

**TO: Councillor: Arnold Woolley  
(Chairman)**

Councillors: Carol Ellis, Patrick Heesom, Mel Higham,  
Dennis Hutchinson, Nancy Matthews JP, Neville Phillips  
OBE, Tony Sharps, Nigel Steele-Mortimer, Helen Yale

Your Ref /  
Eich Cyf

Our Ref / Ein NG  
Cyf

Date / Dyddiad 29/10/2008

Ask for / Gofynner am Graham Connah

Direct Dial / Rhif Union 01352 702336

Fax / Ffacs

Dear Sir / Madam,

A meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** will be held in the **CLWYD COMMITTEE ROOM, COUNTY HALL, MOLD** on **WEDNESDAY, 29 OCTOBER 2008** at **09:30** to consider the following items.

Yours faithfully



Assistant Director (Democratic Services)

### **AGENDA**

1. **APOLOGIES**

2. **MINUTES**

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 07/10/2008 (copy enclosed).

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING REPORTS

**STRATEGIC REPORTS**

4. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY / BUDGET 2009/10 PROCESS & LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT 2009/10  
Report of the County Finance Officer and Chief Executive - Portfolio of the Leader and Executive Member for Finance and Asset Management

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5. DRAFT IMPROVEMENT AGREEMENT (WITH WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT)  
Report of the Chief Executive - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Corporate Governance and Strategy
6. COUNCIL PLAN REVIEW  
Report of the Chief Executive - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Corporate Governance and Strategy
7. "PLANNING POLICY CHANGES TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL AREAS - MEETING HOUSING NEEDS"  
WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT DRAFT POLICY CONSULTATION  
Report of the Director of Environment - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Environment
8. EMERGING FLINTSHIRE UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN: PUBLIC INQUIRY FEES – ADDITIONAL COSTS  
Report of the Director of Environment - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Housing Strategy and Planning
9. FLINT TOWNSCAPE HERITAGE INITIATIVE BID UPDATE  
Report of the Director of Environment - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Environment

**OPERATIONAL REPORTS**

10. ESTYN REPORT ON THE QUALITY OF ADULT COMMUNITY BASED LEARNING IN FLINTSHIRE  
Report of the Director of Lifelong Learning - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Education and Youth
11. OUT OF COUNTY PLACEMENTS  
Report of the Director of Lifelong Learning and Director of Community Services - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Social Services and Executive Member for Education and Youth
12. LEISURE CENTRE ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY: MOLD SPORTS CENTRE  
Report of the Director of Lifelong Learning - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Education and Youth and Executive Member for Leisure and Public Protection
13. RACE EQUALITY SCHEME –ANNUAL REPORT 2007-2008  
Report of the Chief Executive - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Corporate Governance and Strategy
14. HOUSING REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE SERVICE MID YEAR REVIEW  
Report of the Director of Community Services - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Estate Management (Housing and Industrial/Commercial and Agricultural)
15. BUILDING MAINTENANCE TRADING ACCOUNT 2008/09

Report of the Director of Community Services - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Estate Management (Housing and Industrial/Commercial and Agricultural)

16. VACANT DESIGNATED WARDEN ACCOMMODATION  
Report of the Director of Community Services - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Estate Management (Housing and Industrial/Commercial and Agricultural)
17. FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR ADOPTERS AND GUARDIANS  
Report of the Director of Community Services - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Social Services
18. DESIGN CONSULTANCY FEE INCOME FOR 2008/2009  
Report of the Director of Environment - Portfolio of the Leader and Executive Member for Finance and Asset Management
19. BUSINESS RATES - WRITE OFFS  
Report of the County Finance Officer - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Finance and Asset Management
20. BUSINESS RATES - SMALL BUSINESS RATE RELIEF SCHEME  
Report of the County Finance Officer - Portfolio of the Leader and Executive Member for Finance and Asset Management
21. EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS  
Report of the Chief Executive enclosed.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 - TO CONSIDER THE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The following item is considered to be exempt by virtue of Paragraph(s) 12, 13, 14 and 15 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

**STRATEGIC REPORTS**

22. AD WASTE  
Report of the Chief Executive and County Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer and Director of Environment - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Waste Strategy and Management
23. NORTH WALES WASTE TREATMENT PROJECT

Report of the Chief Executive and County Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer and Director of Environment - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Waste Strategy and Management

24. **PHASE II OF ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE**  
Report of the Chief Executive - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Corporate Governance and Strategy
25. **VOLUNTARY SECTOR GRANT MANAGEMENT PRACTICE**  
Report of the Chief Executive - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Corporate Governance and Strategy

### **OPERATIONAL REPORTS**

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26. **SCHOOL PLAYING FIELDS GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT**  
Report of the Director of Lifelong Learning - Portfolio of the Executive Member for Education and Youth and Executive Member for Leisure and Public Protection
27. **FOR INFORMATION**  
A copy of the Executive Forward Work Programme (Months 09/08 to 11/08) (as considered by the Executive on 5 August, 2008) together with an update are enclosed for information.















**EXECUTIVE**  
**7<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2008**

Minutes of the meeting of the Executive of Flintshire County Council held in County Hall, Mold on Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> October, 2008.

**PRESENT: Councillor A Woolley (Chairman)**

Councillors: P G Heesom, M Higham, H D Hutchinson, N Matthews, L A Sharps, N R Steele-Mortimer and H Yale.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Councillors J B Attridge, K Armstrong-Braun, R C Bithell, H Bateman, V Gay, R Jones, D Mackie and A P Shotton.

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Chief Executive, Director of Community Services, County Legal & Democratic Services Officer, County Finance Officer, Director of Lifelong Learning, Director of Environment, Assistant Director of ICT and Customer Services and Democratic Services Manager.

**100. WELCOME**

The Chairman welcomed the Directors of Lifelong Learning and Environment to their first meeting of the Executive.

**101. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2008 were confirmed as a correct record.

**102. POST OFFICE CLOSURES**

Arising from Minute No. 82 of the Executive, the Chief Executive reported that he was expecting a response this week to the representations made in relation to Post Office closures.

Later in the meeting he received a response confirming that the consultation period would not be extended. He indicated that there were other matters of detail which he wished to investigate and would report back in due course.

**103. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None were received.

## 104. STRATEGIC REPORTS

The previously circulated report of the Chief Executive was submitted. The purpose of the report was to receive the Review of the Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges and to agree the process for sharing the revised Assessment with Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the Audit Committee. The Chief Executive gave a powerpoint presentation to supplement his report.

Circulated at the meeting were the most up-to-date figures relating to the Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges and the Chief Executive advised that the document provided the foundations for both the Council Plan and the Regulatory Plan. It defined and detailed the priorities for change and improvement and was supported by the Council's Business Planning processes and disciplines including Service Planning, Risk Management and Financial Monitoring and Review.

The Chief Executive explained that the Strategic Assessment of Risk and Challenges comprised three categories:-

- Community Leadership
- Council Delivery
- Council Governance

It was necessary to review progress against each of these categories. The review document showed the level of risk, pre-action, and provided a commentary as to progress against actions. It also showed the level of risk remaining post action.

He indicated that there were 12 Community Leadership risks, 33 Council Delivery risks and 23 Council Governance risks and commented upon them and the progress that had been made.

The Chief Executive indicated that the Officers were keen to meet the challenges and unless they were absolutely convinced that progress was made, they left the topic in the red category. He explained that the next steps would be for the Audit Committee and Overview and Scrutiny Committees to consider the management of existing risks and review new/emerging risks. Following this the revised position will be presented to the Executive on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2009.

The Executive Member for Planning and Housing Strategy welcomed the report, particularly the link which would develop between the Scrutiny and Audit Committees and individual Members.

The Executive Member for the Environment suggested that although the outcome of the UDP was still awaited, preparatory work on the Local Development Plan could commence. The Chief Executive indicated that preparatory work was already being undertaken. A number of Members

welcomed the format of the report and the “traffic lights” system of identifying the areas of risk.

**RESOLVED:**

- a) That progress against the Strategic Risk and Challenges, be noted.
- b) That the process for sharing details of progress made against the risks and challenges of the Overview and Scrutiny and Audit Committees, be agreed.

**105. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2007/08**

The Executive considered the previously circulated report of the Chief Executive, the purpose of which was to endorse the proposed contents of communication plans for the 2007/08 Annual Performance report. The report detailed the background to its preparation and identified the key considerations.

The Chief Executive confirmed that consideration was being given to the document being web based.

**RESOLVED:**

- a) That the proposed contents of the Communication Plans for the 2007/08 Annual Performance, be endorsed.
- b) That the final draft report be considered at a special meeting of the Executive on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2008 prior to consideration by County Council on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2008.

**106. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS**

The Executive considered the previously submitted report of the Chief Executive, the purpose of which was to advise and update Members on the current arrangements for reporting Performance Management issues. The report also advised Members of methods to ensure consistent and relevant reporting arrangements which inform the organisation in an accurate and timely manner about performance. The Chief Executive supplemented his report with a powerpoint presentation.

The Chief Executive reported that the Council's approach to target setting had been reviewed to improve reporting, understanding and decision-making. The following categories of targets had been endorsed by the Executive on 5<sup>th</sup> August 2008:

- Improvement target
- Incremental target
- Maintenance target

The Chief Executive reported that target categorisation had initially been considered by a joint meeting of People and Performance and Corporate Management Overview and Scrutiny Committees to which the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of all other Overview and Scrutiny Committees had been invited. A formal approach had been developed and Executive would receive a mid-year position for quarters 1 and 2 in November.

The Chief Executive explained that Executive Members were accountable for performance in their Portfolios alongside Senior Officers and may request Overview and Scrutiny to undertake further work on their behalf. He further explained that the Overview and Scrutiny Committees would receive service performance data that was relevant to their area on a quarterly basis.

It was noted that Scrutiny's role was to review the progress of performance and advise on the quality and robustness of the Action Plan being followed to achieve performance.

Members were pleased to note the level of progress that had been made but the Executive Members for the Environment and for Planning and Housing Strategy referred to continuing difficulties in the Housing Service. The Chief Executive, whilst acknowledging this, felt it was worth noting the improvements that had been made over the six month period.

**RESOLVED:**

- a) That the approach to Performance Management Reporting for further development and review at the mid-year point, be endorsed.
- b) That the categorisation of targets be endorsed and that reports be received back from Overview and Scrutiny Committees as to further development, be endorsed.
- c) That an update in the form of a presentation on the Local Government Data Unit's Bulletin published in 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2008, be received.

**107. DRAFT PROCUREMENT STRATEGY 2008/09 – 2010/11**

The Executive considered the previously circulated report of the County Finance Officer, the purpose of which was to seek approval for the Flintshire County Council's Draft Corporate Procurement Strategy for 2008/09 – 2010/11. The Strategy provided a three year framework for improving Procurement within the Council. The report detailed the background to its preparation and identified that the Strategy in its current form was draft and that feedback and suggestions would be welcomed. The County Finance Officer expanded upon this point.

The Executive Member for Finance welcomed the report and advised that its substance was sound.

**RESOLVED:**

- a) That the contents of the draft Procurement Strategy 2008/09 – 2010/11, be noted; and
- b) That a final version be submitted to the Executive at its meeting scheduled for 18<sup>th</sup> November 2008.

**108. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY UPDATE**

A report of the Assistant Director of ICT and Customer Services, previously circulated, was submitted. The purpose of the report was to provide the Executive with an update on the Corporate Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Strategy. This update was part of the mid-year review of all major corporate strategies covering the Council's key resources, information, finance and people and assets.

The report detailed the background to its preparation and identified the key considerations.

**RESOLVED:**

That the progress made in implementing the Corporate ICT Strategy and the commitment to reduce the environmental impact from ICT, be endorsed.

**109. VOLUNTARY SECTOR COMPACT**

The report of the Chief Executive, copies of which had been previously circulated, was submitted. The purpose of the report was to note the progress and endorse a revised approach to the Voluntary Sector Compact.

The report detailed the background to its preparation and identified the key considerations. It was noted that considerable progress had been made at Compact meetings and in between. Three meetings had been held and the first meeting in March 2008 centred around three main areas which were identified in the report. It was noted that the forward programme for the Compact was based on two main work streams, which were grant management and local volunteering.

The Executive Member for Lifelong Learning acknowledged the improved relationship with the voluntary sector.

The Executive Member for Planning and Housing Strategy declared that he was a Member of the Board of the Flintshire Voluntary Council.

**RESOLVED:**

That the revised approach to the Voluntary Sector Compact be endorsed.

**110. COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGIC PLAN**

The report of the Chief Executive, which had previously been circulated, was submitted. The purpose of the report was to approve and adopt the Community Safety Partnership Strategy Plan.

The report detailed the background to its preparation and identified key considerations noting that there was a statutory duty for the Local Authority, Police Authority, Police Service, Local Health Board and Fire Authority/Fire Service to work together for community safety. These Bodies made up the Community Safety Partnership together with the Probation Service and Voluntary Sector representatives and were required each year to produce a Strategic Assessment and Strategic Plan.

The Chief Executive also referred to the Green Paper on Policing which he was pursuing with a possibility of a presentation being made to the meeting of the County Council. The Leader felt that this was an excellent report and commended it to the Executive.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Community Safety Strategic Plan, be approved and adopted

**111. UPDATE ON CHANGES IN THE NHS**

The Executive considered the previously submitted report of the Director of Community Services, the purpose of which was to update Members on consultation in respect of a range of developments to make changes in the NHS Wales nationally and regionally.

The Director of Community Services opened the presentation by advising that he understood details had been released whereby the proposals would allow for mental health provision to be a separate National body and that there would be seven Regional Boards.

The report noted that the Minister's most recent statement indicated:

- Agreement that there should be one NHS organisation serving North Wales;
- Support for a new National NHS Board
- A consensus to strengthen the scrutiny role of Community Health Councils



The Director of Community Services advised that there were a number of significant issues for the Local Authorities to consider alongside the proposed NHS reforms and these were referred to in the report. She also advised on the outcome of a report on neuro-surgery services in North Wales and set out the main recommendations in her report.

The Director of Community Services also referred to the significant concerns of officers about the single All Wales Mental Health Service proposed in the Williams' report. These had been summarised in response to the consultation outlining a range of issues from a Local Authority perspective.

The Executive was informed that there was a series of consultation events on the Community Services Redevelopment Project (Glan Clwyd Hospital) which were being organised by North Wales Trusts. Presentations had been made or were planned for a number of strategic partnership groups. It was noted that an event for Flintshire County Council Members and Senior Officers had been provisionally arranged for 14<sup>th</sup> November 2008.

**RESOLVED:**

- a) That the consultation responses made to date on the NHS Reform, be supported.
- b) That the attendance by Members at the consultation events at Glan Clwyd Hospital, be supported.

**112. REGIONAL TECHNICAL STATEMENT FOR FUTURE AGGREGATES SUPPLY**

The report of the Director of Environment, which had been previously circulated, was submitted. The purpose of the report was to advise Members of the Regional Technical Statement (RTS) and to endorse it with reservations to facilitate future Strategic and Local Development Plan (LDP), Policy Development to ensure an uninterrupted and long-term supply of aggregate, was made available for the construction sector.

The report was presented by the Executive Member for Planning and Housing Strategy. He referred in particular to paragraph 2.08 where the Plan was considered on a regional basis. The Executive Member also commented that the Council were fortunate to have in its employ Mr Gary Nancarrow who is highly knowledgeable in this area.

**RESOLVED:**

That a Regional Technical Statement, with reservations, to facilitate the preparation of future Development Plans and to enable the continued development of the RTS at future review, be endorsed.

### **113. REGULATORY PLAN : MID-YEAR REVIEW**

The report of the Chief Executive, which had been previously circulated, was submitted. The purpose of which was to provide a mid-year report on the management of the Regulatory Plan. The report detailed the background to its preparation.

In presenting his report, the Chief Executive referred in particular to paragraph 3.04, whereby he had stated that it was the aim to reduce core regulator fees by 10% in 2009/10 which would be in the region of £45,000, to reflect a reduction in requirement for Regulation. The improved processes for self-regulation and the reduction in the amount of regulatory work identified, should lead to this reduction in fees.

The Chief Executive reported that the Regulators were also being encouraged to identify efficiency savings from within their own work programmes and also to be transparent in indicating the number of work days and costs of each piece of Regulatory work. This evidence should provide the Council with a better understanding of the costs of Regulatory work in relation to its quality.

The Executive very much welcomed this report and the aims of the Chief Executive to reduce the fees as identified.

In this respect the Executive Member for Planning and Housing Strategy felt that the Chief Executive should be delegated full authority to pursue this matter as actively as necessary.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- a) That continuing improvement of the management of the Regulatory Plan, be endorsed and a progress report against the 2007/08 Plan be noted.
- b) That the Chief Executive be granted delegated authority to pursue this matter as necessary.

### **114. HIGHWAYS INFRASTRUCTURE AUDIT - UPDATE**

The report of the Director of Environment, previously circulated, was submitted. The purpose of which was to update Members on the progress being made with the actions arising from the Wales Audit Office (WAO) report on Flintshire County Council's Highway Infrastructure (November 2007). The report was presented by the Executive Member for the Environment who took the opportunity to welcome Mr Carl Longland as the new Director.

The report detailed the background to its preparation and the Director of Environment thanked the Executive for the opportunity to help make the changes necessary to improve the service.

The Director of Environment acknowledged that considerable work had already been done but expressed caution that there could be a downside because the Council could lose funding because of the already high standard of its roads. However, he anticipated that the Highways Network Management Plan would help to address this problem.

The Executive Member for Planning and Housing Strategy welcomed the comments, particularly in relation to the work already undertaken by existing members of staff.

**RESOLVED:**

That the progress being made and the actions arising from the Welsh Audit Office Highways Infrastructure Review, be noted

**115. OUTCOMES OF THE CARE AND SOCIAL SERVICES INSPECTORATE WALES (CSSIW) OF THE FLINTSHIRE FOSTER CARE SERVICES 2006 AND 2007**

The report of the Director of Community Services, previously circulated, was submitted. The purpose of which was to advise and inform the Executive of the Inspection of the Foster Care Services for 2006/07 by the Care and Social Services Inspection Wales (CSSIW). The report was presented by the Director of Community Services.

The Chief Executive, supported by the Leader, paid tribute to the Foster Carers who undertook such excellent work on behalf of the Council. As part of the background to the report, the Director of Community Services expanded upon the role of the Foster Carers in the various categories. She also expanded upon the details of the two Inspection reports and identified the conclusions, which referred to two areas:

- Achievements of the Foster Care Service 2006/07
- Areas for Improvement highlighted in 2006/07

It was noted that both reports reflected a service which continued to demonstrate continuous improvement year on year.

**RESOLVED:**

That the continuous improvement of the Foster Care Service, as evidenced by the CSSIW Inspection Report for 2006/07, be noted.

**116. NORTH WALES REGIONAL COLLABORATION**

The joint report of the Chief Executive and Assistant Director of ICT and Customer Services, previously circulated, was submitted. The purpose of which was to update Members on the Portfolio collaborative projects in

progress across the six North Wales Councils. The report detailed the background to its preparation and identified a number of considerations. Attached as an Appendix to the report was the Board's Operating report which provided an outline of the current project Portfolio identifying the project status and progress to date.

The Chief Executive indicated that a more detailed report would be submitted in due course.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

**117. MAKING THE CONNECTIONS – MAKING THE MOST OF OUR RESOURCES**

The report of the County Finance Officer, previously circulated, was submitted, the purpose of which was to provide the Executive with details of the efficiency gains achieved in 2008 as set out in Making the Connections Agenda. The report was presented by the County Finance Officer who reported upon the levels of efficiencies in 2007/08 and projected for 2008/09 against target and how they had been included in the budget. Details of efficiency gains would be included in the 2007/08 Annual Performance Report.

The Executive Member for Finance indicated extensive work was on target in this area. It was also suggested that the improved procurement strategy would add to the efficiency targets.

**RESOLVED:**

That the efficiency gains achieved by the Authority, be noted.

**118. PLANNING DEVELOPMENT CONTROL – REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENTS**

The Executive considered the previously submitted report of the Director of Environment, the purpose of which was to inform Members of the Planning Development Control (DC) service, both in relation to the statistics submitted to the Welsh Assembly Government in connection with the quarterly survey of Welsh Local Planning Authorities and the improvements to the service identified through various reports and included in the Directorate Service Plan 2008/09.

The report was presented by the Director of Environment who explained that this was the first quarter report and identified the background to its preparation. Particular reference was made to the situation whereby the Development Control Section was currently preparing for the switch over to the National Standard Planning Application Form, which was termed (1APP)

and would replace all existing types of planning application forms, except minerals, within Wales. It was noted that this process was geared to the electronic submission of applications. The report expanded upon the operation of this system.

The figures for each of the following areas were fully detailed in the report:

- Planning Applications;
- Appeals;
- Enforcements

In commenting upon the report, the Member for Planning and Housing Strategy indicated that the scope of Planning required to be as transparent as possible and he felt that these reports would benefit that.

**RESOLVED:**

That the contents of the report be noted and that quarterly reports be presented to the Executive on Performance Improvements in the Planning Development Control Services.

**119. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2008/09 (MONTH 4)**

A report of the County Finance Officer, copies of which had been previously circulated, was submitted. The County Finance Officer presented the report which provided an update on the Council's financial position for 2008/09 in respect of the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account.

Members were requested to note the project overspend of £0.069m on the General Fund and the projected underspend of £0.116m on the Housing Revenue Account. It was noted that as it was at a very early stage in the year there were many risks associated with the projections and some of these were identified in paragraph 2.16 of the report. Members were also requested to note that unallocated non-standard inflation of £1.529m and central contingencies of £0.085m were assumed to be spent and future allocations would be monitored through subsequent monitoring reports (section 3). On the basis that all non ring-fenced underspends would be returned to the reserve and that the net ring-fenced overspends would be met from the reserve, the contingency sum available at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009 (above the base level of £5.112m) would be £2.947m (para 4.01). However this would reduce to £2.250m if the current projected Directorate non ring-fenced overspends were not managed within the cash limited budget (para 4.03). Taking into account the projected underspend of £0.116m on the Housing Revenue Account, the level of balances at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009 would be £1.366m (para 5.06), however this could reduce following further work undertaken on issues surrounding the Building Maintenance Trading Account (Part 04).

The Executive Member for Planning and Housing Strategy commented upon the level of work being undertaken relating to Housing funding.

**120. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2008/09 (MONTH 4)**

The report of the County Finance Officer, which had previously been circulated, was submitted. The report was presented by the County Finance Officer, the purpose of which was to provide Members with the latest Capital Programme information for 2008/09. It was noted that the Council approved the Capital Programme for 2008/09 of £48.590m at its meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2008.

As part of the consideration, the report identified movements within the Programme and these were identified in a table which showed how the Programme had changed during 2008/09. Detailed information relating to each Programme area was summarised within the report, provided at Appendix A to the report. The report also identified the movement during the given period within the various categories.

The County Finance Officer also referred to contractually uncommitted generally financed budgets and identified savings. The report also identified how the Capital Programme was financed and the shortfall in anticipated capital receipts for both the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account.

The Executive Member for Finance supported the recommendation.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted and approved.

**121. ENFORCEMENT POLICY – HEALTH AND SAFETY SECTION, PUBLIC PROTECTION**

The previously circulated report of the Director of Environment was submitted, the purpose of which was to seek approval for the Enforcement Policy (Health and Safety Section, Public Protection). The report was presented by the Director of Environment.

It was noted that this section of the Authority was responsible for enforcing Health and Safety Legislation in approximately 2,700 premises within the County. As part of the Improvement Agenda it was necessary to have an up to date enforcement policy which had been approved by the Council.

The Executive Member for Leisure enquired how small businesses would be informed of the relevant policies and the Leader indicated that it would be via the Federation of Small Businesses.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Council be recommended to approve the Enforcement Policy of the Health and Safety Section, Public Protection as detailed in the report.

**123. ENFORCEMENT POLICY – LICENSING SECTION, PUBLIC PROTECTION**

The report of the Director of Environment, previously circulated, was submitted for consideration. The purpose of the report was to seek approval for the Enforcement Policy (Licensing Section, Public Protection) and was presented by the Director of Environment.

The Director of Environment advised that it was necessary for the Licensing Committee to formally approve this Policy. The report detailed the background to its preparation and identified the key considerations.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Enforcement Policy of the Licensing Section, Public Protection, as detailed in the report be approved and recommended to the Licensing Committee.

**123. PROPOSED DEDICATION OF COUNCIL-OWNED LAND AS PUBLIC FOOTPATH AT CASTLE PARK, FLINT**

The report of the County Legal and Democratic Services, previously circulated, was submitted. The purpose of the report was to seek approval in principle for the dedication of Council-owned land as a public right of way on foot i.e. a public footpath and grant delegated powers to the Director of Community Services to give effect of this dedication.

The report noted that the dedication of this way as a public footpath would provide a valuable addition to the Public Right of Way network as well as linking Flint with the coastal hinterland and public footpaths which would, by 2012, form part of an All Wales Coastal Footpath.

The Executive Member for Planning and Housing Strategy indicated that this proposal would not affect any possible future development, such as a Flint By-pass.

