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Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol a Democraataidd



To: Cllr Matt Wright (Chairman)

CS/NG

Councillors: Haydn Bateman, Derek Butler,
Peter Curtis, David Evans, Cindy Hinds,
Joe Johnson, Ann Minshull, and Paul Shotton

16 May 2013

Nominations are awaited from the Liberal
Democratic, Independent Alliance, and New
Independents Group

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Dear Sir / Madam

A meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** will be held in the **DELYN COMMITTEE ROOM, COUNTY HALL, MOLD CH7 6NA** on **WEDNESDAY, 22ND MAY, 2013** at **10.00 AM** to consider the following items.

Yours faithfully

Democracy & Governance Manager

A G E N D A

- 1 **APOLOGIES**
- 2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**
- 3 **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR**
Nominations will be sought for a Vice-Chair for the Committee.

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The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English
Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawau gohebiaeth yn y Cymraeg neu'r Saesneg

- 4 **MINUTES** (Pages 1 - 12)
To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the last meeting
- 5 **MISSED COLLECTIONS TECHNOLOGY**
To receive a demonstration on missed collections technology.
- 6 **EXTENDED AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY** (Pages 13 - 16)
Report of Director of Environment.
- 7 **TOURISM IN FLINTSHIRE** (Pages 17 - 26)
Report of Director of Environment.
- 8 **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 27 - 32)
Report of Environment & Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator.

Agenda Item 4

ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE **10 APRIL 2013 (10AM)**

Minutes of the meeting of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held at Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold CH7 6NA on Wednesday, 10 April 2013 at 10am

PRESENT: **Councillor Matt Wright (Chairman)**

Councillors Haydn Bateman, Derek Butler, Peter Curtis, Chris Dolphin, David Evans, Veronica Gay, Cindy Hinds, Joe Johnson, Colin Legg, Nancy Matthews, Paul Shotton and Carolyn Thomas

SUBSTITUTION: Councillor Ian Dunbar (for Ann Minshull)

APOLOGIES: Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Environment, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise & Leisure and Chief Regeneration Officer

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors: Patrick Heesom and Richard Lloyd

CONTRIBUTORS: Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Public Protection, Waste & Recycling, Director of Environment, Highways Strategy Manager, Economic Development Manager, Communities First Programme Manager and Senior Business Advisor

Ms. Lowri Owain of Cadwyn Clwyd

IN ATTENDANCE: Acting Overview & Scrutiny Manager and Committee Officer

73. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

Councillor C.A. Thomas declared an interest in Agenda Item 4.

74. MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 24 January and 6 March 2013 had been circulated with the agenda.

Accuracy - 6 March 2013

Councillor C.J. Dolphin said that the statement about pre payment meters on page 12 was incorrect. The Director of Environment said that the minute was correct. He said that he would check if pre payment meter owners were excluded from the scheme.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

75. RURAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL FUNDS

The Economic Development Manager presented the report to update members on developments with the Rural Development Plan (RDP). The Rural Development Plan had now entered the final stages and the Welsh Government (WG) had approved extensions and enhancements to the projects to the end of 2014. This 12 month extension would provide the necessary time to ensure that the projects were successfully concluded to budget and schedule.

Looking ahead, the WG had recently launched its consultation on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform for the new 2014-2020 RDP Programme. Flintshire County Council, the Flintshire Rural Partnership and Cadwyn Clwyd would all submit responses to the WG by mid April. The European Structural Fund Programmes for 2014-2020 were also under development. It was expected that less funding would be available than previously. WG was consulting on its proposed approach to the new programmes and the County Council would respond to this consultation at the end of April.

The Leader of the Council conveyed apologies from the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise & Leisure. He stressed the importance of Assisted Area funding which was critical to many businesses in the County and more so, due to the Deeside Enterprise Zone. The Enhanced Capital Allowance incentive to lure big businesses to Flintshire would be put at risk if Assisted status was not secured. He added that many investments may not have happened if not for the funding and urged Members to lobby North Wales MEPs over the matter.

The Chairman stated that the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee would do all it could to support the process.

The Highways Strategy Manager gave an update on 'Linking Flintshire's Communities', which was part of the RDP. Signage had now been installed on the the A548 at Gronant and the Pegasus scheme and new road layout was due to be completed in May 2013. Design work for Footpath 64 had been completed and Footpath 69 design work was almost complete.

Councillor C.J. Dolphin suggested that Whitford, Carmel and Gorsedd should be included in future linking community projects as they had no facilities apart from a pub and school.

Councillor P.J. Curtis said that the surrounding villages of Holywell would also be suited to such a project as well as Greenfield Dock, St Winifred's Well and St Beuno's.

Councillor C. Legg said that he wanted to see more safe cycling routes and asked if Flintshire were involved with Sustrans.

The Highways Strategy Manager said that he understood the issues and concerns raised in relation to linking villages to towns, but that the scope of future projects would depend on future funding and matters such as existing public rights of way. He added that Flintshire were working with WG and Sustrans on the Active Travel Bill.

Councillor N. Matthews asked how people without cars in villages would get to work. The Highways Strategy Manager in response, said that this would be included in the Regional Transport Plan, in partnership with other organisations.

Councillor H.D. Hutchinson asked why there had been a closure recently on Footpath 2. The Highways Strategy Manager said that forthcoming closures were usually advertised in the local press and would check as to why this had not been publicised.

Councillor W.P. Shotton asked if further car parking spaces would be considered for Talacre. The Economic Development Manager said that officers were working with local businesses and land owners looking at some short term solutions.

