

**CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**18 DECEMBER 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 Friday, 18 December 2015

**PRESENT: Councillor Clive Carver (Chairman)**

Councillors: Andy Dunbobbin, Richard Jones, Vicky Perfect, David Roney, Nigel Steele-Mortimer and Arnold Woolley

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor Robin Guest

**SUBSTITUTIONS:** Councillors: Haydn Bateman for Marion Bateman, David Cox for Richard Lloyd and Paul Cunningham for Ron Hampson

**ALSO PRESENT:** Councillors: Christine Jones and Mike Peers

**CONTRIBUTORS:** Councillor Aaron Shotton, Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Chief Executive, Chief Officer (Governance), Chief Officer (Organisational Change (1)), Corporate Finance Manager

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Member Engagement Manager and Housing & Learning Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator

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

No declarations of interest were made.

**64. COUNCIL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2016/17**

The Chairman welcomed the contributors to the meeting.

The Chief Executive and Corporate Finance Manager gave a presentation on the Local Government Provisional Settlement 2016/17 which had been given at Cabinet on 15<sup>th</sup> December, 2015. The presentation covered the following areas:-

- Settlement Context
- Settlement Headlines
- Flintshire Position in the Settlement
- Known Impacts for Flintshire
- Ongoing Local Budget Work
- Ongoing National Budget Work
- Timescale for Phasing the Budget

The Leader of the Council commented on specific grants, particularly the Outcome Agreement Grant, and the continued lobbying of Welsh Government (WG) to allow Local Authorities greater freedom and flexibility to decide how these grants were spent.

The Chief Executive, Chief Officer (Governance) and Corporate Finance Manager gave a detailed presentation which covered the following areas:-

- Purpose of today's meeting
- Corporate Overview
- Corporate Finance Efficiency Proposals 2016/17
- Corporate Finance Local Pressures and Inflation
- Inflation
- Service Business Plan Proposals
- Budget Closure Strategy
- National Budget Timetable

The comments and questions which were raised by Members of the Committee on the presentations, together with the responses given, are detailed in Appendix 1 (attached).

**RESOLVED:**

That the presentation be noted.

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

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

(The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 11.27 am)

.....  
**Chairman**

**2016/17 Budget Consultation.**  
**Corporate Resources Change Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 18<sup>th</sup> December**  
**2015 (AM)**

<b>Member Comment/Question</b>	<b>Response</b>
Has Flintshire County Council ever missed receiving the full amount of Outcome agreement grant?	No, we have always received 100%. Some authorities have not.
There had been an assumption that the budget settlement would have been much worse. If we had ignored the intelligence received, would we have come to the same conclusions?	All Welsh authorities had planned on similar lines, with some anticipating an even worse position than Flintshire had. The English experience recently has been for 20-25% cuts. We had responded to expectation management from the UK government. The comprehensive Spending review gave us a different position. The revenue Support Grant could have been much worse.
How does this year's settlement affect next year?	Again managing expectations. Degree of risk for next year.
Who covers the deficit within the Betsi Cadwaladr UHB?	BCUHB is understood to have borrowed money from the Welsh government to manage this. There are sustainability issues within the Welsh NHS as this is completely devolved.
We won't know what the proposed shape of local government in Wales will be until after next year's Assembly elections. Are we considering linkages?	There will still be three financial years before the shadow local authorities, so quite a long way off. Some services such as Education and social services will adapt to either model. There are shared ICT platforms.
Appreciate explanation on the School funding formula.	The school funding formula has been modernised but in order to meet all cost pressures this would mean an additional £3.5m. The Council is working with both federations and the Education & Youth Overview & Scrutiny Committee to work on the best outcomes that can be expected. This is subject to final recommendations on closing the final settlement.
Is the Insurance top up an annual cost to be met?	This is to cover extended liabilities arising from the former MMI
Capitalisation of salaries has been done in the past, why can this and not long term rentals be capitalised.	This can be done for capital projects but not to cover situations such as the Enterprise agreement. Only things that are constituting to

	an asset can be capitalised.
Have you considered the use of Open Source rather than Microsoft?	We are now using a citrix system which has vastly reduced our hardware costs. Some authorities are now seeking to use Open source – essentially free software- but this is still some way off
Is the sum indicated for Single Status more than anticipated?	No. The ‘buffering period’ ends.
How does the proposed savings compare with savings made in other corporate services?	Our legal income is relatively low compared with other Welsh Local Authorities. The estimates are cautious and we hope to increase income from commercial sources for land sales, rather than individual householders.
ICT redesign.	The structure within ICT had anticipated greater collaboration with Wrexham County Borough Council and had been designed to facilitate this. As this is not feasible the structure has been adapted to provide for larger teams and fewer managers with broader spans of control.
On Community Asset Transfer (CAT), FLVC are not acknowledging or responding to correspondence.	FLVC are acting as our agents for CAT. If they are not responding, we need to know so that we can pursue this.
A great deal of information has been provided verbally to Members, can this be provided in written format following the meeting?	All verbal information will be pulled into factsheets which will be provided to all Members in mid January.