

**EXECUTIVE**  
**17 MAY 2011**

Minutes of the meeting of the Executive of Flintshire County Council held at County Hall, Mold on Tuesday, 17 May 2011

**PRESENT: Councillor A. Woolley (Chairman)**

Councillors: H. Brown, H. D. Hutchinson, N. M. Matthews, N. Phillips, L. A. Sharps, N. Steele-Mortimer, M. G. Wright

**APOLOGY:** Councillor C. A. Ellis

**ALSO PRESENT:** Councillors K. Armstrong-Braun, J. B. Attridge, R. G. Hampson, P. G. Heesom, R. B. Jones, D. I. Mackie and C. A. Thomas

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Chief Executive, Director of Environment, Director of Lifelong Learning, Head of Legal & Democratic Services, Head of Finance, Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development, Head of ICT & Customer Services, Head of Housing and Team Manager – Committee Services

**1. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 April 2011 were confirmed as a correct record.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors H. D. Hutchinson, N. Phillips and A. Woolley declared personal, non-prejudicial interests in agenda item number 19 – Buckley Masterplan.

**3. COUNCIL PLANNING FRAMEWORK**

The Executive Member for Corporate Management introduced the reviewed Council Planning Framework.

The Chief Executive explained that the Framework was a family of co-related documents which together stated ambition, priorities and targets within an overall governance framework.

The Framework comprised three main parts: the Council Plan (Governance) framework, annual statements and service and directorate planning. The timings of each of the three parts were outlined in the report.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the Council Planning (Governance) Framework be endorsed; and

- (b) That the production and availability of the service and directorate plans be noted.

#### **4. DIRECTORATE PLANS**

The Executive Member for Corporate Management introduced the report which provided Members with an overview of the three renewed Directorate Plans for 2011/12 as part of the Council (Plan) Governance Framework.

The Chief Executive explained that the three Directorate Plans formed part of the Council (Plan) Governance Framework, the purpose of which was to set direction and purpose for the directorates, to connect to the corporate plans and to set a high level performance accountability framework.

All three Directorate Plans would be completed by the end of May 2011 which would enable the newly appointed Director of Community Services, Neil Ayling, to contribute to his Directorate Plan.

The Directorate Plans provided the link between the Corporate Priorities and the Medium Term Financial Strategy. They also described forecasted pressures and efficiencies and set out intended actions within the set of priorities.

A document was handed to Members which highlighted the County Priorities, Council Priorities and Directorate Priorities for each Directorate including one for Corporate Resources.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the content of the new Directorate Plans as part of the Council (Plan) Governance Framework be noted.

#### **5. COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

The Leader and Executive Member for Finance and Asset Management introduced the report which outlined the revised Council Priorities.

The Chief Executive explained that in 2010 the Executive adopted a set of 40 priorities. They had now been reviewed by Executive Members, with the advice and support of the Corporate Management Team with the aim of:

- Providing a reduced set of priorities to provide clarity and vision and direction.
- Giving guidance to directorates in the setting of their service / business plans for 2011/12 and
- Meeting the recommendations of the Wales Audit Office to adopt a set of 'Improvement Objectives' as required by the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009

The Council drew its priorities from a number of sources. Four were corporate governance priorities and six were service policy and performance priorities. The 10 priorities were supported by more detailed secondary priorities set out in the three Directorate Plans and in the corporate governance plans.

**RESOLVED:**

That the revised set of 10 primary priorities be adopted and classed as the Council's 'Improvement Objectives'.

**6. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY**

The Leader and Executive Member for Finance and Asset Management introduced the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) which incorporated the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

The Head of Finance delivered a detailed presentation on the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy which covered the following:

- MTFS Contents
- MTFS Purpose and Development
- Governance Framework
- MTFS Includes the Financial Plan (MTFP)
- Key Financial Objectives of the MTFS
- Financial Planning & Operating Principles
- Forecasting Future Resource Levels & Needs
- Initial Forecast
- Monitoring & Delivering the Financial Strategy
- What Next?