Councillor C.A. Thomas urged the Committee not to forget the big impact that small investments could make on rural communities, such as opening up former railway lines. She said the success of projects was reliant upon the communities taking ownership of a project.

Ms. Lowri Owain from Cadywn Clwyd then gave a presentation about projects that had benefited from the Rural Development Plan for Wales.

The Chairman thanked her for the presentation and said that it was good to see projects spread evenly over rural areas.

Councillor Hutchinson asked why Mold was designated a rural area. Ms. Owain explained that Mold was eligible as part of a rural designation. She added that rural counties further west were lobbying for higher funding in their areas. The Economic Development Manager said that Flintshire had to raise awareness in WG that 80% of the county was rural and represented one quarter of the population.

The Chairman thanked Ms. Owain and the Highways Strategy Manager for their presentations.

RESOLVED:

That progress in implementing the Rural Development Plan in Flintshire and the briefing material on European Structural Funds be noted.

76. COMMUNITIES FIRST

The Communities First Programme Manager presented an update on the new Communities First Programme in Flintshire, following Welsh Government (WG) approval of the revised two cluster bid approved by the Cabinet on 12 June 2012.

The Communities First Programme Manager reported that the required changes had been made to the programme and that a larger population would be served with the £1.7 million funding, without any reduction in staffing. One of the

priority areas would be to help young people aged 16-24 not in education, training or employment including through “Academy” models.

Councillor N. Matthews asked about support for areas previously included in Communities First which were no longer included. The Communities First Programme Manager said that exit funding had been applied for in those areas and that the communities had been encouraged to establish local partnerships to look at alternative resources and this had proved successful in the Rural North area.

The Director of Environment said that if Flintshire had not accepted the WG’s position on some of the areas contained within the Council’s original bid and amended proposals accordingly, it would have been likely that the bid would not have been successful.

The Leader of the Council pointed out that Flintshire had to adhere to specific criteria imposed by WG. He added that the WG was about to release Key Performance Indicators for Communities First for the first time.

Councillor V. Gay said that her area had lost out in this project. She expressed concern that the report showed “NONE” under the Equality Impact Category. The Director of Environment said that Councillor Gay was right to raise this issue and that the Equality Impact category should be completed more fully in future in these circumstances.

The Chairman thanked the Communities First Programme Manager for the report.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

77. UPDATE ON NORTH WALES RESIDUAL WASTE TREATMENT PROJECT AND THE SUB-REGIONAL FOOD WASTE PROJECT

The Director of Environment introduced the report and opened the floor to questions.

Councillor A.I. Dunbar asked if the other local authorities signed up to the project would have to pay their share of the financial penalty if the project did not go ahead. The Director of Environment said that he had circulated information about penalties to Members and if Flintshire decided to withdraw from the process, Flintshire County Council would have to pay the sums as set out in the document which was up to around £50 million pounds.

Councillor N. Matthews asked if newsletters could be sent out after Joint Committees had been held. The Director of Environment said it was anticipated that a newsletter would be sent out before the next meeting of this Committee.

Councillor V. Gay asked if there would be an official response to the Friends of the Earth document which had been circulated to some Members. The Director of Environment said that he needed to speak to the Chief Executive

in order for the project team to draft a communiqué. He said that this would answer all the relevant questions.

Councillor Matthews asked for a cost comparison to show alternatives to the waste project. The Director of Environment said that this information had previously been circulated. He stressed that something had to be done to avoid £400 per tonne fines if the Council went over its residual waste limit for landfill.

RESOLVED:

That the content of the report be noted.

78. DEESIDE ENTERPRISE ZONE

The Senior Business Advisor introduced the report by saying that the project had just completed its first year of work, with four years remaining. Due to time constraints, the Senior Business Advisor proposed that the floor be opened to questions which was duly agreed by the Committee.

Councillor W.P. Shotton gave thanks for the report and asked if there had been any feedback regarding the recent China trade delegation to Flintshire.

Councillor D. Butler, who was involved in the visit, reported that the Chinese delegation had expressed an interest in coming to Flintshire. They had been particularly impressed by the local aeronautical industries and car industries. The Deeside Enterprise Zone now featured on a Chinese industry web site, a delegation from Flintshire had been invited to the Chinese Embassy in London and the possibility of a twinning arrangement between Flintshire and a Chinese city was being explored.

The Leader of the Council said that the visit proved that Flintshire was open for business to the whole world.

Councillor C. Hinds asked if any businesses had already expressed interest in the Deeside Enterprise Zone. The Senior Business Advisor said that there had been interest from 2-3 businesses and interest in dealing with Chinese industries. She said that she would have follow-up meetings with these organisations.

In response to a question from Councillor N. Matthews, the Senior Business Advisor said that there was interest in exploring what expertise was available locally and doing business with Flintshire. She said that seminars were needed for local businesses to explain further the opportunities involved in trading with China.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

79. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Acting Overview & Scrutiny Manager introduced a report to enable the Committee to consider the Forward Work Programme.

It was proposed that at the meeting on 26 June 2013, a report be received on the Mersey Dee Alliance and that the Planning item be moved to the July meeting. It was also agreed that Energy Switching would be added to the July meeting and that there be a Forward Work Plan workshop in early July.

RESOLVED:

That the Forward Work Programme be updated accordingly.

80. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

There were two members of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 12.20 pm)

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Chairman

ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10 APRIL 2013 (2PM)

Minutes of the meeting of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held at Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold CH7 6NA on Wednesday, 10 April 2013

PRESENT: Councillor Matt Wright (Chairman)

Councillors Haydn Bateman, Derek Butler, Peter Curtis, Chris Dolphin, Veronica Gay, Cindy Hinds, Colin Legg, Paul Shotton and Carolyn Thomas

SUBSTITUTES: Councillors Ian Dunbar (for Ann Minshull), Ron Hampson (for David Evans), Richard Lloyd (for Dennis Hutchinson), Hilary McGuill (for Nancy Matthews) and Mike Reece (for Joe Johnson)

APOLOGIES: Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Environment, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise & Leisure and Head of Regeneration

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors: Marion Bateman, Christine Jones and Billy Mullin

REPRESENTING THE INITIATORS OF THE CALL IN: Councillors Patrick Heesom (for Deeside Partnership), Robin Guest, Richard Jones, Mike Peers, Clive Carver and Dennis Hutchinson (for Street Lighting)

REPRESENTING THE DECISION MAKERS: Leader of the Council, Director of Environment, Economic Development Manager (for Deeside Partnership), Head of Streetscene (for Street Lighting) and Team Leader, Street Lighting (for Street Lighting)

IN ATTENDANCE: Democracy & Governance Manager and Committee Officer

81. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

There were no declarations of interest.

82. CONSIDERATION OF A MATTER REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE PURSUANT TO THE CALL IN ARRANGEMENTS

The Democracy & Governance Manager explained the procedure for the call in of a Cabinet decision.

83. NEW DEESIDE PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURE

The Chairman referred to the call in of the decision of the Cabinet, from its meeting held on 19 March 2013 on the New Deeside Partnership Structure. A call in notice had been received signed by five Members of the Council. To assist Members with their deliberations on the issue, the following documents had been circulated with the agenda:

- (a) A copy of the report considered by the Cabinet on 19 March 2013.
- (b) A copy of the Cabinet Record of Decision, Record No. 2817

- (c) A copy of the call in notice signed by Councillors P.G. Heesom, R.J.T. Guest, R.B. Jones, M.J. Peers and C.S. Carver
- (d) A copy of the Procedure for dealing with a called in item.

The Chairman invited the call in signatories to address the Committee via a spokesperson or individually to which the decision makers could respond.

Councillor R.B. Jones described the report as flawed and said that it did not consider the implications for Flintshire County Council as a whole, in concentrating on the Deeside area alone. He thought that there was not sufficient detail about financial implications, anti-poverty, environmental impact nor equalities impact on Flintshire and said that concentrating resources in one area would lead to a lack of resources elsewhere within the county.

Councillor P.G. Heesom stressed that the call in was not driven by anti-Deeside sentiments. He said that problems faced in the Deeside area were not unique to that area and that the whole county suffered similar issues. He said that the report contained little evidence to back up claims and that there were wider issues to address in Deeside such as the road Access to North Wales from England and the importance of new job opportunities for Flintshire residents. He felt that a holistic approach was needed to re-generation.

Councillor M.J. Peers said that the report was not specific about how much funding would be available to the Deeside partnership, where it would come from and for how long funds would be available. He was concerned about extra demands on officer time and resources, and commented that the report only focussed on structures and that Cabinet needed to step back and re-visit the report from a Flintshire wide perspective.

Councillor R.J.T. Guest said that the proposed structure was misleading in suggesting that existing groups were not going to continue to be involved. He said that there was no detail of any Welsh Government funding in the report and felt that many areas of Flintshire encountered difficulties and that this report was divisive.

When asked by the Leader to go through the main points of the Cabinet report, the Economic Development Manager said that the new structure would remove unnecessary tiers and was not an additional group but merely a rationalisation of what currently happened. He reported that certain issues needed to be discussed across a wider area such as congestion issues, and therefore needed a wider partnership.

The Director of Environment said that the report built upon an Executive report entitled 'Deeside Moving Forward - Turning the Tide - a strategic approach to regenerating Deeside' published in 2011 which focussed on Deeside and its areas of deprivation as well as its area of opportunity within the adjacent industrial park. It was the intention of the Cabinet report to bring together and streamline a series of structures into one cohesive whole which could make better decisions. There was no intention to undermine the work of the town centre partnerships. The Director of Environment referred to a Cabinet report from December 2012 which set out a range of funding streams available to Deeside area such as ERDF, NRA, Taith which added up to £11 million pounds.

He concluded by saying that any concerns about diverting money to Deeside were unfounded.

The Leader of the Council said that the new structure would be more strategic and efficient in that it would avoid duplication. He then referred to the Executive report dated 15 March 2011 entitled "Deeside Moving Forward - Turning the Tide - a strategic approach to regenerating Deeside" which referred to the area as being the largest area of deprivation in North Wales. The Leader of the Council acknowledged the work of the previous administration in accessing Housing Renewal Area funding and said that it was time to look forward to the opportunities afforded by the Enterprise Zone which would benefit all North East Wales. He reiterated that the focus was about targeted spending of money, specific to Deeside and not about diverting funding from other areas.

The Chairman then invited questions from Members.

Councillor V. Gay asked how much money had been spent in the Deeside area. The Director of Environment said that he could not comment on this, but had information on grants that were available in future, such as £2.3 million for Deeside Neighbourhood Renewal and £3 million ERDF which was available across all the town partnerships. The Leader of the Council reported that there was £12.2 million of regeneration funding available to Flintshire, of which 17% or £2.1 million was designated to Deeside, which was almost in proportion to the population of Deeside which represented 20% of the population of the county.

Councillor C.J. Dolphin sought clarity on the new structure diagram. The Director of Environment explained that seven committees were to be reorganised into four; Deeside Partnership; People sub group; Places sub group; Deeside Forum.

