

COMMUNITY PROFILE AND PARTNERSHIPS
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
24 JUNE 2013

Minutes of the meeting of the Community Profile and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the Flintshire County Council held at County Hall, Mold on Monday, 24 June 2013.

PRESENT: Councillor B. Dunn (Chairman)

Councillors: R. Davies, A.I. Dunbar, R.J.T. Guest, B. Lloyd, D.I. Mackie, M.A. Reece, W.P. Shotton, I.R. Smith and N.R. Steele-Mortimer

SUBSTITUTIONS: Councillor N.M Matthews for C.J. Dolphin, and C.A. Thomas for D.T.M. Williams

APOLOGIES: Councillor A.P. Shotton

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor P.G. Heesom

CONTRIBUTORS: Chief Executive, Professor P. Heard, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research), Glyndwr University (for minute No.4), and the Policy Performance and Partnerships Manager

ATTENDANCE:

Member Engagement Manager and Committee Officer

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

The Chairman sought nominations for a Vice-Chairman for the Committee.

Councillor D.I. Mackie proposed that Councillor R.J.T. Guest be appointed Vice-Chair of the Committee. The proposal was seconded and when put to the vote Councillor Guest was appointed Vice-Chair of the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor R.J.T. Guest be appointed Vice-Chair of the Committee.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 22 April 2013, were submitted.

Matters arising

Councillor M.A. Reece said he had referred to the extra 54 Police Constables made available and asked if they would be deployed “on the beat” to act as a physical deterrent but had not received a response to his question.

The Member Engagement Manager indicated that he would pursue the information which the Police and Crime Commissioner had been asked to provide and forward it to Members.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. GLYNDWR UNIVERSITY AND ITS LINKS WITH FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

The Chairman welcomed and introduced Professor Peter Heard, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research), Glyndwr University, and invited him to give a presentation on the linkages between the University and the Council.

Professor Heard provided background information and referred to the University’s two ‘campus’ sites in Flintshire which were the Advanced Composites Training and Development Centre at Broughton and Glyndwr University at Northop. He advised that the campuses formed part of the University’s developing Knowledge Industry Corridor which included Glyndwr University St. Asaph and two centres in Wrexham. He made particular reference to the ASTUTE project (Advanced Sustainable Manufacturing Technologies) which is a Pan Wales initiative, with Glyndwr working alongside the universities of Swansea and Cardiff, as well as other universities in Wales, to stimulate economic growth by applying advanced engineering technologies to manufacturing, particularly in the Aerospace and automotive sectors.

Professor Heard explained that the University engaged with the Authority at various levels and referred specifically to the strong links established with the Economic Development team within the Authority. He reported that the University had worked with the Authority on key strategic bodies including the Mersey-Dee Alliance and Deeside Enterprise Zone and had collaborated to support the City Regions bid.

The Chairman thanked Professor Heard for his overview and invited Members to raise questions.

In response to a question from Councillor R.J.T. Guest around the development of links with the Authority, Professor Heard suggested that a strategic away day would be a useful way to move forward.

Councillor C.A. Thomas asked if the University was represented on the Flintshire Local Service Board (LSB). Professor Heard advised that he sat

on the Flintshire Local Service Board and ensured that the University aligned itself with and made use of the LSB. In response to a further question from Councillor Thomas concerning links with schools Professor Heard advised that the University enjoyed strong links with many schools across Flintshire from primary level up to around the age of 16.

The Chief Executive referred to the Economic Ambition Board and gave an overview of its purpose commenting on manufacturing technology in Wales and the need for skills planning, provision and education. Professor Heard advised that a member of the University's Executive would shortly join the Economic Ambition Board.

Councillor C.A. Thomas asked if it was intended that Glyndwr University would become part of Coleg Cambria. Professor Heard said he was currently unable to comment on the structure of education across the region and made reference to the Web Review report which was to be submitted to the Minister on 28 June 2013. The Chief Executive commented on collaborative working with universities across the border and on the Web Review and the recommendations expected from it.

In response to the further questions and observations put forward by Members Professor Heard emphasised the need to encourage students to have the aspiration to progress to higher education. He also outlined his ambition to establish an advance manufacturing centre which facilitated the needs of all manufacturing industries within the region. He referred to a predicted skills shortage in the future and the need for a qualified and skilled labour force to service the demands of businesses and provide "careers for life". Professor Heard explained that investment to fund the development of the manufacturing centre would be sought from both the Welsh Government and the private sector.

The Chairman thanked Professor Heard for an informative presentation.

RESOLVED:

That the presentation be received and Professor Heard be thanked for his attendance.

5. REGIONAL COLLABORATION PROJECTS

The Chief Executive introduced a report to inform the Committee of the current regional collaboration projects and to invite members to contribute to a review of governance and reporting arrangements to be carried out by the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Audit Committees.

The Chief Executive advised that collaboration projects ranged in type and scale and referred to the type, purpose, benefits, progress, performance and governance arrangements for each collaboration as detailed in the report.

