

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
26 JANUARY 2021

Minutes of the remote meeting of Flintshire County Council held Tuesday, 26 January 2021

PRESENT: Councillor Marion Bateman (Chair)

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

APOLOGIES: Councillor David Cox

OBSERVER: Julia Hughes, Independent Member of the Standards Committee.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Executive; Chief Officer (Governance); Chief Officer (Planning, Environment & Economy), Chief Officer (Education & Youth), Chief Officer (Social Services), Corporate Finance Manager, Head of Democratic Services, Democratic Services Officers; and Councillor Reverend Daniel Stroud for prayers. (For minute 47: Tamara Harvey, Artistic Director of Theatr Clwyd, and Liam Evans-Ford, Executive Director of Theatr Clwyd and Chair of Theatr Cymru)

45. COMMEMORATION AND TRIBUTES TO THE LATE COUNCILLOR KEVIN HUGHES

The Chair referred to the recent sad death of Councillor Kevin Hughes following a brave fight against Covid-19. She expressed sincere condolences to his wife, family, friends, and residents of his Ward. She invited Councillor Chris Dolphin to lead the tributes.

Councillor Dolphin spoke of the personal and professional attributes of Councillor Hughes whom he regarded as a friend as well as a colleague. He said he was highly respected by all who knew him and was a genuine and good man.

The Leader of the Council paid tribute to Councillor Hughes whom he said was a special person and regarded as a friend by many people. He would be greatly missed. He said his contribution as a member of the Authority had been considerable and he was well respected by his local community, Members of the Council, and the Authority's Officers and staff. Councillor Hughes was an active local member and represented his community with integrity. He spoke of his personal qualities, hobbies, and particularly passion for football. Councillor Roberts said he had been given the privilege of attending a service of

commemoration for Councillor Hughes which although expressing deep regret for his loss gave thanks and celebration for his life and legacy.

Councillors Mike Peers, Patrick Heesom, Tony Sharps, Chris Bithell, Derek Butler, Ian Dunbar, Andy Dunbobbin, and Aaron Shotton all expressed their deepest sympathy to Councillor Hughes' wife and family. Members paid tribute to Councillor Hughes and spoke of his strength of character and intuition, distinguished behaviour, care and kindness towards others, sense of humour, enthusiasm and willingness to help a good cause. It was said that nothing was too much trouble for Councillor Hughes who was hard working and a true gentleman. Despite the fight to overcome his own illness he did his utmost to warn others of the danger of Coronavirus and sent a message to all Members from hospital urging them and the residents of Flintshire to protect themselves.

The Chair informed that she had also received condolences from the Chief Executive of Wrexham Borough Council and Reverend Daniel Stroud. A virtual book of condolence was available on the Authority's website to enable further tributes from Members and Officers to be made to Councillor Hughes.

In paying tribute the Chief Executive also spoke on behalf of the Authority's Officers and reiterated that Councillor Hughes was very well respected and popular, and had served the Council well. He extended deepest sympathy to his family and friends on their loss and concurred with all the warm sentiments expressed.

The Chair also referred to the sad news of the death of former Councillor Norma Humphreys who had been a long-standing Member of the Authority and had represented the Higher Kinnerton Ward until 2012. The Chair spoke of the kindness and support Councillor Humphreys had extended to her when she joined the Authority as a newly elected Councillor. She expressed her condolences to her family and friends on their sad loss.

The Chair asked Members to join her in a minutes silence in tribute to the late Councillors Kevin Hughes and Norma Humphreys.

46. RECOGNITION OF AWARD FOR A LOCAL RECIPIENT IN THE NEW YEAR'S HONOURS LIST

The Chair said the Council was proud to recognise that Professor Laurence John Alison, Director of the National Centre for the Study of Critical Incident Decision Making, University of Liverpool, had been listed in the New Year's Honours List. Professor Alison was a resident of Flintshire.

Professor Alison was a forensic psychologist who had been awarded an MBE in the Queen's New Year Honours list for services to critical incident handling and to the NHS during COVID-19. As Director of the National Unit for Critical Incident Decision Making, Professor Allison leads the University's Psychological Resource Network.

In April last year, Professor Alison oversaw the launch of a project to provide a series of free online psychological tools to assist frontline staff in preparedness, adaptation, and recovery from working in the intense operational environment of

COVID-19. The project (named Project ARES) extended a 30-year career of understanding and responding to high profile critical and major incidents, from disaster management to terrorism.