The Chief Executive commented on the importance of forecasting. It was planned to have a first estimate of the update to forecast in the Medium Term Financial Plan which had been presented incorporating the major items from Directorate/Service Plans and the Flintshire Futures Programme by mid June. It was important that there were clear priorities with appropriate support provided throughout the rigorous work that would be required on forecasting.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the draft Medium Term Financial Plan be noted;
- (b) That the report and the outcome of the WLGA Financial Peer Review be considered by the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19 May 2011 and that feedback on the MTFS be reported to Executive on 21 June 2011; and
- (c) That the final draft document be approved for submission to County Council on 29 June 2011 with the Medium Term Financial Plan based on the initial forecasts set out in the report.

## 7. **MINISTERIAL REVIEWS**

The Executive Member for Corporate Management introduced the report which noted the outcomes and implications of three significant reviews commissioned by Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) Ministers.

In 2010 the then WAG Cabinet commissioned three significant reviews.

- Vision to Action of Social Services – the ‘Pearson Review’
- The Structure of Education Services in Wales - the ‘Thomas Review’
- Review of Local Authority Service Delivery - the ‘Simpson Review’

The formal response to the ‘Pearson Review’ was published prior to the recent election.

Summaries of the ‘Thomas’ and ‘Simpson’ reviews and their recommendations were appended to the report. No formal Welsh Assembly Government responses had yet been made to these reviews although the retiring Ministers, pre-election, had made supportive statements in welcoming the recommendations of the reviews.

The ‘Simpson Review’ built on the positive work of collaborative working at a regional level and made specific recommendations for greater and more consistent collaboration within and across regions with recommendations for some national level collaborations. This review was influenced by the aims for regional collaboration in North Wales to which the six Councils were committed.

The Director of Lifelong Learning said the ‘Thomas Review’ built on earlier commitments to regionalisation of key education support services, maximising investment in and delegation to schools, improving standards and improving school performance and governance. One of the recommendations in the Review was that a national target be set for school surplus places to be established at a maximum of 10% across Wales. The Executive Member for Education explained that work was underway on proposals for how that target could be met and would be presented to the Executive in June 2011.

The Executive Member for Environment asked if any schools in Wales were receiving European funding. The Director of Lifelong Learning explained that specific grants were provided only where there were specific issues and he would share information with Members on any projects that had been undertaken from such funding.

### **RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the recommendations and implications of the ‘Thomas’ and the ‘Simpson’ reviews be noted; and

- (b) That the commitment of the Executive to regional collaboration, school re-organisations, increased delegation of funding to schools and improved standards of education in response to the 'Thomas' review and its commitment to regional collaboration in response to the 'Simpson' review be repeated.

**8. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (WALES) MEASURE 2011**

The Executive Member for Corporate Management introduced the report which provided an overview of the Local Government Measure and its implications for Flintshire.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services explained that the Measure had recently been granted Royal Assent and would now come into effect in stages. The day after Royal Assent was granted the provisions relating to Overview and Scrutiny, collaboration and amalgamation came into effect. Two months later provisions relating to governance arrangements, area committees and co-opted members of Overview and Scrutiny Committees would come into effect as would some of the provisions relating to communities and community councils.

**RESOLVED:**

That the provisions of the Measure and the implications for Flintshire be noted.

**9. COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND LOCAL SERVICE BOARD – MID YEAR REVIEW**

The Executive Member for Corporate Management introduced the report which sought endorsement of the ongoing work of the Flintshire Local Service Board (LSB).

The Chief Executive introduced the mid-year report and highlighted the work of two complex projects: Carbon Reduction and Adaptation and Maximising Opportunity – Preventing and Reducing Poverty and Disadvantage in Flintshire.

On 15 March 2011 the proposals and timescale for implementation of the outcomes of the North Wales Partnership Review were endorsed by the Executive. Changes being made as a result of that review were the introduction of a Regional Leadership Board (RLB), the development of a regional North Wales Safer Communities Board and sub-regional consolidation of Local Service Boards, Children and Young People's Partnerships, Health, Social Care and Well-being Partnerships and Local Safeguarding Children Boards with linked delivery roles for Community Safety Partnerships.

**RESOLVED:**

That the ongoing work of the Local Service Board be supported and endorsed.

**10. STRATEGIC PROCUREMENT OVERVIEW – NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENTS**

The Executive Member for Corporate Management introduced the report which provided an update on the work being undertaken nationally, regionally and locally to improve Procurement practices, develop professional capacity and deliver efficiency savings.