Councillor H.J. McGuill asked about the funding for the Deeside Newsletter, its circulation, costs in terms of officer time and resources. In response, the Leader said that he thought that the funding for the Neighbourhood Renewal leaflet would come from grant sources and he offered, following the meeting, to find out the source of funding for the marketing budget and inform Committee Members.

Councillor Gay proposed Option 4 of the call in procedure to refer the matter to full Council. This was duly seconded by Councillor R. Lloyd.

Councillor D. Butler said that he was in agreement with the report and proposed Option 1 of the call in procedure to accept the report. This was duly seconded by Councillor A.I. Dunbar.

On being put to the vote, Option 4 was not carried, with four votes for and nine votes against.

On being put to the vote, Option 1 was carried by nine votes for and four votes against.

RESOLVED:

That having considered the decision, the Committee was satisfied with the explanation received and so the decision could be implemented.

84. STREETLIGHTING POLICY

The Chairman referred to the call in of the decision of the Cabinet, from its meeting held on 19 March 2013 on the Street Lighting Policy. A call in notice had been received signed by five Members of the Council. To assist Members with their deliberations on the issue, the following documents had been circulated with the agenda:

- (a) A copy of the report considered by the Cabinet on 19 March 2013.
- (b) A copy of the Cabinet Record of Decision, Record No. 2826
- (c) A copy of the call in notice signed by Councillors R.J.T. Guest, R.B. Jones, M.J. Peers, C.S. Carver and H.D. Hutchinson
- (d) A copy of the Procedure for dealing with a called in item

The Chairman invited the call in signatories to address the Committee via a spokesperson or individually to which the decision makers could respond.

Councillor M.J. Peers said that he understood the proposal to employ part night lighting (part 3.10 of the Street lighting report) and the estimated savings, but felt that there was no criteria in the Policy (point 5.9) nor in the report (point 3.10) to identify which lights would be affected. He asked if the 3000 illuminated signs maintained by the Council would be suited to part lighting. Councillor Peers then referred to point 3.12 in the report which referred to unadopted lights on adopted roads or footways which should be considered to be adopted by the Council and voiced his concern at the consequent costs that would be incurred (Financial implications 5.03 of the report 'The cost of adopting the unadopted lights will be from current maintenance budgets'.) and sought clarification on this matter.

Councillor R.J.T. Guest voiced concerns about the process around the development of the Policy and report and felt it was wrong that the matter went from the Overview & Scrutiny workshop to Cabinet, without first going to an Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting. Councillor Guest advised the Members of the Committee to opt for Option 3 and to refer the Policy and report back to Cabinet.

Councillor C.S. Carver pointed out that section 3.08 of the report stated that the most appropriate lighting system to be installed on the Council's highway network was the white light Cosmopolis option and that this should be specified in future on all new developments and utilised during any replacement or upgrade work carried out by the Council. He pointed out that the lower energy lights could not be replaced in isolation, in order to maximise the savings of part lighting/dimming. All Council lights would have to be changed which would incur additional costs. Councillor Carver said that point 3.04 of the report which related to Town and Community Council Footway lighting was in conflict with 3.12 of the report which stated that unadopted lights on adopted roads should be adopted.

Councillor R.B. Jones asked for clarification on point 5.9 of the Policy in relation to part night installations as to which roads/areas would be affected. He advised the Members of the Committee to choose Option 3 and to refer back to Cabinet.

The Head of Streetscene said that part night installations (switched off 12 midnight -6 am) would be in non residential areas subject to a new robust risk assessment, backed by local Members and Police involvement. In response to Councillor Peers' question about illuminated signs, the Head of Streetscene informed him that it was a statutory requirement to have some signs lit on the highway. In response to questions about 'unadopted' lights, he made it clear that Town and Community Council lights were not unadopted as they were adopted and maintained by the relevant Town and Community Councils who also had lighting powers on the highway. Unadopted referred to a small number (under 100) lights where there was no record of ownership and where the Council, under duty of care, had effectively adopted them. Where there were new developments, the developer would put in a Commuted Sum and pay maintenance and power for a specific period ten years prior to adoption.

The Director of Environment explained that because of the previous work done by the Member Task & Finish Group and because the feedback from the Overview & Scrutiny workshop had been so positive, it had been decided that the report would then go straight to Cabinet. He explained that the policy document sought to set out the criteria for matters such as part lighting, and not give specific details of locations.

The Leader of the Council conveyed apologies from the Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Environment who was unable to attend the meeting. The Deputy Leader had said that the Street lighting workshop was one of the best workshops he had ever attended. He explained that the part night lighting was one way of making efficiency savings with as little impact as possible.

Councillor C.A. Thomas asked if the part night lighting would cause more maintenance costs, thus negating the perceived energy savings. She added that she felt that her views shared at the workshop had not been taken on board. She also said that she was not aware that non residential A roads would be partly lit. The Team Leader for Street lighting said that new technology such as 'soft start' gearing enabled lights to switch on and off without causing additional wear and tear. All new electronic gearing would come with an eight year warranty and bulbs had a longer life expectancy with this technology. The Head of Streetscene said that he had a full record of comments from the workshop and was happy to share it with Members of the Committee. In response to the question about A roads, the Head of Streetscene said that the roads affected would be non residential through routes.

Councillor C.J. Dolphin asked what the target response time was for rectifying street lighting faults. The Team Leader for Street lighting said that the key performance indicator target was three days.