Professor Alison is widely known in his field for his publications on critical incident decision making, interrogation of high value detainees, and his work on child sexual exploitation resulted in a research allocation tool which is used across 24 European countries and more recently in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Brazil. Professor Alison led psychological debriefing in over 460 critical incidents including the 7/7 bombing, the Boxing Day Tsunami. His work on decision making and overcoming decision inertia is used nationally by the UK Police.

The Chair invited Councillor Rosetta Dolphin to pay tribute to the work of Professor Alison. Councillor Dolphin said that Professor Alison undertook extremely important work on critical world incidents and was an advisor on major cases including reviews and military interrogations. She advised that his work on decision making and overcoming decision inertia was used by the Police and his work on child protection was highly valued. Commenting on his work on Covid 19 she advised that Professor Alison and his team launched the Active Resilience Emergency Services through the University of Liverpool and Alder Hey Hospital. Professor Alison had also produced journals and teaching aids. Councillor Dolphin congratulated Professor Alison on his well-deserved award.

47. RECOGNITION OF THEATR CLWYD: REGIONAL THEATRE OF THE YEAR

The Chair introduced and welcomed Tamara Harvey, Artistic Director of Theatr Clwyd, and Liam Evans-Ford, Executive Director of Theatr Clwyd and Chair of Theatr Cymru.

The Chair informed that the Theatre had won regional theatre of the year at the Stage Awards held on 6 January 2021. She advised that the Stage Awards are the highest profile awards celebrating theatre across the whole of the UK and beyond. This year, the awards had been reimagined to recognise the extraordinary achievements of teams up and down the country in arguably the most challenging year the industry has ever faced.

Winners were chosen for their achievements and impact in response to the coronavirus pandemic. They were selected by the awards' judging panel following a public nominations process and consultation. The judges said "In 2020, Theatr Clwyd has been more than a theatre: it has been a beacon, one that won the hearts and trust of the many communities it serves".

Councillor Derek Butler said the accolade was national and international acknowledgement of Theatr Clwyd as Flintshire's cultural centre which provided multi activities for the community.

Councillor Chris Bithell congratulated the Theatre on achieving the highly esteemed award particularly in the challenging circumstances of the stringent restrictions imposed due to the pandemic. Councillor Bithell reported that since last March the Theatre had become a distribution centre providing help for children and families and had worked with local businesses in distributing food and particularly food parcels to those in need. In addition the Theatre had

contributed to giving significant support to freelancers and engaging audiences in activity by setting multi tasks to complete at home. Councillor Bithell concluded by saying the prestigious Award gave optimism for the Theatre's future and was a credit to Tamara Harvey and Liam Evans-Ford and their team.

Councillor Dave Mackie said he was proud of the outstanding and widespread innovation which moved the Theatre forward under the guidance of Tamara Harvey and Liam Evans-Ford.

Councillor Glyn Banks also expressed his congratulations to Tamara Harvey and Liam Evans Ford and their team and thanked them for their leadership and hard work.

The Chief Executive said the Theatre had been a stalwart for people in need during the pandemic. He commented on the impending transfer of the Theatre from April to a new independent Trust, and said the Theatre was in the latter stages of negotiations with the Welsh Government for capital investment to refurbish and modernise Theatr Clwyd for the future.

Councillor Ron Davies also expressed his thanks to Tamara Harvey and Liam Evans-Ford on the success of the Award which he said was not easily gained.

The Chair invited Tamara Harvey and Liam Evans-Ford to speak.

Tamara Harvey expressed her appreciation at Theatr Clwyd being recognised as the Stage Awards Regional Theatre of the Year. She said in challenging times, Theatr Clwyd had risen to meet that challenge. It was very much a team effort, and she was proud of the team whose efforts had been acknowledged by their industry leaders.

In summary Liam Evans-Ford commented on the Theatre's connection with the Authority and said the Award was the result of the partnership work undertaken with the Authority and cited collaborative work with Social Services and Education Services as examples. He thanked Members for their kind words and recognition.

48. MINUTES

(i) The minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2020 were submitted.

The minutes were moved by Councillor Paul Shotton and seconded by Councillor Chris Bithell and approved as an accurate record.

(ii) The minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2020 were submitted

Councillor Tony Sharps referred to his comments on page 17 regarding an enquiry from a company which would release a capital receipt for the Council and asked if any further information was available on this. The Chief Executive confirmed that contact had been made with the company involved and the enquiry was re-open.