**RESOLVED:**

- a) That approval be given, in principle, to the dedication of land in the ownership of the Council for public use as a footpath as identified by a bold broken line on the map attached to the report.
- b) That delegated authority be given to the Director of Community Services to give effect the Dedication upon the completion of a statement in a form prepared by the County Legal and Democratic Services Officer setting out the terms of the dedication.
- c) In the event of the County Legal and Democratic Services Officer considering that there is sufficient evidence in the Council's ownership of the two areas of land in respect of which there are no Title Deeds,

delegated authority be given to the Director of Community Services to include these two areas in the Dedication or in a separate Dedication in the same terms as in a) above.

**124. SURFACE WATER SEWER AT YR YDLAN, BRYN ROAD, BRYN-Y-BAAL**

The report of the County Legal and Democratic Services Officer, previously circulated, was submitted. The purpose of which was for the Executive to consider providing guarantees to Dwr Cymru to enable it to adopt the perforated land drain which constituted a surface water sewer serving the residential developments at this location.

The report detailed the background to its preparation, the report also detailed the relevant considerations.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Council gave an assurance to Dwr Cymru that it will maintain the perforated land drain in perpetuity on condition that Dwr Cymru adopt the surface water sewer system servicing the development.

**125. RECRUITMENT OF NEW MEMBERS AND RE-APPOINTMENT OF EXISTING MEMBERS TO THE FLINTSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM**

The Joint report of the County Legal and Democratic Services Officer and Director of Environment, previously circulated, was submitted. The purpose of which was to approve the proposed recruitment and appointment process for the new Membership of the Flintshire Local Access Forum. The report detailed the background to its preparation and referred to the key considerations relevant to the appointment to the Forum.

**RESOLVED:**

- a) That the Executive note, and endorse, the proposed recruitment process for the establishment of the new Membership of the Flintshire Local Access Forum.
- b) That the County Legal and Democratic Services Officer and the Director of Environment be given delegated authority, jointly, to appoint Members of the new Forum, to appoint replacement Members when necessary and to determine the number of Members of the new Forum such members not to exceed 15.



**126. GREENFIELD VALLEY TRUST LTD – ACCOUNTS FOR 2007**

The report of the Director of Lifelong Learning, previously circulated, was submitted. The purpose of which was to submit, to the County Council, the accounts of the Greenfield Valley Trust Ltd for the period 1<sup>st</sup> January – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2007. The report detailed the background to its preparation and it was noted that under the terms of the Management Agreement, the Trust must submit to the Council an audited set of year end accounts.

It was noted that the audited accounts for the financial year 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2007, were available for inspection in the Members' Library.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be received.

**127. EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS**

An information report of the Chief Executive, copies of which had been previously circulated, was submitted. The purpose of the report was to inform Members of the actions taken under delegated powers.

The actions taken were set out below:

- a) **Community and Housing**  
– Sale of Land to the rear of Connah's Quay Shopping Precinct and Fronting Fron Road for the development of a primary health care centre.
- b) **Community and Housing**  
Deed of Rectification relating to access/egress for 54 Fraser Drive, Buckley.

**128. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 – TO CONSIDER THE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:**

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting as the following item was considered to be exempt by virtue of paragraph 15 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (a) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)

**129. NORTH EAST WALES COMMUNITY EQUIPMENT SERVICE**

The joint report of the Director of Community Services and the Director of Environment, previously circulated, was submitted for consideration. The purpose of the report was to seek approval for the proposed acquisition of the

new premises for the North East Wales Community Equipment Service with the Council's partner Authority, Wrexham County Borough Council.

A similar authorisation process was being undertaken at Wrexham and authorisation at both Authorities would be required to release the total sum concerned. The report detailed the background to its preparation.

The Executive Member for Planning and Housing Strategy initially expressed reservations about the proposal but the Director of Community Services explained the level of funding that would be received from the Welsh Assembly Government, and he accepted this.

The Executive Member for Environment explained he did not support the proposal, not on the basis of the service which he felt was essential, but the principle of collaboration with another Authority.

The Chief Executive reminded the Executive that the initial approval for this scheme had been agreed by the Executive at its meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2008.

**RESOLVED:**

- a) That the acquisition of the building selected at Hawarden, Unit 3 Hawarden Business Park on terms as agreed by the Head of Technical Services and County Legal Officer to protect Flintshire and Wrexham's interests in liaison with Officers of both Authorities, be approved.
- b) That the building is acquired and held jointly or in trust for Wrexham's benefit as Officers from each Authority may consider appropriate to protect the respective Authority's interests.

**130. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

A copy of the Executive Work Programme for months 09.08 – 11.08 as considered by the Executive on 5<sup>th</sup> August 2008 together with an update, were enclosed for information. An updated copy of the Executive Work Programme months 12.08 – 04.09 was circulated at the meeting.

**131. DURATION OF MEETING**

The meeting commenced at 9.30am at ended at 11.30 am.

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

There was 1 member of the press in attendance.

.....  
Chairman

**SUMMARY OF DECLARATIONS MADE BY MEMBERS  
IN ACCORDANCE WITH FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S  
CODE OF CONDUCT**

<b>EXECUTIVE</b>	<b>DATE: 7<sup>th</sup> October 2008</b>
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<b>MEMBER</b>	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>MIN. NO. REFERS</b>
NO DECLARATIONS WERE MADE		

**FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 4**

**REPORT TO:** **EXECUTIVE**

**DATE :** **29 OCTOBER 2008**

**REPORT BY:** **COUNTY FINANCE OFFICER AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**SUBJECT :** **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY / BUDGET 2009/10  
PROCESS & LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL  
SETTLEMENT 2009/10**

**1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01 To provide Executive with:

1. An update on the work being undertaken on both the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and the 2009/10 budget.
2. Details of the Provisional Welsh Local Government Settlement 2009/10, which was announced on 15th October 2008 by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG).

**2.00 BACKGROUND**

2.01 The Executive has, to date, received three updates on the progress achieved in both developing the MTFS and progressing the 2009/10 budget - 3rd June, 5th August and 16th September 2008.

2.02 A briefing on the Provisional Settlement was provided to Executive Members and the Strategic Management Team (SMT) on 17th October 2008.

**3.00 MTFS & 2009/10 BUDGET**

Action Plan

3.01 The detailed plan to implement the principles and activities of the MTFS referred to in the 16th September 2008 Executive report has now been completed and work is underway to enable the deadlines to be met.

Mid-Year Business Reviews

3.02 Service managers have completed their mid-year business reviews, which required managers to address the areas of risk, performance, internal/ external influences and funding issues as well as identifying future pressures and possible and achievable efficiencies. This review has further enhanced the link between business and service planning and financial planning.

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Date: 27/10/2008

3.03 The mid-year business reviews, and potential financial impact of all emerging pressures and efficiencies are being considered by the Chief Executive and Directors. These items will be the subject of further discussions over the coming weeks along with detailed evaluation of resources available prior to the initial budget proposals for 2009/10 being considered by the Executive on 27th January 2009.

3.04 Details of the Provisional Settlement are set out in Section 4.00 below. In addition to financial support from WAG, the following are important in establishing the overall resources available.

1. Local Taxation Policy

One of the key considerations of a Local Taxation Policy is the setting of the Council Tax base. A report will come to Executive on 18th November 2008 to review Council Tax discounts and exemptions and to set the base of 2009/10, prior to submission to WAG by 30th November 2008.

2. Reserves and Balances

It has previously been agreed that the position as at Month 6 (end September) will form the basis of planning for 2009/10. Budget monitoring for Month 6 and the resultant estimated level of reserves and balances at 31st March 2009 will be completed by mid-November and will be reported formally to the Executive on 9th December 2008.

Overview & Scrutiny

3.05 On 29th September 2008 the Corporate Management Overview & Scrutiny Committee hosted a Scrutiny Workshop, open to all Scrutiny Members, to discuss the MTFs and 2009/10 budget process.

3.06 The Chief Executive and County Finance Officer took Members through the 5th August 2008 Executive presentation and also provided an update on the work currently being undertaken.

3.07 Members were given the opportunity to discuss, and raise questions on, both the MTFs and the work planned to be undertaken. In addition Members were offered the opportunity to attend 'drop in' sessions (8th and 9th October), or alternatively to submit written feedback, to raise issues/questions. No written feedback was received.

### School Budget Forum

- 3.08 On 2nd October 2008 the School Budget Forum received a briefing from the County Finance Officer on the MTFS and 2009/10 budget process. At this meeting the Forum was asked to submit the items it wished the Council to consider when setting the 2009/10 budget.
- 3.09 The Forum requested that the following 5 items be considered as part of the whole MTFS/budget process.
- That the recommendation of the Education Funding Task & Finish Group, requesting additional funding of £0.646m, is approved
  - That the relative under funding of schools in Flintshire is addressed by reducing the gap between Net Revenue Expenditure and the Indicator Based Assessment (IBA), and therefore the resultant funding per pupil is increased
  - That schools receive an indication of funding levels for future years
  - That sufficient funding is made available for excluded pupils
  - That the link between funding and achievement is recognised

### **4.00 LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT 2009/10**

- 4.01 At this stage figures are provisional only. It is expected that the final details will be received on 10th December 2008.
- 4.02 The formal consultation period on the Provisional Settlement is from 15th October to 18th November 2008. Arrangements will be made to coordinate the Council's formal response to WAG, which will include comments from both Executive and Scrutiny.

### Aggregate External Finance (AEF)

- 4.03 Across Wales, the overall increase in Aggregate External Finance (AEF) [made up of revenue support grant (RSG) and national non domestic rates (NNDR)] for 2009/10 over 2008/09 is 2.9%.
- 4.04 Flintshire's increase in AEF is 2.7%, bringing total AEF to £181.502m. This equates to £1,206 per capita, making Flintshire 18th out of the 22 authorities in Wales.

### Standard Spending Assessment (SSA)

- 4.05 The Assembly has retained a 'floor funding' arrangement for 2009/10, which will ensure that all authorities receive a minimum increase in AEF of 1.5%. The three authorities receiving additional funding under this arrangement,

totalling approximately £3.0m, are Anglesey, Blaenau Gwent and Powys. Due to the treatment of this arrangement in the Settlement there are two Standard Spending Assessment (SSA) figures for Flintshire - a calculated SSA (based on the sum of the AEF and assumed Council Tax Yield) and a stated SSA as published in the Provisional Settlement.

- 4.06 Flintshire's calculated SSA has increased by 2.7% to £232.590m. The stated SSA figure is £0.149m higher at £232.739m.

#### Council Tax Yield

- 4.07 Based on the calculated SSA and AEF level announced for Flintshire for 2009/10, the amount to be collected from Council Tax would be £51.088m (an increase of 2.8%). Assuming no increase in Flintshire's Council Tax base this would indicate a rise in the Band D Council Tax of 2.8% to spend at the calculated SSA. However, this is subject to change at the Final Settlement stage as the Provisional SSA is based on the current 2008/09 tax base.

#### Included within the Provisional Settlement

- 4.08 The Assembly's draft budget announced an additional £10.0m of funding for local government, calculated as follows:

	£m
Floor funding	3.0
LABGI funding	3.0
Pay and price pressures	4.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>10.0</b>

- 4.09 Whilst it was anticipated that the Authority would receive an element of the additional £7.0m, relating to Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI) and pay and price pressures, there have also been some significant changes to key datasets which have offset any additional funding.
- 4.10 As with the 2008/09 Settlement it is not clear what percentage increases have been applied for pay and price inflation in the Provisional Settlement, however the overall figure is net of assumed 1% efficiency savings.
- 4.11 There are no transfers either into or out of the Settlement.
- 4.12 The Settlement details highlight the inclusion of the following additional responsibilities across Wales:
- £3.738m for Learner Travel - an extension of free school transport

- £0.068m in recognition of increased charges which will fall on local authorities as a result of changes in the fees on court cases in family courts
- £0.100m for Childcare Act responsibilities

4.13 Flintshire will receive £0.154m for Learner Travel. However, values have not been quantified, at local authority level, for the other two responsibilities as the values are below the reporting threshold.

#### Specific Grants - Revenue

4.14 Provisional details have been given at the all Wales level indicating support of over £676.0m through revenue specific grants. Additional specific grant funding has been announced to support the roll-out of the Foundation Phase (£20.0m at the all Wales level) and there are additional resources to ensure continued delivery of the concessionary fares scheme and post 16 education arrangements.

Details are awaited of specific grants for Flintshire in 2009/10.

#### Unhypothecated Grants

4.15 The position across Wales is as follows:

- Deprivation Grant of £22.0m
- Improvement Agreement Grant of £31.4m

4.16 The position for Flintshire is as follows:-

- Deprivation Grant of £0.225m
- Improvement Agreement Grant of £1.497m

Whilst the value of the Improvement Agreement Grant has been published, it is anticipated that payment will be based on performance against agreed Improvement Agreements and therefore it is not certain that 100% of the grant will be awarded to the Authority.

#### Capital Settlement

4.17 Across Wales, general capital funding has remained at £217.433m. This is unhypothecated funding of which £54.037m is paid as capital grant, the remainder, £163.396m, is provided as support for borrowing.

4.18 For Flintshire, general capital funding has remained unchanged at £10.431m. This is divided into general capital grant of £2.604m and £7.827m support within the Settlement for borrowing.

4.19 In addition to general capital funding, there will be specific capital grants of £418.0m across Wales. No details are available of specific capital grants for Flintshire at this stage.



## **5.00 TIMETABLE**

- 5.01 The timetable for consideration of the 2009/10 budget is set out in Appendix A. Alongside this timetable, a series of meetings will take place between the Chief Executive, Directors and Executive Members to facilitate detailed consideration of the budgets for the General Fund 2009/10, Housing Revenue Account 2009/10 and the Capital Programme 2009/10 to 2012/13.
- 5.02 The date for receiving the Final Settlement is expected to be 10th December 2008. A report will be made to Executive on 6th January 2009.
- 5.03 Members will see that there is specific provision for consultation with Overview & Scrutiny, Business Ratepayers, the School Budget Forum and the Flintshire Joint Trades Union Committee (FJTUC).
- 5.04 Members will also see from the timetable at Appendix A, that it is planned for:
- Draft budget proposals for the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and the Capital Programme to be considered by Executive on 27th January 2009
  - Directorate presentations to be made to all Overview & Scrutiny Committees (28th to 30th January 2009)
  - Final recommendations, which will be made to Council on 3rd March 2009, to be considered by Executive on 17th February 2008

## **6.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.01 Members are recommended to:
- (a) Note the work already undertaken and planned to develop the MTFs and establish the 2009/10 budget proposals and timetable.
  - (b) Note the 2009/10 Provisional Settlement information.
  - (c) Provide County Finance Officer with any comments on the Provisional Welsh Local Government Settlement by 10th November in order that these comments, together with those of Overview & Scrutiny, can be reported to the Welsh Assembly Government by 18th November 2008 (the end of the consultation period).

## **7.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.01 As set out in the report.

## **8.00 ANTI-POVERTY IMPACT**

- 8.01 None directly as a result of this report.

**9.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

9.01 None directly as a result of this report.

**10.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

10.01 None directly as a result of this report.

**11.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

11.01 None directly as a result of this report.

**12.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

12.01 Overview & Scrutiny, Business Ratepayers, School Budget Forum, Flintshire Joint Trades Union Committee.

**13.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

13.01 Overview & Scrutiny, Business Ratepayers, School Budget Forum, Flintshire Joint Trades Union Committee.

**14.00 APPENDICES**

14.01 Appendix A - Budget Timetable 2009/10.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**  
**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Provisional Welsh Local Government Settlement 2009/10

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**BUDGET TIMETABLE 2009/10**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>EVENT</b>	<b>DETAILS</b>
15-Oct-08	Provisional Settlement from WAG	
29-Oct-08	Executive	Provisional Settlement / Budget Update
30-Oct-08	Corporate Management Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Provisional Settlement
30-Oct-08	NNDR Consultation - start	
18-Nov-08	Executive & Scrutiny comments to WAG	Provisional Settlement
18-Nov-08	End of WAG Consultation	Provisional Settlement
29-Nov-08	NNDR Consultation - end	
10-Dec-08	Final Settlement from WAG	
06-Jan-09	Executive	Final Settlement
15-Jan-09	School Budget Forum - update	Budget Update
15-Jan-09	FJTUC - update	Budget Update
27-Jan-09	Executive	Budget Proposals
28-Jan-09 to 30-Jan-09	Overview & Scrutiny - all committees	Directorate Presentation
30-Jan-09	Schools Budget notified to WAG	
17-Feb-09	Executive	Final Budget Proposals
03-Mar-09	County Council	Budget

## FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 5

REPORT TO: EXECUTIVE

DATE : 29 OCTOBER 2008

REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

SUBJECT : DRAFT IMPROVEMENT AGREEMENT (WITH WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT)

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01 To provide members with a clear process for approving the Council's Improvement Agreement and accessing the Improvement Agreement Grant.

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

2.01 All Councils will have to agree an Improvement Agreement with the Welsh Assembly Government during 2008/09 to access the national Improvement Agreement Grant. The prospectus for these revised agreements has been provided to Executive at its 5 August meeting. The Council will need to determine, internally and then in negotiation with the Assembly, which eight key outcomes (i.e. services and outcome targets) should be included in the Agreement.

2.02 The Improvement Agreement Grant replaces the former Performance Incentive Grant and equates to an income stream of £1.47 million per year over a three year period starting this year with the agreement of the grant.

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

3.01 Each Improvement Agreement will have the following structural principles.

- each agreement will contain the same four over-arching **strategic themes** linked to the One Wales agenda
- each strategic objective is aligned with a number of **broad outcomes**
- each broad outcome has a suggested number of **sources of evidence** (including, but not limited to performance indicators) which describe progress towards that outcome.

3.02 All outcomes should reflect areas of greatest priority (for instance where performance, as compared to the all-Wales picture, is of concern; or where citizens or communities have significant unmet need). In this regard the work already undertaken in identifying our Improvement Targets and the issues

within our strategic assessment of risks and challenges provides a solid foundation from which to base our Improvement Agreement.

3.03 Each outcome should be supported by a range of evidence, ie the means by which success in attaining that outcome will be assessed. In contrast to policy agreements, which relied on single performance indicators to quantify performance, each outcome in an Improvement Agreement should include a wider range of evidence from different sources. Possible sources of evidence therefore include:

- Performance indicators (whether statutory, core or local);
- Satisfaction data: citizen surveys, views of citizens' panels and similar, numbers of complaints etc.;
- Service usage levels;
- Audit, regulatory and inspection findings;
- Recognition by an acknowledged external award or accreditation scheme;
- Completion of a project or programme (eg the construction of a new amenity);
- Introduction of a new means of service access or delivery.

3.04 The methodology for calculating grant payments involves classifying outcome attainment according to whether it has been wholly successful, partly successful or unsuccessful. Therefore we also need to consider, by reference to the evidence selected, what levels of performance would constitute (full) success and what levels would constitute a lack of success. These should be stated in the text of the agreement, but may be subsequently amended by agreement with the Assembly Government in the light of unforeseen events.

3.05 The process for finalising our Improvement Agreement is detailed below:

- i. Develop measures and outcome attainments - October/November
- ii Corporate Management Team consider measures and attainments - 13 November
- iii Joint Scrutiny Committee consider measures and attainments - November
- iv Presentation to Leaders Strategy Group - 25 November
- v Endorsement by Executive - 9 December
- vi Dialogue with Welsh Assembly Government - December

3.06 It is anticipated that we will set stretching and ambitious targets within the Improvement Agreement which may have implications for the receipt of the totality of the grant from 2009/10.

#### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 Members to endorse the process for approving the Improvement Agreement as outlined in section 3.05.

## **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 There are no direct financial implications implicit within this report although dependent upon the nature of the final agreement there could be future implications in terms of the grant received for 2009/10.

## **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 There are no direct anti poverty implications within this report.

## **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 There are no direct environmental implications within this report.

## **8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 There are no direct equalities implications within this report.

## **9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 There are no direct personnel implications within this report.

## **10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 Consultation with Scrutiny Committees is as outlined in the report

## **11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 Strategic Management Team have considered the contents of this agreement.

## **12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 Appendix 1: Draft Improvement Agreement scope (to follow)

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

WAG IMprovement Agreement prospectus

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## FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 6

REPORT TO:     EXECUTIVE  
DATE :            29 OCTOBER 2008  
REPORT BY:     CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
SUBJECT :        COUNCIL PLAN REVIEW

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01 To update Members on the the review of the Council Plan and outline a clear process for its development and approval.

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

2.01 The Council has had a Council Plan since 2005 which has been reviewed each year. It has served two main purposes; (1) to inform ongoing business planning within services and; (2) to provide Part One of the Council's Improvement Plan as the annual forward planning document.

2.02 Since 2008 the Council Plan 2008 - 2012 has been under review pending a number of interlinking and formative developments:  
(1) the adoption and review of the strategic assessment of risks and challenges  
(2) the categorisation of indicator targets  
(3) the development of the Council's Improvement Agreement with the Welsh Assembly Government.

The priorities of the new administration also need to be reflected within the emerging Council Plan.

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

3.01 The review of the strategic assessment of risks and challenges has a fundamental role in informing the Council Plan and will be presented to Executive on 6 January 2009.

3.02 Given our position within the Council's business and financial planning cycles it would seem sensible to finalise the contents of the Council Plan in tandem with this review and prepare the Council Plan for 2009/10.

3.03 A proposed approach and timescale is outlined below:  
(1) Executive determine priorities for the Council - mid November  
(2) Executive finalise Improvement Agreement - 9 December

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Date: 27/10/2008



- (3) Executive receive Relationship Manager's Annual Letter - December
- (4) Executive receive review of strategic assessment of risks and challenges - 6 January
- (5) Executive receive first draft of Council Plan - 6 January
- (6) County Council receive Relationship Manager's Annual Letter - 20 January
- (7) Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committees challenge and review draft Council Plan - January
- (8) Final draft of Council Plan received by Executive - 17 February
- (9) Final approval of Council Plan by County Council - Feb / March (tbc.)

3.04 It is proposed that the document is published as a web-based document capable of being readily updated to reflect developments, emerging issues and progress.

#### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 Members to approve the proposed process outlined in para 3.03 for the development and approval of the Council Plan.

#### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 There are no direct financial implications implicit within this report although the financial considerations implicit within the Council Plan itself will need to be evidenced.

#### **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 There are no direct anti poverty impacts implicit within this report.

#### **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 There are no environmental impacts implicit within this report.

#### **8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 There are no equalities impacts implicit within this report.

#### **9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 There are no personnel impacts implicit within this report.

#### **10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 Consultation with Overview and Scrutiny Committees has been outlined in the report in January.

#### **11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 None at this time.

**12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 None.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**  
**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None

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## FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 7

**REPORT TO:**     **EXECUTIVE**

**DATE :**           **29 OCTOBER 2008**

**REPORT BY:**    **DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT**

**SUBJECT :**       **"PLANNING POLICY CHANGES TO SUPPORT  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL AREAS -  
MEETING HOUSING NEEDS" WELSH ASSEMBLY  
GOVERNMENT DRAFT POLICY CONSULTATION**

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.01 To Inform Members of the main issues raised by the Welsh Assembly Government's (WAG) recent consultation on "Planning Policy Changes to Support Sustainable Development in Rural Areas – Meeting Housing Needs" issued in July 2008, and to seek Members approval for the proposed response to this consultation.
- 1.02 Members are asked to note that as the Assembly's deadline for comments is 10th October 2008, a copy of this report and appendices will be submitted to WAG as "draft comments subject to the outcome of the Executive Committee meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2008".

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

- 2.01 The WAG is currently seeking views on proposals to change planning policies to support rural sustainable development, with the main emphasis being meeting rural housing needs. The need for the changes stems from the WAG's wish to promote thriving rural communities embodied in proposals to support rural communities set out in the "One Wales" agenda. For example, "One Wales" contains the following commitments:
- Increase the supply of affordable homes by 6,500 over 4 years;
  - Extend the scope of the "essential dwellings" category;
  - Permitting a second farm dwelling where this would facilitate 'succession'.
- 2.02 In order to make planning policy 'flexible' enough to accommodate these commitments, WAG are proposing the following changes to policy, grouped under three main areas:

#### *1. Essential Dwellings*

- Current policy which allows essential dwellings in the countryside for farm or forestry workers is proposed to be extended to encompass “other rural enterprise workers”;
- Essential dwellings should be considered as affordable, and should remain so in the event of the cessation of the essential need;
- It is proposed to allow a second farm dwelling to enable farm succession, for the residential use of the retiring farmer;
- It is proposed to allow a second essential farm dwelling, where the applicant has a functional need to work part-time on the holding.

*2. Affordable Housing in Rural Areas*

- It is proposed that all market housing should contribute to affordable housing, via a commuted sum where the development (including single dwellings and conversions) falls below affordable policy thresholds;
- The LPA would hold all commuted sums to be used to facilitate or provide affordable housing. In rural areas, this could be on rural exception sites or by financing Community Land Trust affordable housing projects;
- It is proposed that homes permitted under the current “infill” policy will be limited to affordable homes only as defined by TAN2 “Planning and Affordable Housing”;
- It is proposed to extend the scope of the current rural exception site policy to include urban areas as well.

*3. Low Impact Development (LID)*

- It is proposed to introduce a new national policy dealing with exceptions for LID projects to be developed in the countryside.