Councillor R. Lloyd asked how long developers of new estates had to maintain lighting equipment before it could be adopted by the Council. The Director of Environment said that the developer paid for ten years maintenance

costs but that the lights would be maintained by the Council once the lights had been brought up to adoption standard and following a twelve month maintenance period.

In summing up, Councillor Peers said that the call in could have been avoided had the Policy and report come to an Overview & Scrutiny Committee before Cabinet. He recommended that the Members of the Committee chose Option 3.

The Leader of the Council said that the Policy was a positive step to reduce light pollution. He accepted the comments about the workshop and acknowledged that it would have been helpful to discuss any issues or misunderstandings at the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting before going to Cabinet.

Councillor V. Gay proposed Option 2 of the call in procedure. This was duly seconded by Councillor R. Lloyd.

Councillor D. Butler proposed Option 1 of the call in procedure. This was duly seconded by Councillor A.I. Dunbar.

On being put to the vote, Option 1 had five votes in favour and five votes against. The Chair used the casting vote to vote against the proposal.

Option 2 had five votes in favour and seven votes against the proposal.

Option 3 had four votes in favour and eight votes against.

There was not a proposal to vote on Option 4, so the Committee agreed to vote on Option 2.

On being put to the vote, Option 2 was carried with 11 votes in favour and one against Option 2.

RESOLVED:

That the explanation be accepted but not endorsed by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Option 2).

85. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

There was one member of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 2.00 pm and ended at 5.10 pm)

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Chairman

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE
DATE: WEDNESDAY, 22 MAY 2013
REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT
SUBJECT: THE CLWYDIAN RANGE AND DEE VALLEY AREA
OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To advise Members of the recent extension of the Clwydian Range Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its implications for Flintshire County Council.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Clwydian Range was designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) by the Secretary of State for Wales in July 1985 under the National Parks and Access to Countryside Act 1949. There are just five AONBs in Wales - including the Wye Valley which straddles the English-Welsh border.

2.02 Due to their special qualities, AONBs have more protection than other areas under the planning process and the quality of their scenery is considered to be equal to that of National Parks.

2.03 The primary purpose of AONB designation is to conserve and enhance natural beauty – which includes not just the landscape but also flora, fauna and geological features.

2.04 In November 2011 the Welsh Government's Environment Minister confirmed a southerly extension to include much of the Dee Valley from Corwen to Newbridge along with stunning natural features such as the Eglwyseg Escarpment, Horseshoe Pass and Esclusham Mountain. The extension added a further 229 square kilometres to the 160 square kilometres of heather, hillforts and limestone cliffs that make up the Clwydian Range. It was the first new area of land in Wales to be awarded AONB status for 26 years. At the same time, the whole area became known as the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB.

2.05 A presentation will be given at the Committee meeting, which will focus on the extent of the AONB, the management arrangements and the implications for Flintshire County Council.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 To be covered in the presentation.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That the report be noted.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 None directly.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None directly.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None directly.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None directly.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None directly.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Ongoing through the management of the AONB.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Significant recent consultation undertaken with respect to the extension to the Clwydian Range AONB.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Not applicable.

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

Contact Officer: Andrew Farrow
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Email: andrew.farrow@flintshire.gov.uk

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **WEDNESDAY, 22 MAY 2013**

REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT**

SUBJECT: **TOURISM IN FLINTSHIRE**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To inform and update Members regarding the approach taken to promoting Flintshire to visitors and to managing the County as a destination.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The visitor economy is estimated to support 4,200 jobs in Flintshire or 6.5% of the total workplace jobs (NOMIS 2008 figure). Although Flintshire has a relatively low profile as a visitor destination, the County has a highly attractive landscape and a good stock of high quality accommodation providers and smaller attractions.

2.02 Nationally, the sector is expected to grow over the next few years due to an anticipated increase in domestic tourism and in visitors from overseas. However, tourism is a very competitive industry and the expectations of visitors are gradually increasing, putting an increased onus on destinations and businesses to offer a consistently high quality experience. Flintshire has a very large potential visitor market due to its proximity with North West England and has 4.8 million people living within one hours drive time.

2.03 The sector has seen considerable public sector investment in recent years through the Rural Development Plan programme and this is likely to remain a priority sector for the Welsh Government in future rural programmes. Investment to date has been largely focused on community-based tourism activity, small scale business improvements and heritage and cultural based tourism. The priorities for funding in the new programmes remain unclear but an increased emphasis on creating employment opportunities is likely.

2.04 Delivery of tourism activities by the Council has always been delivered through a partnership with businesses in the visitor economy sector, in particular the Flintshire Tourism Association and more recently the Clwydian Range Tourism Group. This is seen as a strength which offers both cost effectiveness and responsiveness to business needs.

- 2.05 The approach to supporting tourism in Flintshire is steered by the “Tourism Strategy North Wales 2010-2015” developed by Tourism Partnership North Wales (TPNW). TPNW also fund the Destination Management programme in each County and the sub-regional marketing campaigns. A number of specialist marketing campaigns are also run by TPNW at the North Wales level, such as walking promotion.
- 2.06 Promoting Flintshire as a good place to visit also has the effect of raising awareness of the County as a place to invest. Good quality of life is now a very important consideration taken by potential inward investors.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

Activities to date

- 3.01 Flintshire Tourism Strategy 2006-2013 identified a number of work streams to improve the quality of the visitor experience in Flintshire and to get greater value from the environmental, cultural and heritage assets of the County. Key achievements in the period of the Strategy have included:
- Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor (STEAM) figures have shown a gradual increase in the value and volume of tourism in the County from £182.1m (2.7m visitors) in 2006 to £200.2m (3.2m) in 2011. Other areas have seen a decline over the same period.
 - Provided mentoring support to 94 businesses to enable them to review their performance and plan improvements.
 - Support the Flintshire Tourism Association to increase its role as a co-ordinator for the tourism sector and as a promoter of the County. Membership increased from 25 to 75.
 - 102 projects supported through the Rural Development Plan (RDP) programme to interpret, promote or increase access to heritage and cultural assets and to support events and tourism activity.
 - The Town Action Plan programme has had a strong focus on the visitor experience in a number of towns and has seen the development of visitor facilities, environmental improvements and new attractions such as heritage trails.
 - Creation of Wales Coastal Path and current development of Pilgrim’s Way from Holywell to Bardsey Island provide new opportunities for the County.