He explained that a summary of all the principal collaboration projects within the region where Flintshire was a partner was attached to the report.

The Chairman invited Members to raise questions.

Councillor D.I. Mackie expressed the need for good control of collaboration arrangements and raised concerns around the submission of remote reports and whether they would address the interests and implications for the Authority sufficiently. The Chief Executive responded to the points made and gave an assurance of the protocols introduced to address new proposed principal collaboration, principal collaboration under development, and any adopted and implemented principal collaboration.

Councillor R.J.T. Guest also expressed concerns around the progress and scrutiny arrangements for collaborative working. He referred to the decision at the meeting of Cabinet on 21 May 2013 that the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the Audit Committee be invited to review governance and performance reporting arrangements for principal collaborations, and suggested that the Community Profile and Partnerships Overview & Scrutiny Committee should also be invited to join the review. The proposal was agreed by Members.

Councillor C.A. Thomas referred to the arrangements for schools under Gwasanaeth Effeithiolrwydd a Gwella Ysgolion Rhanbarthol Gogledd Cymru (GWeR) and asked if schools were being contacted to see how they were feeling about it. She commented that schools may experience remoteness about the new arrangements. The Chief Executive commented on the operational structure in place to support and respond to the changing needs of schools.

The Chief Executive responded to Members' questions, following which the Member Engagement Manager commented that the Committee would become an integral part of the consultation on governance for collaborative working.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (a) That the progress made by North Wales as a progressive region and by Flintshire as a progressive Council be noted: and
- (b) That a review of governance for principal collaborations be carried out jointly by the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee, the Audit Committee, and the Community Profile & Partnerships Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

6. FLINTSHIRE COMMUNITY ENDOWMENT FUND

The Policy Performance and Partnerships Manager introduced a report to advise of the final arrangements of the 'Flintshire Community Endowment Fund' prior to any agreed launch. In addition the report provided advice from

the Head of Finance in her Section 151 statutory officer role in relation to risk, return and value for money as set out in the recommendation to the November 2012 Cabinet report.

The Policy Performance and Partnerships Manager provided background information and outlined the working arrangements for the closure and transfer of existing moribund and ineffective education trust funds to a newly established 'Flintshire Community Endowment Fund' to be managed and administered by the trustees of the Community Foundation in Wales.

Councillor R.J.T. Guest expressed concerns regarding the governance arrangements for the Fund. He referred to the proposed composition of the Grants Panel and suggested that it would be helpful to include an educational representative in the membership. Councillor Guest also commented on the proposal to encourage donations to the Fund from potential philanthropic individuals, companies, businesses and organisations and expressed the view that there was a need to promote independence from the Authority concerning decision making on grant distributions.

The Chief Executive acknowledged the points made by Councillor Guest. The Policy Performance and Partnerships Manager referred to the setting up of a North Wales Business Development Group as a strategic body to grow and develop funds.

Councillor N.R. Steele-Mortimer expressed his support for the new Fund. He referred to the 16 educational trust funds which were moribund or ineffective and asked if details could be provided to the Committee of the purpose and amount in each fund. Officers agreed to send a list of the funds to members of the Committee.

Councillor D.I. Mackie commented on the need for the Fund to retain links with the original objectives. The Policy Performance and Partnerships Manager explained that any investment from the Fund would be targeted for educational purposes up to 25 years with specific aims.

Councillor A.I. Dunbar raised a query about the Community Chest fund. The Policy Performance and Partnerships Manager said that there was no intention to close the Community Chest fund as a result of the establishment of the Flintshire Community Endowment Fund.

In response to a query from Councillor C.A. Thomas concerning applications for funding the Policy Performance and Partnerships Manager explained that the allocation of grants did not replace statutory provision and funding was available for individuals and groups.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the closedown and transfer of existing moribund and ineffective education trust funds to a newly established 'Flintshire Community Endowment Fund' to be managed and administered by the trustees of

the Community Foundation in Wales, be noted, given the assurances provided by the Head of Finance in her Section 151 statutory officer role, but noting the potential risks which remain; and

- (b) That the Flintshire Community Endowment Fund be launched with the working arrangements as set out in the report.

7. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Member Engagement Manager introduced the Forward Work Programme of the Committee.

Members reviewed the current programme and agreed that the following items be considered at the next meeting of the Committee to be held on 25 July 2013. In response to a suggestion put forward by Councillor N.R. Steele-Mortimer it was also agreed that a presentation on the Flintshire Neighbourhood Wardens be included on the agenda.

- Flintshire Community Safety Partnership
- Strategic Partnerships report
- To include an update on Flintshire Neighbourhood Wardens

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Forward Work Programme be agreed subject to the above; and
- (b) That the arrangements in hand for a presentation by the Royal National Lifeboat Institution be noted.

8. DURATION OF MEETING

The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. and ended at 11.45 a.m.

9. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

There were two members of the press in attendance.

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Chairman