The Head of ICT and Customer Services explained that the work highlighted in the report would contribute to more effective and innovative procurement which in turn would improve service delivery. It would also help the Council to realise the required efficiency savings, whilst at the same time delivering social, environmental and economic benefits.

As part of the Welsh Assembly Government's Efficiency and Innovation Programme a Procurement and Commissioning Taskforce was established to identify a national programme of improvement to public sector procurement within Wales. To deliver on the ambitious vision the taskforce produced a detailed report with 23 key recommendations under four main themes: Governance; Policy, Process and Technology; National Procurement Service and Category Management. The full recommendations were attached as an appendix to the report. The Leader and the Chief Executive had committed personally to adoption of the recommendations at national meetings.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the work being undertaken at a local, regional and national level to radically improve procurement and deliver efficiency savings be noted and supported; and
- (b) That the recommendations of the National Procurement and Efficiency Taskforce detailed in the report be endorsed.

**11. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2010/11 (MONTH 11)**

The Executive Member for Finance and Asset Management introduced the report which provided the most up to date revenue budget monitoring information (Month 11) for the Council Fund and the Housing Revenue Account in 2010/11.

The Head of Finance reported this was a pleasing position for the Authority with the projected year end position as estimated at Month 11 being:

- Council Fund – Net underspend of £0.037M (overspend of £0.389M at Month 10)

- Housing Revenue Account – Net underspend of £0.311M (underspend of £0.055M at Month 10)

Significant savings were reported across departments and corporate finance which resulted from the ongoing management action being taken to minimise the impact on the Council's overall financial position.

Various requests for carry forward funding had been received which were detailed in the report.

The Chief Executive commended the Director of Lifelong Learning and the Head of Children's Services for their work on reducing the budget pressure on Out of County Placements.

Movements to date on unearmarked reserves and the estimated level of contingency sum were detailed in the appendix to the report. As a result of the movements, the estimated amount currently projected in the Contingency Reserve was £1.045M. This was £0.754M more than the £0.291M anticipated when the 2011/12 budget was set.

Appendix 8 to the report detailed the reasons for significant variances occurring to date on the Housing Revenue Account, and actions planned to deal with them.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the report be noted;
- (b) That the carry forward requests be approved;
- (c) That the estimated Council Fund Contingency Sum as at 31 March 2011 be noted; and
- (d) That the projected final level of balances on the Housing Revenue Account be noted.

**12. COUNCIL TAX HELP FOR PENSIONERS**

The Executive Member for Finance and Asset Management introduced the report which provided information on the continuation of the Assembly Government Pensioner Discount Grant Scheme in 2011-12 which provided financial assistance for pensioners to pay their Council Tax.

The Head of Finance explained that during 2010-11, £3.89M was made available across all 22 Authorities in Wales from a grant scheme to target funding to those pensioners most in need of financial help. The money was distributed on the older adults formula used in the calculation of the Standard Spending Assessment.

As part of the 'One Wales' policy commitment, the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) had announced a further £3.89M funding package across Wales for 2011-12 to enable Local Authority pensioners discount schemes to continue and Flintshire County Council had been allocated grant funding of £163,990.

Details were provided on the proposed qualification criteria for a fixed grant award for eligible Flintshire residents.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the Pensioner Discount Scheme in 2011-12 be adopted; and
- (b) That officers be authorised to accept the £163,990 grant from the Assembly Government and to administer the grant in line with proposals detailed in the report, seeking an equitable award in the payments made based on the total number of applications on the qualifying date whilst providing a 'ring fenced' contingency fund to support up to 100 additional applications on a 'first come first served basis'. All grants will be fixed at a level when the total numbers of applications are known after 30 September 2011 deadline date for new applications.

**13. COUNCIL TAX – SINGLE PERSON DISCOUNT REVIEW**

The Executive Member for Finance and Asset Management introduced the report which provided details of a collaborative project across North Wales to review Council Tax Single Person Discounts (SPD).

In the past, the Council had carried out yearly or biannual reviews to establish that the Council Tax SPDs were correct. This had usually been done in writing. This had always prompted some taxpayers to provide details of additional people who had joined the household, but there was no independent check or verification of the taxpayers' actual circumstances and therefore the Council accepted the review form on face value. If the taxpayer signed and returned the form, the discount would continue.