- Development of Talacre master plan and current implementation of a number of projects to improve the appearance and facilities in the area through RDP funding.
- 3.02 The promotion of Flintshire to visitors to date has largely been achieved through the sub-regional promotional campaign North Wales Borderlands, delivered in partnership with Denbighshire and Wrexham Councils and supported by Visit Wales. The future approach to sub-regional promotion is currently under review to ensure that it links to wider collaborative programmes and to maximise value for money.
- 3.03 The Flintshire Regeneration Partnership established a new sub-group in early 2012. The Destination Flintshire group brings together key stakeholders in the visitor economy and public sector to manage Flintshire as a destination for visitors and local people. Destination management involves identifying the different facets of the visitor experience, such as accommodation, transport, environment and facilities, and ensuring that these meet visitor expectations, especially in the most popular areas.
- 3.04 The Partnership adopted a Destination Management Plan in February 2013 which is appended for information. The Destination Management Plan for Flintshire includes five key priorities:
1. Improve the availability and coordination of visitor information that meets customers' diverse needs.
 2. Increase the quality and range of visitor accommodation and attractions.
 3. Increase the scale and diversity of the activity sector.
 4. Increase the scale and economic impact of events in Flintshire.
 5. Data development to monitor the impact of the Plan.

Future actions

- 3.05 The key areas of action over the next twelve to eighteen months are:
- Complete the review of sub-regional marketing activity and launch an integrated promotional package across North Wales targeting inward investment as well as visitors.
 - Deliver a targeted promotional campaign to showcase Flintshire and North East Wales attractions, accommodation and events to people in North West England.
 - Improve the appearance and appeal of town centres in Flintshire used by visitors through the Town Action Plan programme and improve the promotion of the town centres.
 - Support the development of the Destination Flintshire partnership and implement the Destination Management Plan for Flintshire.

- Implement projects to improve access to the coastline and to improve the quality and range of facilities.
- Complete the Rural Development Plan-funded improvements to the environment of Talacre and Gronant.
- Develop electronic media resources to enable visitors to access information on events, trails and businesses.
- Increase the availability and visibility of locally produced food to visitors and local people.
- Support the development of the Roman Fort project in Caergwrle.
- Promote the area to regional coach operators to encourage greater uptake.
- Support the development of sustainable high quality events in Flintshire.
- Continue to review the role of the Flintshire Visitor Centre in Mold to ensure it offers value for money.
- Develop a robust monitoring framework to measure the impact of this programme of work relying more upon real-time business feedback than previously.

Tourism Partnership North Wales (TPNW)

- 3.06 TPNW will be attending the Scrutiny Committee meeting to provide a brief presentation of their work. The purpose of the organisation is to:

“Tourism Partnership North Wales is one of four Regional Tourism Partnerships in Wales, with partners drawn from the public and private sector. The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) devolves resources to the Partnership to enable it to undertake its main objective, i.e. to enable the delivery of the Regional and Action Plans contained within its Tourism Strategy North Wales - “Tourism Strategy North Wales 2010-2015”.” (TPNW 2013).

A summary of the “Tourism Strategy North Wales” document is appended.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 To note the progress made and the future approach to promoting Flintshire to visitors and managing the County as a destination.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 The Council provides an annual service budget for tourism activities of £65,000. This is used to lever in funds from TPNW, external funding bodies and the private sector. It is anticipated that an additional £110,000 will be secured for 2013/2014.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 As a sector that employs an estimated 4,200 people, the visitor economy has a role to play in offering employment opportunities in Flintshire.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 There are a number of potential positive impacts from the sector:

- Encouraging people to spend time locally rather than travelling further afield will help to reduce energy use.
- The sector is well-placed to showcase local food and reduce food miles.
- Encouraging use of the developing infrastructure for walking and cycling in the County will help to increase less carbon intensive forms of recreation.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 The sector helps to support rural services and small businesses – helping to ensure their sustainability for use by more vulnerable people in these communities.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 None.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 An ongoing dialogue is maintained with tourist businesses and in particular with the Flintshire Tourism Association and Clwydian Range Tourism Group. The Destination Flintshire Partnership also provides a forum for discussing and agreeing future programmes of work.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Summary of Tourism Strategy North Wales 2010-2015

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Contact Officer: Niall Waller
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SUMMARY: TOURISM STRATEGY NORTH WALES 2010-2015

Tourism is vitally important to the North Wales economy and we believe it can play an even more significant part in future. This strategy sets out how we can achieve its potential and is a blueprint to guide action over the next five years.

The importance of tourism and the visitor economy

Tourism generates £1.8bn for the North Wales economy each year, supports an estimated 37,500 jobs and is a lifeline for numerous small businesses. There is potential for further growth. Like an export industry tourism brings money into the region from outside and North Wales would be poorer without this.

