

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
28TH JUNE 2007

Minutes of the Special meeting of Flintshire County Council held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Mold on Thursday, 28th June 2007.

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs A. Minshull (Chairman)

Councillors: L.A. Aldridge, J.B. Attridge, S.R. Baker, D. Barratt, J.G. Beard, Colin Bithell, R.C. Bithell, D.M.D. Clayton, D.L. Cox, P.J. Curtis, R. Davies, Mrs G.D. Diskin, B. Dunn, E.F. Evans, F. Gillmore, Mrs R. Griffiths, R.G. Hampson, G. Hardcastle, P.G. Heesom, M. Higham, Mrs N. Humphreys, G.A. Jones, J.F. Jones, R.K. Jones, Mrs S. Jones, C. Legg, R.P. McFarlane, E.E. Matthews, W. Mullin, J. Ovens, M.J. Peers, N. Phillips, T. Renshaw, K.W. Richardson, H.G. Roberts, L.A. Sharps, C. Shone, A.P. Shotton, I.R. Smith, N.R. Steele-Mortimer, W.O. Thomas, Pamela J. Walkden, T. Walker, D.R. Wilkes, G.D. Williams and D.E. Wisinger.

APOLOGIES:

Councillors: D. Butler, J.C. Cattermoul, A.G. Diskin, Q.R.H. Dodd, R.C. Dodd, C.J. Dolphin, C.A. Ellis, H. Gambino, J.J. Griffiths, R.J.T. Guest, A.E. Hannah, H.T. Howorth, H.D. Hutchinson, H.T. Isherwood, H.J. McGuill, W.M. Warburton, A. Woolley and M.G. Wright.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Acting Chief Executive, County Legal and Democratic Services Officer, County Finance Officer, Director of Corporate Strategy, Director of Adult Social Care, Interim Director of Community and Housing, Interim Director of Education and Children's Services and Recreation, Chief Planning Services Officer and Head of Committee, Member and Electoral Services.

156. PRAYERS

At the commencement of the meeting, Councillor R.C. Bithell conducted prayers.

157. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

158. APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A report of the County Legal and Democratic Services Officer, copies of which had been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The County Legal and Democratic Services Officer presented the report, the purpose of which was to approve the recommendations of the Appointment Panel to appoint Mr Colin Everett to the post of Chief Executive. He referred to the recommendations of the report and the reference to the relocation package was corrected to £7,863 and not as stated in Section 4.01 of the report. The figure of £3,334.00 stated in the report, referred to the annual increments on the salary scale.

The County Legal and Democratic Services Officer also referred to the financial implications of the report and referred to the costs of employing SOLACE and other expenses associated with the recruitment process which would be met from unearmarked reserves and were still to be finalised.

The Leader of the Council, in moving the recommendations, said he was pleased to welcome the new Chief Executive. As Chairman of the Appointment Panel he explained that the Panel had set a clear criteria for the most suitable candidate and he believed that the criteria had been met through the recommendation coming from the Panel. He said that Colin Everett had a significant depth of knowledge of Welsh Local Government and referred to his Welsh Local Government Association role and links with the Welsh Assembly Government which would prove to be a tremendous asset in the role of Chief Executive. He would be able play a key role in the future development of the Flintshire County Council.

Councillor G.D. Williams seconded the proposal and referred to Mr Everett's contribution to a number of Local Government initiatives in Wales over recent years.

The recommendations from the Appointments Panel were supported by Councillors P.G. Heesom, N. Phillips and N.R. Steele-Mortimer.

On being put to the vote, the recommendations were agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

- a) That the recommendation of the Appointment Panel to appoint Mr Colin Everett as Chief Executive on a salary range of £115,000 - £125,000 (subject to any annual pay award) at the bottom of the scale commencing on a date to be agreed, together with a relocation package of £7,863.00.
- b) That the increase in salary costs be met from unearmarked reserves for 2007/08 and built into the base budget for future years.
- c) That the Director of Corporate Strategy be given delegated authority to agree the starting date for the post; and
- d) That the costs of employing SOLACE and other associated expenses with the recruitment process, be approved and met out of unearmarked reserves.

At this juncture, Mr Colin Everett was welcomed into the Council Chamber by the Chairman and Mr Everett responded to his appointment. He thanked the Chairman, Leader and Members of the Council and said that he was delighted and privileged to be offered the post of Chief Executive of Flintshire County Council. He thanked the Members and Officers who had been on the Appointment Panel and thanked the Acting Chief Executive for undertaking the interim role and for the advice he had received since his appointment.

159. EARLY RETIREMENT OF THE ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A report the County Legal and Democratic Services Officer, copies of which had been previously circulated to Members, was submitted. The County Legal and Democratic Services Officer presented the report, the purpose of which was to approve the early retirement of the Acting Chief Executive.

