible services. This work is still ongoing but it is likely that some services will fall outside of the eligibility criteria. This will mean that plans will need to be in place to withdraw ineligible funding. A full report on the outcome of the reviews will be presented to the Executive.
- 3.06 Flintshire County Council is now developing its next Supporting People Operational Plan required by the Welsh Assembly Government. It outlines the current position of Supporting People, assesses current need to supply, identifies gaps, links Supporting People to other plans and strategies and details proposals to fill gaps in services and make improvements to existing services. The plan will demonstrate that Flintshire is committed to ensuring

its Supporting People Services are strategically planned and commissioned and meet the needs of vulnerable people in Flintshire. The plan will be submitted to the Executive for approval in December 2008.

- 3.07 It is proposed that a seminar is held to provide an update to Members on the Supporting People Programme and the Supporting People Operational Plan.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 That Executive notes that progress made in developing Flintshire's Supporting People Programme to achieve the recommendations made by WAG and Internal Audit.

- 4.02 That Executive notes the new team structure outlined in paragraph 3.02.

- 4.03 That Executive supports a Member Seminar on the Supporting People Programme.

- 4.04 That Executive receives a further report in due course regarding the cost implications of the review of eligibility criteria.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 The cost of the Supporting People Team is £199,070. These are funded from existing budget and the Supporting People Grant.

- 5.02 Reviews of Services are currently being undertaken and a further report on the outcomes of these reviews will be submitted to the Executive.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 The Supporting People grant income if targeted appropriately, can increase the potential for vulnerable members of our communities (who are not eligible for Social Services Support) to receive an accommodation related support service that will enable them to continue to live in their own home for as long as practical.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.01 N/A

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.01 The Supporting People Programme was established to provide low-level accommodation support services to people with an assessed need for support. The implementation of a strategic planning approach and a clear

contracting and performance management framework will ensure high quality services can be targeted to those who need them.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 N/A

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 No further consultation is envisaged.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 None

12.00 APPENDICES

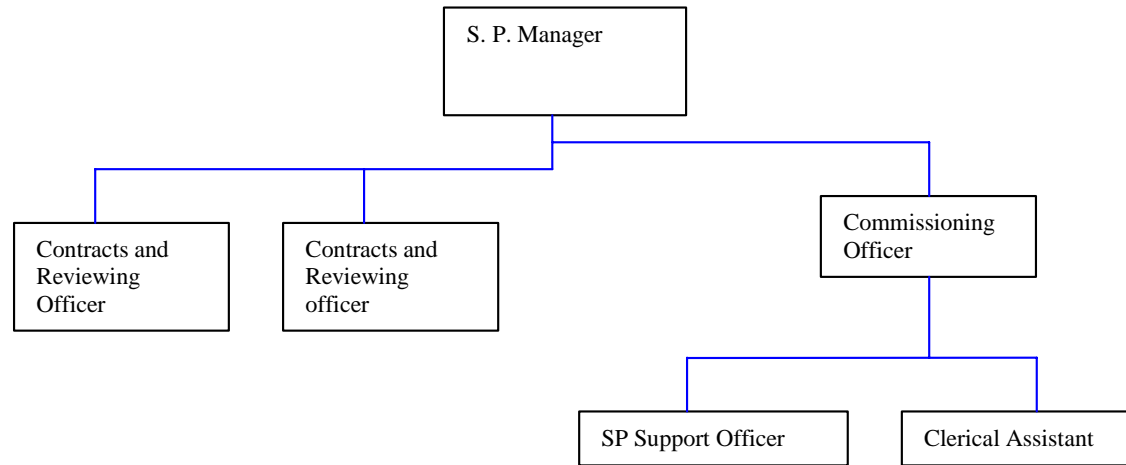
12.01 Appendix A - Supporting People Team Structure

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

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Supporting People Team Structure



FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 18

REPORT TO: **EXECUTIVE**
DATE : **18 NOVEMBER 2008**
REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF LIFELONG LEARNING**
SUBJECT : **PROCEDURE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF LEA**
 GOVERNORS TO SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To consider revising the current procedures for the appointment and removal of LEA Governors to School Governing bodies.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 Since April 1996, in accordance with the procedure set out by the Policy Committee, the nomination of LEA Governor positions which are due for renewal, is vested in the local Member in whose division the relevant school is situated. The Ward Member is also required to consult colleagues representing adjoining wards and complete a Nomination Form showing that consultation has been carried out.