North Wales accounts for a third of Wales' tourism, attracting 8m staying visitors and an estimated 17m day trips in 2007. The majority of the visitors are from the UK and holiday tourism predominates. Tourism is not evenly distributed across the region, the North West (Anglesey, Conwy, Gwynedd) accounts for 75% of staying visits and 60% of day visits, with the balance of 25% of staying visits and 40% of day visits in the North East (Denbighshire, Flintshire, Wrexham).

It is quite seasonal with 70% of trips taking place in the summer 6 months. Volumes have remained broadly static in the region over the past decade with a slight drop in real spending although this is not dissimilar from the picture across the UK as a whole. People who do visit are loyal and show high levels of satisfaction.

North Wales has wonderful natural assets in its countryside, mountains and coast; a variety of landscapes contained in a small area; a distinctive heritage and culture; a good range of attractions; unrivalled scope for activities; an improving product; a large population on its doorstep; and an experienced tourism industry.

Compared to similar places, North Wales performs well in terms of its climate, catchment population, accessibility and strength of its core offer. In the light of this, we believe it could and should be achieving more.

Challenges for the future

North Wales is heavily dependent on the domestic holiday market which is highly seasonal. Tourism is static and has shown some decline in value. The quality of the product and visitor experience is still patchy and it has proved difficult to attract new private investment. Some areas are jaded and look more to the past than to the future of tourism. There is also evidence to suggest that awareness and appeal of the region is slipping and that we are failing to attract new visitors and new markets.

We also need to address external factors which will impact on our tourism potential including:

- The current economic crisis. This may work in favour of domestic tourism but will have adverse impacts on private sector investment and public sector spending.
- Increasing competition from other destinations both at home and abroad offering a more appealing experience.
- Changing tastes and market demand. If we don't provide the products and experiences people want then tourism will decline.
- The impact of new technology affecting how people plan and organise their leisure time.
- Climate change and the need to embrace sustainability. Increasing real transport costs and growing awareness of the impact of travel on climate change might encourage people to stay closer to home.

Our vision for tourism in North Wales

“One of the top 5 UK tourism destinations, internationally known for its natural beauty, dramatic scenery, heritage and distinctive culture. A place you can boast about visiting, easy to get to but rewardingly different. A centre of excellence for adventure sports and the market leader for activity tourism of all sorts. Plenty going on at all times of the year, whatever the weather, with a lively, living culture and thriving arts scene. A place that is often talked about and features in the media for the quality of its food, hospitality and interesting places to stay. A region that is proud of its heritage and culture, cares for its natural assets and welcomes visitors.”

A strategy for the future and an Action Plan

We believe North Wales has a positive future in tourism. There is scope to strengthen and expand tourism and the contribution it makes to regional prosperity.

The future lies in capitalising on what makes this area special and stand out from the ordinary – its spectacular natural beauty, the diversity of its landscapes, its distinctive heritage and culture. This is a special place with strong and enduring appeal which should take its rightful place in the top 5 UK destinations - a place which people aspire to visit and isn't seen as second best.

The challenge is twofold - providing a tourism infrastructure and product which matches up to the quality and appeal of the region's natural assets and making our potential audience more aware of the special qualities of North Wales and what it has to offer.

We have produced an Action Plan for the next three years, setting out what we propose to do and outlining responsibilities for taking the strategy forward. TPNW will be responsible for leading on some actions, encouraging other stakeholders to play their part and for monitoring and reviewing progress.

1. Projecting our distinctive strengths

We need to put North Wales firmly back on the visitor map and re-establish it as a Top 5 destination in the UK. We need to put out more compelling and inspiring messages, be less passive in our marketing and more co-ordinated. We need to create a splash and get the region talked about in a more positive way.

- **Market driven.** We will focus marketing activity on the primary markets of UK family holidays, short breaks and activities and also target a series of secondary and niche markets which have potential for growth or where we have strengths. Market needs will determine product development and investment priorities.
- **Stronger impact.** We will project a more coherent message, focus on higher profile projects to create more awareness, and review the marketing mix to rationalise marketing activity placing more emphasis on PR, and web-based marketing activity.
- **Inspiring information.** We will review the TIC network to maintain coverage in key areas, monitor the signage system, ensure there is an effective local information distribution system in place within the region, encourage experimentation with digital media and equip front-line staff to act as information ambassadors.

2. Investing in product excellence

We must stimulate development and investment in the core product to meet the needs of a changing marketplace, exceed our customers' expectations and rival the best elsewhere. Our core product needs to enhance and complement the region's key strengths and be tuned to the needs of the target markets.

- **Quality accommodation.** We will continue to improve the quality of existing accommodation to meet market needs. We will encourage selective new developments to exploit new areas of demand and act as a stimulus to improvement.
- **Diverse attractions.** We will encourage investment and improvement in existing visitor attractions and increase their visibility and exposure to visitors. Additional attractions will not be encouraged unless they satisfy clear criteria.
- **Excellent activities.** We will strengthen and develop centres of excellence, improve the activity infrastructure and fill gaps in the network of routes, support the activity sector to generate more business, and make it easier for holidaymakers to access activities on a casual basis.

3. Providing an outstanding experience

We need to deliver a total quality experience from arrival to departure, making it a delight to spend time in North Wales. Positive first impressions, easy to move around and get the most from the visit, a warm welcome and good service everywhere you go, distinctive and well cared for places to visit.