2.03 Members are asked to note that the full consultation document is available as a background document to this report.

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

3.01 The schedule attached as appendix 1 to this report sets out to provide Members with a single page summary of the key proposed policy changes, as well as the key implication and/or proposed response to each proposal. In addition, appendix 2 provides a fuller response to the proposals, based on WAG’s pre-formatted consultation questions. Members are asked to consider and approve this response in appendix 2 alongside the main considerations highlighted in this report, as the Council’s response to WAG.

3.02 In terms of the main considerations for Members raised by these proposals, the proposed policy changes first and foremost represent a significant change from current policy in relation to the principle of new dwellings in the countryside which could lead to increases in sporadic development in the countryside if not properly controlled. The emphasis of the consultation also seems to be based on the premise that these policy changes will take place,

and it is just the manner or format of the policies which is the main consideration.

- 3.03 Representing as they do such a significant departure from current policies that are embodied in development plans, which seek to protect the countryside from inappropriate development, they also seem to conflict with other sustainability principles such as reducing the need to travel by car.
- 3.04 The proposals also place a very specific emphasis on retiring farmers which is perceived as unbalanced in relation to the fact that there are other groups or interests who require accommodation in rural areas, but who remain excluded by this policy change. In relation to the suite of proposals relating specifically to supporting farming, it is not the perception that current planning policies present barriers to farm development or diversification, which draws into question the need to broaden the scope of policies as proposed.
- 3.05 It is also of concern that the policy changes are not supported by research or empirical evidence, for example in relation to the lack of clarity or definition of what constitutes a rural business or enterprise (other than farming or forestry) where an essential dwelling may be required. Much is therefore left unprescribed, leaving difficulties for LDPs in defining local policies based on imprecise national guidance. This evidence and justification is considered essential in order to justify and support such a sea change in long established policies, designed to protect the countryside from inappropriate development.
- 3.06 In terms of some of the specific concerns which the proposals raise for Members consideration, it is a concern that:
- The proposal to extend the provision of essential dwellings to “other rural enterprise workers” is not properly defined or justified, and could lead to a weakening of the exception made for this purpose;
  - The proposals relating to retirement dwellings for farm succession are potentially discriminatory, and also represent a specific set of circumstances which are essentially temporary, but where an approved dwelling would represent a permanent feature in the countryside;
  - The proposals to allow a second essential worker dwelling must be backed by the same functional and financial test, which in both cases must present clear and robust evidence of the business need, in order to preserve fairness and transparency of process;
  - The principle of extending ‘exception sites’ to urban areas conflicts with the principle of bringing suitable urban sites forward via the development plan system. It may also lead to a preference for targeting urban fringe sites, rather than leading to the emergence and development of rural exceptions sites.

3.07 Members are also asked to consider acknowledging support for elements of the proposals as follows:

- Limiting the principle of infill development to affordable housing will help to tighten the implementation of this policy to circumstances of genuine exceptional need, helping to adhere to policy criteria ;
- Whilst the general principle that all market housing should contribute to affordable housing is supported, there is also a need to significantly increase levels of Social Housing Grant in order to address affordability issues, particularly in rural areas.

3.08 In relation to Low Impact Development (LID), this has been defined as development that through its low negative impact, either enhances or does not significantly diminish environmental quality. Permaculture is also a term used to describe schemes that develop single holdings or co-operative communities that are self sufficient in food growing, energy generation and waste disposal. Work and living arrangements are integrated with a minimal impact on the environment. The aim is to improve the environmental quality of the site in question. It is an integral part of schemes that dwellings are provided on the site. These can range from temporary canvas dwellings to more substantial timber framed houses. In principle any structures should be capable of being removed from the site to leave it in an equivalent or better condition than before the development. There are a number of LID schemes in the UK with temporary planning permissions.

3.09 LIDs are a relatively new consideration, hence the lack of any previous national guidance. It is considered that the scope for such development will not be widespread and could be very location-specific, and any consideration of the need for a local policy on this following the development of national guidance, should be a consideration for individual LDPs. National guidance should be developed in relation to the nature and circumstances in which such development would be appropriate.

#### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 That Members:

- a. Endorse the comments and responses to the Welsh Assembly Government consultation document set out in this report, and also contained within appendix 1 and 2 of the report;
- b. That the Welsh Assembly Government are informed that the draft of these comments already submitted by the deadline represent the formal views of the Council.

#### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 No direct financial implications.

**6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 No direct anti-poverty implications.

**7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 No direct environment implications.

**8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 No direct implications for equality.

**9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 No direct implications for personnel.

**10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 The recommendations proposed are in relation to a Welsh Assembly Government Consultation and raise no direct implications for the need for consultation by Flintshire County Council.

**11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 In formulating this response views have been sought from Planning and Housing Officers.

**12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 Appendix 1 Single page summary of main policy changes and implications/response.

12.02 Appendix 2 Fuller response to consultation following WAG's pre-formatted consultation questions.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**  
**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

WAG Consultation Paper "Planning Policy Changes to support Sustainable Development in Rural Areas - Meeting Housing Needs" July 2008

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WAG Consultation “Planning Policy Changes to Support Sustainable Development in Rural Areas – Meeting Housing Needs”

Appendix 1: Summary of key Implications/responses to proposed policy changes

Current Policy	Proposed Policy Changes	Implications/response
<b>Essential Dwellings</b>		
Essential dwelling to house a farm or forestry worker (UDP policy HSG4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extended to include “other rural enterprise workers”</li> <li>• All essential dwellings considered as affordable, including after the essential need no longer exists</li> <li>• Second farm dwelling for succession</li> <li>• Second essential dwelling for farm worker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern - this potentially opens up the opportunity to seek a new dwelling in the countryside beyond reasonable limits or controls. Needs tight definition of ‘rural enterprises’ against which to judge suitability.</li> <li>• Principle supported – should help ensure that scale of essential dwellings is kept to reasonable limits.</li> <li>• Concern – The circumstances proposed are specific and essentially temporary, yet the dwellings will be a permanent feature in the countryside. Also, potentially isolated locations of these may not make them suitable as follow-on affordable homes. Also no guidance on how to assess the “no suitable alternatives” element of the proposal.</li> <li>• Concern – Same functional and financial test must apply. Robust evidence is critical for fairness and transparency. Also concern that the proposal relates to workers who work part time on the holding, and part time elsewhere as off farm income should contribute to assessment of farm viability only if it sustains the enterprise.</li> </ul>
Infill development (UDP policy HSG5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infill development limited to affordable only</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principle supported – this will help to tighten up the application of this policy to a specific context of exceptional need.</li> </ul>
Conversion of rural buildings to residential (UDP policy HSG7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordable housing commuted sum payable for residential conversion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principle supported – though significantly increased levels of Social Housing Grant are also required to address rural affordable issue seriously.</li> </ul>
<b>Affordable Housing in Rural Areas</b>		
Rural exception sites (UDP policy HSG11)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All market housing contributes to affordable housing via commuted sum</li> <li>• Exception site principle to be extended to urban areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principle supported – though significantly increased levels of Social Housing Grant are also required to address rural affordable issue seriously.</li> <li>• Concern – goes against principle of a plan led system via UDP/LDP. May lead to urban fringe sites being identified as ‘easier’ options in preference to rural exception sites.</li> </ul>
<b>Low Impact Development</b>		
No current national or local policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New national policy on LID exceptions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited scope for such developments – need to explore their applicability locally through LDP process.</li> </ul>

**CONSULTATION PAPER**

**PLANNING POLICY CHANGES TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL AREAS**

**MEETING HOUSING NEEDS**

July 2008

**PART 5  
CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM**

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Organisation...Flintshire County Council.....

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**ESSENTIAL DWELLINGS**

<b>Essential dwellings</b>
<b>Q1. Should essential dwellings be used for affordable housing where their original justification has ceased to exist?</b>
Yes/No: YES
Comments: Controlled via a section 106 agreement. This may also serve to ensure that the scale of essential dwellings is kept to reasonable limits.
<b>Q2. How can essential dwellings be made more sustainable, e.g. should they be required to generate power/heat and dispose of waste on site?</b>
Yes/No: NO
Comments: Why just these and not all new dwellings, which is the emphasis coming forward through climate change policy changes. This is capable of being controlled through general development plan policies aligned to the climate change/zero carbon agenda.
<b>Q3. Should limits be placed on the size of essential dwellings to ensure that they remain affordable to the local community?</b>

Yes/No: YES

Comments: There is a need for tighter assessment of the scale of the dwelling in relation to both the needs of the essential worker and the business, and also in relation to the future affordability of it in relative/market terms – affordability goes with property size and then tenure. Otherwise S106 agreements catering for affordable ‘after-uses’ would have to asset affordable ‘discounts’ relative to property size.

### **New Essential Dwellings for Succession Planning**

#### **Q4. What evidence should be provided to demonstrate that succession will take place?**

Comments: A fully justified statement of not only the farm’s current viability but also a forward look at the direction of the business, investment plans, income projections etc. This is essential to avoid an already partly ‘abused’ policy where permissions are sought based on limited real evidence of need or those without a genuine long term interest in the rural economy. Main issue must be to ensure fairness and transparency.

Whilst the Council recognises the potential role that section 106 agreements could play in controlling succession the authority is concerned that the introduction of a policy supporting succession will have to be far more detailed to ensure national guidance is sufficiently robust and effective. In particular national guidance should be specific about what constitutes "alternative accommodation" and how this should be assessed by the planning authority.

#### **Q5. Should a temporary dwelling be considered to meet a retiring farmer's needs in locations unsuited for affordable housing?**

Yes/ No: NO

Comments: The use of temporary dwellings can resolve immediate housing pressures with the reasonable assurance that the land can and will be restored after the temporary period. However temporary dwellings are unlikely to offer suitable accommodation for the circumstances here. Also, in isolated rural locations it is questionable whether allowing temporary dwellings is enforceable, as this will simply add to the burden already placed on public resources.

Sustainability of the location should be a factor in the assessment of the ‘retirement’ dwelling and its subsequent potential affordable use. Allowing temporary dwellings in remote locations is not necessarily sustainable - the decision should be to allow a dwelling or not, though this in itself is contradictory in that the circumstances are essentially temporary (specifically retirement) and will change, but the dwelling would be permanent in the countryside.

<b>Additional Essential Dwellings on Existing Farm Holdings</b>
<b>Q6. Should the applicant for the second dwelling be required to demonstrate functional need?</b>
Yes/No: YES  Comments: As the second dwelling is also to accommodate the needs of the farm enterprise then it clearly must be demonstrated that there is the capacity and functional need for the second dwelling. As with the answer to Q4, the system must maintain clarity of process and transparency.
<b>Q7. Should income from off farm activities or employment be included when assessing the financial viability of the farm business?</b>
Yes/No:  Comments: Given that the issue is to justify a second dwelling at the farm location, this needs careful consideration. Is the main issue whether the off farm income is linked to sustaining the farm enterprise hence tying it in to the issue of a need for a second dwelling? The local planning authority recognises that rural diversification is increasingly important to the success of rural communities within Wales and particularly the farming industry, and that a diversified income for farm and forestry workers is increasingly a necessary way of life. In this manner it could be considered appropriate to include additional sources of income when assessing the need for essential dwellings. The key factor in the assessment of such proposals will however continue to be whether that individual needs to live in that location or could live elsewhere.
<b>Q8. Should this policy apply universally across Wales, or should local development plans identify the areas in which the policy will apply?</b>
Comments: Has to apply Pan Wales for consistency – otherwise the perceived prejudice already implicit in the proposal in favour of just farm enterprises, could be exacerbated by a geographical distinction also. LDPs can define the local context in which the policy then applies.
<b>Q9. Do you consider 20 hours an appropriate measure for part time work, if not can you suggest an appropriate measure?</b>
Yes/No: YES  Comments: There is sufficient documentation which has been produced by the Government to define what part time work is and 16-20 hours range per week would seem to be appropriate. However the main issue for consideration is not simply the length of time involved in an activity but the nature of the activity, the contribution the second worker makes to the work of the holding, and how it relates to the justification for a new essential dwelling.

<b>New essential dwellings on established rural enterprises</b>
<b>Q10. Should the dwelling be subject to a condition restricting occupation of the dwelling to the owner or employee of the business?</b>
Yes/No: YES  Comments:
<b>Q11. How long should the business have been trading profitably before a permanent dwelling may be considered?</b>
Comments: 3 years, as at present for essential farm/forestry workers.

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN RURAL AREAS**

<b>Affordable Housing Contributions in Rural Areas</b>
<b>Q12. Should all new market housing be required to contribute to affordable housing?</b>
Yes/No: YES  Comments: Whilst this as a general principle might be laudable, in practice the implications of applying this in rural areas where the development of market housing is limited, means that this may be both an unworkable policy, and one that makes little difference to the need to provide significant levels of affordable housing. A better focus would be to provide greater level of Social Housing Grant funding targeted on rural affordable development, enabling the RSLs to play a more active role in bringing forward rural exception sites etc.
<b>Q13. What are the potential consequences of the proposed policy?</b>
Comments: Little difference to the issue of rural affordability and therefore little impact on the house price situation in general in rural areas.
<b>Q14. Should the affordable housing contribution from small sites and single dwellings be based on site values, construction cost or something else?</b>

Yes/No:

Comments: It should as always first and foremost be based on a genuine and identified need for affordable housing in the first instance, which will depend on local circumstances and should therefore be defined via local policy. The nature of the need should in turn define the type of house appropriate and also the most suitable form of affordable tenure. This in turn will then set the context for assessing the contribution.

### **Affordable Housing within small groups or clusters**

**Q15. Should affordable housing built in these locations be available to any local person in need of affordable housing or should it be limited to individuals whose employment means that it is essential for them to live locally?**

Comments: This 'tightening' of the infill criteria is welcomed in general, and limited it to affordable housing makes it a more 'genuine' exception to policy. The need first and foremost should be local but employment considerations could come into play as they do now with exception sites where 'local qualification' is defined as living and/or working in an area for a period of time (say 5 years).

**Q16. Should this policy apply universally across Wales, or should local development plans identify the areas in which the policy will apply?**

Comments: As response to question 8 – pan-Wales.

### **Affordable housing exception sites**

**Q.17 Should the existing rural exception site policy be extended to include urban areas as well?**

Yes / No: NO

Comments: Conflicts with whole principle of bringing forward suitable urban sites through the development Plan process. Could interfere with spatial strategies and the capacity of settlements to accommodate growth – would also deflect away from identifying genuine rural exception sites hence meeting the need for rural affordable housing, as urban 'fringe' sites would be targeted as the 'easier' option for land owners/developers, who may also have higher expectations of value which would impinge on true affordability. In terms of major settlements, this may also impact on future spatial growth options.

## LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT

<b>Low Impact Development</b>
<b>Q18. Should LID schemes be allowed only on previously developed land?</b>
Yes/No: NO  Comments: This may defeat the object of finding locations where LIDs may be appropriate and capable of being developed with 'low impact'. It also seems to conflict with the principle of using pdl before green field sites and making the best use of such sites, particularly as they typically are located in or adjacent to urban areas.
<b>Q19. What tests e.g. functional and financial (in addition to usual planning considerations) can you suggest should be applied to consider LID planning applications?</b>
Comments: In assessing LID schemes it would appear that the sustainability of a site is of key importance and as such all genuine LID schemes should incorporate energy efficiency measures, renewable energy technologies, waste materials recycling, and onsite crop and/or animal farming. An appraisal of new proposals revealing a lack of any significant self sufficiency measures would indicate that the scheme is not a Low Impact Development.



**FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 8**

**REPORT TO:** **EXECUTIVE**

**DATE :** **29 OCTOBER 2008**

**REPORT BY:** **DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT**

**SUBJECT :** **EMERGING FLINTSHIRE UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN:  
PUBLIC**

**INQUIRY FEES – ADDITIONAL COSTS**

**1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01 To seek Members approval to finance the additional costs incurred by the UDP Public Inquiry process from the Contingency Reserve Fund.

**2.00 BACKGROUND**

2.01 Members will be aware of the current position with the Emerging UDP from the recent Executive Report considered on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2008, entitled “Emerging Flintshire Unitary Development Plan: Close of Public Inquiry and Timetable for Adoption”. It was not possible within that report however, to give Members a firm date for the receipt of the Inspector’s Report as the Planning Inspectorate were still deliberating this issue at the time of the last report.

2.02 Since then, the Council has received formal notification from the Planning Inspectorate in a letter dated 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2008, of the delivery date for the draft Inspector’s Report, which will be in the week commencing 9<sup>th</sup> March 2009. This represents a considerable length of time from the start of the Inquiry process, and whilst it has consequences related to the adoption timetable for UDP, an immediate impact of this reporting date on the Council relates to the associated costs of the Inquiry process and Inspector’s time in preparing the report, which the Council is responsible for.

2.03 Whilst a Service Level Agreement (SLA) has been signed between the Council and the Inspectorate, which itemises the various formulae on which Inspectors costs are calculated, no estimate was given prior to the start of the Inquiry by the Inspectorate of how long the Inquiry would take and how much it would cost. Whilst this is understandable particularly in the unprecedented case of the Flintshire UDP, for the purpose of Council budgeting an estimate of costs was made by officers prior to the 2006/07 financial year of £0.300m. Now that an estimate of costs has been received

from the Inspectorate, there is a shortfall of £0.240m which is not budgeted for, but which the Council is committed to through the SLA.

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

3.01 Members will already be aware that in all aspects of the Emerging UDP process so far, the scale of the representations made and scope of the issues dealt with on the Plan have been unprecedented, not only in a national context within Wales, but across England and Wales. This has also meant that the resources required and invested to address these issues and progress the Plan through its statutory stages have also been considerable, and to a similar degree also without precedent. The UDP Public Inquiry is no exception to that rule and Members will have noted from the previous report of 16<sup>th</sup> September, the full nature of the effort and resources invested in presenting the Council's case during the four months of the heard sessions, followed by 6 months of work in preparing written evidence to the Inquiry (over 700 proofs of evidence) leading to its close in early August this year.

3.02 The responsibility for considering the objections to the UDP and the evidence submitted by objectors and the Council in relation to each objection is of course with the Planning Inspectorate, and the Council has no control over the way that is considered either during or after the close of the Inquiry, or the time it takes to consider these and report thereafter. It is however of significant concern that the Inspectorate have informed the Council that the delivery of the Inspector's Report will not be until March 2009, as this has a number of implications and repercussions:

- it adds more time to the process of adopting the UDP;
- this in turn has knock on effects for the follow-on LDP process;
- it further lengthens the time objectors have to wait to understand the outcome of their representations (indeed a number of objectors and their agents/consultants who have contacted the Council for an update on the delivery of the Inspector's Report, have expressed consternation at the date given);
- it causes problems for the Council in having to justify this process, when in fact it is totally out of the Council's control;
- it adds considerably to the total costs of the Inquiry process, which the Council is responsible for meeting.

3.03 The decision taken by the Council to progress with the UDP to adoption committed the Council to a significant amount of investment of resources, in terms of officer time and commitment. In addition there were the respective costs of employing a Programme Officer and of meeting the costs of the Inquiry process itself. In setting out a date for the delivery of the Inspector's Report, the Planning Inspectorate has also provided an estimate of the total costs and fees incurred based on the formulae set out in the SLA signed with the Council. Having considered this estimate of costs, it is a concern that the Inspectorate appear to have applied the maximum possible timescales and

allowances which the SLA makes provision for, without fully justifying the necessity or applicability of some of these.

- 3.04 It is also the view that some of the allowances of 'additional time' made are not applicable, and on both counts these issues have been questioned with the Planning Inspectorate. Equally, the SLA allows for a reduction of reporting time where the Council has assisted the Inspector in preparing the administrative and background work such as the Inspectors Skeleton Report, which the Council prepared and provided at the outset of the Inquiry. It seems that no such allowances have been applied and this has also been taken up with the Inspectorate. In addition, the Inspectorate has been asked to provide examples of comparative Inquiries and their costs in order to set the estimate for this Inquiry in context, or failing that to provide the Council with a statement confirming the exceptional nature of this Inquiry. In response the Inspectorate have indicated it is the volume of objections received which has created the complexity for the Inquiry, which in turn has had an effect on the time required for the Inspectors to address each individual objection, ensuring that objectors can identify their own objections in the report and the outcome of their consideration.
- 3.05 Notwithstanding this however, given the Council's commitment, the costs incurred as part of the Inquiry process are unavoidable, and must be met. This is not to say that the costs presented by the Inspectorate have not and will not be scrutinised and queried further, but given the commitment to the process, it is necessary to make this request for reserve funds, in order to cover this budget deficit.

#### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.01 That Members agree to finance the UDP Public Inquiry additional costs identified in this report of £0.240m from the Council's Contingency Reserve Fund.

#### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.01 If the recommendation at para 4.01 is approved, an allocation of £0.240m will be made to the Environment Directorate budget from the contingency reserve.

#### **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

- 6.01 None.

#### **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

- 7.01 A Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal (SEA/SA) has been carried out and its recommendations have informed the consideration of representations as well as improvements to the Plan.

## **8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 None.

## **9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 The Programme Officer's contract ceased once the Inquiry closed in August 2008. The Planning Inspectorate now act as link between the Inspectors and the Council.

## **10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 No consultations are required at this stage whilst the Inspectors consider their view of the Plan and objections to it. Once the Inspector's report is received and the Council has approved the recommendations, then changes made to the Plan will need to be advertised as formal modifications, allowing time for any new comments to be made on the modifications only.

## **11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01

- UDP Deposit consultation September – November 2003;
- Proposed Changes consultation November – December 2006;
- SEA/SA consultation November – December 2006.

## **12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 None.

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985** **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Flintshire Unitary Development Plan Deposit Draft 2003 and all subsequent Proposed Changes (Nov 2006, May 2007, July 2008).

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## **FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 9**

**REPORT TO:** **EXECUTIVE**

**DATE :** **29 OCTOBER 2008**

**REPORT BY:** **DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT**

**SUBJECT :** **FLINT TOWNSCAPE HERITAGE INITIATIVE BID UPDATE**

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.01 To update Members of the progression of the Stage II development work for Flint Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI)
- 1.02 To seek delegated powers for the Director of Environment to approve the content of the Stage II bid and submit the bid by 1 December on behalf of the Authority.
- 1.03 To advise Members on the current position regarding funding partners and their contributions to the proposed THI common fund and the implications for the Authority as lead partner.

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

- 2.01 A Townscape Heritage Initiative Scheme (THI) is a grants assisted restoration, repair and regeneration scheme involving substantial public funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to secure conservation managed regeneration through a partnership scheme with other major partners. It is specifically for historic areas whose special character is threatened by problems of disrepair, lack of maintenance, inappropriate alterations to historic buildings and vacancies to ground / upper floor. Projects are targeted and identified by need and vacancy considerations. Holywell has a successful THI, which has been running for 7 years and currently in its 2nd phase.
- 2.02 The THI approval process is a 2 stage process. A committee report authorising officers to bid for the proposed Flint THI scheme (Stage I) was submitted and approved by Executive on 24 April 2007. The Stage I bid was submitted to the HLF in May 2007.
- 2.03 The HLF announced in October 2007 that Flint was one of only 3 towns in Wales and one of 13 overall in the UK to be successful in its Stage I application for the 2007 round of THI funding. As part of the THI submission process a more detailed Stage II bid requires submission to the HLF by 1 December 2008. The HLF will then notify the Authority with its decision within

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Date: 27/10/2008

4 months of receiving the application. Funding will therefore need to be in place from the date of any approval given.

2.04 A committee report informing Members of the HLF's decision to approve the Stage I bid and to authorise the Council to prepare and submit a more detailed Stage II bid for submission to the HLF was submitted to and approved by Executive on 30 January 2008. This report formally agreed in principle a contribution of £305,000 over 5 years for the life of Flint THI. This is broken down into £41,000 for years 1 - 3 and £91,000 for years 4 - 5. This includes £22,500 per annum for a dedicated project officer with on-costs. This funding is subject to a capital bid for 2009 / 10. If the capital bid and THI bid is successful, the scheme will commence in April 2009.

2.05 The THI will form part of a complementary series of measures in Flint that form a broad approach to regeneration in the town under an overarching strategy, which are: -

- The restoration and renovation of Flint Railway Station, the major gateway in to Wales from Chester (some works have already been undertaken with Welsh Assembly Government Funding and grants from the Railway Heritage Trust)
- Development of the North Wales Coast Cycle Path which is in close proximity to Flint Castle, a Grade I listed building and Scheduled Ancient Monument, and a landmark on the Dee Estuary
- Major improvement works on Flint Castle Park Industrial estate, funded through the Welsh Assembly Government Physical Regeneration Fund
- The Communities First Programme
- Town Improvement grants funded by DE&T (Welsh Assembly Government, Department for the Economy & Transport). This scheme was in operation until early 2008.
- Investments by the private sector in the town and its vicinity

2.06 Partners who originally supported the scheme financially or otherwise included Cadw, DE&T, Flint Town Council, TAITH and Physical Regeneration Funding. DE&T's funding has been subject to uncertainty and there is a likelihood of reduction in funding from this source. If confirmed, this will increase the proportion of Flintshire's investment in the scheme.

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

3.01 The Stage I application identified a total sum of £920,000 of partnership funding which will be match funded by the HLF to create an anticipated THI common fund of £1.8 million. The funding partners were notified by the Authority by letter once the official confirmation of approval to progress the Stage II application was received from the HLF on the 26<sup>th</sup> November 2007. Discussions were requested with the funding partners to finalise all funds

relating to the Stage II submission. The HLF, this Authority and DE&T, using its Town Improvement Grant funding, were identified as the largest contributors in the Stage I submission.