2.02 Depending upon geographical location, ward members are required to consult between 2 and 9 adjoining wards.

2.03 Depending upon size and type of schools, there are between 1 and 5 LEA Governors on each Governing Body.

2.04 Part 3 of Flintshire County Council's Constitution confirms the responsibility of the Director of Education to confirm nominations, ordinarily, with disputes being determined by the Executive.

2.05 Governors normally serve a 4 year term of office.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The Wales Assembly Government's Code of Practice on LEA/School relations states that the LEA should publish the process and its criteria by which they identify candidates for appointment as school governors. It goes on to provide that governors should be chosen on the basis of the contribution which they can bring to a school in terms of their skills and experience.

3.02 The present procedure is based upon the view that local Members are best placed to recommend those who have the skills and experience appropriate to the position of school governor.

3.03 The procedure has been followed without significant problems in the past, although incomplete nomination forms have had to be sent back to Members causing delays in filling LEA Governor positions. Some Members have also expressed difficulties in obtaining what can sometimes be numerous responses required as part of the required consultation.

3.04 There are currently 17 unfilled LEA Governor positions and a further 54 positions are due for renewal during the period September to December 2008. There are also currently disputed nominations for the positions of LEA Governors at St. David's High School, Saltney and John Summers High School, and the Governing Body of Sealand Primary School has asked for the removal of an LEA Governor. It is therefore, an opportune time to review the procedure for the appointment of LEA Governors and to consider a process for removal of governors. The following approach is recommended:

- Power of nomination to remain with the Member of the Ward where the school is situated for all schools.
- The establishment of an LEA Governor Panel of 5 Members who will have the responsibility for ratifying the nominations of the LEA Ward Members.
- For Church Aided: Welsh Medium and Secondary Schools it is recommended that consultation by the Ward Member with neighbouring Ward Members continues prior to the above ratification process. The LEA will provide administrative support for this consultation process.
- The Panel will meet as required to ensure that nominations are ratified as soon as possible.
- The Panel will also consider disputes arising from nominations requiring consultation with neighbouring wards.
- The Panel will also hear any request made to them to remove an LEA Governor in accordance with paragraph 27 of the Government of Maintained School (Wales) Regulations 2005 and make a recommendation to the Director of Lifelong Learning.

3.05 In view of the desire for transparency in decision making and the need to determine disputed nominations and consider the request for the removal of an LEA Governor, it is considered that the recommended approach is the most appropriate option.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That an LEA Governor Panel be appointed with 5 Members (2 Independent, 1 Labour, 1 Liberal Democrat and 1 Conservative) nominated by the respective Group Leaders, to ratify nominations to vacancies for LEA School Governors, to consider disputes concerning nominations and to consider requests to remove LEA Governors.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 None.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 There will be some additional administrative work by Council Officers if the recommended approach is adopted.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 None.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 None.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 19

REPORT TO: **EXECUTIVE**
DATE : **18 NOVEMBER 2008**
REPORT BY: **COUNTY LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER**
SUBJECT : **FOURTH, FIFTH AND SIXTH ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE
FLINTSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 For the County Council to note and approve the fourth, fifth and sixth annual reports of the Flintshire Local Access Forum, prepared in accordance with Regulation 16 of the Countryside Access (Local Access Forums) (Wales) Regulations 2001.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Flintshire Local Access Forum was established in 2002 by the County Council in accordance with the provisions of the above Regulations. It is a requirement of those Regulations that an annual report be prepared and approved by the County Council which must include the following:-

- (i) information relating to the Forum's functions during the twelve month period ending on 31st March in each year, and
- (ii) a programme of works which has been agreed between the Forum and the County Council which the Forum plans to undertake during the twelve months commencing immediately after 31st March in each year.

