

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
24 OCTOBER 2017

Minutes of the meeting of Flintshire County Council held at Council Chamber, County Hall, Mold CH7 6NA on Tuesday, 24 October 2017

PRESENT: **Councillor Brian Lloyd (Chairman)**

Councillors: Mike Allport, Bernie Attridge, Janet Axworthy, Glyn Banks, Haydn Bateman, Marion Bateman, Sean Bibby, Chris Bithell, Helen Brown, Derek Butler, Clive Carver, Bob Connah, David Cox, Paul Cunningham, Jean Davies, Ron Davies, Adele Davies-Cooke, Ian Dunbar, Andy Dunbobbin, Mared Eastwood, Carol Ellis, Veronica Gay, George Hardcastle, David Healey, Gladys Healey, Patrick Heesom, Cindy Hinds, Dave Hughes, Kevin Hughes, Ray Hughes, Dennis Hutchinson, Joe Johnson, Paul Johnson, Rita Johnson, Christine Jones, Tudor Jones, Richard Lloyd, Mike Lowe, Dave Mackie, Hilary McGuill, Billy Mullin, Mike Peers, Michelle Perfect, Vicky Perfect, Neville Phillips, Mike Reece, Ian Roberts, Aaron Shotton, Paul Shotton, Ralph Small, Ian Smith, Carolyn Thomas, Owen Thomas, Martin White, David Williams, David Wisinger, and Arnold Woolley

APOLOGIES:

Councillors: Sian Braun, Geoff Collett, Chris Dolphin, Rosetta Dolphin, David Evans, Andrew Holgate, Richard Jones, Colin Legg, Ted Palmer and Tony Sharps.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Executive, Chief Officer (Governance), Chief Officer (Organisational Change 1), Chief Officer (Organisational Change 2), Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise), Chief Officer (Social Services), Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation), Committee Officers, and Ms. Angela Bebbington for prayers.

44. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held 27 September 2017 had been circulated with the agenda

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be approved as a correct record.

45. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Monitoring Officer advised that a personal interest would be recorded on behalf of all Members present for item 11 – Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) Draft Annual Report for 2018/19.

46. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

A copy of the Chairman's Communications had been circulated to all Members prior to the meeting.

The Chairman commented on the successful Flintshire Business Awards Gala evening which was held on 20 October, and thanked all involved for their hard work. He also drew attention to the ceremony to celebrate 25 years of engine manufacturing in Wales which had been held at Toyota Manufacturing (UK) Limited, and the Japanese Youth Exchange presentation evening which had taken place in County Hall the previous evening. He commented that both events had been excellent. The Chairman concluded by thanking all who had made a contribution to his Charity event.

47. PETITIONS

Councillors Dennis Hutchinson and Mike Peers presented a petition on behalf of local residents for Mount Pleasant Road, Drury, Buckley, to become a one-way system. Councillors Hutchinson and Peers commented on the concerns raised by residents in the area for the safety of motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians, due to the high risk of a traffic collision and the actions requested to address the risk.

48. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

None were received.

49. QUESTIONS

None were received.

50. NOTICE OF MOTION

None were received.

51. ARMED FORCES ANNUAL REPORT

The Chief Executive presented the report which was the first Annual Report of Flintshire County Council's Armed Forces Covenant. He advised that the report outlined the progress and commitment of the Authority and its partners who had signed the Covenant to support the Armed Forces Community. He explained that the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service had also joined the Flintshire Covenant and had formally signed the Covenant in a short ceremony prior to today's meeting of the Council. The Chief Executive asked that Members considered endorsing the positive progress made in meeting the Armed Forces Covenant and supporting the commitments for further improvement and approved the Annual Report prior to its publication on the Council's website. The Chief Executive invited Councillor Andrew Dunbobbin to speak on the item as the Council's Armed Forces Champion.

In moving the report Councillor Dunbobbin referred to the positive comments made by the Welsh Government (WG) concerning the work undertaken in Flintshire and specifically the work for schools to capture data on whether any pupils or students were children of serving members of the Armed Forces, and the offer of guaranteed interviews for veterans who meet the essential criteria of the job role.

Councillor Clive Carver congratulated the Authority on producing the Armed Forces Covenant, however, referring to the areas for improvement detailed in paragraph 1.05 the report, he felt that there was an omission in the objective “for schools to start capturing whether any pupils/students are children of serving members of the Armed Forces” and suggested the wording in Flintshire’s Covenant should be amended to include “children of both serving and veteran members of the Armed Forces”. The Chief Executive acknowledged the point made by Councillor Carver and gave an assurance that the work was applied to both serving and veteran members and it was agreed that the wording would be amended to provide clarification.