The minutes were moved by Councillor Chris Bithell and seconded by Councillor Gladys Healey and approved as an accurate record.

RESOLVED

That both sets of minutes be approved as an accurate record.

49. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chief Officer (Governance) referred to the previous advice given to Members on consideration of the Local Development Plan (LDP) and the circumstances where a personal and prejudicial interest or a personal interest would apply. He reminded Members of the nature of interests which had been previously declared.

On that basis, the following Members declared a personal and prejudicial interest and said they would leave the meeting before the item was considered:

- Councillor Bob Connah - related to occupier of land in the Local Development Plan (LDP).
- Councillor Joe Johnson - owner of land within the LDP.
- Councillor Hilary McGuill - related to owners of land within the LDP.
- Councillor Ralph Small - property overlooking one of the candidate sites.
- Councillor Andy Williams - home and business near to a candidate site
- Councillor Adele Davies-Cooke – related to owners of land within the LDP

The following Members declared a personal interest:

- Councillor Janet Axworthy
- Councillor Mike Peers

50. CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Chair took the opportunity to express her thanks to all staff in the Streetscene workforce who had recently dealt with adverse weather conditions including floods, ice, and snow. She reported that the Winter Maintenance teams had been gritting continuously through the night and would continue to grit priority routes across the network as needed. Salt heaps and salt bins would continue to be replenished across the network where necessary.

The Chair reported that when weather conditions had prevented waste collections being completed in one day, or due to the significant increase in volume of waste during the Christmas period, the Streetscene team had worked tirelessly to collect and remove all waste the next day. Such was the dedication of all employees in the last ten months. She suggested that Members join her in a short round of applause to show appreciation for the commitment and hard work undertaken by all staff.

Councillor Ian Roberts concurred with the sentiments expressed by the Chair on the hard work and dedication of staff. In addition to his appreciation of the work of the Streetscene Team he also expressed thanks to staff in the Test, Trace and Protect Service, Social Services, and Housing Services as further examples of staff who had worked tirelessly throughout the Christmas period.

Councillor Carolyn Thomas expressed her sincere thanks to the commitment and hard work of all involved in the Streetscene Team (Managers, officers and front-line staff) who had worked long hours throughout the challenges of the pandemic, the harsh Winter conditions, and Christmas holiday period.

Councillor Glyn Banks congratulated the Streetscene Team on their sterling work on the waste collection service during the Christmas and New Year holiday period.

51. PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

52. FLINTSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (LDP) EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC DELEGATED AUTHORITY FOR OFFICERS

The Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) introduced the report to seek Member's views on, and agreement to, a proposed scheme of delegation for officers to act on behalf of the Council should the Inspector propose changes arising out of the examination of the soundness of any aspect of the LDP during the scheduled hearing sessions. The Chief Officer reported that the examination of the LDP was due to commence on 8 March 2021. A pre-hearing meeting had been held on 12 January and a draft timetable for hearing sessions was expected this week and would be published on the LDP website (link provided within the report).

The Chief Officer advised that the Council considered that the LDP as submitted to be a sound plan, however, during the hearing the Inspectors may propose changes. He explained that the purpose of the scheme of delegation was to allow officers to agree, in principle, to the Inspector making changes to the LDP during the hearing sessions in consultation with Members, depending on the nature and scope of the changes proposed. Changes of a minor typographical or factual nature are proposed to be delegated to the Service Manager Strategy (or in his absence, or inability to act, or for operational expediency, exercised by the Team Leader Planning Policy) but more significant changes, such as the deletion of an allocation or introduction of a new site or sites, would require consultation with Members as detailed in the report. He said that the Planning Inspectorate and the Welsh Government recommended that such a scheme of delegation be agreed to allow for the examination to operate efficiently.

The Chief Officer drew attention to paragraphs 1.05 and 1.06 in the report and the information in Table 1 which sets out the proposed scheme of delegation. He reported that the Planning Strategy Group had considered the proposals in the draft scheme of delegation at a meeting held on 12 November, and following amendment of the scheme had endorsed and recommended it to Council for approval. He gave reassurance to Members that any changes that emanated

from the examination process (known as 'Matters Arising Changes') would be collated into a document and subject to a separate 6-week public consultation process when the hearing sessions were completed. He gave an assurance that there would be ample opportunity for Members and the wider public to respond to any proposed changes as part of that formal consultation. The Chief Officer recommended that the Scheme of Delegation, as set out in Table 1 of the report, be adopted to provide officers with a framework to act at the LDP EiP, should the Inspector propose changes to the Plan.