2.02 Appended to this report are the draft reports (excluding the minutes of the Forum meetings which are referred to at Appendix 4 of each report) for the periods of 1st April to 31st March for the years 2005/06 (Appendix 1), 2006/07 (Appendix 2) and 2007/08 (Appendix 3) as prepared by the Forum Secretary, David M. Davies, who is a principal solicitor employed in my Department. Copies of the draft report, with all the accompanying appendices, are available in the Group Rooms. The format of the report follows the advice issued by the Countryside Council for Wales.

2.03 The draft fourth report was submitted to a meeting of the Forum on 10th July 2006 (it does not then appear to have been submitted to the Executive for approval), whilst the draft fifth and sixth reports were submitted to the Forum meeting on 6th October 2008. At both meetings, the Forum agreed that the reports should be submitted to the County Council for approval.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The attached reports follow the format of the previous annual reports. They have been completed in accordance with the guidance issued by the Countryside Council for Wales regarding the preparation of the reports.

3.02 The Countryside Council will maintain a central record of annual reports of all the local access forums in Wales. Copies of the appended reports, once approved, will be sent to the Countryside Council.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That the fourth, fifth and sixth annual reports of the Flintshire Local Access Forum, for the years 2005/06, 2006/07 and 2007/08, be noted and approved by the County Council, and be submitted to the Countryside Council for Wales for their records.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 There are continuing costs associated with the administration of the Local Access Forum. Additional funding has been, and continues to be, made available by the Welsh Assembly Government to cover additional work arising out of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, of which the Local Access Forum forms part.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 Under the terms of the 2000 Act, the function of the Forum is to advise the County Council, the Welsh Assembly Government and the Countryside Council as to the improvement of public access to land in the area for the purposes of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 None.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 The report has already been submitted to the Local Access Forum.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Draft fourth, fifth and sixth annual reports of the Flintshire Local Access Forum.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Flintshire Local Access Forum minutes for the periods covered by the draft reports.

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 20

REPORT TO: **EXECUTIVE**
DATE : **18 NOVEMBER 2008**
REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT**
SUBJECT : **PROPOSED WAITING RESTRICTIONS - MOLD ROAD,
GREEN LANE, BROADWAY AND MOLD WAY, EWLOE**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To advise Members of unresolved objections received following the public advertisement for the installation of waiting restrictions on the B5127 Mold Road, Ewloe, adjacent of Ewloe Green School.

1.02 To recommend that Members over-rule the objection.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The problems and inherent dangers to the safety of children caused by the number of parked vehicles in the vicinity of Ewloe Green School at start and finish times had been identified by school staff and Officers from the Authority.

2.02 A joint meeting was held at the school on 20th February 2008 with the Head Teacher, Chair of Governors, Local Members, North Wales Police and Officers from the Authority.

2.03 Agreement was reached on the proposal to introduce waiting restrictions on certain sections of roads adjacent to the school and to impose clearway status on the two bus waiting areas on either side of Mold Road.

2.04 Following public advertisement of the waiting restrictions, three letters of objection were received, together with a petition with the names of 26 objectors.

2.05 One objection related to the length of the restriction on Green Lane, The objector requested that the restriction be reduced by 3 metres.

2.06 Two objectors, residents of Mold Road, requested that the time of the restriction be increased from the advertised 7 am - 7 pm to be for the full 24 hours.

2.07 The petition of 26 signatures objected to the restrictions, stating that this would displace the parking by parents dropping off / picking up children into the adjoining housing estate i.e Greenville Avenue and Broadway.

