

EXECUTIVE **2ND JUNE 2009**

Minutes of the meeting of the Executive of Flintshire County Council held at County Hall, Mold on Tuesday, 2nd June 2009.

PRESENT: Councillor A. Woolley (Chairman)

Councillors: C. Ellis, M. Higham, H.D. Hutchinson, N. Matthews, N. Phillips, L.A. Sharps, N.R. Steele-Mortimer and H. Yale.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors: J.B. Attridge, R. Baker, Mrs A. Davies-Cooke, Ms. V. Gay, Mrs C. H. Jones, Mrs D. Mackie and D. Mackie.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Executive, Director of Community Services, Director of Environment, Director of Lifelong Learning, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Head of Finance and Head of Committee, Member and Electoral Services.

19. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13th May 2009 were confirmed as a correct record.

Matter Arising

Minute No 5 – Capital Programme 2009/10 – 2012/13

The Chief Executive responded to a question over the representations made to the Welsh Assembly Government on the Mostyn Dock Access Bridge. He confirmed that the Executive had agreed to a two month timescale for a response to be received and that a further report on the future economic development of Mostyn Docks and it was expected that a report would be made to the Executive in due course.

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor H.D. Hutchinson declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda Item no. 14 in respect of the report of the Director of Environment on Testing Scheme for Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Vehicles.

21. FINAL IMPROVEMENT AGREEMENT

The Chief Executive presented a report in which the Executive was invited to receive and endorse the final Improvement Agreement as approved by the Welsh Assembly Government. This report had been reported to the Executive and Overview and Scrutiny during its development.

The Improvement Agreement Grant replaced the former Performance Incentive Grant and equated to an income stream of £1.497m per year over a three year period.

RESOLVED:

That the final improvement agreement, as approved by the Welsh Assembly Government, be endorsed.

22. STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT OF RISKS AND CHALLENGES QUARTER 4 2008/09 REVIEW

The Chief Executive presented a report which updated the status of the set of risks and challenges included within the Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges (SARC) following the quarterly review of the period January – March 2009. The report highlighted a new risk which had been identified over the NHS restructuring “The NHS Reforms in Wales will adversely impact on local partnerships and service delivery” and also outlined the improved risks.

The Chief Executive responded to a question on the NHS Restructuring and referred to a report to be considered by the County Council the following week. He reported that the Welsh Assembly Government Minister had declined a request for a delegation to meet her and he confirmed that there would only be one Board for North Wales.

RESOLVED:

That the updated Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges following the quarter for 2008/09 Review, be received and endorsed.

23. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2009/10 – 2012/13

The Head of Finance presented a joint with the Director of Community Services which proposed an initial Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme for 2009/10. The report was subject to consultation with the Corporate Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee which would meet on 8th June 2009 and, subject to approval by the Executive of the recommendations contained in the report, this would also be considered by the County Council on 9th June 2009.

The Head of Finance referred to the General Fund Capital Programme discussions at the last Executive. Similarly for the HRA, the impact of the economic downturn had significantly reduced levels of projected capital receipts for the period 2008/09 to 2011/12. Schemes totalling £1.988m included in the 2008/09 programme that could not proceed because of the shortfall in capital receipts in that year were now being brought forward as a first call on the 2009/10 resources given their priority. A supplementary information sheet, which provided further information on this amount, was tabled.

The Head of Finance referred to table 2 of the report which outlined available funding for new schemes. This included the Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) of £5.200m and the Capital Expenditure Finance from Revenue Account (CERA) of £1.252m, which gave a total of £6.472m. It was emphasised that until the economy recovered and asset sales could be confidently predicted, it was

prudent to prepare a programme for 2009/10 only at this point in time. A programme for future years would be developed in line with resources available for those years and in the light of information available at the time. The amount of funding available for new schemes in 2009/10 was currently identified as £4.484m which was set out in table 2 of the report, as referred to earlier. In addition, there would be further HRA capital spending in 2009/10 of £1.988m as referred to earlier which would enable the completion of the schemes which were in the 2008/09 programme. The total funding currently available for investment in the Housing Stock in 2009/10 was therefore £6.472m including £1.988m deferred from the 2008/09 and £4.484m for new schemes for 2009/10.

The Head of Finance referred to the HRA revenue account for 2009/10 which included £1.252m of revenue contribution (CERA) to the Capital Programme. The HRA accounts for 2008/09 were still being finalised and the balance on the HRA at 31st March 2009 was indicating a position which was in the order of £0.400m to £0.500m greater than was anticipated when the 2009/10 budget was agreed. Based on the emerging figures, it was predicted that there would be an increased level of HRA balances to utilise for capital, but this would not be committed until the final position was known. A more up-to-date position would be reported to Executive on 23rd June 2009.

