

HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
22 JANUARY 2013

Minutes of the meeting of the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held at Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold CH7 6NA on Tuesday, 22 January 2013

PRESENT: Councillor Ron Hampson (Chairman)

Councillors: Amanda Bragg, David Cox, Peter Curtis, Ron Davies, Rosetta Dolphin, Alison Halford, George Hardcastle, Brian Lloyd, Gareth Roberts and Sharon Williams

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors: Bernie Attridge, Haydn Bateman, Marion Bateman, Christine Jones, Richard Jones and Billy Mullin

CONTRIBUTORS: Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Cabinet Member for Housing, Chief Executive, Director of Community Services, Head of Finance, Head of Housing, Acting Finance & Accountancy Manager and Finance Manager

IN ATTENDANCE: Member Engagement Manager and Committee Officer

38. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

No declarations of interest were made.

39. BUDGET CONSULTATION FOR 2013/14

The Chairman welcomed the contributors to the meeting.

The Head of Finance explained that an overview of the budget would be provided for each Overview & Scrutiny Committee with the budget proposals for the specific area covered by each Committee detailed at the meetings. An information pack including background papers had been made available prior to the meeting. In addition, copies of the report on the Housing Revenue Account 2013/14 and Capital Programme 2013/14 received by Cabinet earlier in the day were circulated, together with a note of the revised recommendation agreed at that meeting.

The Director of Community Services and Head of Housing presented budget proposals and key service issues for the Housing - Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget 2013/14 respectively.

The main features of the presentation were:-

- National and Local Context
- Council Fund Budget Strategy
- Budget Process
- Ongoing Work
- Housing Budget
 - Council Fund
 - HRA Revenue and Capital Budget

- Key Service Issues
- Next Steps

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).

During discussion, Members thanked officers for their work in presenting a positive set of proposals in the current difficult climate.

In response to a comment made by the Chairman, the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance referred to a Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) pilot project with some Councils to assess the impact of direct payment of Housing Benefit to a number of their tenants. He suggested that details on this and in particular the example at Wakefield Council, could be shared with Members. The Head of Housing agreed to bring this information to the meeting of the Committee scheduled for the following day.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the presentation be noted; and
- (b) That the Head of Housing provide information to the Committee on the DWP pilot project on the direct payment of Housing Benefit to tenants.

40. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

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

(The meeting started at 2.00 pm and ended at 3.30 pm)

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Chairman