

EXECUTIVE
8TH DECEMBER 2009

Minutes of the meeting of the Executive of Flintshire County Council held at County Hall, Mold on Tuesday 8th December, 2009.

PRESENT: Councillor A. Woolley (Chairman)

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

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors: K. Armstrong-Braun, P.G. Heesom, Ms V. Gay, D.I. Mackie and Mrs D.L. 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, Head of ICT and Customer Services, Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development and Head of Committee, Member and Electoral Services.

APOLOGIES: Councillor H. Yale.

183. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17th November 2009 were confirmed as a correct record.

184. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor A. Woolley declared an interest in agenda item number 26 being a report of the Chief Executive on Voluntary Sector Funding – Mid Year Review as a Director of the Citizens Advice Bureau. He also indicated that he would be leaving the meeting during the consideration of this item and would ask the Deputy Leader to chair the remainder of the meeting.

185. ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE AND RE-DESIGN PHASE II

The Executive Member for Corporate Management and Strategy introduced the Chief Executive's progress report on the set of reviews commissioned as Phase II of the Organisational Change and Re-design. He drew Members attention to the Appendix to the report which outlined the progress of reviews and referred in particular to the Youth Service Review and asked Members to note that following consideration by the Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee the draft Youth Service Strategy was out to consultation and this had been extended from 30th November 2009 until 31st January 2010.

The Chief Executive emphasised the need for regular updates on the reviews for Members information, which reported that with the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development he had attended the Welsh Local Government Association at Cardiff the previous week and Flintshire's approach to

Organisational Change and Re-design was generating interest from other Local Authorities.

The report made reference to the outcomes of Job Evaluation under Single Status which had revealed the need for further work on job design and structures in some areas and this could lead to further service reviews being identified and commissioned. In conclusion, the Chief Executive referred to the capacity required to successfully manage and implement reviews.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the progress of Phase II of the Organisational Re-design Programme be noted; and
- (b) That the requirement for further reviews to be carried out as set out in paragraph 3.03 of the report, be noted.

186. WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME

The Chief Executive presented a report which advised Members on the review of the Council's Welsh Language Scheme and the actions agreed between the Council and the Welsh Language Board in response to the 2008/09 Monitoring Report.

The Chief Executive reminded Members that the Council had a statutory duty to prepare a Welsh Language Scheme which was proportionate to the needs of the Authority. The Welsh Language Board had responded positively to the scheme and had identified priority improvement areas as set out in section 3.02 of the report.

The Chief Executive responded to a question on Welsh Language training for Councillors. He reported that at this stage no dates had been arranged. He would speak to Members separately on this issue of training which was of language awareness not language learning.

The Leader referred to authors of reports and to the use of initials and acronyms and as reports would be viewed by members of the public emphasised the need for full words to be used in the first instance and then followed by the initials at appropriate stages. The Chief Executive concurred with the views and this particular report was a good example of the use of such abbreviations.

RESOLVED:

That the actions as agreed with the Welsh Language Board be endorsed.

187. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT) STRATEGY - UPDATE

The Head of ICT and Customer Services presented a report which provided an update on progress with the implementation of the Corporate Information and Communications Technology Strategy. He reminded Members that at the

Executive on 4th August 2009 a new four year ICT strategy had been endorsed. The Executive had agreed that a detailed action plan be prepared and this was in the process of being developed. The action plan had been delayed as work was being undertaken with each Directorate to identify their ICT priorities and aspirations to ensure that these were reflected in the action plan. A detailed analysis of the use of ICT had been undertaken in the Environment Directorate and meetings had been held with all Service Managers to analyse their ICT requirements for the future. Work would now be undertaken with the Directorate Management Team to identify priorities and this exercise would then be repeated with Community Services, Lifelong Learning and Corporate Services. As the plan developed, key priorities for services were being identified and these were set out in section 3.04 of the report. One of the key priorities identified was mobile computing solutions, the pace of implementation was dependent on the Council's securing Welsh Assembly Government Invest to Save funding for the procurement of hardware, software and consultancy services. The procurement and implementation of new telephone system which would enable greater flexibility and integration with email, voicemail and instant messaging to provide a unified communications platform.