- 2.08 Copies of the relevant correspondence are enclosed in the appendices of this report.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.01 The proposed waiting restrictions as advertised were as agreed at the meeting on the 20th February 2008 involving all parties concerned. At a further meeting with the new Local Members it was agreed that the objections received would be presented to the Executive for resolution.
- 3.02 The request regarding the reduction in length of restriction on Green Lane can be accommodated without detriment to the order as advertised. This amendment can be included in the sealed Order, if made.
- 3.03 The proposal is for waiting restrictions 7 am to 7 pm, which covers the period of time for the vast majority of school based activities. Some isolated events may fall outside this period but not sufficient to justify more stringent restrictions.
- 3.04 The migration of some parked vehicles to locations further from the school may result in some additional vehicles within the adjacent housing estate. The possible impact will be low, with various alternatives available to the current on road parking.
- 3.05 Parking for parents is available at the Ewloe Social Club Car Park and the school is promoting a walking bus, possibly based off the Ewloe Spine Road. Parents and children could then use the new pedestrian crossing on the Spine Road and use the overbridge to safely walk to school.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 That Members over-rule the objections received as outlined above and approve the implementation of the waiting restrictions as advertised.
- 4.02 The slight reduction in length on Green Lane can be accommodated in the made Order.
- 4.03 That delegated authority is given to the Head of Highways and Transportation, in conjunction with the Executive Member for Environment following consultation with appropriate Local Members, to consider objections/representations received following the advertisement of intention to make Orders under Highway legislation and to confirm the making of the proposed Order or otherwise including making amendments where appropriate.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 The cost of the restrictions, signs and associated traffic regulation order will be met from the revenue budget allocation for Traffic Regulation Orders.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 No Identifiable Impact

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 The proposals will improve the safety of school children and pedestrians at this location and may lead to a reduction in the number of parents using a vehicle to transport a child to and from school.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 No Identifiable Impact

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 No Identifiable Impact

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 No further consultation required.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 The Local Member, North Wales Police, School Staff and Governors.

11.02 The proposal has been advertised in the press and notices maintained on site for the duration of the extended objection period.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Letters from Objectors

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 21

REPORT TO: **EXECUTIVE**
DATE : **18 NOVEMBER 2008**
REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT**
SUBJECT : **A541 HENDRE - 30/40 MPH SPEED LIMIT**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To advise Members of an unresolved objection received following the advertisement of the proposal to introduce a 40mph and revised 30mph speed limit on the A541, Denbigh Road, Hendre.

1.02 To recommend that Members over-rule the objection.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 Following a large number of complaints regarding danger to road users caused by speeding traffic and inappropriate driver behaviour especially in the vicinity of the Royal Oak Public House, the introduction of a 40mph "buffer" speed limit was identified as a suitable remedial measure, having considered a number of alternatives including a minor road improvement at Dolfechlas Road junction.

The proposed Order will also re-impose the national speed limit on a section of the A541 currently subject to a 30mph speed. By doing so it will address certain historical anomalies concerning the extent of the speed limit through Hendre village.

2.02 Proposals were agreed and advertised to introduce a 40mph speed limit on the A541 to the West of the village and to modify the length of the existing 30mph speed limit to the East.

2.03 Following public advertisement one objection was received and despite strenuous efforts it remains unresolved.

2.04 The unresolved objection, from a resident of Hawarden, queried the content and method of the proposed Order and also stated a belief that it was "technically unsound and well outside your Council's policy on speed limits....."

2.05 Copies of the relevant correspondence are enclosed in the Appendices section of this report, namely 6 letters from the objector and 6 letters of reply from the Authority.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The proposed speed limits as advertised are considered appropriate for this village location and category of road and will alleviate public concern and address the safety issues raised.

3.02 The proposal has the support of the Local Member, Cilcain Community Council, the Chief Constable and Assembly Member.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That members over-rule the unresolved objection and approve the implementation of the new and modified speed limits as advertised.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 The cost of providing the required speed limit signs and the cost of processing the Order will be met from the revenue budget allocated for Traffic Regulation Orders.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 No identifiable impact.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 The proposed reduced speed limit will improve road safety for all road users at this location by reducing the risk and severity of collisions.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 No identifiable impact.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 No identified implications.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 No further formal consultation required.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 North Wales Police and Local Elected Member.