- 3.02 In January 2008 DE&T stated that the proposed meeting would best take place once the various socio-economic / town centre retail studies (health checks) currently undertaken in Flintshire had been completed. The Authority was advised that these would be completed by June 2008.
- 3.03 The health checks were completed in June 2008 and the receipt of the Healthcheck Study final report submitted to the Authority in July 2008. At the beginning of July 2008 DE&T still could not advise the Authority on its funding commitment. This was due to uncertainty within the Welsh Assembly Government in the allocation of physical regeneration funded schemes in Wales.
- 3.04 The HLF was advised by the Authority of this delay in July 2008 and was advised to proceed with the Stage II development work regardless in order not to jeopardise the THI. The Conservation Area Appraisal and boundary review of Flint has been undertaken in draft as part of the development work by Flintshire County Council. Cadw has undertaken an Urban Characterisation exercise for Flint and community profiling exercise for Flint Castle to assist the Authority with its Stage II submission. Consultants have been appointed to undertake other elements of the development work which is now underway.
- 3.05 The Authority has been advised informally by DE&T that it is unlikely that Flint THI can presently be funded from this source. This has not yet been formally confirmed as it is now being discussed at a higher level between the HLF and the Welsh Assembly Government. If it is confirmed that DE&T cannot contribute to the Flint THI common fund at the time of submission of the Stage II bid to the HLF then the Authority will have an increased percentage investment in the scheme. This percentage investment in the common fund has risen from 16% to 27%. However, total partnership funding of £555,000 will be attracted to the scheme without any additional overall cost to the Authority.
- 3.06 DE&T has not ruled out a future change in circumstances and the Authority has been informally advised that there may be an opportunity to discuss funding on an annual basis during the life of the THI's 5 year programme.
- 3.07 It should be noted that Flint Town Council has confirmed its funding commitment and Cadw has confirmed and increased its funding. Both the TAIH funding and Physical Regeneration Fund (PRF) were only available for the 2008 / 9 financial year. The TAIH funding had already been allocated for restoration works to the east bound station building within the THI area in 2008 / 9 and the building has now been restored. The Physical Regeneration Fund also identified in the Stage I bid can only be spent on the

projects to the north of the Town Hall and is restricted to public works. No such projects were identified in the Stage I bid.

- 3.08 The common fund includes contributions from funding partners, including Flintshire County Council (lead partner - £305,000); Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments (increase in funding confirmed from £60,000 over 3 years to £150, 000 over 3 years and reviewed after that period); and Flint Town Council (£100, 000 confirmed over 5 years).
- 3.09 It should be noted that due to funding commitments of the HLF the 5 year programme for the THI was finite and could not, as with the successful Holywell THI model, be approved for a further 5 years. The THI therefore offers the only real opportunity for funding improvements to the historic fabric of the town centre, and projects were chosen carefully for their long term visual and economic impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre.
- 3.10 Members should note that the possible funding from Flintshire County Council to the common fund offers a potential leverage of a 1 in 3 level of public sector investment. This represents excellent value for money and return. The Holywell THI has so far levered almost £4 million in private and public investment in repair and restoration of historic buildings and by substantially reducing vacancy floor space in properties in the town, due to its successful implementation.
- 3.11 Further reports will be sent to the Executive for information purposes and seeking authority during the progression of the bid.

#### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 It is recommended that:-

- Members note the HLF's decision to approve the commencement of the Stage II development work. This will require a conservation area appraisal, boundary review and management plan to be produced as part of the Stage II submission bid.
- Delegated authority is sought to enable the Director of Environment to agree and submit the contents of the bid in order that the deadline for the HLF submission on the 1 December 2008 can be met.
- Members note the reduction in the common fund as a result of DE&T's withdrawal from the scheme subject to written confirmation and that the agreed contribution from Flintshire County Council will remain at £305,000.

#### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 The change in circumstances regarding partnership funding has meant that the common fund has been re-evaluated following submission of the Stage I



bid. In the Stage I bid, the HLF agreed to match fund the amount submitted, which was over £1.8 million in principle in total for Flint town centre regeneration. If DE&T formally withdraw from funding the THI then the common fund will be reduced to £1.1million. This reduction also reflects the ineligibility of work from TAITH and PRF.

- 5.02 The percentage investment increase from 16% to 27% does not affect the amount of funding formally agreed in principle by the Executive. As stipulated in Section 2.04, this is broken down into £41,000 for years 1 - 3 and £91,000 for years 4 - 5. This includes £22,500 per annum for a dedicated project officer with on-costs.
- 5.03 The HLF has awarded the Authority up to £25 000 towards development work for a Stage II submission. This cost represents 75% of the total cost with Flintshire County Council contributing the remaining 25%. This is £7 380 and will be met from existing planning budgets.

#### **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

- 6.01 The THI aims to assist building owners with repair by conserving and maintaining heritage assets as a key step towards the economic regeneration of Flint. The THI is complementary to a number of regeneration initiatives, including a Community First area. The THI has the potential to increase the viability of businesses and opportunities for job creation in one of the most deprived wards in Flintshire.

#### **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

- 7.01 The purpose of the THI scheme is to give a positive environmental benefit to the historic environment of Flint by enhancing the character of its predominantly commercial core.

#### **8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 8.01 The scheme is in accordance with the principles of equal opportunities.

#### **9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.01 The employment of a dedicated THI officer on a contract for the life of the scheme of the THI is a requirement of the HLF. A committee report formally approving this was submitted and approved by Executive on 30 January 2008.

#### **10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

- 10.01 A full public engagement and consultation exercise will be undertaken, which is a criterion for the submission of the Stage II application to assess public support. The HLF places great emphasis on community and business

involvement including all stakeholders in order that the scheme is embraced by the local community.

### **11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 Support for the Flint THI has been given in principle by the remaining funding partners, the HLF, the AM and MP for the local area and the previous Executive. Community engagement exercises will be undertaken mid October 2008 to gauge views and support for the conservation area appraisal, boundary review, management plan and action plan for the THI.

### **12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 None

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

### **Flint THI Stage I submission bid May 2007**

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**FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 10**

**REPORT TO:**     **EXECUTIVE**

**DATE :**           **29 OCTOBER 2008**

**REPORT BY:**     **DIRECTOR OF LIFELONG LEARNING**

**SUBJECT :**       **ESTYN REPORT ON THE QUALITY OF ADULT COMMUNITY  
BASED LEARNING IN FLINTSHIRE**

**1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01 To provide Executive Members with information on the outcome of Estyn's inspection of Adult Community Based Learning in Flintshire which was conducted in May 2008.

1.02 A copy of the Inspection report is available from Member Services.

**2.00 BACKGROUND**

2.01 Adult community-based learning in Flintshire was inspected as part of a six-year (2004-2010) national programme of inspections. The purpose of the programme is to identify good features and shortcomings of adult community-based learning in order that the providers may improve the quality of education and training offered and raise the standards achieved by learners.

2.02 The Inspection Report was produced in accordance with Section 77 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000.

2.03 Adult community-based learning is defined as educational provision for adults made by:

- local authorities;
- voluntary organisations including the WEAs and YMCA;
- further education colleges; and
- higher education institutions.

2.04 In Flintshire, the principal providers of Adult Community Based Learning are:

Deeside College

Welsh College of Horticulture

Coleg Harlech Workers' Educational Association (WEA) (North)

Bangor University

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Date: 27/10/2008

In addition some learning is also provided by the following:

Flintshire Local Voluntary Council

Flintshire County Council

Popeth Cymraeg

YMCA (Wales)

University of the Third Age (U3A)

The inspection covered all of the providers and produced a single set of judgements on overall performance

2.05 The five point scale to used for all inspection judgements in the report is as follows:

Grade 1 good with outstanding features

Grade 2 good features and no important shortcomings

Grade 3 good features outweigh shortcomings

Grade 4 some good features but shortcomings in important areas

Grade 5 many important shortcomings

2.06 The adult community-based learning inspection areas were:

Adult Basic Education

Welsh for Adults

English for Speakers of Other Languages

Adult Learning

Community Development.

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

3.01 The inspection team judged the providers' work as follows:

Key Question	Inspection grade
1 How well do learners achieve?	2
2 How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	2
3 How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	2
4 How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

5 How effective are leadership and strategic management?	2
6 How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	2
7 How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	2

3.02 The inspection team judged the overall grades by learning areas as follows:

Learning area inspected	Inspection grade
Adult Basic Education including Family Learning and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)	1
Welsh for Adults	2
Adult Learning	2
Community Development	2

3.03 The report makes the following recommendations:

R1 review Flintshire County Council's input to strategic planning for adult community-based learning to:

- improve the coordination of its role in the network; and
- make more effective use of available resources for adult community-based learning;

R2 improve:

- the monitoring of achievement, attainment, and retention by the network; and
- the monitoring and evaluation of the Flintshire Community Learning Network's strategic and operational plans;

R3 ensure all tutors engage learners fully, provide learners with enough opportunities to assess their learning and to take part in class discussions;

R4 share the very good practice in Family Learning with other providers;

R5 improve completion rates on most Welsh for Adults courses;

R6 ensure that all ESOL learners can make use of the learndirect online assessment process to help them accelerate their progress;

R7 develop a common system for gathering the views of learners across all providers and the non-service users across Flintshire;

R8 review and monitor the systems for Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks to make sure they are carried out consistently across the network;

R9 improve:

- the promotion of the range of support services available to learners cross all providers; and
- the promotion and celebration of diversity;

R10 make more effective use of staff development activities across the network and ensure that all part-time staff have teaching qualifications; and

R11 recruit and train more tutors able to teach through the medium of Welsh and bilingually.

3.04 The Learning and Skills Act 2000 requires the providers to prepare a written statement of the actions that they propose to take to address the recommendations in the inspection report and the timescales for completing the proposed actions. This task is being co-ordinated by Deeside College which is the principal provider of adult community based learning in Flintshire.

#### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 Executive members are requested to note the conclusions and recommendations of the Estyn inspection report.

#### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 None.

#### **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 None.

#### **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 None.

#### **8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 None.

**9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 None.

**10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 A draft action plan is being prepared in response to Estyn's recommendations. This must be submitted to Estyn by the end of October 2008.

**11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 N/A

**12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 None

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**  
**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

A report on the quality of adult community based learning in Flintshire, May 2008, by Estyn

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## FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 11

REPORT TO: EXECUTIVE

DATE : 29 OCTOBER 2008

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF LIFELONG LEARNING AND DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

SUBJECT : OUT OF COUNTY PLACEMENTS

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01 To provide an update on the ring fenced joint "Out of Authority" Placements budget.

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

2.01 The "out of authority placement" budget operates as a ring fenced budget to provide for the costs of children and young people whose social and/or educational needs cannot be met within Flintshire County Council's provision.

2.02 The term "out-of-authority placement" describes placements funded in the non-maintained and independent special schools sector, voluntary and independent residential homes and voluntary and independent foster agencies.

2.03 For budget monitoring purposes Placements are categorised in four ways:

- Lifelong Learning only;
- Children's Social Services only;
- jointly funded between Lifelong Learning and Children's Social Services; and
- "tripartite funded" between Flintshire County Council Lifelong Learning, Children's Social Services and the Local Health Board.

2.04 There are currently 32 children's social services placements, 29 joint or tripartite placements and 95 education placements supported by this budget. For Lifelong Learning educational placements, the expenditure is offset by Recoupment Income received from other Local Authorities for the education of children in Flintshire maintained schools. Children's Social Services utilise the All Wales Children's Commissioning Support Resource to identify placements. This is a preferred provider system.



- 2.05 In 2007/08 the budget overspent by £765,000. The period 6 monitoring report 2008/09 is projecting an increase of £318,000 at £1,136,000. It should, however, be noted that the budget for 2007/08 was increased by a one off injection of £300,000 which was not available for 2008/09. It had been anticipated that ongoing savings would be generated during 2007/08 which would reduce the deficit in future years. However, increased placement needs during 2008/09 have more than offset any savings generated.

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.01 There is a defined decision making process for confirming a placement. It involves an initial professional assessment based on clear evidence and criteria. Additionally, for Children's Social Services placements a child in need assessment is undertaken. Placements are then subsequently considered by a Statutory Assessment Moderation Panel or the Child Care panel.
- 3.02 The Statutory Assessment Moderation Panel is multi-agency, including representatives from Health, the Inclusion Service, Children's Services and schools. It makes decisions about the outcomes of statutory assessment under the 2002 Education Act. These decisions involve children's long term special educational, social and health needs. In making its decision the Moderation Panel will have regard to the guidance in the SEN Code of Practice for Wales.
- 3.03 The Flintshire Child Care panel is composed of education, health, voluntary sector and children's representatives and seeks to ensure that all planned or emergency placements are fully compliant with the "Towards a Stable Life and a Brighter Future " (June 2007) guidance which sets out a prescribed process for ensuring children's health, education and welfare needs are being met . The child care panel sets a range of review arrangements which requires the case worker to return to the panel at prescribed times to update the arrangements and to make necessary adjustments according to the assessed needs of the child. The majority of placements by Children's Services are due to concerns about the child's welfare necessitating applications to the Family Court for Care Orders.
- 3.04 Placement arrangements are then ratified by each partner's respective Assistant Director, Head of Service or equivalent.
- 3.05 It remains important that we check the robustness of management information available to us to:
- assess future needs and demands for placements;
  - discuss with providers the potential to 'block' purchase placements to secure better prices;
  - identify gaps in resources; and
  - decide where to commission or decommission resources.

3.06 There is also scope to work sub-regionally and regionally to develop commissioning strategies:

- seeking to avoiding duplication where each authority currently develops contracting or pre-placement arrangements;
- sharing information on internal and external resources that will enable placements to be made nearer a child's home where appropriate;
- enabling local authorities to provide robust regional data, recognising that the lack of data has held back commissioning strategies;
- allowing better planning and procurement of placements; and
- developing partnership approaches with providers to 'share risk', develop alternatives to placements and to fill gaps in local provision.

#### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 That members note the content of the report and the steps taken to reduce the dependency on this budget wherever possible.

4.02 Members note that the Directors of Lifelong Learning and Community Services will commission further work in accordance with paragraphs 3.05 and 3.06.

#### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 This report is an exception report following projection of a service overspend of £1.136m.

#### **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 None.

#### **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 None.

#### **8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 None.

#### **9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 None.

#### **10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 None.

#### **11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

- 11.01 The North Wales Heads of Children's Services have jointly commissioned work on short breaks for children with disabilities.
- 11.02 Consultation on respite care is ongoing within Children's Services to explore models of provision. A consultation event with parents took place in January this year and a stakeholder event planned for late autumn.

**12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 None.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**  
**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None.

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## FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 12

**REPORT TO: EXECUTIVE**

**DATE : 29 OCTOBER 2008**

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF LIFELONG LEARNING**

**SUBJECT : LEISURE CENTRE ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY: MOLD  
SPORTS CENTRE**

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.01 The report advises on the outcome of the tender process with regard to the refurbishment works at Mold Sports Centre. This specific project needs to be progressed at the current time due to the requirement to spend the Pool Improvement Fund grant by March 2009.

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

- 2.01 There is a fully designed scheme for the refurbishment and improvement of the Reception, Pool Changing Rooms and Pool Hall at Mold Sports Centre. This project has been awarded grant aid of up to £200,000 from the Pool Improvement Fund operated by Sports Council Wales. At the preparation of tender documentation stage the estimated cost of this project was £270,000; and it was anticipated that the balance of funding required would be drawn from the Capital Programme.
- 2.02 Mold Sports Centre is a dual-use facility based on the campus of the Alun High School and Ysgol Maes Garmon. The proposed works necessitate the closure of the pool facility for the duration of the contract and clearly this has required full negotiation and agreement with both Schools. It has been agreed amongst all parties that works could commence on site Monday 27 October 2008 subject to all funding arrangements and approvals being in place.

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.01 Tenders were received from 5 contractors on 15 September 2008 and the tender report completed on 22 September 2008. The outcome is that the lowest tender inclusive of professional fees totals £403,424. This tender has been checked for completeness and accuracy and found to be correct.
- 3.02 On further discussion regarding the tender amongst relevant officers, it has been identified that one element of work can be omitted (Toilet Refurbishment) and an existing allocation in another capital programme

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Date: 27/10/2008

budget (Mold Sports Centre - Urgent Works) utilised on this project. Such adjustments have the overall effect of reducing the funding requirement for the total project to £350,000 inclusive of fees.

3.03 Therefore, if this project is to proceed as envisaged there is a shortfall against the revised total project cost of £150,000. The capital allocation within the 2008 / 09 Capital Programme for Leisure Enhancements is £500,000 and a programme of final schemes is yet to be committed against this sum. There is provision for the funding shortfall to be met from this Fund.

3.04 There are key emerging reports on Leisure matters including the draft Leisure Services Strategy, a commissioned external consultant report on the future of Deeside Leisure Centre and a detailed consideration of leisure enhancement opportunities across other County Council sites. Improving the physical environment at the Mold Sports Centre sites is a core priority consistent with the developing leisure strategy and enhancement work. The further reports will be presented over future Committee cycles of meetings to enable consultation and decision making on a full County-wide leisure strategy and enhancement programme. Delay of a specific decision in relation to the Mold Centre would jeopardise the £200,000 Pool Improvement Grant which is due to be spent by March 2008.

#### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 Executive is invited to approve the allocation of a maximum of £150,000 from within the existing Leisure Enhancement Capital Fund of £500,000 to enable this project to proceed with immediate effect and with completion within the current financial year.

#### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 If approved, the allocation of a maximum of £150,000 to this project would be accommodated from within the current Capital Fund provision and result in a balance of £350,000 remaining available for other enhancement works.

#### **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 None

#### **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 There would be an improved customer environment at the entrance and within the Pool Hall at Mold Sports Centre.

#### **8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 The enhancement works would be of benefit to both School pupils and staff on campus and the wider community users of this facility.

#### **9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 None

**10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 There is a need to advise Sports Council of Wales of the details of the tendering process and the outcome of this meeting.

**11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 Numerous meetings with both Schools.

**12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 None.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**  
**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None

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## **FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 13**

**REPORT TO:** **EXECUTIVE**

**DATE :** **29 OCTOBER 2008**

**REPORT BY:** **CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**SUBJECT :** **RACE EQUALITY SCHEME –ANNUAL REPORT 2007-2008**

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01 To present Executive with the Race Equality Scheme annual report for May 2007 – May 2008 for their consideration and approval. The annual report is attached as an appendix.

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

2.01 The Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 requires all public authorities to produce a Race Equality Scheme. The aim of a Race Equality Scheme is to ensure race equality becomes central to the work of local government – employment, service delivery, procurement and policy development. Putting the scheme into practice will help the council develop citizen centred services, one of the main principles of “Making the Connections” agenda.

2.02 All public authorities are required to publish an annual report identifying progress that has been made to meet the legislative requirements of the Act.

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

3.01 A number of improvements have been made across the Council; these are highlighted in the annual report. These include:-

- The roll out of a training programme to support employees to develop the skills and knowledge to make equality central to the way we work.
- Increased use of interpretation and translation services to ensure that language does not become a barrier to information or accessing services.
- Increased engagement with the community through supporting the development of an International Social Group.
- Increased equality monitoring by services to establish an ethnic profile of customers. This will help to identify potential or actual areas of discrimination and tailor services to meet customer's needs.

3.02 However, although progress is being made it is not always consistent across the council. There remain key areas where continued progress and outcomes are now required:

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Date: 27/10/2008

- **Training** - To ensure every employee and elected Member understand their responsibilities, a training and awareness programme across the authority is essential. To date only a small number of senior managers have attended the diversity and equality training, a situation which will need to be addressed.

In addition, with a limited budget in place (£20,000) to support the training, Corporate Training and the Policy, Performance and Partnerships unit are currently examining ways to maximise the resources available to meet training needs in both the short and long term.

- **Interpretation** – The Council currently has access to a 24 hour telephone interpretation facility and document translation is in place through a national company “Language Line”. However there are some occasions in which “face to face” translation is more appropriate but there is currently no budget provision for this service.
- **Equality monitoring** - All Directorates need to put in place systems to monitor the profile of customers. Human Resources, Education, Customer Services and Social Services for Adults have systems in place, and are using them to analyse the profile of their customers. Human Resources produce and publish a separate Workforce Information report which provides a profile of the workforce, by ethnicity, gender and disability.

The results from monitoring are an important tool to identifying any barriers to services and help set targets for improvement. They will also help inform equality impact assessments. It is important that more services start monitoring and analysing the profile of their customers.

- **Equality impact assessments** need to be undertaken and published by Directorates. Equality impact assessments will help the Council target resources more effectively, reduce discrimination, promote equality and develop services that meet the needs of our communities. These will be one of the key methods for mainstreaming equality. These are not currently being undertaken systematically across services. New guidance on equality impact assessments is being developed by the new Equality and Human Rights Commission. Further training needs will be provided to services when this guidance is published. In the interim Equality impact assessments will be monitored through the Corporate Equalities Review Team and progress will be reported to the Corporate Management Team. There will be capacity implications in the short term whilst officers develop the skills and confidence in this area.

#### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.01 That Members approve the annual report before it is published and made available to the public.



4.02 That Members note the areas for improvement.

#### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 A long term corporate training programme will be required to support the continual improvement in race equality; the costs of providing this will be met from the existing Corporate Training Budget.

5.02 There is currently no specific corporate budget provision for face to face translation, this cost is being met by individual Directorates. Demand is, however, increasing for both face to face and written/spoken translation and the increasing costs will be highlighted as part of the 2009/10 budget process.

#### **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 Placing equality at the heart of every thing that we do will contribute to addressing poverty experienced by people from different ethnic groups.

#### **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 None identified in this report

#### **8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 The Race Equality Scheme aims to promote equal opportunities, eliminate discrimination and promote community cohesion to all people – residents, visitors and employees.

8.02 To make sure the annual report is accessible to every one, it will published bilingually, in English and Welsh. It will also be available in different formats and languages on request.

#### **9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 Staff will need to be released to participate in relevant training courses

#### **10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 None required

#### **11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 None required for this report. A wide programme of consultation was undertaken for the Race Equality Scheme 2008-2011.

#### **12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 Race Equality Scheme Annual Report 2007- 2008

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**  
**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Race Equality Scheme 2005-2008

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# Flintshire County Council

## Race Equality Scheme

### Annual Report

2007-2008

If you would like a copy of this document in an alternative format or your own language please contact

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## **Race Equality Scheme -Annual Report 2007 -2008**

### **1.0 Introduction**

1.01 The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 (RR(A) A) requires all public authorities to produce and publish a Race Equality Scheme (RES). A Race Equality Scheme is a plan to show how the authority will meet the general and specific duties set out in the RR (A) A. This annual report identifies the progress that we have been making implementing our Race Equality Scheme 2005 -2008.

1.02 The purpose of this annual report is to:

- outline the progress the council has made in meeting the legislation and achieving the RES action plan; and
- identify the challenges and issues which the council needs to address to continue to implement and monitor the scheme.

Future actions for the next three years are set out in the revised scheme 2008-2011.

1.03 The strategic aims of the Race Equality Scheme 2005 -2008 are to:

Meet the three parts of the general duty of the RR(A)A:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity
- promote good relations between people from different ethnic groups

And to meet the specific duties of the act:

Provide accessible, appropriate, quality and culturally sensitive services to customers from all ethnic backgrounds through training staff, monitoring service delivery uptake and monitoring complaints and satisfaction surveys.

Become more customer focussed - Increasing involvement and consultation with customers and employees from all ethnic backgrounds.

Contribute to creating safer communities by increasing confidence in the reporting of racial incidents through developing robust recording and reporting systems to report,

monitor and to respond to racial incidents sensitively, consistently and effectively.

Be a fair and equal opportunities employer, through monitoring our employment functions and policies and by working towards employing a workforce that reflects the local community at all levels of the organisation.

## **2.0 Background**

2.01 Flintshire County Council has taken its duty under the RR(A)A seriously and this has been demonstrated by its commitment to build an infrastructure to proactively meet the equalities agenda.

2.02 A Corporate Equalities Review Team consisting of representatives from each Directorate and the elected member champion for equalities is responsible for driving the equalities agenda throughout the council.

2.03 The demography of Flintshire has changed significantly since the Census 2001 and since the 2005-2008 scheme was prepared. There has been an increase in the number of migrant workers living and/or working in Flintshire. A project is currently in progress to develop a snap shot picture of migrant workers in Flintshire. This will support a better understanding of the numbers and the profile of the population which will help the council to understand and meet needs more effectively.

## **3.0 Progress** **Meeting the General Duty**

3.01 This section sets out the progress made to date under the general duty whilst contributing to meeting our strategic aims. Some of the achievements cover all of the three parts of the general duty.

### **3.02 Eliminate racial discrimination** **Outcomes**

- The Community Safety Partnership has resourced a graffiti buster for Flintshire to ensure that graffiti can be removed, free of charge, from both public and private property. This is monitored through the Community Safety Partnership.
- There were 14 racially motivated incidents reported to Flintshire County Council between April 2007 and March 2008. Nine of these incidents were related to graffiti and five reports were incidents of racial abuse. This is a reduction in reports in comparison to the

previous year in which year there were 45 reports of racial incidents.

- Diversity and equality training has been implemented for all managers and employees to ensure they understand their responsibilities.