The County Legal and Democratic Services Officer reported that the Acting Chief Executive had submitted a request for early retirement following the appointment of the new Chief Executive. He had consulted with PricewaterhouseCoopers and it was considered that the recommended decision to accept the request would be both lawful and would demonstrate value for money. Paragraphs 3.02, 3.03 and 3.04 of the report set out supporting information which reinforced the recommendation.

The cost of the pension fund strain associated with the early retirement could be met from savings in the Environment and Regeneration budget for 2007/08. The County Legal and Democratic Services Officer also referred to the recommendation that the Director of Corporate Strategy be given delegated powers to agree the actual date of retirement.

The Leader of the Council supported the recommendations of the report and paid tribute to the support he had received from Chris Kay since his appointment as Leader.

Councillor G.D. Williams seconded the recommendation and also thanked Chris Kay for undertaking the interim role of Acting Chief Executive.

Councillor P.G. Heesom also thanked Chris Kay for the work undertaken as Acting Chief Executive.

On being put to the vote, the recommendations of the report were agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

- a) That the County Council grant the early retirement of the Acting Chief Executive with a leaving date to be agreed but probably to be no later than 30th September 2007.
- b) That the Director of Corporate Strategy be given delegated powers to agree the actual date of retirement.

160. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT 2006/07

A report of the County Finance Officer, copies of which had been previously circulated to Members, was submitted.

The County Finance Officer presented the report, the purpose of which was to advise of the process for Council to receive a recommendation from the

Audit Committee in relation to the Statement of Accounts 2006/07. She referred to a supplement to the report which had been tabled at the commencement of the meeting which advised on the comments and recommendations of the Audit Committee in relation to the Statement of Accounts 2006/07.

The County Finance Officer referred to the comments made by the Audit Committee that an assurance had been sought that the reduction in the level of debtors was not due to unsympathetic recovery processes or procedures. The County Finance Officer had given that assurance and committed to give appropriate details to the specific Member who raised the issue. Secondly, the Chairman had asked staff across all Directorates to be thanked for their contributions in producing the draft Statement of Accounts earlier than in previous years and to tighter statutory deadlines. The Audit Committee had resolved to recommend adoption and approval of the draft Statement of Accounts 2006/07 to this meeting of the County Council.

The County Finance Officer then informed Members of the Council that Mr Lee Childs of PricewaterhouseCoopers was retiring at the end of the month and the Audit Committee had expressed their best wishes to him.

Councillor Mel Higham as Chairman of the Audit Committee asked the County Council Members to recognise the tremendous effort that had been undertaken by staff to produce the report against very tight timescales and he accordingly moved the recommendations. The Vice-Chairman of the Audit Committee, Councillor Colin Bithell, seconded the proposal and also paid tribute to Mr Lee Childs and PricewaterhouseCoopers and asked Mr David Newman to pass on the Council's good wishes for his retirement.

The Executive Member for Finance, Councillor P. McFarlane, endorsed the views of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Audit Committee in relation to the work undertaken by staff in meeting the very tight statutory deadlines for the closure of the accounts. The Leader of the Council also wished to be associated with the views of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Audit Committee and paid tribute to the work of Mr Lee Childs and the invaluable advice he had personally received from him.

The recommendations of the report were unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED

- a) That the comments of the Audit Committee be noted.
- b) That the recommendation from the Audit Committee be received and;
- c) That the draft Statement of Accounts 2006/07 be approved and adopted.

161. PROGRESS UPDATE: HOUSING STOCK OPTIONS APPRAISAL PROCESS AND HOUSING BUSINESS PLAN

A report of the Interim Director of Community and Housing, copies of which had been previously circulated to Members, was submitted.

The Interim Director of Community and Housing presented the report, the purpose of which was to inform the Council as to the current position in relation to the Housing Stock Options Appraisal process and the preparation of the Housing Business Plan 2007/08. He referred to the self-explanatory report which was for noting and update and explained that a final report was to be submitted to the Council meeting on 31st July 2007.

The Leader of the Council referred to the recommendation of the report to note the progress update and that the County Council, on 31st July, would receive a report and Action Plan to meet the 2012 Welsh Housing Quality Standard.

RESOLVED

- a) That the progress update be noted and
- b) That a report and Action Plan to meet the 2012 requirements, be considered by the County Council at its meeting on 31st July 2007.

162. DURATION OF MEETING

The meeting commenced at 2 p.m. and ended at 3.30 p.m.

163. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC PRESENT

There were not members of the press and public present.

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Chairman

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

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

DATE: 28th June 2007
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MEMBER	ITEM	MIN. NO. REFERS
NO DECLARATIONS WERE MADE		