

**ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**24 JANUARY 2013**

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 Thursday, 24 January 2013

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

Councillors: Haydn Bateman, Peter Curtis, Chris Dolphin, Veronica Gay, Joe Johnson, Colin Legg, Nancy Matthews, Paul Shotton and Carolyn Thomas

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors: David Evans and Cindy Hinds

**ALSO PRESENT:** Councillor Richard Jones

**CONTRIBUTORS:**

Leader of the Council, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment, Cabinet Member for Public Protection, Waste and Recycling, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Leisure, Chief Executive, Director of Environment, Head of Finance and Finance Manager

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Learning & Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Committee Officer

**54. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**

No declarations were made.

**55. BUDGET CONSULTATION FOR 2013/14**

The Chairman welcomed the contributors to the meeting.

The Head of Finance explained that an overview of the budget was to be provided for each Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the budget proposals for the specific area covered by each Committee detailed at the meetings.

The Chief Executive explained that he and the Head of Finance would be making a similar presentation to each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Thereafter, the Director of Environment would present on directorate specific aspects of the budget. The main features of the presentation were as follows:-

- Council Fund Budget Strategy & Financial Overview
- Environment – Budget Proposals & Key Service Issues
- Live Issues for this Committee
- Next Steps

The Director of Environment continued with the directorate specific contents of the presentation.

**The comments and questions which were raised by Members of the Committee, and the responses given are attached at Appendix 1**

**RESOLVED:**

That the presentation be noted.

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

There were no members of the press or public in attendance.

(The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 11.42 am)

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**Chairman**

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**Environment - Initial Budget Proposals 2013/14**

No.	Comments and Questions:	Responses:
<b>1.0</b>	<u>Corporate Comments / Issues</u>	
1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why are teachers and non-teachers receiving a pay rise?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay rises are subject to national negotiations and the 1% included in the budget proposals is a provision only.</li> </ul>
1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What steps are we taking to inform communities about Welfare Reform?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Welfare Reform Board meets regularly and includes local partners such as the Citizens Advice Bureau and Job Centre Plus. Around 1,100 Council Tenants have been contacted about the 'bedroom tax'</li> </ul>
1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we track and monitor achievement of savings?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During 2011/12, monitoring of efficiencies was reflected in budget monitoring reports throughout the year. At final outturn 89 % of the efficiencies reflected in the budget had been realised. There is now a wider ownership of Flintshire Futures efficiencies due to revised governance arrangements and Members are now represented on the Flintshire Futures Board.</li> </ul>
1.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When will we get more detail on fees and charges?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All proposals are included within the budget report and will be discussed at each Scrutiny committee meeting.</li> </ul>
1.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the criteria for the North Wales element of the Regional Collaboration Fund?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It needs to be for new and significant changes involving a number of public bodies - 3 priority bids are currently being worked on.</li> </ul>

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No.	Comments and Questions:	Responses:
1.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How confident are we around inflation predictions?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget provision for non standard inflation is held corporately and is only released to Directorates as and when required. Historically predictions have been reasonably accurate.</li> </ul>
1.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apprenticeships - Not all schools link into colleges / local businesses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree pathways with Lifelong Learning and Stakeholders. Keep focussed on apprenticeship opportunities across Flintshire.</li> </ul>
<b>2.0</b>	<b><u>Environment Comments / Issues</u></b>	
<b>2.1</b>	<b><u>General Comments/Issues</u></b>	
2.1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assurance was sought that a detailed plan would be put in place for closing the public conveniences - Members did not want to see buildings left empty.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Officers will investigate alternative uses and if none are found then the buildings will be demolished.</li> </ul>
2.1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Which are the 4 public conveniences that will close?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cilcain, Caerwys, Central Shotton and Holywell (Tower Gardens).</li> </ul>
2.1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is re-organisation now complete within the Environment Directorate?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Streetscene service review is now complete, but the other reviews are still ongoing, each at different stages of completion.</li> </ul>
2.1.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have flood issues affecting Saltney been considered in the budget?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allocations are included in the core capital programme and WG grants. The emerging Flood and Water Management Strategy is to be included in the Forward</li> </ul>

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No.	Comments and Questions:	Responses:
2.1.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Transport Grant for Bus services - is this part of the discussion at the February Environment Overview and Scrutiny committee?</li> </ul>	<p>Work Programme for the Environment Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This will be considered at the February meeting of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny committee. Taith are tasked with creating a Regional Bus Strategy.</li> </ul>
3.0 3.1	<p><b><u>Pressures</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regarding the pressure item of £0.144m for energy generation at landfill sites - Weren't the gas engines bought a year ago, why are they failing? How were they acquired?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The gas engines were bought a number of years ago. A detailed report into the output of the engines has been carried out to inform the new pressure. The engines were part of the asset transfer resulting from the former AD Waste Ltd. being transferred into the Council.</li> </ul>

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No.	Comments and Questions:	Responses:
<b>4.0</b>	<b><u>Efficiencies</u></b>	
4.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A business plan was requested to back up the notion that switching lights off is cheaper than dimming them and that local members and the public would be consulted on all proposals?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The matter will be looked at again as part of the emerging Street Lighting Policy. Savings comparisons will be included in the Street Lighting report to Cabinet in March 2013.</li> </ul>
4.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Car Parking management efficiency of £0.085m - Is this based on the proposals which were considered at Cabinet, or do they include revisions following consideration at the Environment Overview and Scrutiny committee?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A revised Appendix D is being worked on following the comments made at the Environment Overview and Scrutiny committee.</li> </ul>