### 3.03 Further action to be undertaken:-

- continue to monitor the patterns and trends of racial incidents in Flintshire; and
- continue to encourage people to report incidents.

### 3.04 Promote equality of opportunity

#### **Outcomes**

- increased use of interpretation /translation facilities from two requests in 2004 -2005 to 45 requests in 2007-2008;
- some equality impact assessments have now been undertaken;
- increased engagement and consultation with people from all racial groups;
- supported an “Open Door” project under the Flintshire Community Safety Partnership to provide information and advice to migrant workers; and
- included guidance on using positive images and languages in corporate guidelines on producing information for the public.

### 3.05 Further action to be taken:-

- continue undertaking equality impact assessments and publish the results;
- promote information to employees about different cultures and religions;
- continue to promote the interpretation and translation facilities to employees and members of the public;
- undertake a review on the provision of face to face translation services.

### 3.06 Promote good relations between people from different racial groups

#### **Outcomes**

- established multi agency task and finish group to complete a joint protocol on managing unauthorised encampments;
- promoted a myth buster leaflet to dispel myths about migrant workers and to reduce community tensions;

- produced and publicised Frequently Asked Questions on Gypsies and Travellers to increase awareness and to address myths and stereotypes.
- Supported the development of an International Social Group.

### 3.07 Further action to be taken:-

- continue to encourage people to report hate incidents;
- undertaking a "Celebrating Diversity: the people of Flintshire" project. This is being developed by the Library and Museums Service to collect and exhibit people's stories of moving to Flintshire.

## 4.0 Specific Duties

### 4.01 The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 placed specific duties on public authorities to set out arrangements for:-

- Assessing and consulting on the likely impact of proposed policies on the promotion of equality.
- Monitoring policies for any adverse impact on the promotion of race equality.
- Publishing the results of such assessments and consultations.
- Ensuring public access to information and services.
- Training staff.

The following section demonstrates the progress we have been making and further action that we will be taking to make sure race equality is integral to the way we work.

### 4.02 **Assessing Likely Impact of Policies Progress**

A series of equality impact assessment have been undertaken and feedback has been provided to Directorates to improve the effectiveness of these. The outcomes of equality impact assessments have highlighted the lack of data available on the ethnic make up of our customers and the lack of robust mechanisms to engage and consult effectively with people from all ethnic backgrounds.

4.03 Each Directorate is asked to forward all completed equality impact assessments to the Corporate Equalities Review Team. This will help the standardisation process, share good practice and to share outcomes.

4.04 Future actions:-

- revise the equality impact assessment tool kit;
- train policy and decision makers on the new tool;
- develop a more robust system to ensure the tool is used effectively and consistently; and
- publish the results of equality impact assessments.

## **5.0 Consultation**

5.01 Systems are in place to consult with the local community, and work is being undertaken to engage with harder to reach groups. The council uses a variety of methods to consult including meetings, focus groups, work shops and questionnaires

5.02 Progress

The following outcomes have been achieved:-

- incorporating the requirement to consult with people from all ethnic groups as part of the contract with the organisation that will undertake consultation on behalf of the council.
- a draft engagement and consultation strategy has been developed which is supported by a training course, which includes the importance of consulting with all communities and identifies different methods to engage with different groups.
- a corporate data base has been developed to share results of consultations and to identify forthcoming consultations. One of the aims of this is to avoid duplication and over consultation.
- Supporting the development of an International Social Group in 2006. This community organisation was developed in order to enable people from different cultures and backgrounds who reside within Flintshire and the surrounding area to meet together in order to prevent social isolation, to promote social activities and mutual leisure interests and to facilitate the development of mutual support. Strong links with the council are in place in order to gather views on council services.
- a North Wales multi agency consultation event was held to provide an more effective and efficient method for consultation on Race Equality Schemes.



### 5.03 Further action:-

- continue to develop and sustain links with BME community; and
- establish forum/network for employees from BME backgrounds.

## **6.00 Monitoring**

### 6.01 Progress

Systems to collate customer ethnicity data based on the Census 2001 categories for Wales have been set up for the following services:

- Adult Social Care
- Benefits
- Children's Services
- Housing
- Schools (Pupil attainment levels)
- Mobile Office
- Complaints, Compliments and Comments

6.02 The schools data base and the Adult Social Care database are the only systems that are nearly 100% populated. The results of monitoring by service are attached as Appendix 1.

6.03 The data for the other services is being collated over a period of time. For example, in Benefits

- all new claimant's applications will capture ethnicity data
- existing claimant's applications are reviewed every three years. The review process will include information about ethnicity.

This will ensure that data is collated in a staggered approach to allow capacity for it to be entered onto the system.

6.04 Detailed guidance has been provided to employees on why and how to collect ethnic monitoring data. An information booklet has been prepared for the public and is available in reception points.

## **7.00 Access to information and services**

### 7.01 Progress

A contract is in place to provide interpretation and translation services. Information about the facilities has been distributed to employees through

- the intranet system;

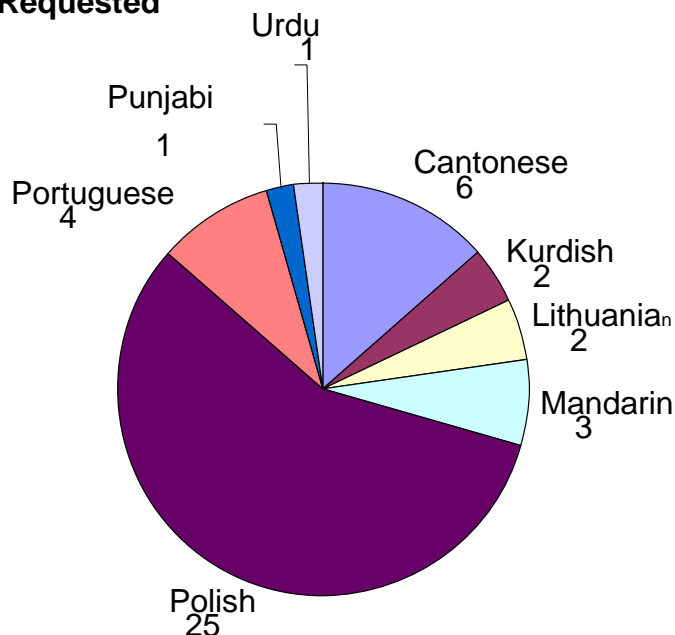
- the staff newsletter;
- induction;
- customer care training;
- race equality training;
- Customer Care Handbook;
- Head Teachers meetings;
- lotus notes messages; and
- Directorate representatives

7.02 Information is distributed to members of the public

- at reception points
- at libraries
- advertised on public information
- at the mobile office
- Community Newsletter
- Press release
- On the website

7.03 During the past 12 months there has been an increase in requests for interpretation and translation. The pie chart below sets out the number of requests for interpretation and translation by language.

**Languages Requested**



#### 7.04 Further action:-

- the website will be used to promote interpretation/translation facilities;
- promote interpretation /translation facilities through leaflets and household news letter;
- investigate the use of face to face translators;
- analysis of data of customer satisfaction and complaints by ethnic groups; and
- continue to seek feedback from all ethnic groups on our services.

### **8.00 Training**

#### 8.01 Training was highlighted as part of the strategic aim in the RES:

Provide accessible, appropriate, quality and culturally sensitive services to customers from all ethnic backgrounds through training staff, monitoring take up of services and monitoring complaints and satisfaction surveys.

#### 8.02 Training on the Race Relations Amendment Act and race equality takes place through traditional courses, and information via employee news letter and the intranet. These include:-

- diversity and equality is part of the induction programme
- customer care training;
- a race equality and cultural awareness course is available to all employees (this training also covers Gypsies and Travellers and migrant workers);
- specific officers have attended a workshop on Islam awareness;
- articles have been placed in Flintshire Focus, the employee newsletter;
- a diversity and equality workshop is being cascaded to all employees.
- information on race equality issues, for examples, different religions, facts and figures about Asylum Seekers and Refugees and Gypsies and Travellers is available on the equality pages on the intranet.

This was also supported by an e-learning programme.

Attendance on diversity and equality training is monitored through the Corporate Equalities Review Team.

## 9.00 Employment

This section relates to our strategic aim:

Be a fair and equal opportunities employer, through monitoring our employment functions and policies and by working towards employing a workforce that reflects the local community at all levels of the organisation.

9.01 A profile of the ethnic make up of the workforce is set out below in Table 1.

Table 1

<b>Ethnic Origin</b>	<b>Overall %</b>
Asian (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Other)	0.16%
Black (Caribbean, African, Other)	0.04%
Chinese (Chinese, Other)	0.05%
Mixed (White & Black Caribbean or African, White and Asian, Other)	0.12%
White British	68.91%
White Irish	0.21%
White Other	1.20%
Unknown	29.32%
<b>Totals number of employees 8185</b>	

9.02 It can be seen from Table 1 that nearly one third of data on the workforce is not available. A target of a 95% response rate to the employee diversity audit has been set for every Directorate. Each Director is responsible for achieving this target and following up those employees who did not return the questionnaire.

The full workforce information report and action plan is available in a separate report. A new Human Resource database is being commissioned; this will support the council to produce more detailed reports on all aspects of employment.

9.03 A People Strategy has been developed which sets out the following aims:-

- Focusing all on the delivery of “customer- centred” services
- Improving employee relations (Developing employment partnership through improved communication, involvement and consultation processes)

- Branding Flintshire as an excellent employer
- Developing a positive working environment
- Mainstreaming equality (putting equality at the heart of everything we do)
- Modernising the HR service

The People Strategy is supported by a detailed action plan.

9.04 An Employee Survey was undertaken in 2007, as a result of the feedback, the Corporate Management Team identified 5 improvement themes:

1. Communicating the vision and priorities for Flintshire County Council
2. Demonstrating our values more effectively
3. Valuing and developing our workforce
4. Considering ways to reduce red tape
5. Improving manager satisfaction

An action plan is in place to achieve these priorities. The percentage of response from BME employees was under 0.5% of the total responses. This means that it is statistically not reliable to compare responses between employees from different ethnic backgrounds.

9.05 A major review is underway of all Human Resource policies, with existing policies being rewritten as part of this review equality impact assessments will be undertaken on each new and revised policy.

9.06 Future actions:

- A priority for the next 12 months is to set up employee forums which will support the council to engage and consult more effectively with employees from a BME background.

## **10.00 Procurement**

10.01 The Contract Procedure Rules have been reviewed to incorporate specific statements on the equality duties.

10.02 Specific race equality actions are being included in some contracts. Race equality requirements are part of the criteria for awarding grants.

10.03 Draft guidance has been prepared for procurement officers and contractors on meeting the race equality duty.

10.04 Future actions:-

- To prepare and publish short easy to read guidance for council officers who are purchasing goods, services or products to ensure that equality is incorporated into any contract or service level agreement. This will be supported by more detailed guidance.

## **11.00 Partnerships**

11.01 In September 2007 support was given by the Community Strategy Partnership Board to establish a Local Service Board (LSB) for Flintshire. The LSB executive group consist of North Wales Police, Flintshire County Council Leader and Chief Executive, Local Health Board Chief Executive and the Principal of Deeside College. The main role of the LSB will be to identify and mange common/ shred issues and challenge the standard delivery of outcomes across strategic partnerships that make up Flintshire in Partnership.

11.02 The inaugural meeting of the LSB took place in June 2008, since then a strategy group has been formed with agreed terms of reference

- Effective Partnership relationships
- Producing a meaningful and fit for purpose Community Strategy
- Good governance of Strategic Partnerships
- Identify common issues as partners

11.03 In addition it is proposed that an LSB Consultation Forum/ Network be formed which will draw on existing mechanisms for consultation and engagement.

## **12.00 Schools**

12.01 Progress

The English as an Additional Language (EAL) service delivered a conference in April 2008 for Flintshire primary schools entitled "Key strategies for a Language Enhancing Curriculum for Pupils Learning English as an Additional Language."

- 12.02 The service has also developed a pack for all schools to help welcome new EAL pupils to the schools and has produced information in Polish for parents about the EAL service.
- 12.03 In conjunction with the Personal Social and Health Co-ordinator (PSC), the EAL service prepared leaflets for schools on how to make contact with schools in Poland. The aim of this is to enable EAL children to maintain links with their home country and support indigenous school pupils to foster an understanding of the culture and background of the new pupils. Two EAL teachers have spent one week in Poland to gain a better understanding of the educational system and culture. This knowledge will be shared with colleagues and used to help children integrate into schools.
- 12.04 Four secondary schools participated in the Croeso project “Diversity Peer Education” training. Croeso is a Commission for Racial Equality initiative and funded through the National Assembly for Wales.
- 12.05 Cultural diversity training is provided to the schools and Youth Service as part of the Global Citizenship agenda.
- 12.06 Monitoring of the ethnic background of pupils is undertaken annually. A profile of all school pupils and educational achievement and ethnic background for key stage 2 pupils is attached in Appendix 1.

### **13.00 Conclusion**

13.01 We have made progress but are aware that we need to continue making changes and taking action to ensure race equality becomes central to the way we work. However there are some challenges that need to be addressed which will support further improvement. The main challenges are:

- lack of information about the profile of customers applying for and receiving services; this affects the ability to undertake effective equality impact assessments and to be able to monitor services and policies for potential or actual discrimination;
- the provision of “face to face” translation;
- the lack of robust mechanism to engage and consult effectively with all our diverse communities;

- ensuring we communicate effectively with the entire workforce, particularly those who are not office based, so that they understand the requirements of the legislation and are equipped with the skills, knowledge and attitudes to meet our statutory obligations.

The priorities for the next three years are:-

- develop a greater awareness and understanding of different cultures.
- improve engagement and consultation with the BME community.
- improve access to information and access to appropriate services that meet the needs of our diverse communities.
- promote good community relations.
- embed equality impact assessments into policy and decision making.
- undertake more robust equality monitoring which will inform equality impact assessments and will help identify areas of potential and actual inequality.

13.02 To support the council to monitor the Race Equality Scheme and action plan more effectively, the action plan will be incorporated into the pan Wales performance management system, “Ffynon”. This will enable progress to be monitored more effectively at different levels, individual, service, Directorate and corporate.

13.03 If you have any comments about this report or about the progress we are making in promoting race equality we would welcome your views. Please contact us

**In writing:-**

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Corporate Strategy  
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Appendix 1

**Results of monitoring –Adult Social Care**

<b>Client Group</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>% Referrals</b>	<b>% Completed Assessments</b>
Older People	White British	99.22	98.48
	White Irish	0	0
	Any other White Background	0.37	0.49
	BME	0.4	0.44
Learning Disability	White British	100	100
	White Irish	0	0
	Any other White Background	0	0
	BME	0	0
PDSI	White British	98.51	100.51
	White Irish	0	0
	Any Other White Background	0.16	0.51
	BME	0	0

BME –Black and Ethnic Minority

PDSI- Physical disability and sensory impairment

## Results of monitoring – Adult Social Care Community Based Services

<b>Client Group</b>	<b>Ethnic Background</b>	<b>% Domiciliary Care</b>	<b>% Day Care</b>	<b>% Community Living Support</b>
Older People	White British	99.35	99.15	
	White Irish	0	0	
	Any other White Background	0.33	0.56	
	BME	0.28	0	
Learning Disabilities	White British	98.06	99.12	98.98
	White Irish	0	0	0
	Any other White Background	1.14	0.44	1.02
	BME	0	0	0
PDSI	White British	99.2	100	
	White Irish	0	0	
	Any other White Background	0	0	
	BME	0	0	

BME –Black and Minority Ethnic

PDSI- Physical disability and sensory impairment

## Appendix 2 Results of monitoring – Education

Table 1: Profile of pupils in primary schools by ethnic background

Ethnic Background	Number of school pupils	% of all primary school pupils
Asian	54	0.4
Black	14	0.1
Chinese	26	0.2
Mixed	123	0.9
Other	29	0.2
White British	12777	94.7
Irish Traveller	29	0.2
White Other	146	1.1
Missing data	292	2.1
Total	13490	

Table 2: Profile of secondary school pupils by ethnic background

Ethnic Background	Number of pupils	% of all secondary school pupils
Asian	24	0.227
Black	4	0.038
Chinese	23	0.218
Mixed	57	0.539
Not obtained	74	0.7
other	9	0.085
Refused	45	0.426
White British	10245	96.94
White Irish	4	0.038
White Other	83	0.785
Total	10568	100

Table 3: Profile of Special school pupils by ethnic background

Ethnic Background	% of all special school pupils
BME	0.90
Not known	0.90
White British	98.19
Total	100.00

### Achievement levels by Ethnicity 2008 Key Stage 2

Table 4: Achievement of level 4 or above in core subjects at key stage 2  
Detailed figures relating to achievement are available

	% of total pupils	% of pupils achieving level 4 or above
Asian	0.16	66.66
Black	0.05	100
Chinese	0.16	100
Mixed	0.93	82
Other	0.16	66.66
Refused	0.27	100
White British	97.16	78.4
White Other	1.09	44.44

## **FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 14**

**REPORT TO:** **EXECUTIVE**

**DATE :** **29 OCTOBER 2008**

**REPORT BY:** **DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**SUBJECT :** **HOUSING REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE SERVICE MID YEAR REVIEW**

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.01 To provide Executive with a mid year review with the Housing Maintenance Service including:
  - 1.1.1 An update in relation to the Public Interest Report undertaken by PriceWaterhouseCoopers LLP on the Housing Repair Service, the subsequent follow-up review dated December 2007 and the report relating to the position at mid March 2008.
  - 1.1.2 An update Members of the progress being made in the implementation of key areas of activity within the Housing Repairs Service.
  - 1.1.3 An update of the current projected financial position of the Building Maintenance Trading Account (BMTA) and confirm measures to control expenditure within the available budget.

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

- 2.01 The Public Interest Report on the Housing Repairs Service was prepared by the external auditor PriceWaterhouseCooper LLP under the powers set out in s22 (1) of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004. These state that the external auditor should consider whether any matters have come to his attention that require him to prepare a report in the public interest.
- 2.02 The Public Interest report was reported to the County Council on the 5 September 2006 and made ten recommendations. These recommendations were reported into and regularly monitored through the Housing Services Project Team. Progress was also reported into the Audit Committee.
- 2.03 A follow-up review was undertaken by the external auditor and a report was prepared dated December 2007 (available from Member Services). This report reflected upon progress made since the Public Interest Report of June 2006 and made 14 recommendations.

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Date: 27/10/2008

2.04 A further review was undertaken in mid March 2008 (available as appendix 1), and reported to Audit Committee in March 2008. That report accepted that substantial progress had been made and noted three fundamental issues that warranted close monitoring:

- The introduction of the new schedule of rates will provide a direct measure of the level of improvement in productivity. A step change is needed, and that requires the active co-operation of employees.
- The boundary between client and contractor activity remains blurred, which confuses responsibility and financial reporting.
- There remains a case for reviewing the structure on contracting activity in the Council as a whole, to see what economies of scale can be unlocked and how their management can be further supported.

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

3.01 Since presenting the Public Interest report significant activity has been undertaken to ensure that the Repairs Service develops further including the introduction of a new Schedule of Rates (SOR), Diagnostic Reporting and vehicle locators tracking. Progress on each of these items is detailed below.

3.02 A temporary Head of Housing has been in post since August, with a brief to improve operational performance. Currently a DSO Manager from Chester and District Housing Trust has been engaged through the Councils framework arrangement with the Chartered Institute of Housing. This arrangement is designed to lever in best practice from such organisations. A permanent DSO Manager commenced with the authority on 29/9/2008 and is undertaking a review of the operations of the service. In order to further improve performance of the DSO there is an urgent need to undertake two additional strands of work: the relocation of the depot to suitable accommodation; and development of a fit for purpose service structure.

#### **Schedule of Rates (SOR) Update**

3.03 This is one of three key developments forming the key foundations for the service moving forward. A review of SORs has taken place in order that the basis for charging and measuring the service could be modernised. The service previously used SORs in use by Delyn Borough Council prior to the formation of Flintshire in 1996. These did not reflect the demands of a modern service, and did not compare with current commercial rates.

3.04 The new schedule of rates has been successfully installed from April 2008. Initial indications are that performance has stayed constant from the previous year. This would suggest an improvement of 25% on productivity due to the new rates being around 27% leaner than previous.

3.05 There are currently over 2000 SORs in use within Property Maintenance and the next phase of the work is to reduce this level to around 500 which will reflect good business practice. In order to take this forward a working group

is currently looking at stream lining the SORs. It will achieve this by developing composite rates for jobs by grouping a number of SORs into one component group. For example, to eg change a tap, this will have all the component trade activities and materials collated and allocated to the task as opposed to multiple trade activities and materials (eg tap, pipes, clips). Training is currently being provided to Trade operatives regarding what should and should not be booked to ensure that the SORs are not being over used when not relevant or applicable, this will assist in rationalising the current SORs.

### **Diagnostic reporting**

- 3.06 The second element was the implementation of diagnostic reporting. This allows repairs to be correctly categorised by call centre operators through talking customers through a series of pictures of a defective component, the customer and the call centre operator both (ideally) looking at the same information.
- 3.07 As reported previously the diagnostic repairs tool is nearing the final stages of implementation, good progress has been made and the diagnostic repairs tool 'Repair Finder' has now been fully scripted to incorporate the new schedule of rates. It is currently in test mode with the repairs call handlers familiarising themselves with its operation, layout and functionality.
- 3.08 The new repairs handbook supports diagnostic reporting, and is being delivered to tenants during October. This is a critical component of the implementation as all Flintshire County Council tenants and leaseholders will receive copies so that diagnosis can be handled faster from both ends (customer and call centre).
- 3.09 An additional feature of 'Repair Finder' is 'Inter Finder'. This is a mirror of 'Repair Finder' that can be used by tenants and leaseholders to diagnose and report repairs over the internet 24/7. It is proposed to roll this application out during the next financial year once 'Repair Finder' has bedded in.
- 3.10 Implementation of the diagnostic tool will ensure that repairs are consistently diagnosed and allocated to the correct repair category (Emergency, Urgent and Routine). Currently a high proportion of works orders are allocated to Emergency or Urgent works when in reality they are Routine jobs. This makes these jobs more expensive. The use of Repair Finder will lead to a substantial reduction in emergency and urgent jobs and ensure that there is a better representation of routine jobs within the three criteria Emergency, Urgent and Routine. Best practice suggests that a 30/70 split should be aimed for (30% Emergency and Urgent and 70 % Routine), currently FCC are not achieving this ratio. This will lead to a reduction in cost and ensure that more jobs can be correctly planned into the 50 day routine target which will ultimately assist in the introduction of an appointments system early in the next financial year.

### **Vehicle Locator/Tracking System**

- 3.11 An action plan is in place that will ensure that a comprehensive vehicle tracking tool, for all property maintenance vehicles can be delivered by 1 January 2008. The Pre Qualification questionnaire (PPQ) has been prepared and is currently being advertised through the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU). The procurement plan is being delivered jointly between the Central Procurement Unit and the Property Maintenance Team.
- 3.12 The procurement process has been structured such that it will deliver a value for money process for the Council based on a price quality selection with the split being 70% for price and 30% for quality.
- 3.13 The Vehicle Locator/Tracker will provide a host of useful management information that will assist in monitoring and improving performance in the following areas:
- Fuel usage
  - Gaining the optimum use of vehicles and operatives to ensure emergencies are dealt with effectively and that operatives/supervisors are managing their time and workloads effectively
  - Ensuring that vehicles are monitored for business use only as required by the Inland Revenue
  - Lone working
  - Customer Satisfaction
- 3.14 This will result in efficiencies being created within the service that will provide increased productivity a faster response to emergency jobs and provide a level of assurance for lone workers.

### **Other Initiatives**

- 3.15 The service has robust measures in place to manage and monitor sickness absence levels and has been addressing this through regular management reviews jointly held with colleagues in Human Resources.
- 3.16 Financial management, including the monitoring of productivity on an individual basis, has improved with the development of a management information system which has been undertaken within the service drawing information from the IBS computer system. Managers within the service have access to this information which enables them to manage staff and other resources more effectively. The system enables levels of productivity to be measured and managed on an employee basis as required. Whilst the level of management reporting is more stable the current processes for



recovering income are overly bureaucratic and require sustained management focus in maintaining ticket flows through the system and to support income recovery.

3.17 Performance indicators over the three main categories of work, Emergency, Urgent and Routine still remain challenging and will require sustained work throughout the remainder of this current financial year by the management team to improve performance. Further and more strenuous effort is required as part of the general approach to performance improvement.

3.18 There has been a recent deterioration in the DSO's current trading position which has necessitated action to rectify an increased deficit and a more detailed analysis of this is given in a separate report to this meeting. Within the current overall budget the service is projected to make a £300k deficit this financial year. The brief history on projections, compared to the outturn for 2007/08, is as follows:

		<u>Deficit</u> <u>£'000</u>
2007/08	Outturn	177
2008/09	Month 3	254
	Month 4	228
	Month 5	544

3.19 The following measures have been deployed to minimise the deficit to within client budget:

- Significantly reduce the use of subcontracted labour utilising the DSO resource more effectively to control expenditure within a £1.8m target.
- Where feasible seek to allocate work to the DSO from the current capital programme so that they may earn additional income through this route.
- Recruit to a number of vacant trade posts (Electricians) to increase income and reduce subcontractor utilisation and cost. This will require detailed management so as not to create an overspend position on the client account.
- Review agency levels and begin to release agency staff based upon business need.
- Stopping overtime which will reduce employee costs and keep income at a more constant level through improved workflow management.