Councillor Tudor Jones referred to the promotion of the WG free swimming initiative for veterans and armed forces personnel which was available at four swimming pools in the County and asked whether this facility could be made available at all the swimming pools in the County. Councillor Jones also commented on the work being undertaken to restore a war memorial in Ysceifiog and asked Councillor Dunbobbin if he could provide information on any funding which the local community may be able to apply for to assist with the project.

Councillor Dunbobbin advised that funding was available from the WG until 2018 for the free swimming initiative and was applicable to all leisure services. He said he would encourage organisations to apply for the funding which was held centrally by the WG. Referring to the community project to restore a war memorial, Councillor Dunbobbin advised that local communities could apply for funding through the Armed Forces Community Covenant. The Chief Officer (Organisational Change 1) explained how the WG funding for the free swimming initiative for veterans and armed forces personnel was dispersed across swimming pools in Flintshire and advised that the current arrangements were to be reviewed during the coming months. He reported that the WG would also be reviewing the funding and provision for free swimming during the next 12 months to ensure that people most in need benefited.

Councillor Arnold Woolley asked that the word “to” be inserted into second recommendation on page 6 of the report after the word “prior”. In response to the question from Councillor Woolley regarding whether the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service had signed the Flintshire Covenant, the Chief Executive confirmed that personnel from the Armed Forces had attended and formally signed the Covenant on behalf of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service at a short ceremony prior to the meeting of the Council today.

Councillor Paul Cunningham spoke of the strong public support for the Armed Forces and congratulated the Authority for the work undertaken to support the Armed Forces Covenant.

Councillor Hillary McGuill asked if veterans and armed forces personnel could be provided with “unrestricted” instead of “time-limited” access to swimming activities and events. Councillor Dunbobbin acknowledged the suggestion and advised that there were a number of schemes available from the Armed Forces to assist veterans and armed forces personnel.

Councillor Chris Bithell welcomed the initiative for schools to start capturing data on whether any pupils or students were children of veterans and serving members of the Armed Forces. He spoke of his admiration for the achievements gained by both pupils and students who had to adjust to frequent periods of relocation throughout their education.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the positive progress made in meeting the Armed Forces Covenant and supporting the commitments for further improvement be endorsed; and
- (b) That the Armed Forces Covenant Annual Report be approved

52. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2016/17

The Chief Executive introduced the report to endorse the 2016/17 Annual Performance Report for the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017 prior to publication. He advised that the Annual Performance Report was a statutory report which provided an overview of the Authority's performance in achieving its improvement priorities as set out in the 2016/17 Improvement Plan. The Chief Executive provided background information and context and advised that the Report had to be adopted by Council prior to 31 October 2017.

The Chief Executive and Corporate Business and Communications Manager gave a joint presentation which covered the following areas:

- the Annual Performance Report
- Council Plan 2017-2023
- format and content
- performance overview 2016/17
- progress overview
- highlights
- areas for improvement
- performance overview
- Wales Audit Office – 2016/17 view
- overview
- next steps
- Council Plan

Councillor Aaron Shotton moved the recommendation to adopt the Annual Performance Report and expressed his thanks to the Chief Executive and the Corporate Business and Communications Manager for a detailed and informative presentation. He spoke of the opportunity to celebrate the Authority's achievements and interventions which had made a "real" difference to the residents and local communities in Flintshire. However, he acknowledged that there were also areas where there was further work to be done to achieve the outcomes set out in the Council Plan.

Commenting on the Authority's achievements, Councillor Shotton drew attention to the progress and improvements as detailed in the report and presentation around housing, social care, skills and learning. He also spoke of the work and success of the Authority in terms of developing the social enterprise sector and referred to the recent Flintshire Business Awards event and the number of socially responsible businesses which were supported by the Authority and had been put forward for awards in that event. Councillor Shotton commented that it was particularly pleasing and well deserved that Café Isa, Mynydd Isa, had won the award on the evening.

Councillor Shotton concluded by commenting on the achievement that Flintshire was ranked top out of 22 authorities across Wales as the most improved Authority between 2015/16 and 2016/17, and said it was important that the contribution and hard work of the Authority's workforce in making that achievement possible was recognised.