This method was resource intensive and costly. There had been several case studies cited by the Audit Commission as good examples where local Authorities, working together with private sector partners, had removed significant numbers of SPD claims where taxpayers had failed to notify of a change of circumstances.

The North Wales Revenues Practitioners Group, following an agreement to develop more effective ways of reviewing SPD claims, had undertaken a joint procurement exercise involving all Councils across North and Mid Wales, to establish an SPD review contract for the region that provided better value for money for taxpayers. Northgate Information Solutions successfully tendered for the project and would work in conjunction with each participating Council and with Experian UK, a leading credit



reference agency, to assist in identifying taxpayers who were claiming 25% SPD when they were not entitled to it.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the regional SPD review taking place in May 2011 be noted; and
- (b) That a further report be presented to Members to consider the viability of future reviews being undertaken by external specialists once the outcomes of the SPD review are known.

**14. HOUSING AND COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT TAKE UP GRANT FROM WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT (WAG)**

The Executive Member for Finance and Asset Management introduced the report which advised Members of the Benefit Take Up grant available to the Council for 2011/12 and provided information about previous years activity funded by the Benefit Take Up grant 2010/11.

Over the last five years WAG had offered grants to Welsh Authorities to encourage benefit take up. For 2011/12 Flintshire County Council had been offered and accepted £47,300 for this purpose.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

**15. HOUSING AND COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT CHANGES 2011/12 - DISCRETIONARY HOUSING BENEFIT POLICY**

The Executive Member for Finance and Asset Management introduced the report which advised on the changes to the Housing and Council Tax Benefit which were being implemented during 2011/12, the impact on benefit administration and on claimants and landlords locally. Approval was sought of the draft Discretionary Housing payment policy that would be applied to future applications for Discretionary Housing payments.

From April 2011, Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates would be reduced so that they were set at the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile of the list of levels for each property size rather than at the median figure. This would mean that approximately 3 in 10 properties for rent in the area should then be affordable to people on Housing Benefit rather than every 5 in 10 properties. In practice, some customers would not be affected until after January 2012.

Details on the Housing and Council Tax changes during 2011/12 and the Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) were explained and full details were provided in the report.

Each year the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) allocated DHP funding to Local Authorities, but allowed the Authority to top up the

amount. For 2011/12, Flintshire County Council has been allocated £81,620 and to ensure that the authority could meet the estimated additional demand as a result of the changes to Housing Benefit, the Authority would need to award the full overall limit of £204,050 which would mean that the Council's contribution would be £122,430.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the changes, and impact of the welfare changes in April 2011 be noted;
- (b) That the Discretionary Housing Policy be approved; and
- (c) That it be noted that for the financial year 2011/12 Flintshire County Council have been allocated £81,620 by DWP for Discretionary Housing Payments and it is estimated that we will award our full overall limit of £204,050. This means that the Council's contribution to the overall total will be £122,430.

**16. WORKFORCE INFORMATION REPORT**

The Executive Member for Corporate Management introduced the report which provided an update for the fourth quarter and whole year 2010/11.

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development explained that the report provided details on: establishment, headcount, agency number, turnover, diversity and absence.

A piece of work was being undertaken to further analyse vacancies to identify which ones were to be recruited to and those that should be removed to allow a more accurate reflection of the establishment.

The overall turnover rate for 2010/11 was 11.94% compared to 10.70% in 2009/10. This increase was largely as a result of the data cleanse work that had been undertaken.

On sickness absence, the number of days lost had reduced in quarter 4 to 2.87 days compared to 3.32 days in quarter 3. Work was underway with the Occupational Health Unit to improve the support and interventions available to employees with the aim of employees returning to work as soon as possible.

The Chief Executive said for the whole year 2010/11, 40% of employees had attained 100% attendance and a way for recognising excellent attendance was being introduced during 2011/12.

Following a comment from the Leader and Executive Member for Finance and Asset Management, the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development said appendices to future reports would be less

complex and headline commentary would be provided within the body of the report to further explain their content.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Workforce Information Report for the fourth quarter and whole year 2010/11 be noted.

