

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14 MAY 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held in the Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold on Thursday, 14 May 2015

PRESENT:

Councillors: Clive Carver, Paul Cunningham, Ian Dunbar, Robin Guest, Joe Johnson, Richard Jones, David Roney, Paul Shotton and Arnold Woolley

SUBSTITUTIONS:

Councillors: Haydn Bateman for Marion Bateman, Mike Reece for Peter Curtis, Carolyn Thomas for Andy Dunbobbin and Adele Davies-Cooke for Nigel Steele-Mortimer

APOLOGIES:

Councillors: Ron Hampson and Brian Lloyd

CONTRIBUTORS:

Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Environment and Chief Officer (Governance)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Member Engagement Manager and Committee Officer

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

The Member Engagement Manager sought nominations for the appointment of Chair for the Committee. Councillor Adele Davies-Cooke nominated Councillor Clive Carver and this was duly seconded. The Member Engagement Manager advised that the Political Group that the Chair would be from had been agreed at the Annual Meeting of County Council earlier in the week and therefore a vote on the nomination was not required.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Clive Carver be appointed as Chair for the Committee for the municipal year.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

The Chairman sought nominations for the appointment of Vice-Chair for the Committee. Councillor Ian Dunbar proposed Councillor Peter Curtis and this was duly seconded. On being put to the vote, the nomination was carried.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Peter Curtis be appointed as Vice-Chair for the Committee for the municipal year.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

No declarations of interest were made.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 16 April 2015 had been circulated to Members with the agenda.

Councillor Richard Jones referred to the last paragraph on page 11 and said that the impact of Welfare Reform had not been his view, but had been a comment provided in a note from an officer at an earlier meeting. He asked that the sentence be amended to read 'Councillor Richard Jones stated that an officer had previously indicated that the Welfare Reforms had not had the impact that had been expected as Housing Benefit and unemployment had reduced'.

In response to a query from Councillor Robin Guest about the proposed joint meeting on the issue of Welfare Reform, the Member Engagement Manager advised Members that following the changes to the Overview & Scrutiny Structure, Welfare Reform would be dealt with by the Community & Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Committee and therefore a joint meeting would not be required.

RESOLVED:

That subject to the suggested amendment, the minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE

The Member Engagement Manager introduced a report to advise the Committee of its Terms of Reference.

He detailed the background to the report and explained that the new Overview & Scrutiny structure had been agreed at the Annual Meeting of the County Council held on 12th May 2015. The differences between the old and new terms of reference were reported which included that this Committee was now the designated 'Crime and Disorder' Scrutiny Committee. This would require one meeting per year to be held as a Crime and Disorder Committee to consider issues such as Community Safety Partnership. Appendix 1 listed the function of each of the Overview & Scrutiny Committees and included details of the main external partner organisations.

Responsibility for the Organisational Design & Change Programme would be shared with the Organisational Change Committee and the principal issue for this Committee would be on the budgetary impacts of the Programme.

The Member Engagement Manager explained that the Police & Crime Commissioner had initially been invited to attend the meeting of Community Profile and Partnerships Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 23rd July 2015 but due to a number of requests from Members, it had been cancelled and replaced with a Special County Council meeting which the Commissioner had been invited

to. The Chief Officer (Governance) also suggested that the Police & Crime Commissioner be invited to a future meeting to discuss his preparation of the Crime and Policing Plan.

Councillor Richard Jones expressed significant disappointment that the revised Terms of Reference did not specifically include 'value for money'. He felt that it was important to show this in the terms of reference to ensure that it was considered and added that Mr. Goodlad from the Wales Audit Office had indicated that the Council would be assessed on value for money in future years. The Member Engagement Manager felt that considerations of value for money would be included in the revenue and capital strategic planning function. In response to a comment by the Member Engagement Manager, Councillor Robin Guest said that changes raised by the Overview & Scrutiny Committees, once they had considered their new terms of reference, could be referred to the Constitution Committee for consideration. The Deputy Leader felt that value for money should be borne in mind in all aspects even if it was not specifically listed in the terms of reference. Councillor Arnold Woolley suggested that the words 'including value for money' could be added to the function of 'Revenue and capital strategic planning'. Councillor David Roney commented that consideration of value for money could be included in the resolution in reports.

The Chief Officer (Governance) concurred that the other Overview & Scrutiny Committees might request changes to their terms of reference once they had considered the report. On the issue of value for money, he advised that it was important that Overview & Scrutiny Committees held Cabinet to account to ensure that budgets were spent wisely.

Councillor Richard Jones proposed that the a request be submitted to the Constitution Committee that value for money be included in the terms of reference for this Committee; the proposal was duly seconded.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be received;
- (b) That the Constitution Committee be requested to amend the terms of reference of the Committee to specifically include a reference to value for money; and
- (c) That officers make arrangements for the annual Crime & Disorder meeting.

6. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Member Engagement Manager introduced the report to consider the Forward Work Programme for the Committee.

He detailed the items for consideration at the 11th June 2015 meeting and indicated that Councillors David Roney and Carolyn Thomas had requested that a report on Customer Services and Call Handling be considered.

In addition to the items suggested for the 9th July 2015 meeting, the Member Engagement Manager indicated that a report on the Medium Term Financial Strategy and an assurance report on the implementation of Single Status could also be considered at that meeting.

The Chief Officer (Governance) stated that a report on the Council's performance against the Wales Audit Office report on workforce costs could be submitted to the 9th July 2015 meeting. During earlier discussions he had also suggested that the Police & Crime Commissioner be invited to attend a meeting between September 2015 and January 2016 about the Crime and Policing Plan for 2016/17.

Councillor Carolyn Thomas asked whether Removal of payments at Post Offices and an update on Workforce Reorganisation could be considered. The Member Engagement Manager advised that Removal of payments at Post Offices fell under the remit of the Community & Enterprise Committee. The Chief Officer indicated that Workforce Reorganisation would be split between this Committee and the Organisational Change Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

In referring to the recent General Election, Councillor Robin Guest queried whether a report on the Function of the Election team could be considered at a future meeting. The Chief Officer (Governance) indicated that this could be combined with a report on Individual Elector registration to either the September or October 2015 meeting.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Forward Work Programme, as amended at the meeting, be approved; and
- (b) That the Member Engagement Manager, in consultation with the Chair, Vice-Chair and officers, be authorised to vary the work programme between meetings.

7. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

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

(The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 10.41 am)

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Chair