In conclusion, the Head of ICT and Customer Services referred to work commissioned by the North Wales Chief Executives to undertake a baseline assessment of ICT across the six North Wales Councils to identify technologies and business systems used the potential for collaboration in providing ICT services.

The Leader of the Council referred to the recognition of the service on a national and international level for the work it had been doing to increase the efficiency and reduce the environmental impact of its data centre operations. He congratulated the Team which had won the European IBM Common Environmental award together with a highly commended award in the UK Local Government ICT Excellence Awards and had also been a finalist in both the Innovation and Environmental categories of the British Computer Society UK IT Industry Awards.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the progress being made in the implementation of the Council's ICT Strategy be noted and the priorities identified in paragraph 3.04 of the report be endorsed; and
- (b) That the work being undertaken for greater collaboration in ICT Support and Development across North Wales be supported.

188. PROGRESS UPDATE ON THE NORTH WALES RESIDUAL WASTE TREATMENT PARTNERSHIP (NWRWTP)

The Executive Member for Waste Management and Strategy and Function introduced a joint report of the Chief Executive and Director of Environment which provided an update on the progress being made in the North Wales Residual Waste Treatment Partnership. The Executive Member reported that the North Wales Residual Waste Joint Committee was to meet the following day at County Hall and would be hosted by Flintshire County Council. The Joint Committee would be considering the Outline Business Case and once adopted this would then need

to be considered by each of the partner authorities together with an Inter-authority Agreement. Accordingly, further reports to the Executive would be made.

The Director of Environment emphasised the importance of this project and the momentum that had gathered over recent months. He outlined the timetable following the meeting of the Joint Committee on 9th December which would include consideration by the Environment and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 13th January, 2010 and the Executive on 26th January followed by the County Council on 2nd March, 2010.

The Executive Member also paid tribute to Mr Stephen Penny and Mr Steffan Owen, as the Project Director and Project Manager respectively who had made a major impact on the progress of the project.

The Chief Executive expressed his appreciation of the comments made by the Executive Member and Director of Environment and as Lead Officer for this project emphasised the importance of understanding the Outline Business Case which would lead to a major procurement exercise. Once the outlined business case had been agreed by the partner authorities and reported back to the Joint Committee. The procurement process would then begin.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report and progress made in developing the Outline Business Case be noted;
- (b) Members continue to be aware of the issues requiring further development around the development of the Outline Business Case; and
- (c) That the timetable as set out in the report be noted.

189. PEOPLE STRATEGY 2009 – 2012 UPDATE

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development presented a report the purpose on progress achieved in the implementation of the revised People Strategy for 2009 – 2012 for quarter 2 of 2009/10 following its adoption by the Executive at its meeting of 4th August, 2009.

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development referred to the considerations of the report and the reference to the County Council decision on Single Status and to the agreement to nine actions which would provide the framework for the Single Status review and these were set out in paragraph 3.03 of the report. A Single Status Project Board comprising of Elected Members, Trade Union Representatives and Officers had recommenced their meetings and would continue to meet on a regular basis for the duration of the Single Status Project. Regular reports on progress would be made to both the Executive and the People and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Workforce information reports on head count, labour turnover, sickness/absence and diversity had been reported to the Executive for the first time during the quarter and regular reports will continue to be made. Five new

employee relation policies had been developed in respect of attendance management, disciplinary and capability, grievance and dignity at work following extensive consultation through focus groups. The next stage would be to report to Corporate Management Team, Departmental Management Teams and Human Resources to implement during January – March 2010.

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development referred to the Chief Executive's earlier report on Organisational Change and Re-design Phase II and to an Organisational Design Framework which had been developed for the Council which would support Senior Managers in re-designing their services in accordance with sound organisational design principles. In addition, a training programme for the HR Team and Senior Managers and Organisational Design had been developed during the quarter and had been delivered during October and November 2009. To complement this new approach to organisational design project management training for all Managers had been arranged.

Further significant work had been undertaken on the design of a new Management Development Programme in partnership with Deeside College for Managers. This programme was being based on the Core Behavioural Competencies defined in the Flintshire "Competency Dictionary" for Managers and reflected National Management Standards. It was planned to pilot this with Deeside College early in 2010.