- **Well-managed places.** We will adopt an integrated approach to destination management, identify tourism hubs which will receive priority treatment and actively experiment with new ways of delivering tourism services and management at the local level.
- **Enriching experiences.** We will develop a richer local experience through making more of events and festivals, exposing visitors to arts and culture, food and shopping and Welsh heritage and culture. The mix of opportunities will vary from place to place.
- **Efficient transport.** We will press for key infrastructure improvements, make transport operators more aware of visitors needs, make more of the heritage and scenic rail network to link attractions, and promote alternatives to the car.
- **Skilled people.** We will review establishing a regional co-ordinator for skills, promote a learning culture across the tourism industry, influence training providers and improve the image of tourism as a job and career.

4. Working together in partnership

Improving working relationships and organisation to harness the energies of the public, private and not for profit sectors, encouraging a climate of co-operation and mutual support, moving tourism up the agenda, seeking more efficient and transparent ways of working and becoming more evidence driven.

- **Effective organisation.** We will agree and more clearly delineate roles and responsibilities for tourism in the region to eliminate overlap and make more efficient use of resources.
- **Better recognition** for tourism. We will communicate the importance of tourism to decision makers more effectively to change attitudes, ensure tourism interests are represented, and build a reputation as a responsible industry and a good neighbour.
- **Sound evidence.** We will undertake research and data collection, fill gaps in knowledge and disseminate and share information to improve decision making and effectiveness.

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **22 MAY 2013**

REPORT BY: **ENVIRONMENT & SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FACILITATOR**

SUBJECT: **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 Items feed into a Committee's Forward Work Programme from a number of sources. Members can suggest topics for review by Overview & Scrutiny Committees, members of the public can suggest topics, items can be referred by the Cabinet for consultation purposes, or by County Council, or Directors. Other possible items are identified from the Cabinet Work Programme and the Strategic Assessment of Risks & Challenges.

2.02 In identifying topics for future consideration, it is useful or a 'test of significance' to be applied. This can be achieved by asking a range of questions as follows:

1. Will the review contribute to the Council's priorities and/or objectives?
2. Are there issues of weak or poor performance?
3. How, where and why were the issues identified?
4. Do local communities think the issues are important and is there any evidence of this? Is there evidence of public dissatisfaction?
5. Is there new Government guidance or legislation?
6. Have inspections been carried out?
7. Is this area already the subject of an ongoing review?

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 Overview & Scrutiny presents a unique opportunity for Members to determine the Forward Work Programme of the Committees of which they are members. By reviewing and prioritising the forward work programme Members are able to ensure it is member-led and includes the right issues. A copy of the Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1 for Members' consideration which has been updated following the last meeting.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That the Committee considers the draft Forward Work Programme attached as Appendix 1 and approve/amend as necessary.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None as a result of this report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

None as a result of this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

None as a result of this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

None as a result of this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

None as a result of this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

N/A

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

Publication of this report constitutes consultation.

12.00 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Forward Work Programme

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

None.

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Draft Forward Work Programme

Date of Meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report/Presentation	Scrutiny Focus	Responsible/Contact Officer	Submission Deadline
26 June 2013	Performance Reporting	To consider Quarter 4 and year end outturns for improvement targets against directorate indicators.	Performance Monitoring	Director of Environment	10 June 2013
	Draft Flood Management Strategy & Flooding issues	To consider the draft Flood Management Strategy prior to approval by Cabinet and flooding issues	Pre-decision scrutiny	Director of Environment	
	Speed Limit Review	To present recommendations arising from the Speed Limit Review for A and B roads.	Service Delivery	Director of Environment	
	Mersey Dee Alliance	To receive an update report on the Mersey Dee Alliance.	Pre-decision Scrutiny	Director of Environment	
23 July 2013	North Wales Residual Waste Treatment Partnership	To receive and consider further details on the progress of the project.	Strategic (Collaboration)	Director of Environment	9 July 2013

ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Date of Meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report/Presentation	Scrutiny Focus	Responsible/Contact Officer	Submission Deadline
	Deeside Enterprise Zone	Progress report	Monitoring	Head of Regeneration	
	Energy Switching Scheme	To receive a further detailed report to include a marketing plan as requested at Committee on 6 th March 2013.	Service Delivery	Energy Manager	
	Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To receive a report on planning to include enforcement Role of Conservation Officer Turn around times of applications Inter-departmental (internal) consultation 	Service Delivery	Head of Planning	

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ITEMS TO BE SCHEDULED as agreed by Committee

Item	Purpose of Report	Responsible / Contact Officer
Dog fouling	To receive a report on the review of enforcement options re dog fouling	Director of Environment
Carbon Reduction Strategy	To receive a report on the outcome of the independent assessment undertaken by the Carbon Trust	Neal Cockerton

ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Item	Purpose of Report	Responsible / Contact Officer
North East Wales Area Based Transport Study	To consider the potential solutions to transport in the region highlighted within the report.	Director of Environment
Rights of Way	Invite Natural Resources Wales, once established to discuss new arrangements.	Director of Environment
Review of Council's Waste Collection Policy		Director of Environment

REGULAR ITEMS

Month	Item	Purpose of Report	Responsible / Contact Officer
Quarterly/ Annual	Performance Reporting	To consider performance outturns for improvement targets against directorate indicators.	Director of Environment
Quarterly	North Wales Residual Waste Treatment Project	To receive and consider further details on the progress of the project.	Director of Environment
Quarterly	Deeside Enterprise Zone	To receive quarterly progress reports	Head of Regeneration
6 monthly	Rural Development Plan	To receive regular updates on the progress of Business Plan 2 with particular consideration to any downturns in progress.	Head of Regeneration

Site Visit – Recycling 3rd June

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