Councillor Chris Bithell moved the recommendation as set out in the report. Speaking in support of the recommendation he reiterated that the Plan was sound as it stood. He referred to the proposals and arrangements for delegated authority as detailed in Table 1 and advised that the use of the scheme would be as a last resort (as the Council was not seeking any changes) if, for whatever reason, any aspect of the plan or supporting evidence was found to be not sound by the Inspector. He also said that the Welsh Government had no fundamental issues with the LDP as submitted.

Councillor Mike Peers seconded the recommendation. Councillor Peers referred to the executive summary of the report and said the reference to "changes of more significance" in the third paragraph was contrary to the reference to "changes of some significance" in Table 1 and suggested that the wording in Table 1 should be used for accuracy. He also said that in the same paragraph there was a reference to "seek agreement from Senior Members of the Council" and cross referencing to section 1.05 of the report Councillor Peers said the Welsh Government response had referred to a senior member group which he understood to mean the Planning Strategy Group.

Councillor Peers reiterated the assurance given to Members that the Inspector was seeking an agreement in principle and that the agreement would not disenfranchise local members for the community due to changes being published as 'Matters Arising Changes' which would allow comments to be made during the consultation period. Referring to Table 1 and the proposed delegated authority for the category 'Changes of Some Significance', Councillor Peers said that Local Members would be notified of any significant changes for information purposes and in the category 'Fundamental Changes', local members would be notified of any fundamental changes for information purposes. He proposed that the wording be amended to include that any relevant information provided by the local member be considered. Councillor Chris Bithell agreed to the proposed amendment which then formed the substantive motion for debate.

Councillor Tony Sharps referred to a question that he had raised during previous consideration of the LDP concerning the future of County Hall and said in response to the answer he had received he had voted against the LDP at Council. He expressed a number of concerns around the consequences of the introduction of the proposed scheme of delegated powers and a move away from Member control.

The Chief Executive spoke in support of the amendment by Councillor Peers and suggested that it could be made more precise so that local members be informed and consulted and their views taken into account in respect of changes of significance and fundamental changes.

Councillor Chris Dolphin said he felt that local members should definitely be involved in any changes of some significance and also any fundamental changes. He suggested that the amendment be strengthened to state that a local member must be consulted upon and be part of the final decision-making process.

The Chief Officer (Governance) provided further clarification in response to the concerns raised by Members on the matter of consultation with local members and adjacent ward members whose ward was affected by a proposal.

Councillor Chris Dolphin proposed a further amendment and said that the local member should be part of the proposed delegated authority and this should be added to the amendment proposed by Councillor Peers. The Chief Officer advised that for legal reason delegation had to be made either to a Committee or to an Officer in consultation with Members. He referred to the proposal in Table 1 that authority was delegated to the Service Manager Strategy in full consultation.

Responding to the comments made by Councillor Tony Sharps concerning County Hall the Chief Officer (Planning, Environment & Economy) said that, in the main, the County Hall site was inside the settlement boundary of Mold, however, it was not yet ready as a site for residential or commercial development and work was ongoing concerning this. The Chief Executive said the County Hall site was in ownership of the Council and that the Council would determine its future use.

The Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) confirmed that following the views expressed by Members the proposed delegated authority in Table 1 of the report for the category Changes of Some Significance would be amended in part to read: "Local Members and adjacent ward members would be consulted on any significant changes and their views taken into account". He also confirmed that the proposed delegated authority in Table 1 for the category Fundamental Changes would be amended in part to read "Local Members and adjacent ward members would be consulted on any fundamental changes and their views taken into account". The Chief Officer said he fully supported the amendment.

The recommendation in the report, as amended, had been moved by Councillor Chris Bithell and seconded by Councillor Mike Peers and when put to the vote was carried.

Councillor Tony Sharps voted against the recommendation.

Councillors Dennis Hutchinson, Colin Legg, and David Williams abstained from the vote.

RESOLVED:

That subject to the amendments to Table 1 as above the recommended scheme of delegation as detailed in the report be approved to provide officers with a

framework to act at the LDP EiP, should the Inspector propose changes to the Plan.