11.02 The proposal has been advertised in the press and notices maintained on site throughout the objection period.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 A541 Hendre scanned document

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 22

REPORT TO: **EXECUTIVE**
DATE : **18 NOVEMBER 2008**
REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF LIFELONG LEARNING**
SUBJECT : **PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL TEMPORARY
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT PERSON FOR THE SCHOOL
IMPROVEMENT SERVICE**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.01 To seek the approval of Members for the appointment of an administrative assistant to support School Improvement Officers involved in statutory support work on delivering initiatives linked to the Foundation Phase, the administration of the Better Schools Fund and Transition work at Key Stage 2/3.

2.00 BACKGROUND

- 2.01 Currently the School Improvement Service has three full time administrative staff supporting twenty two officers.
- 2.02 The workload for the School Improvement team has increased particularly in relation to: -
- (i) School Effectiveness Framework
 - (ii) The Development of the Foundation Phase
 - (iii) Transition work at Key Stage 2 and 3
 - (iv) Developments within the 14-19 agenda

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.01 The recent ESTYN report on the School Improvement Service identified the limited capacity within the service as an important barrier and a risk that the Authority will not be able to sustain current rate of progress.
- 3.02 Since the receipt of the ESTYN inspection report in Autumn 2007, senior managers have reviewed the deployment of administrative support. However, the increased developments and workload of school improvement officers has increased stress levels in terms of meeting administrative tasks to support officers.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 That approval is given to appoint a full time temporary fixed term (3 years) administrative support officer.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 The Scale 3 post, at a cost of £20,906 (including oncosts), will be funded by utilising the administration elements of the Better Schools Fund.
- 5.02 An exit strategy will be in place from when funding comes to an end. Any costs associated with the winding up, including any costs due to staff having gained employment rights, will be minimised and met from it, then they will be met from within the base budget of the service concerned.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 None.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.01 None.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.01 None.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.01 The appointment of a temporary fixed term administrative officer will reduce workload on School Improvement Officers who are currently having to undertake much of their own administrative work. It will also reduce the evident stress levels and hopefully alleviate the potential sickness absence.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

- 10.01 None.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

- 11.01 None.

12.00 APPENDICES

- 12.01 None.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 23

REPORT TO: **EXECUTIVE**
DATE : **18 NOVEMBER 2008**
REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF LIFELONG LEARNING**
SUBJECT : **DEESIDE LEISURE CENTRE**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To update Executive on progress with the further report on Deeside Leisure Centre

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 Pan Leisure Consulting Ltd were commissioned by the Council to prepare a report on the redevelopment and refurbishment potential at Deeside Leisure Centre. The report was received in October 2008. The report sets out a full appraisal of the opportunity to develop purpose built facilities which would be fit for purpose and recognise changing markets and needs in health and wellness. The plans include retention of ice rink facilities which operate as a national and regional centre.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The report follows on from previous work undertaken by Pan Leisure Consulting starting in 2005. The brief for the current report focussed on the redevelopment and refurbishment potential for the Deeside Leisure Centre site and the potential for alternative use for part of the site.

3.02 The report consists of four sections as follows:

3.02.1 Leisure Market: to identify a potential facility mix for the Leisure Centre

3.02.2 Concept: to prepare an illustrative plan with indicative costs.

3.02.3 Transport Planning: to undertake a transport assessment to support any planning application.

3.02.4 Residential Development: to undertake a first stage investigation of the market potential for housing development.

In addition, a desk-top study was undertaken relating to the ground conditions on site.