Councillor Dennis Hutchinson expressed his appreciation for the much improved Household Recycling facilities at Buckley and Mold. He referred to the number of new council houses being built in Flintshire and commented that there was a shortage of supply in some areas, citing Buckley as an example. He urged the Authority to address the situation to ensure that there was adequate provision of council houses in the County, and reiterated his concerns around the need for new council houses in Buckley. Councillor Hutchinson also expressed his appreciation to Councillor Attridge and to the Chief Officer (Organisational Change 2) for their work and support to address the issue of unlawful encampment on Buckley Common.

Councillor Bernie Attridge responded to the concerns expressed by Councillor Hutchinson around demand and supply of new council homes in Flintshire and provided details of the new build sites and schemes which were under construction or proposed in the County. He gave assurance to Councillor Hutchinson that the Authority was working to address the need for affordable housing and was robust in its search and negotiations for suitable and available land for such schemes. He concluded that he was optimistic that an announcement may be made in the coming months on a new scheme in the Mold area.

Councillor Mike Peers acknowledged the overall progress that had been made against the improvement priorities which he said was to be celebrated. However, he felt that it was important to retain focus on the performance measures which had not met target to ensure that there was improvement going forward. He asked that a summary be included of the performance measures which had not met target in future reports to enable Members to compare performance.

Councillor Peers expressed concerns around the need and demand for affordable housing and felt that with regard to the planning applications submitted by private developers, there was a need to ensure sufficient density on site to trigger the affordable housing contribution. He suggested that there was a need to review the policy and for the Housing Strategy Team to engage more fully with Planning to achieve the outcomes required for affordable housing. In response the Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise) gave an assurance that there was

close collaboration between the Housing Strategy Team and Planning. She explained that where there was good evidence of a demand for affordable housing the service worked hard to ensure there was the appropriate mix of housing units on the development.

Councillor David Healey said that Flintshire's quartile performance as outlined in page 63 of the report was a remarkable achievement in view of the financial stringency and austerity that had taken place in recent years and congratulated officers and staff on their hard work. Councillor Healey said he was particularly pleased with the progress made to help Flintshire's most vulnerable residents in matters of housing, homelessness, welfare reform, and poverty, and commended the Authority on the work it had undertaken. He also spoke of his appreciation and the need to commend the members of local communities who had come forward as volunteers to support and maintain services at risk in local areas, and cited the successful community asset transfer scheme of Hope library as an example.

Councillor Hilary McGuill said the reduced time to complete Disabled Facilities Grants was welcomed. However, she expressed concerns around the backlog of school repair and maintenance works outstanding and said it was false economy to delay such work. The Chief Executive acknowledged the points made and advised that the issue of school estates was a nationwide problem and was due to capital availability and insufficient investment. He said that the underfunding for repairs would remain an amber risk for the foreseeable future.

In response to a query from Councillor Arnold Woolley concerning the take up by residents of the financial assistance available to repair homes the Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise) advised that there was no problem in the take up of social grant loans.

The Chief Executive and Councillor Derek Butler responded to the concern raised by Councillor Woolley around the Northern Powerhouse and Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), the infrastructure, and the Mersey-Dee Alliance. The Chief Executive explained that a presentation would be made shortly to provide an outline of the North Wales Economic Growth Deal bid which would explain the relationship with the Mersey Dee Alliance, Flintshire's influence, and cross-border collaboration. Councillor Derek Butler gave an update on recent developments on the Mersey-Dee Alliance and commented on the cross-border and cross-party working which had taken place and gave an assurance that significant work was in progress which the Growth Deal would build on.

Councillor Neville Phillips commented on the need for additional affordable housing in Buckley and also on the demand for extra care provision to be built in the area and suggested that the Princess Avenue site in Buckley could be considered as building land for such schemes in the future. The Chief Executive acknowledged the points made by Councillor Phillips and said it was recognised that the town of Buckley would be the next priority for any future scheme, however, he explained that there was no resourcing plan available at the current time to extend the extra care provision.

Councillor Carol Ellis spoke of the valuable contribution made by Members and officers who had worked collaboratively through the Social & Health Care

Overview and Scrutiny Committee to achieve improvements. She also spoke of the value of enablement and the significant difference it had made to the demands on social and health care services and expressed her appreciation for the work of the Senior Manager Integrated services Lead Adults and her team.

Councillor Ian Roberts commented on the improvements in skills and learning and the need to congratulate staff in schools on the excellent progress achieved and cited the improvements in performance indicators at Foundation Phase, and Key Stages 2, 3, and 4, as examples. He also commented on the work and achievements of pupils who had worked hard and achieved significant personal progress but had not been reflected in the indicators. In conclusion Councillor Roberts also concurred with the concerns made by Councillor McGuill concerning the backlog of repair and maintenance works in schools and the need for capital investment.