53. LOCAL GOVERNMENT & ELECTIONS (WALES) BILL

The Chief Executive introduced a report on the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill. He advised that the Bill had received Royal Assent and was now an Act. The purpose of the report was to highlight the key contents of the Act and for Council to note the constitutional implications (for example electoral reform, Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs), and public participation) and other implications (for example creation of a Governance & Audit Committee) and the internal plans for implementation. The Chief Executive advised that whilst some of the changes were immediate there was no timetable as yet for the Welsh Government (WG) to introduce others. He provided a brief update on CJCs and said the Authority's response was appended to the report, and electoral reform and asked the Chief Officer (Governance) to present the report.

The Chief Officer provided background information and advised that subject to commencement the Authority must implement the Act in the best way it could to suit local circumstances. He reported on the key areas of the Act, as detailed in the report, which required Council to make a decision, and which would affect members directly or be relevant to their strategic role. The Chief Officer explained that he had established a working group to schedule an implementation plan for the Act and would submit periodic reports to members on progress.

Councillor Ian Roberts moved the recommendations in the report with the amendment that the Local Government & Elections Bill was now an Act. Councillor Roberts said he welcomed the changes brought in by the Act regarding the electoral franchise which enabled 16 and 17 year olds to vote for the first time in National Assembly elections and County and Community/Town Council elections scheduled for May 2022, and improving public accessibility to local government meetings. Councillor Roberts expressed concerns over the scrutiny arrangements for Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) and, referring to the creation of a Governance & Audit Committee, also expressed concern that a Member would not chair the Committee and commented on the increasing influence of lay members.

Councillor Carolyn Thomas seconded the recommendations. She said she had also raised concerns over the creation of CJCs and referred to the Authority's response to the WG consultation document on CJCs which was appended to the report.

Councillor Chris Bithell concurred with the views expressed by Councillor Ian Roberts on the Governance & Audit Committee and expressed further concerns over the option to change the voting system for local elections in the future.

Councillor Richard Jones expressed concerns on the creation of CJCs and scrutiny arrangements. Referring to previous consideration on CJCs he asked if any further consultations had taken place between 28 January 2020 and 18 November 2020 and was the WG consultation document on CJCs considered by

Cabinet on 15 December 2020 of any value if the WG had made a decision to pass the Bill on 18 November.

Councillor Tudor Jones commented on the extension of the franchise to 16 year olds and foreign citizens under electoral reforms. He expressed concern that due to the pandemic, schools were not able to raise awareness among pupils of their right to vote at 16 and right to register to vote from the age of 14. He commented that the Authority and Members needed to assist in raising awareness in local secondary schools and local communities.

Councillor Mike Peers referred to section 1.04 of the report and the information that with the Single Transferable Voting system (STV) instead of one or two people representing everyone in an area, larger areas elect a small team of representatives, such as 4 or 5. He expressed the view that this would result in larger wards which would cover a vast area and wouldn't work.

In response to the questions and comments made the Chief Executive advised that STV could only be adopted locally if the Council voted in favour of it (and in accordance with the size of the vote required). Referring to the comments from Councillor Tudor Jones on the extension of the franchise to 16 year olds, the Chief Executive explained that around 50% of young voters had been registered so far and said the Electoral Commission would be carrying out national publicity in Wales. The Council was also targeting young people and would be working to raise awareness with local schools and colleges. Responding to the concerns from Councillor Richard Jones on CJs, the Chief Executive explained there were ongoing national discussions over the detail of their operation.

The Chief Officer (Governance) also responded to the points raised by Councillor Chris Bithell in relation to allowing non-politically restricted Council employees to stand for election to their own Council, and the subsequent risk of not being elected, and the questions raised by Councillor Richard Jones relating to CJs.

Councillor Richard Jones raised further concerns around CJs. The Chief Executive acknowledged the points made and suggested that Council might wish to consider adding a further recommendation to those in the report to express concerns around how CJs might work and that any regulations that the WG pass for CJs should meet all the tests set out in the Authority's response to the consultation. Councillor Richard Jones proposed that a third recommendation be added to the report. In seconding the proposal Councillor Carolyn Thomas advised that she had raised concerns many times around CJs regarding duplication and a move away from local position.

The Chief Executive also suggested that in response to the concerns expressed by Councillor Jones the second recommendation in the report be amended as follows: "That the Council notes the constitutional and other implications of the Act, and supports internal plans for their implementation as necessary". Councillor Richard Jones moved the proposed amendment and this was seconded by Councillor Carolyn Thomas.

The Chief Officer asked Councillor Ian Roberts, as mover of the original motion, if he supported the amendment as changed. Councillor Roberts accepted the proposed amendment which became the substantive motion.