3.20 The work outlined in 3.19 above to improve the position of the Building Maintenance Trading Account (BMTA) should not adversely impact on the

ability of the service to pursue the improvements to the service outlined elsewhere in the report.

#### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 That Members note the service improvements that have been undertaken and challenges that remain and support the ongoing management initiatives designed to rectify the current financial position whilst continuously improving the service to our customers.

#### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 The latest projection is a deficit of £0.544m which is £0.244m more than the budget. The overall position is to apply control measures which will reduce the overall reliance upon subcontractors and enable DSO resource to be deployed to recover the position and bring back the account with its budgeted allocation.

#### **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 None as a direct result of this report.

#### **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 None as a direct result of this report.

#### **8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 None as a direct result of this report.

#### **9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 None as a direct result of this report.

#### **10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 None as a direct result of this report.

#### **11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 None as a direct result of this report.

#### **12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 Appendix 1 Mid year review

#### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

December 2007 Review, March 2008 Review (available from Member Services)

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## Flintshire County Council: Audit Committee 25 March 2008

### The Housing Repair Service: Follow up

#### Position as at mid March 2008

##### Introduction

As the substantive paper was based on work undertaken by PricewaterhouseCoopers in the autumn of 2007, this paper notes a number of recent developments in order to provide members with an up-to-date view. It also briefly sets out the current financial position. The paper is structured to follow the headings in the 'Conclusion and Recommendations' section on pages 4 and 5 of the report.

##### *The Scale of the Challenge*

Over the last few months the service has seen the following developments:

- A benchmarking exercise has been undertaken to compare the rates in the new schedule with those found elsewhere. Although not wholly conclusive, it lends weight to the view that the new schedule is a reasonable estimate of the prices available from alternative suppliers
- The 10% allowance for sub-contracted work has been removed for capital
- More has been done in the process of setting the 2008/9 budget to distinguish client and contractor expense, but this remains a complex area

##### *A further recovery plan*

- The new schedule is on course to be introduced on 1 April 2008.
- An appraisal of all first line managers has been undertaken by an external consultant
- A personal development plan has been agreed for each employee based on an appraisal of the skills that the business requires them to possess
- New sickness monitoring processes have been introduced. Sickness levels amongst the manual workforce have fallen from 7.5% to 6.8%, and amongst staff from 7.5% to 4.0%. The employment of two individuals has been terminated by agreement on medical grounds
- Stores management has been reviewed, and a new stores manager is to be appointed
- Some work has been undertaken on the future implementation of enhanced mobile working, which requires tracking the location of vans; we understand the Programme Board is shortly to receive a paper on the topic

##### *Monitoring and financial processes*

- The management accounting processes have been overhauled, so there is now been certainty over the accuracy of the information
- Productivity can now be monitored for each employee

*Other client matters*

Elsewhere in the paper a number of other issues are raised. The following developments are worthy of note although they are essentially client issues:

- Diagnostic reporting should go live on 1 July 2008, which is intended to improve the accuracy of the work required and how it should be classified
- Work on void properties that is capital in nature will be classified as such immediately rather than at the year end, providing more certainty over the level of budget available for responsive work

**Financial position as at 27 January 2008**

The most recent management accounts anticipate a small full year deficit of around £67,000. That is £310,000 better than the budget. Income is forecast at £7.005 million, almost exactly in line with budget. The main reason for the improved performance is the lower use of sub-contractors.

**Other performance indicators**

Response times for the third quarter of 2007/8 are set out in the Table below. It should be noted that they are more a matter for the Housing client than the repair service. Although the PIs remain below target there has been some improvement:

Class of repair	Actual response time Q3 (days)	Target (days)
Emergency	1.09	1
Urgent	15.95	7
Non-urgent	86.07	50

**Conclusion**

We accept that substantial progress has been made. There are however three fundamental issues that warrant close monitoring:

- The introduction of the new schedule of rates will provide a direct measure of the level of improvement in productivity. A step change is needed, and that requires the active cooperation of all employees
- The boundary between client and contractor activity remains blurred, which confuses responsibility and financial reporting
- There remains a case for reviewing the structure of contracting activity in the council as a whole, to see what economies of scale can be unlocked and how their management can be further supported

## FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 15

REPORT TO: EXECUTIVE

DATE : 29 OCTOBER 2008

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

SUBJECT : BUILDING MAINTENANCE TRADING ACCOUNT 2008/09

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.01 To inform Members of the current projected financial position of the Building Maintenance Trading Account (BMTA) and confirm measures to control expenditure within the available budget. This position has worsened since the last reported position (at Month 4).

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

- 2.01 The Building Maintenance Trading Account (BMTA) is placed for accounting and budget purposes within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). Its largest client is the HRA Repair and Maintenance Budget, which generates over 90% of the income earned through the trading operations. The five main areas of trading operational cost are:

- Employee costs – direct workforce and agency staff
- Transport – fleet running costs, vehicle hire, operating leases
- Use of sub-contractors – external contractors to support DSO allocated work
- Supplies and services – direct to job materials, equipment purchase and hire, protective clothing, consultancy, computer hardware/software etc
- Income – income earned through the schedule of rates for works undertaken, on Council dwellings

- 2.02 It delivers these services to approximately 7,500 houses throughout Flintshire. The service is delivered from its depot in Canton, Greenfield via a direct workforce of some 102 trades/support staff with a further 40 technical/administrative support staff.

- 2.03 The service has been subject to constant change over the past four years and has presented the Council with a number of significant challenges. This is reflected in the Council's register of strategic risks and challenges presenting as a high risk service with significant improvement necessary.

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Date: 27/10/2008

- 2.04 Within the current overall budget the service is budgeted to make a £300k deficit this financial year. However, there has been deterioration in its current trading position which has necessitated a report on the position. The brief history on projections, compared to the outturn for 2007/08, is as follows:

		<u>Deficit</u> <u>£'000</u>
2007/08	Outturn	177
2008/09	Month 3	254
	Month 4	228
	Month 5	544

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.01 Work has been undertaken on the trading account to analyse the current areas where financial performance is not in line with the budget set. It is also a clear objective to minimise the level of deficit whilst maximising the service to customers. The following areas have been identified as needing further management controls and information.
- 3.02 Broadly the income generated and earned through the trading account and the expenditure shown through the HRA client account should mirror one another. This relationship is important to remember because action to rectify a problem in the BMTA may have an adverse effect in the client account.
- 3.03 Formal budget monitoring reports commenced in period 3, and this work was being undertaken in July. Close down of the previous year was still being undertaken at that time making it difficult to accurately gauge performance. Monthly Trading Account Review Group Meetings (TARG) with colleagues from Central Finance, Canton and finance staff from County Offices Flint, are scheduled on a monthly basis. However irrespective of TARG meetings budget review meetings are held with the finance team in Flint and the Service Manager. TARG reviews overall performance of the service and is used as an indicator platform for reporting any issues. However regular monthly meetings of the Trading Account Review Group were suspended whilst end of year closedown activity was undertaken. Due to the current position with the trading account, fortnightly review meetings will be undertaken for the remainder of the financial year
- 3.04 Performance reports in relation to trade activity have been developing through the new management systems linked to the IBS system. This is able to show output levels per individual tradeperson and can be used by the Canton Management Team to monitor performance. Fields needed to be populated over a period of time to ensure robustness of data and to ensure analysis and interpretation can inform management activity. This data population and testing has now been completed, and will show activity levels

per tradesperson and assist management in addressing any issues over individual outputs.

- 3.05 One of the highest levels of expenditure and a cause for concern is sub-contractors where it appears that financial controls have failed. In order to mitigate further overspending on this account a new target expenditure level has been set at £1.8m. This is challenging and will need to be monitored on a weekly basis and corrective action taken to ensure this is managed within target. Currently this overspend position is being mitigated in other budget lines, predominantly employee costs.
- 3.06 In addition there have been consequential effects of the new schedule of rates roll out. This may have led to levels of productivity falling for a short period of time due to staff familiarising themselves with the new rates and training. The adoption of the new schedule should lead to increased work throughput i.e. more work for the same level of available budget. Therefore the average effect on the client budget should be neutral.
- 3.07 Members will be aware that during a review undertaken by the former Interim Director, David Finnegan, trades were placed on a salary and removed from bonus on the basis that progression through three bands was based upon the degree and extent of multi skilled working undertaken by individual tradespersons. The operation and effectiveness of this scheme would now benefit from a review so that any management decision, on specific performance levels, can be fully considered on the basis of the management information now available.
- 3.08 As part of dealing with other operational issues, two further components have been or are in the process of being fully implemented: diagnostic reporting and vehicle tracking. Diagnostic reporting is currently being tested in the live environment and tenant handbooks are being finalised. Diagnostic reporting will enable work requests to be categorised far more effectively enabling more work to be planned through non urgent categorisation instead of the emergency category which costs more to undertake and is disruptive to work flow. Vehicle tracking will be implemented in the New Year and will assist the authority to support lone working, identify vehicle location and enable rapid deployment of nearest available trades to work request and support work flow planning. This activity will lead to reduced travel/journey times and as a direct consequence increased productivity and savings in fuel.
- 3.09 Members will also be aware that as part of the Strategic Housing Review one of the four areas that the review board would address was the fitness for purpose of the housing management and maintenance functions.
- 3.10 The following measures are to be deployed to bring the trading account into budget or to minimise the deficit and within client budget.



- Significantly reduce the use of subcontracted labour utilising the DSO resource more effectively to control expenditure within a £1.8m target
- Review the procedures for controlling and managing agreed budgets.
- Where feasible seek to allocate work to the DSO from the current capital programme so that they may earn additional income through this route.
- Recruit to a number of vacant trade posts (Electricians) to increase income and reduce subcontractor utilisation and cost. This will require detailed management so as not to create an overspend position on the client account.
- Review agency levels and begin to release agency staff based upon business need
- Immediately stop overtime which will reduce employee costs and keep income at a more constant level through improved workflow management.

3.11 A new DSO Manager has now commenced (29/9/2008) and is undertaking a review of service operations; further reports will be presented to Executive in order to update Members of the trading position of the service.

3.12 In order to further improve performance of the DSO there is an urgent need to undertake two additional strands of work, the relocation of the depot to suitable accommodation and look at a more fit for purpose structure.

#### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 That Members note the report and

- (a) receive regular update reports on tracking progress of activities being undertaken to control expenditure.
- (b) receive a report to the next meeting concerning the financial management issues identified in the report.

#### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 The latest projection, detailed in Appendix A, is a deficit of £0.544m which is £0.244m more than the budget. The overall position is to apply control measures which will reduce the overall reliance upon subcontractors and enable DSO resource to be deployed to recover the position and bring back the account with its budgeted allocation.

#### **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 None as a direct result of this report.

**7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 None as a direct result of this report.

**8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 None as a direct result of this report.

**9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 None as a direct result of this report.

**10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 None as a direct result of this report.

**11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 None as a direct result of this report.

**12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 Analysis at period 5. Refer to appendix A

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985  
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None

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Appendix A

<b>Subjective Analysis</b>	<b>Budget 2008/09 £'000</b>	<b>Outturn as at Period 5 £'000</b>	<b>Variance £'000</b>
Employees – Direct	3,842	3,511	(330)
Employees - Indirect	74	207	133
Premises	123	124	1
Transport	671	674	3
Sub Contractors	1466	1,800	334
Supplies	1023	1,118	95
Transfer Payments	0	1	1
Support Costs	239	139	(101)
Capital Financing	60	58	(2)
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>7,498</b>	<b>7,632</b>	<b>134</b>
DLO Income	(7,039)	(6,959)	80
Stores Income	(159)	(129)	30
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>(7,198)</b>	<b>(7,088)</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>(SURPLUS)/DEFICIT</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>244</b>

**FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 16**

**REPORT TO:**     **EXECUTIVE**

**DATE :**           **29 OCTOBER 2008**

**REPORT BY:**    **DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**SUBJECT :**       **VACANT DESIGNATED WARDEN ACCOMMODATION**

**1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01 To update members of the current position regarding vacant designated resident warden service accommodation and to recommend that these properties are brought back into tenanted use as soon as practical.

**2.00 BACKGROUND**

2.01 In 2002, a decision was made that when a resident sheltered housing warden left the service the resultant vacant position would not be filled and consequently the service accommodation would remain vacant. This decision was introduced as a short-term measure that would be superseded when the decisions on the long-term future of the resident warden service were made.

2.02 However, the decisions on the long-term future of the warden service have proven challenging to make and the interim decision has been left in place for six years.

**3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

3.01 At present, sixteen designated resident warden properties are vacant. Nine of these properties have been vacant for more than three years. Appendix 1 contains details of the vacant properties. Members are advised that the vacant warden property within the Jasmine Crescent scheme is not been included in this figure, as this scheme is being closed.

3.02 Information obtained from the council's housing waiting list indicates that the anticipated demand for fourteen of the vacant designated warden properties is high, with the other two properties assessed as being in medium demand.

3.03 At a time when there are currently 5,000 people on the council's housing waiting list, to leave sixteen designated warden properties vacant does not enable the Council to make the most positive use of its housing stock or to maximise its rental income. Therefore, it is proposed that the designated warden properties are released back for letting.

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Date: 27/10/2008

- 3.04 Sensitive allocations would be pursued to ensure that any new tenants do not present a conflict of lifestyle with existing tenants. Change of use for these properties is subject to statutory consultation with tenants and other interested parties. This will include elected Members from the ward where the schemes are sited.
- 3.05 The statutory consultation process will be managed by the Housing Estate Management service with appropriate support and guidance being provided by the council's Tenant Participation Officer. During the consultation process, tenants will be advised of the proposal to bring the empty warden properties back into tenanted use and be reassured that their support service will continue to be provided by a non-resident warden.
- 3.07 Members are also advised that three designated resident warden properties are still occupied by an ex-warden. Details of these properties can be found in Appendix 1. The three ex-wardens pay an amount equal to their properties weekly rent (referred to, as mesne-profits) and they are not the secure tenant of the property that they are occupying.
- 3.09 Occupying property on a mesne-profit basis is usually a short-term arrangement. However, the council has allowed the three ex-wardens to occupy their old service accommodation on a mesne-profit basis for significant periods. For example, one ex-warden has occupied their old service accommodation as a mesne-profits tenant for over two years. The other two ex-wardens have both been occupying service accommodation as a mesne-profits tenant for over fifteen months.
- 3.10 Given the period of time that the mesne-profits arrangements have been in force for, it is unlikely that the Council would want to seek possession or that the Court would grant the council possession orders for these three properties on the grounds that they are occupied by ex-service tenants. It is therefore proposed that the three ex-wardens are allowed to remain occupying their old service accommodation and their rights of occupancy are amended from that of mesne-profit tenants to that of a secure tenants. However, this must not be taken as setting a precedent. It is our intention to seek possession of properties at the point when wardens leave their post.

#### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.01 That Members support the proposal to return to use, at the earliest possible opportunity, the sixteen vacant designated warden properties.
- 4.02 That Members support the proposal to provide secure tenancies to three ex-wardens who are currently still residing in their old service accommodation.

#### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.01 A full year saving of £0.056m will be achieved from 2009/10 in the General Fund service budget for Resident Wardens. There is an existing pressure of

£0.012m in the resident wardens rent abatement budget which may be offset against the £0.056m, leaving a net annual budget saving of £0.044m. A partial saving will be achieved in 2008/09 based on the number of weeks remaining from the point of redesignation of the properties. The 2008/09 budget saving will be reflected as appropriate in future budget monitoring reports.

- 5.02 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) currently receives full rental income for all warden designated properties whether vacant or occupied from the General Fund rent abatement budget. Thus, there may be a small reduction in rent income to the HRA resulting from any void period for any of the properties following their redesignation.

## **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

- 6.01 Any course of action implemented by the council that increases its social housing resources will have a positive impact upon the life chances of those who enjoy the right to tenant these additional properties.

## **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

- 7.01 Sixteen properties are unoccupied and four of these properties have been unoccupied for six years. Bringing these properties back into tenanted use will reduce the likelihood of the properties deteriorating further.

## **8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 8.01 Any course of action implemented by the council that increases its social housing resources will provide a potential benefit across all of Flintshire's diverse communities.

## **9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.01 There are no direct personnel implications in this report.

## **10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

- 10.01 Section 105 of the Housing Act 1985, places a statutory duty upon the council to consult on matters relating to housing management with tenants.

- 10.02 Consultation will be undertaken with tenants and other interested parties, including elected Members from the ward where the schemes are sited.

## **11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

- 11.01 No formal consultation has been undertaken.

## **12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 Appendix 1 - Vacant designated resident warden service accommodation.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**  
**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None

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## Appendix 1: Vacant designated resident warden service accommodation

<b>Scheme/Address</b>	<b>Property Type</b>	<b>Date Vacant</b>	<b>Anticipated Demand</b>
19 Acacia Close, Mold	3b flat	10 /0/6/02	HIGH {76 applicants}
24 Ger- Y – Pistyll, Nercwys	3b house	03/ 11/ 03	HIGH {7 applicants}
16 Heulwen Close, Hope	3b bungalow	13/06/ 06	HIGH {28 elderly applicants for 2/3 beds}
94 Bolingbroke Heights, Flint	2b flat	01/07/ 02	HIGH {101 applicants}
9 Mount Walk, Flint	3b maisonette	13 /03/03	HIGH {197 applicants}
2 Ffordd Pandarus, Mostyn	2b House	09/09/02	HIGH {21 applicants}
1 Llwyn Aled, Holywell	2b flat	09/12/02	MEDUIM {52 applicants}
178 Ffordd Pennant, Mostyn	3b house	08/08/04	HIGH {31 applicants}
32 Llwyn Beuno, Holywell	2b flat	29/11/04	MEDIUM {52 applicants}
15 Bryn Tirion, Lixwm	3b bungalow	09/08/04	HIGH {26 elderly applicants for 2/3 beds}
22 Chapel Court, Connah's Quay	2b flat	20/11/06	HIGH {13 applicants}
18 Ashlea Close, Mancot	3b bungalow	30/08/04	HIGH {37 elderly applicants for 2/3 beds}
25 Manley Court, Shotton	3b house	08/09/07	HIGH {215 applicants}
6 Clwyd Crescent, New Brighton	3b house	16/04/07	HIGH {53 applicants}
Leeches Close, Mancot	3B Bungalow	08/09/08	HIGH {37 elderly applicants}



## **Appendix 1: Vacant designated resident warden service accommodation**

<b>Scheme/Address</b>	<b>Property Type</b>	<b>Date Vacant</b>	<b>Anticipated Demand</b>
8 Ivy Crescent, Mold	3b House	21/01/08	HIGH (218 applicants}
Jasmine Crescent, Mold	2b Flat	29/09/08	NOT APPLICABLE

## **Ex – warden is still resident in these properties**

<b>Scheme/Address</b>	<b>Property Type</b>	<b>Date Warden Left Service</b>
10 Hamilton Road, Connah's Quay	3b House	April 2007
Beechcroft, Highfield, Bagilt	Flat (above the community hall)	March 2006
4 Park Crescent, Penyffordd	3b Bungalow	June 2007

**FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 17**

**REPORT TO: EXECUTIVE**

**DATE : 29 OCTOBER 2008**

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**SUBJECT : FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR ADOPTERS AND GUARDIANS**

**1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01 To agree the use of a financial assessment tool which determines the level of financial support to adopters and those who seek to look after children under a Special Guardianship Order.

**2.00 BACKGROUND**

2.01 Flintshire County Council and the Family Placement Team operates as a registered adoption agency and is regulated by CSSIW. In September 2007, the Team introduced the Standardised Means Test Model for Adoption and Special Guardianship. This is recommended by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DfCSF) as it is deemed to be fair and seeks to deliver a standard approach to arriving at the level of financial support given to adopters by local authorities. It also ensures that applicants are treated equitably and within the context of what is affordable within existing Local Authority budgets.

2.02 The new model was introduced as the service area recognised that the model previously in use was potentially inequitable and did not take into account the full financial resources of the applicant(s). The new model was introduced for all new applicants for financial support from September 2007. An internal audit of the service also identified that adoption allowances made prior to September 2007 would need to be retrospectively assessed to ensure that historic allowances were brought up to date. It is recognised that the budget impact can not be determined until this comprehensive re-assessment process has been completed.

2.03 The Internal Audit in May 2008, also recommended the use of this assessment and to support it with a number of guidance and policy documents.

2.04 The Internal Audit Report (May 2008) made the following recommendations:

- that the introduction of the Standardised Means Test model be formally approved by the Executive of the Local Authority.

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Date: 27/10/2008

- to design a guidance document (Appendix A) to assist applicants in the completion of the financial assessment form.
- to design a revised financial form for applicants to provide relevant financial information.
- to draw up a policy (Appendix B) which underpins the use of the new model.

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.01 The Internal Audit clearly sets out a range of activities to ensure the necessary compliance with guidance.
- 3.02 The Internal Audit Report also identified that existing allowances, prior to the introduction of the new model (September 2007) needs to be brought in to line with the new methodology. The service area will therefore need to undertake a review of current arrangements to assess the financial impact of implementing the new methodology to these allowances. The budgetary effect on future applications will be dependent on each individual's financial status.
- 3.04 The implementation of the new model has proven to be generally very successful. This has resulted in decisions being made about financial support which are based upon nationally recognised standards and have enabled clear and open decisions to be reached.
- 3.05 With the use of new policies and documentation the Family Placement Team will be able to demonstrate compliance with best practice and provide applicants with full information about a complex arrangement.

### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.01 That Executive endorses the sensitive introduction of the new policy for allowances for adoption and Special Guardianship Orders.

### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.01 Adoption allowances for all arrangements post September 2007 are being met within existing budgets.
- 5.02 Further work will need to be undertaken to assess the effect of utilising the new methodology to existing allowances (prior to September 2007). The effect of the new methodology on future applications will be dependent on each individual's financial status.

### **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 Children in adoptive and Special Guardianship settings should receive the necessary assessed financial support to avoid a reduction in the family's living standards.

#### **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 None.

#### **8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 It is important to ensure that children/young people are given sufficient opportunity to engage in normal family settings and therefore provide them with valued social, education and peer group activities.

#### **9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 None.

#### **10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 Please see 11.01.

#### **11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 This has required and received full consultation with the Internal Audit section in ensuring that the Policy and Guidance documentation is fully compliant with the objectives and recommendations set out in the audit report.

#### **12.00 APPENDICES**

**Appendix A** Guidance Document

**Appendix B** Policy on Adoption and Special Guardianship

#### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985** **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

The Standardised Means Test Model for Adoption and Special Guardianship  
Financial Support - Department for Education and Skills  
Applicants Financial Report

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# 1 Guidance to the Financial Assessment Process

It is important that the following information is understood when:

- making an Adoption Allowance application for the first time
- the allowance payable is reviewed each year

## 1.1 How the allowance is determined

The rules that determine the payment of Adoption Allowances are enshrined in *The Adoption Support Services (Local Authorities) (Wales) Regulations & The Adoption Support Service Regulations 2004*.

The Adoption Allowance, if agreed, will be dependent on an assessment which considers:

- the age of the child
  - the needs of the child
  - the circumstances of the placement
- and/or
- the financial circumstances of the adoptive parent(s)

In all cases, the final decision as to whether an Adoption Allowance will be paid rests with the Flintshire County Council Adoption Agency.

When the amount payable is decided, you will need to enter into a written agreement with Flintshire County Council.

All allowances are reviewed annually, this is a legal requirement. Adopters are required to notify the Agency immediately of any change in their circumstance or the circumstances of the child which may affect the payment of an Adoption Allowance.

If granted, an allowance will **not** automatically continue to be paid until your child is 18 or completes his/her full-time education as this will be subject to an annual review.

## 1.2 Changes to your circumstances and/or the child's needs

If your financial or family circumstances change substantially at any time during the year, you must notify the Flintshire County Council Adoption Agency immediately without waiting for the yearly review. When you do so, an early review will then be carried out.

The amount payable will change over time according to your financial situation and the needs of the child and in line with Flintshire County Council's Adoption Allowance age-related bands which are outlined in the allowance rates.

If changes in your financial situation mean that you no longer meet the criteria for payment of an allowance, the allowance will be **suspended**. We will continue to undertake a review annually when a change in your financial situation indicates that it is appropriate to do so.

### **1.3 The Financial Assessment**

#### **1.3.1 Who undertakes the assessment?**

The financial assessment is carried out by Flintshire County Council's Adoption Agency. The assessment is based on the 'standardised means test model' for adoption and special guardianship financial support' produced by the Department for Schools, Children and Families.

#### **1.3.2 How the allowance is worked out**

We will take account of your total income (assessed as if the child were placed without the payment of an Adoption Allowance) and compare to your total commitments and outgoings, including any costs relating to the adopted child, see 1.3.3.

#### **1.3.3 What rates are payable?**

The Adoption Allowance rates are based on the Fostering Network's Fostering Allowance Rates, spread over a 52 week year to represent the all inclusive cost of bringing up a child within an 'average' household. The allowance does not include any reward element.

Child Benefit which can be claimed by the adoptive parent(s) from the date of placement is deducted from the allowance prior to payment unless the adoptive parent(s) are in receipt of Income Support or Jobseekers Allowance.