- 3.03 The report recommends that in redeveloping the site that the facilities mix should include the existing ice rink, outdoor MUGA/5 a side pitches, large sports hall, fitness suite, dance studio, martial arts room, spa, squash courts, together with food and beverage facilities. Detailed project planning provides the opportunity to consider other sporting facilities (e.g. indoor bowling, netball, basketball etc.), together with other service and partnership links (e.g. health, culture). This development should be an iconic and sustainable centre which meets the identified needs of the Flintshire community.
- 3.04 The Report findings will be presented to a Task Group meeting scheduled for Tuesday 11 November 2008 which will represent the first opportunity to discuss the findings. These discussions will be developed further over the coming weeks but will need to reflect the emerging Leisure Strategy and the potential for the development of a specific regeneration and renewal plan of local and regional significance for the Leisure Centre site. Subsequently, there will be a need to identify and agree any Capital Programme implication.
- 3.05 There will be an opportunity for a verbal update following the meeting on 11 November 2008 and a further detailed project report will be submitted to the Executive meeting in December 2008.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 Executive is recommended to:

- a) receive the report;
- b) commission a further detailed project report for the December Executive meeting;
- c) reendorse in principle that the redevelopment of facilities at the Deeside Leisure Centre is a key priority in the Council's Capital programme.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 None at this stage.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None at this stage.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None at this stage.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None at this stage.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None at this stage.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Further consultation internally and with partners is required to determine project proposals, facility mix and re-development potential.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Yes.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

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FOR INFORMATION

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: EXECUTIVE
DATE: 18 NOVEMBER, 2008
REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE
SUBJECT: EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To inform Members of action taken under delegated powers.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 At the Executive Meeting held on 31st October, 2000 it was agreed that one of the standard agenda items at each Executive should be a report on the "Exercise of Delegated Powers".

3.00 RECOMMENDATION

3.01 Members note the details of actions taken under the "Exercise of Delegated Powers".

4.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.01 As detailed in each report.

5.00 ANTI-POVERTY IMPACT

5.01 As detailed in each report.

6.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

6.01 As detailed in each report.

7.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

7.01 As detailed in each report.

8.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

8.01 As detailed in each report

9.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

9.01 Not applicable

10.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

10.01 Not applicable

11.00 APPENDICES

11.01 Summary of Decisions taken under Delegated Powers.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background documents: See individual report.

Contact Officer: See individual report.

APPENDIX 1

EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS – DECISIONS TAKEN

Directorate

Subject

Lifelong Learning

To declare an area of land to the rear of Park Lane, Holywell surplus to recreational requirements and be referred to the Valuation & Estates section for disposal.

Environment

10 year lease of 24 Ryeland Street, Shotton on an internal repairing basis for use as a day care facility and 3 residential units for the benefit of Social Services

10 year lease of playground adjacent to Crown Inn, Pantymwyn

Copies of the Delegated Powers reports are on deposit in the Members' Library

EXECUTIVE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME **MONTHS 09/08 TO 11/08**

The following reports are included in the Forward Work Programme for submission to this meeting of the Executive. However, the reports are not included on the agenda for the reasons stated:-

Chief Executive

- Q2 – Performance Report 2008/09
(Deferred until 9 December to ensure a fuller analysis of the mid year position)
- Employee Opinion Survey
(The Survey has been deferred until the Spring of 2009)
- Organisational Development Programme for the Council
(Report title changed to Phase II of Organisational Change and was submitted to Executive on 29 October 2008)

Environment Update

- National Regional Waste Strategy
(This was submitted to Executive on 5 August 2008)

HR Operations Update

- Agency Staff Reporting – Q2
(This is on hold due to the progress of the system)

**FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME
EXECUTIVE
Months 09/08 to 11/08**

DATE	DIRECTORATE/DIVISION	TOPIC	REPORT TYPE
16 September 2008	Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MTFS / Budget 2009/10 Update ➤ Revenue Budget Monitoring 2008/09 (Month 3) ➤ Treasury Management Outturn Statement 	Strategic Operational Operational
16 September 2008	Lifelong Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Progress Report on the School Organisational Review ➤ Outdoor Play Area Investment Strategy ➤ Leisure Centre Enhancement Strategy ➤ School Playing Fields Grounds Maintenance Contract ➤ Greenfield Valley Trust – Audited Accounts 2007 	Strategic Strategic Strategic Operational Operational
16 September 2008	Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Community Planning and the Flintshire Local Service Board 	Strategic
16 September 2008	ICT/Customer Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Customer Access Strategy Update ➤ Design and Print Service Review 	Operational Operational
16 September 2008	Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Closure of UDP Inquiry and Timetable for Adoption ➤ Communities Next – Outcome of the Consultation on the Future of the Communities First Programme ➤ Individual Site Issues – Seaview Farm 	Strategic Strategic Operational
16 September 2008	Community Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ SMAT Funded Accommodation Officer ➤ Looked After Children Employment Project ➤ Outcomes of the Care and Social Services Inspectorate (Wales) (CSSIW) of the Flintshire Foster Care Services 2006/2007 	Operational Operational Operational
16 September 2008	Legal & Democratic Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Legislative and Constitutional Matters from the Assembly 	Operational
7 October 2008	Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MTFS / Budget 2009/10 Update ➤ Revenue Budget Monitoring 2008/09 (Month 4) ➤ Capital Programme Monitoring (Month 4) ➤ Procurement Strategy 	Strategic Operational Operational Operational
7 October 2008	Community & Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Peripatetic Skip Service Update 	Operational

DATE	DIRECTORATE/DIVISION	TOPIC	REPORT TYPE
7 October 2008	Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Voluntary Sector Compact Review ➤ Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges 2008/9 Review ➤ Council Plan Review ➤ Draft Improvement Agreement (with Welsh Assembly Government) ➤ Regulatory Plan Mid-Year Review ➤ Performance Management Reporting Arrangements ➤ Q1 – Performance Report 2008/09 	Strategic Strategic Strategic Strategic Operational Operational Operational
7 October 2008	ICT/Customer Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ North Wales Regional Partnership Board Update ➤ ICT Strategy Progress Report 	Operational Operational
7 October 2008	Lifelong Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Welsh Public Library Standards – Report on Welsh Assembly Government Response to FCC Annual Report for 2007/08 	Strategic Strategic Operational
7 October 2008	Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Planning Development Control Action Plan Improvement Review ➤ Prohibition Orders (Unspecified) ➤ Review of Old Mineral Planning Permissions 	Operational Operational Operational
29 October 2008	Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MTFS / Budget 2009/10 Update ➤ Revenue Budget Monitoring 2008/09 (Month 5) 	Strategic Operational
29 October 2008	Community & Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Housing Management and Maintenance Mid-Year Performance Review 	Operational
29 October 2008	Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges 2009/10 ➤ Annual Performance Report ➤ Mid-Year Flintshire Partnership Performance Assessment ➤ Senior Management Structure/Organisational Design Phase II ➤ Green Dragon: Environmental Management System ➤ Organisational Health and Safety Mid-Year Review ➤ Voluntary Sector Grant Management Practice 	Strategic Strategic Strategic Strategic Operational Operational
29 October 2008	HR Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Workforce Planning ➤ HRMIS 	Operational Operational
29 October 2008	Lifelong Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Leisure Strategy Position Statement ➤ Deeside Leisure Centre Investment and Modelling Strategy ➤ Estyn Inspection of Adult Community Based Learning in Flintshire 	Strategic Strategic Operational

DATE	DIRECTORATE/DIVISION	TOPIC	REPORT TYPE
29 October 2008	ICT/Customer Services	➤ ICT Security Policy	Operational
29 October 2008	Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ TAITH Regional Transport Plan ➤ Flintshire Local Development Plan – First Steps ➤ Traffic Management Act – Update and Policies ➤ Environmental Impact Assessment Procedures and Guidance Policy 	Strategic Strategic Operational Operational
18 November 2008	Finance	➤ MTFS / Budget 2009/10 Update	Strategic
18 November 2008	Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ People Strategy Review ➤ Q2 – Performance Report 2008/09 	Strategic Operational
18 November 2008	HR Operations	➤ Agency Staff Reporting – Q2	Operational
18 November 2008	Chief Executive's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Organisational Development Programme for the Council ➤ Employee Opinion Survey 	Strategic Operational
18 November 2008	Environment	➤ National Regional Waste Strategy	Strategic