When put to the vote the recommendations were carried.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the briefing report be received;
- (b) That Council notes the constitutional and other implications of the Act, and supports internal plans for their implementation as necessary; and
- (c) That Council is not supportive of proposals for CJs as they currently stand and reiterates the comments made in the response to the WG appended to the report and requests that any further regulations meet the tests as set out in the response to the consultation

54. TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REPORT 2020/21

The Corporate Finance Manager introduced a report to present the draft Treasury Management Mid-Year Review for 2020/21. He advised that the Treasury Management Mid-Year Report for 2020/21 was appended to the report and required formal Council approval.

The Corporate Finance Manager advised that the Mid-Year Report reviewed the activities and performance of the treasury management operations during the period 1 April to 30 September 2020. As required by the Council's Financial Procedure Rules the Mid-Year Report was reviewed by the Audit Committee on 18 November 2020 and Cabinet on 15 December 2020. The Audit Committee had no matters to draw to the Cabinet or Council's attention. The Corporate Finance Manager referred to the key points which were summarised in the report.

Councillor Glyn Banks commented that the Authority's prudent stance had served it well during last year's unprecedented challenges and thanked the Finance Team and the Council's advisor Arlingclose and the Audit Committee for their work. He moved the recommendation in the report to Council for approval. Councillor Chris Dolphin seconded the proposal.

The Corporate Finance Manager responded to the question raised by Councillor Mike Peers on the year-end projections in section 5.04 of the report and provided further explanation around the information on investments and borrowing

RESOLVED:

That the Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2020/21 be approved.

55. RECRUITMENT OF A LAY MEMBER TO THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Chief Officer (Governance) introduced a report to approve the recruitment process of a Lay Member to the Audit Committee as required by the Local

Government and Elections (Wales) Act. He provided background information and advised that having considered the size of its membership the Audit Committee had recommended that the current membership of 9 should continue (7 elected Councillors and 2 lay members). If the Council wished to remain at 9 it would need to replace one elected Councillor on the Committee with a co-opted (lay) member. Alternatively, the Council could decide to reduce the size of the Committee to 6 members (4 elected Councillors plus the existing 2 lay members).

The Chief Officer gave advice and reminded Council that the Committee would have an expanded role from 1 April 2021. He advised that the requirement to change the membership was within the provisions that are to be brought into effect at a time chosen by Ministers. It was expected that this would be in April 2021 but was now understood to be May 2022. He explained that Council could, therefore, maintain the current membership for the remainder of this term and begin the recruitment late Autumn ready for the lay person to be appointed in February or March 2022.

The Chief Officer referred to the recommendation in the report that the size of the membership of the Audit Committee remained at 9 and with effect from May 2022 would consist of 6 elected Councillors and 3 lay members and that the recruitment panel (as suggested in the second recommendation in the report) makes a recommendation to Council for the appointment of an additional lay member.

In moving the recommendations Councillor Chris Dolphin commented on the valuable expertise lay members brought to the Audit Committee and the excellent contribution made by the current lay members. Councillor Neville Phillips seconded the recommendations.

When put to the vote the recommendations were carried.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That one additional lay member be recruited to the Audit Committee in place of an elected member with effect from May 2022; and
- (b) That the recruitment panel consisting of the Chair of the Council, Chair of the Audit Committee, and the Cabinet Member for Finance, makes a recommendation to Council for appointment.

56. RECRUITMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS TO THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Chief Officer (Governance) introduced the report to agree the timetable and process for recruiting Independent Members to the Standards Committee. He reported that the term of office for one of the co-opted Members of the Committee ends in March 2021 and as the member had served the maximum terms permitted under legislation must stand down. He advised that another Independent Member had decided to retire. Both co-optees had been active members of the Standards Committee and had made a significant contribution to the governance of the Council.

The Chief Officer explained that the Council would need to advertise two vacancies and to do so must place adverts in the local press and constitute an interview panel (as suggested in the report). Interviews could take place during end of February/March and the preferred candidate would then be officially appointed by Council (potentially on 1 April 2021).

Councillor Paul Johnson moved the recommendations and this was seconded by Councillor Mike Peers.

The Chair expressed her thanks to the retiring members of the Committee for their sterling work and contributions. The Chief Officer said he would write to both members to formally record the Chair's thanks and best wishes.

When put to the vote the recommendations was carried.

RESOLVED:

That the report be accepted and an appointment panel be formally established with the membership as described in the report.

57. 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 5.03 pm)

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Chairman