**NB: Adopters can put in a claim for child benefit from the date of placement however; it may not be awarded until the Adoption Order is granted.**

### **1.4 Support and Allowances**

#### **1.4.1 Sibling Placements**

Good support packages for families are absolutely essential if they are to parent large sibling groups. An Adoption Allowance is almost certain to be needed. (However, this will be paid subject to the required means test).

Settling-in grants for equipment such as beds, large washing machines, etc. will also need to be considered.

Flintshire County Council's Adoption Service currently offers a maximum payment (of the board-out rate of five times the age of the child) for a settling-in grant. Additional payment can be made for children who require specialist equipment etc.

Transport can become an issue for a family with more than three children (including any they already have), which means a family might need a larger than average car. Contributions can be made towards the cost of purchasing a new car.

A settling in grant is also available where a single child is placed

### **1.4.2 Transitional Arrangements for Foster Carers**

Financial support cannot normally include any remuneration to the adoptive parent. However, where the child is adopted by former foster carers the Local Authority may continue to remunerate the adopters at the same rate for the first two years, or longer in exceptional cases. The payment to the foster carer is an exception by reason of the particular circumstances in which the placement arises.

### **1.4.3 Payments made by the Department**

Financial support is payable to an adoptive parent for the purposes of supporting the placement of the adoptive child or the continuation of adoption arrangements after an adoption order is made. Section 10 of the Adoptive Support Regulations 2004 provide that financial support may be provided to an adoptive parent(s) in the following circumstances.

- where it is necessary to ensure that the adoptive parent can look after the child
- where the child needs special care which requires greater expenditure of resources by reason of illness, disability, emotional or behavioural difficulties or the continuing consequences of past abuse or neglect
- Where it is necessary for the Local Authority to make any special arrangements to facilitate the placement or the adoption by reason of
  - the age or ethnic origin of the child; or
  - the desirability of the child being placed with the same adoptive parents as his brother or sister (whether full or half-blood) or with a child with whom he previously shared a home
- Where the Local Authority consider it appropriate to make a contribution to meet the following kinds of expenditure



- expenditure on legal costs, including fees payable to a court in relation to an adoption;
- expenditure for the purpose of introducing an adoptive child to his adoptive parent;
- expenditure necessary for the purpose of accommodating and maintaining the child, including the provision of furniture and domestic equipment, alterations to and adaptations of the home, provision of means of transport and provision of clothing, toys and other items necessary for the purpose of looking after the child.

**(NB: there is no automatic entitlement; decisions will be made on case by case bases)**

## Guidance for the Completion of the Financial Assessment Form

### **1.5 Income**

#### **1.5.1 Earnings**

All income **must** be declared:

- proof of income is required in the form of the most recent payslips. Provide the slips for the last 3 months if paid monthly or the last 8 weeks pay slips if paid weekly.
- net wages or salaries from an employer (for both partners in the case of couples) before any contributions to pension schemes.
- when providing your monthly wage or weekly wage an average should be taken, over 3 months for monthly paid, or 8 weeks for weekly paid

#### **1.5.2 Self employment**

If you are self employed, an Inland Revenue approved Statement of Drawings for the previous tax year should be provided with your application.

A statement of expected drawings for the current year may be asked for, and may be used to assess current income for the year if it is expected to be substantially different from the previous year, or if a full year's Inland Revenue statement is not available, i.e. new business.

#### **1.5.3 Equity, Savings, and Investments**

All income (including interest and dividends) received on capital, savings and investments should be declared in this section.

Income from lodgers, tenants, sub-tenants or rental income must also be declared in this section.

Note that if the cumulative market value of assets, savings and investments (including equity in a second home) exceeds £100,000 this must be declared at section 7 of the Financial Assessment Form. If the market value of your assets exceeds £100,000 it is likely to mean that Adoption Allowance will not be payable, however, each case will be considered individually, and discretion may be applied.

## **1.6 Pensions, Allowances & Benefits**

You **must** declare:

- all state and private pensions (including those paid for disabilities)
- all benefits and allowances including Disability Living Allowance, Housing Benefit, Sickness Benefit and any adoption or fostering allowances received for any child(ren) in your family
- Disability Living Allowance (DLA) will not be included in the calculation neither will the Adoption Allowance for the child for whom the assessment is being carried out. However, DLA will be considered when an enhanced allowance is paid
- Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit is classed as income under the assessment and will be included in our calculations
- money received under a Maintenance or Separation Order, or from the Child Support Agency is also classed as income under the assessment and will be included in our calculations

## **1.7 Commitments & Outgoings**

Payments and monies paid out by you must be declared and include the following:

- mortgage payments, made up of capital and interest, and also including any endowment payments linked to a mortgage
- council tax – most Councils charge monthly for 10 months only, so if a monthly figure is given, it will be multiplied by 10 to give an annual figure. If a rebate is given, the net figure must be declared
- any commitments under a Court Order includes such things as payments made under a Separation or Maintenance Order

## **1.8 Regular Family Expenses**

If there are any additional expenses not covered in the above classifications but to which you are already committed prior to the Adoption Allowance being set up, or which are related to the placement, they can be declared. This may include regular monthly payments on loans for housing improvement (e.g. extensions) or transport costs (e.g. new car), or childcare costs for existing children or for the child(ren) being placed).

## **1.9 Financial Resources of the Child**

### **1.9.1 Allowances**

If the child receives a Disability Living Allowance, it must be declared even though it will not be taken into account when considering eligibility for a standard Adoption Allowance.

However, it will be considered when assessing the amount of any enhancement that may be paid on the grounds of special needs.

### **1.9.2 Lump Sump Payments or Trust Funds**

Any lump sum payment or trust fund held in the child's name must be declared, along with any regular payment received in respect of the child.

## **1.10 Request for Further Information**

**1.10.1** The Local Authority reserves the right to make further enquiries and carry out further investigation of the financial circumstances of applicants in instances where documentation and evidence returned is not adequate for the Authority to form an opinion as to the financial status of the applicant.

### **1.10.2 Payment Method**

Payment will be made on a fortnightly basis via a formal BACS system. In the event of an overpayment of Adoption Allowance, for example, in instances where applicants fail to notify the Local Authority of a change in circumstances which would have resulted in a reduction in Adoption Allowance, Flintshire County Council's Adoption Agency will seek to recover the overpayment from the applicant.

**POLICY FOR ADOPTION ALLOWANCE AND SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP ALLOWANCE**

**1. Adoption Allowances**

**Rates**

The adoption allowance rates paid under the Flintshire County Council's Adoption Allowance Scheme are based on the Fostering Networks Fostering Allowance recommended rates over a 52 week year to represent the all inclusive cost of bringing up a child within an average household. The allowance does not include any reward element.

**Conditions**

The provision of an allowance agreed before the Adoption Order remain the responsibility of the Authority who originally agreed it, regardless of where the family live. The requirement for carers to complete and supply the Local Authority with an annual statement as to their financial circumstances, the financial needs and resources of the child, their address and whether the child still has a home with him will apply in all cases.

The Adoption Support Services (Local Authorities) (Wales) 2004 in Regulation 11 provides that financial support ceases to be payable to an adoptive parent if:

- the child ceases to have a home with him
- the child ceases full-time education or training and commences employment
- or
- the child qualifies for Income Support or Jobseeker's Allowance in his own right, or training, in which case it may continue until the end of the course or training he is then undertaking.

Regulation 12 provides that financial support that is to be paid periodically is not payable until the adoptive parent or, in the case of adoption by a couple, each adoptive parent, has agreed to the following conditions:

- that he will inform the Local Authority immediately if he changes his address, if the child dies, or any of the changes mentioned in Regulation 11 occur
- that he will inform the Local Authority immediately if there is a change in his financial circumstances or the financial needs or resources of the child which may affect the amount of financial support payable to him
- that he will complete and supply the Local Authority with an annual statement as to his financial circumstances, the financial needs and

resources of the child, his address and whether the child still has a home with him

Regulation 12 provides that the Local Authority may set any other conditions they consider appropriate, including the timescale within which and purposes for which any payment of financial support should be utilised. Where any condition imposed is not complied with, the Local Authority may suspend or terminate payment of financial support and seek to recover all or part of the financial support they have paid.

However, where the condition not complied with is a failure to provide an annual statement, Regulation 12 also requires that the Local Authority may not take any steps to suspend, terminate or seek to recover financial support until they have sent to the person who entered into the agreement a written reminder of the need to provide an annual statement and 28 days have expired since the date on which the notice was sent.

### **Transitional Arrangements for Foster Carers**

Where the adoptive parent previously fostered the child they are adopting and received remuneration for that, the regulations provide that the Local Authority may continue to pay that level of remuneration for two years from the date of the Adoption Order, or longer in exceptional circumstances.

## **2. Special Guardianship Allowances**

### **Rates**

The allowance rates for Special Guardians are the same as those paid to carers receiving adoption and residence orders.

Financial support should not be the sole reason for a special guardianship arrangement failing to survive. This applies to both looked after and non-looked after children.

### **Conditions**

The provision of an allowance agreed before the Guardianship Order remains the responsibility of the Authority who originally agreed it, regardless of where the family live. The requirement for carers to complete and supply the Local Authority with an annual statement as to their financial circumstances, the financial needs and resources of the child, their address and whether the child still has a home with him will apply in all cases.

In exceptional cases payments may be made where the child needs special care as a result of long term and serious illness, disability or severe emotional and behavioural difficulties. It must be demonstrated that the actual costs of providing the special care are above those applicable to a child who does not suffer from the condition. Examples are the need for special diets, clothing or

bedding. Eligibility for such payments must be assessed in relation to any entitlement to benefits, such as Disabled Living Allowance. Any payment agreed may be paid as an enhancement to a regular allowance.

Assistance may also be provided with legal costs, both at the time of the application and subsequently. Assistance may be given where this is deemed necessary for the order to be made or to continue, where the application or the continuation of the order is assessed by the Local Authority as being in the child's best interest. Cases will be assessed individually and agreement for payment must be supported by the Service Manager (Fieldwork).

Assistance may also be provided with travelling expenses to facilitate contact between the child and their relatives or others with whom the child is considered by the Local Authority to have a beneficial relationship. Cases will be assessed individually and agreement for payment must be supported by the Service Manager (Fieldwork).

### **Transitional Arrangements for Foster Carers**

A foster carer who becomes the special guardian for a child they were formally fostering can receive an element of remuneration for up to two years after making the order, and for a longer period in exceptional circumstances. This enables the Authority to maintain payments to foster carers who become special guardians at the same rate as they received when they were fostering the child. Where it is proposed that remuneration will continue, agreement for payment must be supported by the Service Manager (Fieldwork).

### **3. Other Support Services**

For details of all other services relating to the support of adoptive families and families caring for a child subject to a Special Guardianship Order see also:

*Flintshire County Council, Adoption Support: Policy and Procedure*

*Flintshire County Council, Special Guardianship: Policy and Procedure*

## FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 18

REPORT TO: EXECUTIVE

DATE : 29 OCTOBER 2008

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT

SUBJECT : DESIGN CONSULTANCY FEE INCOME FOR 2008/2009

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.01 To advise Executive of the current position regarding the Design Consultancy Fee income projections for the financial year 2008/2009 and the impact on end of year projections.

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

- 2.01 Design Services is a business unit where fee income recovered should as a minimum cover the running costs. In 2008/09 the budget provides for a surplus of £0.069m. It is funded by fees charged against client departments on the projects which are carried out for those departments. The fees are based on the (RIBA) Royal Institute of British Architects suggested fee scales, abated to reflect the external market situation. Generally fees are charged on the basis of a percentage of the final account figure for the project, but sometimes, where work is of the feasibility type, time charge recording is applied.
- 2.02 At the start of each financial year, a fee income budget for the year is set. This budget is determined by adjusting the existing base budget for approved pressures and savings where appropriate.

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.01 The budgeted fee income of £0.894m for 2008/09 was set corporately as part of the formal budget process, following consultation with the Directorate of Community & Housing.
- 3.02 Design Consultancy are able to build up their own projections for fee income as the budgets secured by our client departments are translated into probable projects. At this stage there is not always a certainty that projects will proceed as planned (or at all), since clients often have to rearrange programmes due to pressures from elsewhere, or non-materialised budgets, which may result in very reduced or deferred projects.

- 3.03 The current estimate for fees for 2008/209, based on projects which Design Consultancy are reasonably confident will proceed, is circa £717,000. Appendix 1 indicates this detail.
- 3.04 Design Consultancy are only able to project fees on known workloads and often at the commencement of a financial year neither workload or budget have been finalised.
- 3.05 As an example an area of concern, relating to reduced fee income, is in relation to work on a new Environmental Services Depot which Design Consultancy had been involved with for some time. Building costs for this, in addition to the FCC vehicle workshop extension, were projected in the region of £1.6m which would produce a fee income in the region of £200,000, most of which would have been claimed in 2008/2009. This project was subsequently postponed and has resulted in abortive fee work.
- 3.06 In terms of the potential for future work this year, approaches have been made to Corporate Property Maintenance with the result that there is potential for additional fee income of £55k, mainly for capitalised works on School Buildings. See Appendix 2.
- 3.07 Currently, in terms of external consultancy costs, Design Consultancy outsource structural engineering and CDMC (health and safety role). This is because we do not have these disciplines in-house. However, Design Consultancy do recover these costs as a part of our overall design fee.
- 3.08 In this respect there is a likelihood that, in future years, consultancy costs will increase because the environment within which the service is operating under is changing and additional specialisms need to be addressed to comply with legislation and Government policy, e.g. Thermal Modelling, BREEAM Consultancy, Acoustic Design, Ecology.
- 3.09 In line with the requirements of the Welsh Assembly Government, project partnering appears to be the preferred procurement route for construction projects.
- 3.10 Experience in practice has indicated that the process, by its nature, absorbs significantly more staff time than traditional tendering processes and if further projects are to be procured by this method then there may need to be an increase in fees to cover the time involved.
- 3.11 There are currently 2 agency members of staff. One of these, the electrical design engineer, is covering for a vacancy on the permanent structure which it is hoped will be filled this year.
- 3.12 A recurring issue is the fact that projects dealt with may span a 2 to 3 year period (or more) and fees are legitimately claimed at certain work stages in the design and construction process. All fee income accounting, however, has to be contained within the financial year and it is not possible to carry a



surplus into a following year. An example of this is that in the year 07/08 there was an out-turn surplus of £130k which could have been claimed in the following year. It was however, necessary to claim the fees because the funding would have been lost to the Client department. A more considered move away from an annualised budget approach by WAG would be more appropriate.

#### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 Consideration for the future could be the submission of a budget pressure to supplement the reduced income level. The option of time charging to cover salary costs and associated overheads.

- Increases in the fee levels
- Cost base reductions through efficiencies or other measures

#### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 The additional fee income from the Corporate Property Maintenance projects referred to earlier, £55k, increases the total projected income to £772k. This level of projected income together with other variances will mean a projected overspend of £0.165m for the service as a whole.

5.02 Design Consultancy are currently in discussion with other departments regarding future projects, including:

- A housing group repair scheme for the Housing Department
- Upgrade work to Leisure Centres
- A combined Social Services storage facility
- Remodelling works to County Hall
- Foster home accommodation for Children's Services
- Garage Accommodation at the Glanrafon Centre, Queensferry

5.03 The detailed extent of these works is not yet known and it would be difficult to put a value on them which would indicate the level of anticipated fee income at this stage. Any additional fee income which may be claimable for these works will be reflected in subsequent budget monitoring reports.

#### **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 None.

#### **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 None.

#### **8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 None.

**9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 None.

**10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 None.

**11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 None.

**12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985  
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None

Contact Officer: John C Williams  
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**Appendix 1****Design Consultancy Projects 08/09 - Estimated Fee Income**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Fee Claim</b>
Buckley Belmont Special School - DDA	£100.00
<b>Buckley Elfed High School 5– Internal Alterations, Remodel of Food and Kitchen Areas - SBIG</b>	<b>£20,000.00</b>
Buckley Elfed High School – Traffic Calming	£955.00
Buckley Westwood Centre – New Entrance and Ramps	£866.63
<b>Carmel CP School – Toilet Refurbishment - SBIG</b>	<b>£11,250.00</b>
<b>Deeside Leisure Centre – Ice Rink Garage</b>	£0
Flint Castle Heights – Lift Refurbishment	£24,765.38
<b>Flint Castle Industrial Estates – Proposed New Units</b>	<b>£1,500.00</b>
<b>Flint Gwynedd CP School – Refurbishment of 6 Toilet Blocks - SBIG</b>	<b>£25,000.00</b>
Flint Special Schools – New Build	£366,102.00
<b>Flint Leisure Centre – Transfer of Youth Club</b>	<b>£6,500.00</b>
Flint Richard Gwyn RC High School – Food Technology Remodel - SBIG	£20,397.00
Foundation Phase Minor Alterations – 9 No	£5,915.62
Holywell High School – Toilets and Lifts – DDA - SBIG	£27,435.25
Holywell St Winefrides RC School – Replace Boiler Plant and Controls (M)	£4,100.70
Holywell Youth Club – Adaptations for New Office	£1,328.54
Hope Castell Alun High School – Resurfacing All Weather Pitch	£3,524.09
Hope Castell Alun High School – DDA Works	£5,081.79
<b>Leisure Centres – Services, Repairs and Testing</b>	<b>£5,000.00</b>
<b>Mold Bryn Coch – Refurbishment of Toilets – SBIG</b>	<b>£37,500.00</b>
Mold Ysgol Maes Garmon – Lifts and Toilets – DDA - SBIG	£11,858.00
Mold Daniel Owen Centre – Kitchen Refurbishment	£3,535.50
Mold Sports Centre – Changing Village/ Reception	<b>£33,500.00</b>
<b>Mold County Hall – Alterations to 1<sup>st</sup> Floor to Provide Accommodation</b>	£0
<b>Mold County Hall – Remodel of Council Chamber and Committee Room</b>	£0
Mynydd Isa Junior School - DDA	£357.88
<b>Queensferry John Summers – Miscellaneous Improvements</b>	£0
<b>Saltney St Anthony’s RC Primary School – Replace Boiler Plant, Controls and Convert to Gas (M)</b>	<b>£8,750.00</b>
Sandycroft CP School – Boiler Replacement Plant – SBIG (M)	£11,989.50
<b>Saltney Ferry CP School – Proposed Ramp</b>	£0
Treuddyn Ysgol Parc Y Llan - Fencing	£317.00
Demolition Phase 1 – Rhydymwyn CP, Connah’s Quay Houses	£5,414.71
Demolition Phase 2 – Llwyn Onn	£1,523.44
<b>Demolition Phase 3 – Flint Youth Club</b>	£0
<b>Demolition – Connah’s Quay Maude Street Toilets</b>	£0
Demolition – Boot End Bagillt – Abortive Work	£0
<b>Whitford CP School – Demolition of Canteen and Outside Toilets</b>	£0
<b>Demolition – Connah’s Quay Dock Road – Former British Rail Warehouse</b>	£0
<b>Estimated Total</b>	<b>£644,567.53</b>

*Italic Bold figures – estimated fee*

1

Other figures – actual fee

**Appendix 1**  
**Design Consultancy Projects 08/09 - Estimated Fee Income**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Fee Claim</b>
<b>Balance of Fees</b>	
Northop Hall, 11 Elm Drive - Extension	£2,655.77
Flint Gwynedd CP School – Doors and Steps to External Areas	£614.22
Connah's Quay Civic Centre – Remodel of Garden Area	£942.19
Buckley Westwood Centre – Alterations and Refurbishment	£1,017.32
Bolingbroke - Lift Refurbishments	£9,545.00
Flint Richard Heights – Lift Refurbishment	£8,255.12
Flint Castle Heights – Lift Refurbishment	£8,255.12
Warden Call System – Phase 2	£12,500.00
<b>Mold Ysgol Bryn Gwalia - Proposed Refurbishment of Early Years Area</b>	<b>£2,778.77</b>
<b>Hawarden Records Office - Proposed First Floor Strong Room</b>	<b>£1,383.85</b>
<b>Holywell Kitchen Extensions</b>	<b>£7,260.00</b>
<b>Mold Theatre Clwyd - Clwyd Room Air Conditioning</b>	<b>£1,621.50</b>
<b>Buckley Elfed High School - Lift and Ramp</b>	<b>£2,047.53</b>
<b>Gronant CP School - SEN Adaptations</b>	<b>£407.14</b>
<b>Hope Ysgol Estyn CP School - SEN Adaptations</b>	<b>£1,581.30</b>
<b>Hawarden High School - SEN Adaptationss</b>	<b>£323.39</b>
<b>Mold St David's RC School - SEN Adaptations</b>	<b>£1,180.78</b>
<b>Mold Glanrafon CP School - SEN Adaptations</b>	<b>£316.68</b>
<b>Shotton Taliesin CP School - SEN Adaptations</b>	<b>£674.15</b>
<b>Cilcain CP School - SEN Works</b>	<b>£230.24</b>
<b>Connah's Quay High School - Alterations to CDT Block</b>	<b>£1,630.84</b>
<b>Proposed Early Years Outdoor Play Areas - Phase 2 - 5 Nr Schools</b>	
Connah's Quay Golftyn CP School	£357.65
Connah's Quay Wepre CP School	£475.00
Trelawnyd VA School	£307.50
Flint Cornist CP School	£363.75
Sychdyn CP School	£344.05
<b>Brook Farm, Bretton - Proposed Adult Training Centre Nursery</b>	<b>£5,438.51</b>
<b>Broughton Bathroom Extensions</b>	<b>£262.92</b>
<b>Mold Glanrafon Centre - Kitchen Remodel/Windows Replacement</b>	<b>£3,576.55</b>
<b>Estimated Total</b>	<b>£72,770.29</b>

<b>Estimated Grand Total (£644,567.53 + £72,770.29)</b>	<b>£717,337.82</b>
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*Italic Bold figures – estimated fee*  
Other figures – actual fee

**Appendix 2****Design Consultancy Projects 08/09 – Estimated Additional Fee Income**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Fee Claim</b>
Carmel CP School – Replacement Boiler Plant	<i>£7,000.00</i>
Connah's Quay High School – Replace roof to D&T Block	<i>£2,900.00</i>
Ewloe Green CP School – Replacement Boiler Plant	<i>£8,300.00</i>
Greenfield CP School – Flooring Works	<i>£2,000.00</i>
Gwespwr Picton CP School – New Windows and Doors	<i>£4,000.00</i>
Hawarden High School – Repairs to Mansard Roof	<i>£2,500.00</i>
Holywell Perth Y Terfyn Junior - New Windows and Doors	<i>£5,500.00</i>
Mold Alun High School – Replacement Rooflights	<i>£2,500.00</i>
Mold County Hall – Lift Modernisation	<i>£8,300.00</i>
Mynydd Isa Junior School - New Windows and Doors	<i>£6,000.00</i>
Treuddyn Ysgol Parc Y Llan – Replace Atrium Roof	<i>£6,000.00</i>
<b>Estimated Total</b>	<b><i>£55,000.00</i></b>

*Italic Bold figures – estimated fee*

1

Other figures – actual fee

**FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 19**

**REPORT TO:**     **EXECUTIVE**  
**DATE :**           **29 OCTOBER 2008**  
**REPORT BY:**    **COUNTY FINANCE OFFICER**  
**SUBJECT :**       **BUSINESS RATES - WRITE OFFS**

**1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01 To request authorisation to write off two Business Rates debts relating to the same company to the value of £55,297.25

**2.00 BACKGROUND**

2.01 Financial Procedure Rules (section 9.6 - Income and Expenditure) requires that write-off are referred to Executive in excess of £25,000.

**3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

3.01 The consideration to write off relates to a company placed into administration. Notification from the appointed Administrator, Pricewaterhouse Coopers, confirm that the Business Rates debts which relate to two separate properties are accepted as an unsecured debts, consequently there is little prospect of the amounts outstanding being discharged by the administrators, given that secured creditors will take a higher priority in any future availability of funds.

**4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 That members approve the write off of this debt, amounting to £55,297.25

**5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 There are no financial implications to the Council or to taxpayers in relation to the write off of bad debts since the Council collects Business Rates on behalf of the Assembly through the National Collection Pool for Wales. There are provisions made within the Collection Pool for the write off of debts.

**6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 None

**7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

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Date: 27/10/2008

7.01 None

**8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 None

**9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 None

**10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 None

**11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 None

**12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 None

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985  
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Financial Procedure Rules (section 9.6 - Income and Expenditure)

Various correspondence from PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP  
Confirmation of Administration through Companies House

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E-Mail: david\_barnes@flintshire.gov.uk

**FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 20**

**REPORT TO:**     **EXECUTIVE**

**DATE :**           **29 OCTOBER 2008**

**REPORT BY:**    **COUNTY FINANCE OFFICER**

**SUBJECT :**       **BUSINESS RATES - SMALL BUSINESS RATE RELIEF**  
                          **SCHEME**

**1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01 To provide members with a further update on the Welsh Assembly proposals to enhance the Small Business Rate Relief Scheme.

**2.00 BACKGROUND**

2.01 The Assembly published a consultation document in April 2008 setting out draft proposals to extend the provision of rate relief in support of specific sectors of small business, especially retail outlets involved in the sale of prepared food, public houses, off licences, restaurants, cafes and petrol filling stations.

2.02 A report on the draft scheme was presented to Executive on the 15th July 2008 and a response in support of the proposals was submitted to the Assembly on the 31st July 2008.