The use of capital receipts currently set aside was referred to. It was explained that this was a technical accountancy issue associated with the treatment of land sales and the impact on the council's net Housing Subsidy position. As a result of queries raised by External Audit relating to the 2007/08 subsidy claim and subsequent research with WAG and other Councils it had become apparent that there were different interpretations of the guidelines.

The Director of Community Services referred to the close working between Housing and Finance staff to enable this report to be compiled and brought forward to the Executive. She also referred to the fall in land sales which had impacted on the programme. Table 1 of the report which provided the new programme proposals and totalled £4.484m and specific reference was made to a sum of £0.639m for empty property re-modelling/improvement works, £0.460m for programmed heating replacement, £0.450m for electrical re-wiring programmes and £1.300m for disabled facilities grants. The supplementary sheet which had been tabled at the meeting provided a carry forward improvement programme totalling £1.988m brought forward from 2008/09

The Director then referred to Section 3.08 of the report which highlighted priority areas for the allocation of any additional funds which became available from either CERA or Capital Receipts Set Aside based on technical needs and customer demands analysis

The Chief Executive referred to the importance of looking beyond the current available budget provisions to enable future planning and commissioning to be developed. It was important to clarify the use of the "set aside". The amount of additional CERA once the final accounts had been confirmed.

The Deputy Leader thanked the Director of Community Services and the Head of Finance for the extra work that had been undertaken to produce this report and to the Chief Executive for pursuing other ways of making finance available for schemes to proceed. In conclusion, he thanked the Executive Member, Councillor Helen Yale, the Leader and the Officers for the work undertaken.

RESOLVED:

- a) That it be recommended to County Council on 9th June 2009, subject to any comments from Corporate Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 8th June 2009 that the schemes set out in the report be included in the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme for 2009/10 as set out in section 3.04 (table 1) of the report;
- b) That the work to identify potential further resources which would enable further works to be added into the 2009/10 programme and the priority areas for allocation, be noted; and
- c) That the current projected levels of funding for 2010/11 – 2012/13, be noted.

24. ALLOCATIONS POLICY

The Executive Member for Estate Management (Housing and Industrial/Commercial and Agricultural) introduced a report, to present and agree the proposed changes to the Allocations Policy.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services reported that under the terms of the Data Protection Act, the previous practice of sharing certain Tenant's details with local Ward Councillors would not be considered acceptable and this could not be reinstated. A letter would be sent to all Members to outline the new procedure.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed changes to the Allocation Policy be approved.

25. LEISURE STRATEGY : ACTION PLANS

The Director of Lifelong Learning presented a report which provided an update on the progress made since the approval of the Leisure Strategy.

The Director referred to the approval of the Strategy by the Executive on 1st April 2009 following prior consideration and discussion over a number of months as part of the consultation period. This had included detailed consideration of the Strategy by the Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee and participation of a range of community groups. The Director referred to the Action Plan and highlighted specific areas including the need for an organisational re-design and a range of actions involving Sports Development, Leisure Centres and the Countryside Services. Monitoring of the implementation

of the Plan would be undertaken as part of the Overview and Scrutiny forward work programme.

The Chief Executive responded to questions on the recommendation and emphasised that this was a starting point. Further reports would be made back to the Executive as work proceeded and that it may be necessary to make reviews and change as work progressed.

RESOLVED:

That the recommendations be agreed recognising that this was the first version of the Action Plan and was subject to constant review and change.

26. DIRECTORATE PLAN OVERVIEWS

The Chief Executive presented a report which provided Members with overviews of the three Directorate Plans.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the emerging contents of the draft Directorate Plans, be noted and
- b) That the accessibility and publication arrangements be endorsed.

27. IMPROVEMENT TARGETS 2009/10 AND BEYOND

The Chief Executive presented a report which advised Members on the approach to setting targets for Improvement Performance Indicators and any additional Indicators within the Improvement Agreement and to present targets for 2009/10 and longer term aspirational Improvement targets

The Chief Executive referred to previous Member Workshops that had been held, that the report represented work in progress, and that targets were constantly being challenged by officers and Members.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the approach taken for target setting, be endorsed; and
- b) That the Improvement Targets set for 2009/10 and the longer term aspirational targets, be endorsed.

28. ORGANISATION RE-DESIGN – CORPORATE TRAINING AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Chief Executive presented a report of the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development, which sought endorsement of the scope of the second of two Human Resources reviews included in Phase 2 of Organisational Change and Re-design.

The Chief Executive referred to the review and the opportunity to explore partnership arrangements with neighbouring councils and with other organisations such as Deeside College and the Welsh College of Horticulture.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the scope of the Corporate Training and Organisational Development Review and the timescales for the project initiation work be noted and endorsed; and
- b) That a further report be presented to the Executive on completion of the review work to explain the proposals for the re-design of the Corporate Training function and organisational development. The timetable for the implementation of the project plan and to outline any efficiencies that may be identified.