**17. MATRIX CONTRACT UPDATE (MANAGED AGENCY STAFF SOLUTION)**

The Executive Member for Corporate Management introduced the report which provided an update on the contract for the provision of agency workers, quarter 4 of 2010/11 savings and an update on the development of procedures to maximise efficiencies and improve practice in relation to the use of agency workers.

The number of agency staff who had been in the organisation for longer than six months had decreased since the last quarter. However, this remained an area which required ongoing consideration.

The reduction in agency head count was reflected in the hours worked compared with the previous year. Overall, 39,487 fewer hours had been worked in 2010/11 which equated to a reduction of 13.80% with savings of £32,500.85 being achieved. The Authority was continuing to identify further options for improving efficiencies and reducing costs. This included reviewing the use of Matrix to assist in managing the use of consultants for one off projects to control the level of usage and spend. This would offer both direct and indirect cost savings and process efficiencies.

**RESOLVED:**

That the update be noted and the approaches being taken to manage the use of agency workers more closely and to explore further options for increasing efficiency savings for Flintshire be endorsed.

**18. BUCKLEY MASTERPLAN**

The Executive Member for Regeneration and Tourism introduced the report which provided details of the progress with the production of the Buckley Masterplan and the proposed next steps for delivering the Masterplan.

Following the Healthchecks Study by Roger Tym and Partners in 2008, a Town Partnership was established in Buckley the following year. The Buckley Partnership had developed an Action Plan which included the need for a Masterplan to provide a detailed guide for the future development of the town, in particular, the need to attract significant investment in new retail development. The Masterplan would set out a clear way forward for Buckley, providing a major step forward in securing the regeneration of the town and help to inform the proposed Flintshire Local Development Plan.

The Director of Environment explained that a major public consultation exercise had taken place in January 2011. A draft Masterplan for the whole of the town centre, together with three options for the key sites to the rear of The Precinct was presented. A large number of people attended the exhibition in Buckley Library. The report detailed the preferred way forward following that public consultation process.

A key action in developing options had been to soft market test the demand for, and viability of, any proposals put forward, which had been carried out. Full financial and soft market testing of all of the options had been undertaken which included detailed discussions with both developers and major retailers.

The Masterplan provided an evidence-based framework to guide future development for the town and contained a mix of short, medium and long term actions and aspirations designed to help create a strong, vibrant and sustainable town centre. Indicative timescales for the next stages of the project were:

- Preparation of a Development Brief for The Precinct and adjoining areas (completed by end of May 2011)
- Discussions with key landowners (mid August 2011)
- Send development package to interested parties (end of September 2011)
- Evaluation of proposals (mid November 2011)
- Selection of preferred scheme (Executive 13 December 2011)

The Executive Member for Environment expressed his concerns on land ownership, who would lead the project and who would be on the tender list. The Director of Environment explained that landowners would be contacted on developing a package of land for the proposals. Through soft market testing, a considerable amount of interest had been demonstrated by developers who would be invited to tender. The Chief Executive added that the Director of Environment would lead the project, supported by his team.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the contents of the Buckley Masterplan be noted and agreed as providing key guidance for the Authority in considering future development proposals in Buckley Town Centre;
- (b) That the commencement of negotiations with necessary landowners in order to identify the potential site area(s) available for development be authorised;
- (c) That officers be authorised to identify interested developers capable of bringing forward a development scheme for Buckley in line with the Masterplan framework and Development Brief; and

- (d) That a further report be brought to Executive setting out the suggested development partner and identifying their proposals for Buckley.

## **19. SPONSORSHIP OF ROUNDABOUTS**

The Executive Member for Environment introduced the report which included a finalised policy for the sponsorship of and advertising on adopted highway roundabouts.

A well-managed highway roundabout sponsorship scheme could provide an opportunity to promote and strengthen links with local businesses, as well as improving the environment, particularly in 'gateways' and town centres. The term 'sponsorship' included the erection of works of art, landscaping or similar features on roundabouts, as well as the erection of signs.

The Director of Environment said advice had been sought from a Barrister for advice on whether the Council could lawfully permit the erection of signs on roundabouts and whether, in extreme conditions, this could result in the prosecution of Senior Council Officers for Corporate Manslaughter. A summary of the Barrister's Opinions was set out in the report, as was information from a Department of Transport Report – Road Safety Research Report No 95 'Scoping Study of Driver Distraction'.