**3.00 SMALL BUSINESS RATE RELIEF - OUTLINE OF THE NEW SCHEME**

3.01 The final proposals to extend rate relief to other businesses are broadly the same as the original consultation proposals. The only notable change follows a positive announcement by the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government that most businesses, regardless of their use, with a rateable value of up to £6,500 will now qualify for rate relief. The current rateable value threshold for most businesses to qualify for relief is currently set at £5,000.

3.02 Additionally, the Assembly are making changes so that rate relief can also be awarded to support 'retail' sectors of business; these being those whose trade relates wholly or mainly to the sale of goods, including those involved in the sale of prepared food, public houses, off licences, restaurants, cafes and petrol filling stations.



3.03 In order to qualify for rate relief under the new package of help, the key changes will see :-

- o An increase in the upper rateable value limit from £5,000 to £6,500 for most businesses to automatically qualify for a 25% reduction.
- o Small retailers, wholly or mainly selling goods, including shops, cafes, restaurants, public houses and petrol stations qualifying for a 25% reduction until 2012 if their rateable is between £6,501 and £9,000.
- o Credit Unions receiving a 50% reduction until 2012 if their rateable value is £9,000 or less.
- o Child Care providers and day nurseries also receiving a 50% reduction until 2012 providing that the rateable value of the property is £12,000 or less.

3.04 As part of the implementation of the scheme, it is the intention to award rate relief automatically in most cases, without the need for businesses to complete application forms, but where this is not possible in the cases of retailers, credit unions and child care providers, then letters will be sent to businesses within the rateable value limits to explain the criteria of the scheme and to invite applications if businesses feel they will qualify. A key qualifying requirement for the retail sector is that businesses that operate from more than one property in Wales will only be able to receive rate relief for one property within Wales.

3.05 It is estimated that an additional 650 businesses in Flintshire may benefit from these proposals, providing that they meet the eligibility to receive rate relief, which when added to the 1,752 businesses that already qualify for small business relief, will potentially mean that nearly 50% of all businesses in the County qualify for rate relief.

#### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 That members note the final details of the enhanced rate relief scheme.

#### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 There are no direct financial implications to the Council or to taxpayers since the cost of awarding small business rate relief is borne by the Assembly Government and offset against the Councils contribution to the National Collection Pool for Wales.

#### **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 None

#### **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 None

**8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 None

**9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 None

**10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 None

**11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 As part of the consultation process a report was previously considered by Executive on the 15th July 2008 which recommended "*That the Executive support the Assembly proposals to extend the Small Business Rate Relief Scheme*". Members supported the scheme and a response in support of the proposals was sent to the Assembly on the 31st July 2008.

**12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 None

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**  
**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

The Non Domestic Rating (Small Business Relief) (Wales) Order 2008

Contact Officer: David Barnes  
Telephone: 01352 703652  
E-Mail: david\_barnes@flintshire.gov.uk

**FOR INFORMATION**

**FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** EXECUTIVE  
**DATE:** 29<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER, 2008  
**REPORT BY:** CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
**SUBJECT:** EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS

**1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01 To inform Members of action taken under delegated powers.

**2.00 BACKGROUND**

2.01 At the Executive Meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> October, 2000 it was agreed that one of the standard agenda items at each Executive should be a report on the "Exercise of Delegated Powers".

**3.00 RECOMMENDATION**

3.01 Members note the details of actions taken under the "Exercise of Delegated Powers".

**4.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.01 As detailed in each report.

**5.00 ANTI-POVERTY IMPACT**

5.01 As detailed in each report.

**6.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

6.01 As detailed in each report.

**7.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

7.01 As detailed in each report.

**8.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

8.01 As detailed in each report

**9.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

9.01 Not applicable

**10.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

10.01 Not applicable

## **11.00 APPENDICES**

11.01 Summary of Decisions taken under Delegated Powers.

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

Background documents: See individual report.

Contact Officer: See individual report.

## APPENDIX 1

### EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS – DECISIONS TAKEN

<u>Directorate</u>	<u>Subject</u>
Community & Housing	Approval of a temporary fixed term appointment for an additional Customer Services Officer to assist with the increase in customer demand relating to the introduction of new kerb-side schemes.
	Transfer of Freehold title of CAB Premises, Post Office Lane, Holywell to the CAB
Community Services	Capital Minor Works Programme 2008/09
Environment & Regeneration	Temporary conversion of post within Trading Standards
	Adoption of Rights of Way Improvement Plan
Legal and Democratic Services	Change of duties to a vacant post of Corporate Solicitor. Post has been accordingly changed to Solicitor 'Child Care' to reflect the services required by the Council.

Copies of the Delegated Powers reports are on deposit in the Members' Library

## FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL - EXEMPT INFORMATION SHEET

COMMITTEE: Executive

DATE: 29 October 2008

AGENDA ITEM NO: 22

REPORT OF: (Director of originating Department)

Chief Executive and County Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer and  
Director of Environment

SUBJECT:

AD Waste

**The report on this item is NOT FOR PUBLICATION because it is considered to be exempt information in accordance with the following paragraph(s) of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.**

	<u>Para</u>	
Information relating to a particular individual *	12	
Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual *	13	
Information relating to financial/business affairs of a particular person * See Note 1	14	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Information relating to consultations/negotiations on labour relations matter *	15	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Legal professional privilege	16	
Information revealing the authority proposes to:	17	
(a) give a statutory notice or		
(b) make a statutory order/direction *		
Information on prevention/investigation/prosecution of crime *	18	
<u>For Standards Committee meetings only:</u>	Sec.	
Information subject to obligations of confidentiality	18a	
Information relating to national security	18b	
The deliberations of a Standards Committee in reaching a finding	18c	
<u>Confidential</u> matters which the County Council is not permitted to disclose	Sec. 100A(3)	

### PLEASE TICK APPROPRIATE BOX

\* Means exempt only if the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Note 1: Information is not exempt under paragraph 14 if such information is required to be registered under Companies Act 1985, the Friendly Societies Acts of 1974 and 1992, the Industrial and Provident Societies Act 1965 to 1978, the Building Societies Act 1986 or the Charities Act 1993.

**SCHEDULE 12A LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972  
EXEMPTION FROM DISCLOSURE OF DOCUMENTS**

**REPORT:** AD Waste  
**AUTHOR:** Neal Cockerton  
**MEETING AND DATE OF MEETING:** Executive on 29 October 2008

I have considered grounds for exemption of information contained in the report referred to above and make the following recommendation to the Proper Officer:-

**Exemptions applying to the report:**

Paragraphs 14 and 15.

**Factors in favour of disclosure:**

Transparency of decision making.

**Prejudice which would result if the information were disclosed:**

Disclosure of confidential information concerning the Company would be likely to undermine trust and confidence between the Company and the Council and jeopardise negotiations and the decision making process.

**My view on the public interest test is as follows:**

The need to maintain trust and confidence is paramount.

**Recommended decision on exemption from disclosure:**

That the report be exempt from disclosure.

**Date:** 23/10/2008

**Signed:**



**Post:** County Legal and Democratic Services Officer

I accept the recommendation made above.



Proper Officer

Date: 23/10/2008

## FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL - EXEMPT INFORMATION SHEET

COMMITTEE: Executive

DATE: 29 October 2008

AGENDA ITEM NO: 23

REPORT OF: (Director of originating Department)

Chief Executive and County Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer and  
Director of Environment

SUBJECT:

NORTH WALES WASTE TREATMENT PROJECT

**The report on this item is NOT FOR PUBLICATION because it is considered to be exempt information in accordance with the following paragraph(s) of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.**

	<u>Para</u>	
Information relating to a particular individual *	12	
Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual *	13	
Information relating to financial/business affairs of a particular person * See Note 1	14	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Information relating to consultations/negotiations on labour relations matter *	15	
Legal professional privilege	16	
Information revealing the authority proposes to:	17	
(a) give a statutory notice or		
(b) make a statutory order/direction *		
Information on prevention/investigation/prosecution of crime *	18	
<u>For Standards Committee meetings only:</u>	Sec.	
Information subject to obligations of confidentiality	18a	
Information relating to national security	18b	
The deliberations of a Standards Committee in reaching a finding	18c	
<u>Confidential</u> matters which the County Council is not permitted to disclose	Sec. 100A(3)	

### PLEASE TICK APPROPRIATE BOX

\* Means exempt only if the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Note 1: Information is not exempt under paragraph 14 if such information is required to be registered under Companies Act 1985, the Friendly Societies Acts of 1974 and 1992, the Industrial and Provident Societies Act 1965 to 1978, the Building Societies Act 1986 or the Charities Act 1993.



**SCHEDULE 12A LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972  
EXEMPTION FROM DISCLOSURE OF DOCUMENTS**

**REPORT:** NORTH WALES WASTE TREATMENT PROJECT  
**AUTHOR:** Nigel Truem  
**MEETING AND DATE OF MEETING:** Executive on 29 October 2008

I have considered grounds for exemption of information contained in the report referred to above and make the following recommendation to the Proper Officer:-

**Exemptions applying to the report:**

Paragraph 14

**Factors in favour of disclosure:**

Transparency of decision making.

**Prejudice which would result if the information were disclosed:**

The draft agreement is being negotiated with the other partner authorities and disclosing the latest stage of proposed business relationships could undermine the whole process.

**My view on the public interest test is as follows:**

The public interest test favours non-disclosure at this stage.

**Recommended decision on exemption from disclosure:**

That the report is exempt from disclosure.

**Date:** 23/10/2008

**Signed:**



**Post:** County Legal and Democratic Services Officer

I the recommendation made above.



Proper Officer

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL - EXEMPT INFORMATION SHEET

COMMITTEE: Executive

DATE: 29 October 2008

AGENDA ITEM NO: 24




REPORT OF: (Director of originating Department)

Chief Executive

SUBJECT:

Phase II Of Organisational Change

**The report on this item is NOT FOR PUBLICATION because it is considered to be exempt information in accordance with the following paragraph(s) of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.**

	<u>Para</u>	
Information relating to a particular individual *	12	
Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual *	13	
Information relating to financial/business affairs of a particular person * See Note 1	14	
Information relating to consultations/negotiations on labour relations matter *	15	
Legal professional privilege	16	
Information revealing the authority proposes to:	17	
(a) give a statutory notice or		
(b) make a statutory order/direction *		
Information on prevention/investigation/prosecution of crime *	18	
<u>For Standards Committee meetings only:</u>	Sec.	
Information subject to obligations of confidentiality	18a	
Information relating to national security	18b	
The deliberations of a Standards Committee in reaching a finding	18c	
<u>Confidential</u> matters which the County Council is not permitted to disclose	Sec. 100A(3)	

### PLEASE TICK APPROPRIATE BOX

\* Means exempt only if the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Note 1: Information is not exempt under paragraph 14 if such information is required to be registered under Companies Act 1985, the Friendly Societies Acts of 1974 and 1992, the Industrial and Provident Societies Act 1965 to 1978, the Building Societies Act 1986 or the Charities Act 1993.

**SCHEDULE 12A LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972  
EXEMPTION FROM DISCLOSURE OF DOCUMENTS**

**REPORT:** Phase II Of Organisational Change  
**AUTHOR:** Colin Everett  
**MEETING AND DATE OF MEETING:** Executive on 29 October 2008

I have considered grounds for exemption of information contained in the report referred to above and make the following recommendation to the Proper Officer:-

**Exemptions applying to the report:**

Paragraphs 12, 13 and 15.

**Factors in favour of disclosure:**

Transparency of decision making.

**Prejudice which would result if the information were disclosed:**

The disclosure of sensitive personal information is likely to be in breach of data protection principles. It is also contrary to the interests of all concerned to divulge information before the consideration process is complete.

**My view on the public interest test is as follows:**

The public interest would not be served by the disclosure of the report.

**Recommended decision on exemption from disclosure:**

That the report is exempt from disclosure.

**Date:** 23/10/2008

**Signed:**



**Post:** County Legal and Democratic Services Officer

I the recommendation made above.



Proper Officer

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL - EXEMPT INFORMATION SHEET

COMMITTEE: Executive

DATE: 29 October 2008

AGENDA ITEM NO: 25

REPORT OF: (Director of originating Department)

Chief Executive

SUBJECT:

Voluntary Sector Grant Management Practice

**The report on this item is NOT FOR PUBLICATION because it is considered to be exempt information in accordance with the following paragraph(s) of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.**

	<u>Para</u>	
Information relating to a particular individual *	12	
Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual *	13	
Information relating to financial/business affairs of a particular person * See Note 1	14	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Information relating to consultations/negotiations on labour relations matter *	15	
Legal professional privilege	16	
Information revealing the authority proposes to:	17	
(a) give a statutory notice or		
(b) make a statutory order/direction *		
Information on prevention/investigation/prosecution of crime *	18	
<u>For Standards Committee meetings only:</u>	Sec.	
Information subject to obligations of confidentiality	18a	
Information relating to national security	18b	
The deliberations of a Standards Committee in reaching a finding	18c	
<u>Confidential</u> matters which the County Council is not permitted to disclose	Sec. 100A(3)	

### PLEASE TICK APPROPRIATE BOX

\* Means exempt only if the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Note 1: Information is not exempt under paragraph 14 if such information is required to be registered under Companies Act 1985, the Friendly Societies Acts of 1974 and 1992, the Industrial and Provident Societies Act 1965 to 1978, the Building Societies Act 1986 or the Charities Act 1993.

**SCHEDULE 12A LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972  
EXEMPTION FROM DISCLOSURE OF DOCUMENTS**

**REPORT:** Voluntary Sector Grant Management Practice  
**AUTHOR:** Rebecca Mead  
**MEETING AND DATE OF MEETING:** Executive on 29 October 2008

I have considered grounds for exemption of information contained in the report referred to above and make the following recommendation to the Proper Officer:-

**Exemptions applying to the report:**

Paragraph 14.

**Factors in favour of disclosure:**

To enable transparency to be demonstrated in decision making.

**Prejudice which would result if the information were disclosed:**

It would be improper for decisions affecting the business affairs of organisations to become public prior to the decisions being conveyed to the organisations themselves.

**My view on the public interest test is as follows:**

That the public interest in disclosing the report is outweighed by the need to observe confidentiality at this stage.

**Recommended decision on exemption from disclosure:**

That the report be exempt from disclosure until after the decisions set out in the report have been conveyed to the organisations in question.

**Date:** 21/10/2008

**Signed:**



**Post:** County Legal and Democratic Services Officer

I accept the recommendation made above.



Proper Officer

Date: 21/10/2008

## FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL - EXEMPT INFORMATION SHEET

COMMITTEE: Executive

DATE: 29 October 2008

AGENDA ITEM NO: 26


REPORT OF: (Director of originating Department)

Director of Lifelong Learning

SUBJECT:

School Playing Fields Grounds Maintenance Contract

**The report on this item is NOT FOR PUBLICATION because it is considered to be exempt information in accordance with the following paragraph(s) of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.**

	<u>Para</u>	
Information relating to a particular individual *	12	
Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual *	13	
Information relating to financial/business affairs of a particular person * See Note 1	14	
Information relating to consultations/negotiations on labour relations matter *	15	
Legal professional privilege	16	
Information revealing the authority proposes to:	17	
(a) give a statutory notice or		
(b) make a statutory order/direction *		
Information on prevention/investigation/prosecution of crime *	18	
<u>For Standards Committee meetings only:</u>	Sec.	
Information subject to obligations of confidentiality	18a	
Information relating to national security	18b	
The deliberations of a Standards Committee in reaching a finding	18c	
<u>Confidential</u> matters which the County Council is not permitted to disclose	Sec. 100A(3)	

### PLEASE TICK APPROPRIATE BOX

\* Means exempt only if the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Note 1: Information is not exempt under paragraph 14 if such information is required to be registered under Companies Act 1985, the Friendly Societies Acts of 1974 and 1992, the Industrial and Provident Societies Act 1965 to 1978, the Building Societies Act 1986 or the Charities Act 1993.

**SCHEDULE 12A LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972  
EXEMPTION FROM DISCLOSURE OF DOCUMENTS**

**REPORT:** School Playing Fields Grounds Maintenance Contract  
**AUTHOR:** Mike Hornby  
**MEETING AND DATE OF MEETING:** Executive on 29 October 2008

I have considered grounds for exemption of information contained in the report referred to above and make the following recommendation to the Proper Officer:-

**Exemptions applying to the report:**

Paragraph 14.

**Factors in favour of disclosure:**

To demonstrate that the tendering procedure used by the authority is open and transparent.

**Prejudice which would result if the information were disclosed:**

The details of the scoring of the contract bids could financially prejudice one or more of the contractors involved in the process and potentially undermine the award procedure and the future tendering exercise.

**My view on the public interest test is as follows:**

The risks involved indicate that the public interest would be better served if the report were to be exempt.

**Recommended decision on exemption from disclosure:**

That the report be exempt from disclosure.

**Date:** 07/10/2008

**Signed:**



**Post:** County Legal and Democratic Services Officer

I accept the recommendation made above.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Proper Officer

Date: 07/10/2008

## **EXECUTIVE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME** **MONTHS 09/08 TO 11/08**

The following reports are included in the Forward Work Programme for submission to this meeting of the Executive. However, the reports are not included on the agenda for the reasons stated:-

### **Environment**

- Flintshire Local Development Plan – First Steps  
(As the delivery date for the Inspector's report on the UDP has been delayed this has meant that the timetable for transition to the LDP has changed. The Head of Planning Policy is now awaiting a meeting with WAG officials to get their advice on the preparation of an LDP timetable which should be able to go forward to Executive on 18 November 2008.)
- Environmental Impact Assessment Procedures and Guidance Policy  
(To be reported after April 2009.)
- Traffic Management Act – Update and Policies  
(Not in a position to report as the policies are still being developed. To be submitted on 6 January 2009.)
- TAIH Regional Transport Plan  
(To be reported to Executive on 18 November 2008.)
- Peripatetic Skip Update  
(To be reported to Executive on 18 November.)

### **Finance Update**

- Revenue Budget Monitoring 2008/09 (Month 5)  
(The CFO has agreed that there will be no detailed monitoring report in respect of the month 5 budget position although, attention will still be given to any potential areas of significant budget variation. This is to enable work by finance officers across the Council on the Mid-Year Review, Single Status and other high priority areas. The next report on the General Fund and HRA revenue position will be at Month 6.)

### **HR and Organisational Development**

- Workforce Planning  
(There will be no workforce report as the system is not ready to produce one.)
- HRMIS  
(The HRMIS system is not going live until November.)

### **ICT & Customer Services**

- ICT Security Policy  
(Deferred - This is forming a larger project to develop an Information Security Management Framework.)



## Chief Executive

- Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges 2009/10  
(This went to 7 October Executive. Feedback (following submission to Overview & Scrutiny Committees) to Executive will be January 09.)
- Mid-Year Flintshire Partnership Performance Assessment  
(To be submitted to Executive on 18 November 2008.)
- Green Dragon: Environmental Management System  
(Deferred until Executive on 18 November – assessment report will not be received until Mid October.)
- Annual Performance Report  
(This was submitted to Executive on 7 October.)
- Organisational Health and Safety Mid-Year Review  
(This will be submitted to Executive in December 2008 as the Health and Safety Update – Occupational Health Statistics 2007/08 report was submitted to the Executive meeting on 16 September so they are out of step.)

## Lifelong Learning

- Leisure Strategy Position Statement  
(Deferred – the Leisure Strategy is still in draft form.)
- Deeside Leisure Centre Investment and Modelling Strategy  
(Deferred – the Consultants report has just arrived and needs to be considered by the Task Group first.)

**FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL  
FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME  
EXECUTIVE  
Months 09/08 to 11/08**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>DIRECTORATE/DIVISION</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>REPORT TYPE</b>
<b>16 September 2008</b>	Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ MTFS / Budget 2009/10 Update</li> <li>➤ Revenue Budget Monitoring 2008/09 (Month 3)</li> <li>➤ Treasury Management Outturn Statement</li> </ul>	Strategic Operational Operational
<b>16 September 2008</b>	Lifelong Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Progress Report on the School Organisational Review</li> <li>➤ Outdoor Play Area Investment Strategy</li> <li>➤ Leisure Centre Enhancement Strategy</li> <li>➤ School Playing Fields Grounds Maintenance Contract</li> <li>➤ Greenfield Valley Trust – Audited Accounts 2007</li> </ul>	Strategic Strategic Strategic Operational Operational
<b>16 September 2008</b>	Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Community Planning and the Flintshire Local Service Board</li> </ul>	Strategic
<b>16 September 2008</b>	ICT/Customer Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Customer Access Strategy Update</li> <li>➤ Design and Print Service Review</li> </ul>	Operational Operational
<b>16 September 2008</b>	Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Closure of UDP Inquiry and Timetable for Adoption</li> <li>➤ Communities Next – Outcome of the Consultation on the Future of the Communities First Programme</li> <li>➤ Individual Site Issues – Seaview Farm</li> </ul>	Strategic Strategic  Operational
<b>16 September 2008</b>	Community Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ SMAT Funded Accommodation Officer</li> <li>➤ Looked After Children Employment Project</li> <li>➤ Outcomes of the Care and Social Services Inspectorate (Wales) (CSSIW) of the Flintshire Foster Care Services 2006/2007</li> </ul>	Operational Operational Operational
<b>16 September 2008</b>	Legal & Democratic Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Legislative and Constitutional Matters from the Assembly</li> </ul>	Operational
<b>7 October 2008</b>	Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ MTFS / Budget 2009/10 Update</li> <li>➤ Revenue Budget Monitoring 2008/09 (Month 4)</li> <li>➤ Capital Programme Monitoring (Month 4)</li> <li>➤ Procurement Strategy</li> </ul>	Strategic Operational Operational Operational
<b>7 October 2008</b>	Community & Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Peripatetic Skip Service Update</li> </ul>	Operational

DATE	DIRECTORATE/DIVISION	TOPIC	REPORT TYPE
<b>7 October 2008</b>	Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Voluntary Sector Compact Review</li> <li>➤ Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges 2008/9 Review</li> <li>➤ Council Plan Review</li> <li>➤ Draft Improvement Agreement (with Welsh Assembly Government)</li> <li>➤ Regulatory Plan Mid-Year Review</li> <li>➤ Performance Management Reporting Arrangements</li> <li>➤ Q1 – Performance Report 2008/09</li> </ul>	Strategic Strategic Strategic Strategic Operational Operational Operational
<b>7 October 2008</b>	ICT/Customer Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ North Wales Regional Partnership Board Update</li> <li>➤ ICT Strategy Progress Report</li> </ul>	Operational Operational
<b>7 October 2008</b>	Lifelong Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Welsh Public Library Standards – Report on Welsh Assembly Government Response to FCC Annual Report for 2007/08</li> </ul>	Strategic Strategic Operational
<b>7 October 2008</b>	Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Planning Development Control Action Plan Improvement Review</li> <li>➤ Prohibition Orders (Unspecified)</li> <li>➤ Review of Old Mineral Planning Permissions</li> </ul>	Operational Operational Operational
<b>29 October 2008</b>	Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ MTFS / Budget 2009/10 Update</li> <li>➤ Revenue Budget Monitoring 2008/09 (Month 5)</li> </ul>	Strategic Operational
<b>29 October 2008</b>	Community & Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Housing Management and Maintenance Mid-Year Performance Review</li> </ul>	Operational
<b>29 October 2008</b>	Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges 2009/10</li> <li>➤ Annual Performance Report</li> <li>➤ Mid-Year Flintshire Partnership Performance Assessment</li> <li>➤ Senior Management Structure/Organisational Design Phase II</li> <li>➤ Green Dragon: Environmental Management System</li> <li>➤ Organisational Health and Safety Mid-Year Review</li> <li>➤ Voluntary Sector Grant Management Practice</li> </ul>	Strategic Strategic Strategic Strategic Operational Operational
<b>29 October 2008</b>	HR Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Workforce Planning</li> <li>➤ HRMIS</li> </ul>	Operational Operational
<b>29 October 2008</b>	Lifelong Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Leisure Strategy Position Statement</li> <li>➤ Deeside Leisure Centre Investment and Modelling Strategy</li> <li>➤ Estyn Inspection of Adult Community Based Learning in Flintshire</li> </ul>	Strategic Strategic Operational

<b>DATE</b>	<b>DIRECTORATE/DIVISION</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>REPORT TYPE</b>
<b>29 October 2008</b>	ICT/Customer Services	➤ ICT Security Policy	Operational
<b>29 October 2008</b>	Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ TAITH Regional Transport Plan</li> <li>➤ Flintshire Local Development Plan – First Steps</li> <li>➤ Traffic Management Act – Update and Policies</li> <li>➤ Environmental Impact Assessment Procedures and Guidance Policy</li> </ul>	Strategic Strategic Operational Operational
<b>18 November 2008</b>	Finance	➤ MTFS / Budget 2009/10 Update	Strategic
<b>18 November 2008</b>	Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ People Strategy Review</li> <li>➤ Q2 – Performance Report 2008/09</li> </ul>	Strategic Operational
<b>18 November 2008</b>	HR Operations	➤ Agency Staff Reporting – Q2	Operational
<b>18 November 2008</b>	Chief Executive's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Organisational Development Programme for the Council</li> <li>➤ Employee Opinion Survey</li> </ul>	Strategic Operational
<b>18 November 2008</b>	Environment	➤ National Regional Waste Strategy	Strategic