29. WORKFORCE INFORMATION REPORTING

The Chief Executive presented a report of the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development which provided an update on the current status of the new suite of workforce information reports. A further report would be submitted to the next Executive and this would also be considered at the People and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED:

That it be noted that it was intended to submit the full year 2008/09 workforce information report to the next Executive.

30. CCTV SERVICES

The Director of Lifelong Learning presented a report and referred to a previous report which had been considered by the Executive on 21st April 2009 and had been a subject of a call-in to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11th May 2009. It was important to note that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had not questioned the levels of contract staffing supervision of the system proposed and had been concerned of the longer term of capital investment challenges.

The Chief Executive referred to a meeting with the North Wales Police the previous week and outlined the positive first outcome of discussions on shared contributions to CCTV in the future. Alternative ways of working would be examined and sub-regional partnerships needed to be pursued.

RESOLVED:

That the following recommendations be approved;

- a) That the County Council adopts Option 2 as set out in paragraph 3.04 of the report in relation to future staffing arrangements;

- b) That the staffing levels in the CCTV Control Room be increased to allow for two operators on duty at all times at an estimated cost of £82,000 p.a. and that the Executive approve the allocation of additional budget in 2009/10 of £82,000 to be met from the contingency reserve; and
- c) That a further report be commissioned for September 2009 outlining the proposed process for conducting further work on Service Level Agreements with partners and capital developments

32. TESTING SCHEME FOR PRIVATE HIRE AND HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLES

The Director of Environment presented a report on the findings of a review on the current arrangements for the testing of Private Hire and Hackney Carriage vehicles to make recommendations for improving the current scheme based on the findings of the review.

The Director referred to the scheme which had been first launched in 2002 and referred to the background and to details of the review findings. The considerations of the report included an improved list of testers, annual performance review, transparency, quality criteria and evaluation and an appeals procedure.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the proposal for introducing a revised scheme for approved testers and to periodically review the effectiveness of the scheme in meeting its objectives and to ensure it remained fit for purpose, be approved; and
- b) That the Licensing Committee oversee the effective operation of the scheme including consideration of future changes to fees, approve the quality criteria and evaluation processes and ensure the appeals procedures are followed.

33. HOUSING REPAIR SERVICE AUDIT UPDATE

The Director of Community Services presented a report which provided an update on work in response to to the public interest report undertaken by PriceWaterhouse Coopers on the Housing Repair Service, the subsequent follow up review dated December 2007, and the position as at mid-March 2008.

The Director referred to the background of the report, productivity and performance, responsibility and financial reporting and reviewing workforce the structure.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the service improvements which had been undertaken, be noted and
- b) That the ongoing management initiatives designed to continuously improve the Housing Repairs Services to customers, be supported.

34. THE PROPOSED RE-ALIGNMENT OF THE BUDGET OF FORMER CHILDREN'S HOME (KNOWN AS AROSFA)

The Director of Community Services presented a report which sought approval for the re-alignment of part of the budget of the former children's home (known as Arosfa) to create two new posts within the Family Placement Team.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the re-alignment of £85,022 including oncosts from the Arosfa budget to the Family Placement Budget, be approved; and
- b) That the Executive receives a further report on the future of the Arosfa site.

35. LONG TERM MANAGEMENT OF THE FORMER COED TALON COLLIERIEY AND OPEN CAST SITE

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services presented a joint report with the Director of Environment which sought approval to the setting up of an advisory board to facilitate the long term management of the site.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services referred to discussions with the Executive Member for Waste Management Strategy and to concerns that there were no representatives of the Historic Society and suggested that this could be determined by the Board at its first meeting. He also responded to a question with regard to the secretarial support to the Board and confirmed that this would be financed through the Countryside Service.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the recommendations be agreed and
- b) That the Advisory Board be given power to determine those landowners and those with a legal interest affecting the site who are to be Members of the Board and to include a representative of an appropriate Historical Society as an additional Member.

36. EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS

An information report of the Chief Executive, the purpose of which was to inform Members of actions taken under delegated powers, was submitted. The action was set out as below:

Community Services – Approval for a temporary support worker to assist with smooth running of the Flintshire Sounds Project which was a community based project

37. DURATION OF MEETING

The meeting commenced at 9.30am and ended at 10.58 am.

38. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

There were no members of the press and public present.

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Chairman

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

EXECUTIVE	DATE: 2nd June 2009
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MEMBER	ITEM	MIN. NO. REFERS
Councillor H D Hutchinson	TESTING SCHEME FOR PRIVATE HIRE AND HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLES	32