In view of the advice and information, a series of safety-related and other principles had been established in conjunction with Consultant Traffic Engineers to assist Officers when considering individual requests for sponsorship signs and/or erection of features on roundabouts which were detailed in the report.

### **RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the policy, as set out in the report, be approved;
- (b) That delegated authority be given to the Director of Environment, following consultation with the Executive Member for Environment, to make amendments to the policy in the future; and
- (c) That the Regeneration Service Area administers the policy to optimise the revenue generated for the Authority.

## **20. SUPPORTING PEOPLE OPERATIONAL PLAN 2011/12**

The Executive Member for Finance and Asset Management introduced the Supporting People Operational Plan (SPOP) 2011/12.

The SPOP action plan for 2011/12 was split into three sections to reflect the three policy areas covered by housing related support services – Community Care, Community Safety and Homeless Prevention.

Details on what each section covered were provided in the report. In particular, new developments for 2011/12 in the Homeless Prevention section included the development of a Homeless Services Co-ordinator role within the Supporting People Team. This post would ensure the best use was made of existing resources and improve access to housing support provision. The aim of the post was to ensure that vulnerable people could access and receive services most appropriate to their need. The requirement to develop this post was also identified within the Flintshire Homelessness Strategy.

**RESOLVED**

- (a) That the Supporting People Operational Plan 2011/12 be approved;
- (b) That the creation of a Homeless Co-ordinator Post on a two year fixed term be approved; and
- (c) That a Member Workshop to update on new developments and outcomes achieved, planned for July 2011, be noted.

**21. 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 remainder of the meeting for the following items by virtue of exempt information under the paragraphs indicated of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

Minute 22 – Paragraph 17

Minute 23 – Paragraphs 12, 13 and 14

**22. FLINT MAISONNETTES**

The Executive Member for Housing introduced the report which sought approval for actions to support the development of long term solutions for the provision of high quality homes for the residents of Flint maisonettes.

A letter was being hand delivered to tenants that morning to inform them of a public meeting taking place the following evening to receive their views on the maisonettes.

A report would be submitted to Executive in the summer with firm proposals on the future of the maisonettes.

**RESOLVED**

- (a) That delegated authority to the Head of Housing to make decisions as to whether to re-let vacant maisonettes on the basis of a value for money assessment as each vacancy occurs be approved; and

- (b) That commencement of formal consultation about the long term future of the maisonettes with tenants and leaseholders be approved and that firm proposals be brought back to the Executive.

**23. DELIVERY OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL AREA & PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING RENEWAL ACROSS FLINTSHIRE**

The Executive Member for Housing introduced the report which provided an update on the delivery of the Connah's Quay, Shotton and Queensferry Neighbourhood Renewal Area.

Approval was also sought for opening negotiations in an attempt to acquire 4 properties, within a single ownership, to facilitate re-development for housing purposes in Connah's Quay.

Members were informed of a current review of the Empty Homes function, the aim of which was to create a holistic strategy which could bring about a reduction in Empty Homes across Flintshire.

**RESOLVED**

- (a) That the progress in delivery of the Connah's Quay, Shotton and Queensferry Renewal Area be noted;
- (b) That the proposal to acquire 4 properties in Connah's Quay, namely 231 & 233 (one retail property with self contained flat above), along with 235, 237 & 239 High Street for the purpose of facilitating housing development be approved. Any acquisition to be agreed by the Council's Valuation & Estates Service in line with legal requirements and within the pre-existing Council Fund element of the Housing Capital Programme; and
- (c) That the ongoing service review of the empty homes function, as a key component of supporting countywide Housing Renewal be noted and that a further update will be provided to Scrutiny in June and Executive in July.

**24. DURATION OF MEETING**

The meeting commenced at 9.30a.m. and ended at 11.55a.m.

**25. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE**

There were three members of the press in attendance.

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**Chairman**

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

<b>EXECUTIVE</b>	<b>DATE: 17 MAY 2011</b>
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<b>MEMBER</b>	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>MIN. NO. REFERS</b>
Councillors N. Phillips, H. D. Hutchinson and A. Woolley	Buckely Masterplan	18