RESOLVED:

That the Annual Performance Report 2016/17 be adopted.

53. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES (IRPW) DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2018/19

The Monitoring Officer introduced a report to enable the Council to consider and comment on the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) Draft Annual Report for 2018/19. He provided background information and explained that it was the IRPW which sets out and decides what should be the rates of payment to Members and co-optees of Local Authorities in Wales.

The Monitoring Officer advised that the IRPW was required to take into account the representations it received on the draft before issuing the final version of the report in February 2018. He informed that the Panel's determinations for 2018 were appended to the report. The Monitoring Officer summarised that the IRPW was not recommending any increases in any allowances for 2018/19 apart from a change to the basic salary for elected Members which equated to an increase of £200 (1.49%).

The Monitoring Officer also advised that no increase was proposed for senior salaries but the postholders would receive the £200 increase in the basic salary being paid to all Members. The IRPW had removed the "two tier" approach for payment of Cabinet Members and Committee Chairs as no local authorities had adopted the approach.

The Monitoring Officer referred to the number of senior salaried posts which Flintshire was able to pay. He gave background information and explained that the Council was asked to consider whether an application should be made to the Independent Remuneration Panel for a specific or additional senior salary, which does not fall within the current remuneration framework, to recognise the role of the Chair of the Clwyd Pension Fund Committee which was currently unpaid.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the application to the Independent Remuneration Panel for a specific additional senior salary, which does not fall within the current remuneration framework, to recognise the currently unpaid role of the Chair of the Clwyd Pension Fund Committee, be endorsed; and
- (b) That the Chief Officer (Governance) be authorised to make a response on behalf of the Council, reflecting the decision made at the meeting, to the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales.

54. REAPPOINTMENT OF TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE TO THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Monitoring Officer introduced a report on the reappointment of the Town and Community Council representative for a further term on the Standards Committee.

The Monitoring Officer provided background information and advised that the term of office for the Town and Community Representative came to an end with the local elections in May 2017. A report was presented at the Annual Meeting of the Council in May 2017 and the Standards Committee in July 2017 recommending that Councillor Duggan-Keen, the current representative, be reappointed for a further term. Before making the reappointment Council needed to consult the Town and Community Councils on the proposal. The Monitoring Officer advised that consultation had been undertaken and as there was no disagreement with the proposal it could go ahead.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Council notes that no Town or Community Council has objected to the reappointment of Councillor Duggan-Keen; and
- (b) That Councillor Duggan-Keen be reappointed for the remainder of the council term.

55. FOR INFORMATION – APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Democratic Services Manager introduced the report to inform the Council of progress which had been made on the appointment of members to national and regional Outside Bodies. He advised that the Appointments to Outside Bodies list was reported to the Annual Meeting in May 2017 and following on from the Annual Meeting the Chief Executive, in consultation with Group Leaders, made appointments to all but one of the bodies on the list which was appended to the report. The Democratic Services Manager advised that the one vacancy where it had not been possible to make a nomination was to the North Wales Association for the deaf and therefore it remained as a vacancy for the time being. The Democratic Services Manager explained that some of the current vacancies on the list related to the late Councillor Ron Hampson and these were Ward related and would be filled following the Buckley Bistre West by-election.

Councillor Mike Peers referred to the vacancy on the Theatr Clwyd Board of Governors and asked for confirmation that the vacancy existed. He proposed that if the vacancy did not exist then Councillor Veronica Gay be replaced by Councillor Kevin Hughes. In response the Chief Executive explained that the Board of Governors was currently being reviewed both internally by the Theatr and by the Cabinet and he commented on some of the proposals for discussion around membership of the Board going forward and said that the external positions were to be advertised as a form of public appointment to open up access to being a Theatre Board member.. The Chief Executive concluded that for the time being the existing membership of the Board of Governors, both internal and external, would remain unchanged. However, in acknowledging the proposal put forward by Councillor Peers he advised that it did not change the number or proportion of representation.

Councillor Chis Bithell referred to the two vacancies on the list for SACRE and reported that Councillor Paul Cunningham had volunteered to join the membership of the Committee so only one vacancy remained on that body

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the current list of Outside Bodies which is attached as Appendix A, be noted; and
- (b) That where any vacancies remain unfilled these should be removed from the Outside Bodies list.

56. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

There was one member of the press and no members of the public present.

(The meeting started at 2.00 pm and ended at 3.35 pm)

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Chairman