The Chief Executive emphasised to Members the importance of the strategies and the number of intensive projects that were being undertaken and also referred the importance of working with the Trade Unions.

RESOLVED:

That the progress made in relation to the delivery of the revised People Strategy be noted.

190. A STRATEGY FOR FLINTSHIRE'S LIBRARIES 2009-12

The Executive Member for Education and Youth Services introduced the Director of Lifelong Learning's report which sought approval to implement a Strategy for Flintshire Libraries 2009-12. He commended the work of the Library Service and the steps being taken to improve the service even further.

The Director of Lifelong Learning explained to Members that this was the latest of a number of Strategy updates and set the context for the next three years. The Strategy recognised an improving service which was matched by customer satisfaction levels. The Strategy set out a number of practical ways to enhance service provision.

RESOLVED:

That the Strategy be endorsed as the blueprint for the future direction of the Library and Information Service over the next three years and to sanction its publication.

191. QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE REVIEW 2009-10

The Chief Executive presented a report, on the 2009/10 Quarter 2 Performance Reports produced at the Heads of Service level according to the Council's improved business systems.

RESOLVED:

That the 2009/10 Quarter 2 Performance Reports be endorsed, and referred to the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committees for consideration, and the update to the Strategic Risks and Challenges be endorsed.

192. REGULATORY PLAN: MID YEAR REVIEW

The Chief Executive presented a report which provided a periodic mid year review on the management of the Regulatory Plan and advised Members on the change to external audit and inspection arrangements for the auditing period 2009/10.

The Chief Executive referred to the Auditor General for Wales who was responsible for the external audit function provided to public sector bodies across Wales and to the proposed change of external auditors from PricewaterhouseCoopers to the Wales Audit Office. This proposal had been considered by the Audit Committee on 28th September and a response to the Auditor General was set out in paragraph 3.06 of the report. Despite the Council's response, the Auditor General was pursuing the change to audit arrangements and a handover was due to take place.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the continuing improvement to the management of the Regulatory Plan be endorsed and the progress report against the 2009 Regulatory Plan be noted; and
- (b) That the change in external audit arrangements from PricewaterhouseCoopers to the Wales Audit Office to take effect for the audit period 2009/10 be noted.

193. IMPROVEMENT AGREEMENT – MID YEAR REVIEW

The Chief Executive presented a report, on progress against the actions and targets for 2008/09 contained within the Improvement Agreement with the Welsh Assembly Government.

The Chief Executive referred to a meeting with the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) and the Wales Audit Office in August to review progress against the 2008/09 actions and targets. At this meeting it was determined that good progress had been made with 79% of targets met and improved trend. A number of amendments had been made and agreed with WAG to reflect the clarity of the Agreement and timescales or targets and these were set out in Appendix 1. It was noted that good progress was also being made against the 2009/10 actions

and a further report identifying final progress against these targets and would be reported to the Executive in late Summer.

The Executive Member for Leisure and Public Protection and Team Clean Activity referred to the Appendix to the report which set out Improvement Agreement monitoring for 2008/09 and expressed his appreciation of the improvements made on housing performance.

RESOLVED:

That the progress in 2008/09 against the Improvement Agreement be endorsed.

194. CENSUS

The Chief Executive presented a report to update the Executive on the proposals of the Office for National Statistics to work with Local Authorities on the Census for England and Wales in 2011 and to endorse the Council's participation.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted and the Council's participation in the planning and organisation of the 2011 Census be endorsed.

195. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2009/10 (MONTH 6)

The Head of Finance presented a report which provided Members with the most up to date Revenue Budget Monitoring information at month 6 for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account in 2009/10.

The Head of Finance, before dealing with the detail of the report referred to the final settlement from the Welsh Assembly Government for the 2010/11 financial year which was expected during the day and would feed into the budget report to be considered by the Executive on 22nd December.

The month 6 Budget Monitoring report showed a net overspend of £0.260m on the General Fund (compared with £0.467m at month 5) and a net overspend of £0.550m on the Housing Revenue Account (compared with £0.571m at month 5). The significant in year projective variances were detailed in the Appendices to the report and particular reference was made to the volatility of the Out of County Placements budget.

The Executive Member for Social Services referred to the efforts made to avoid an overspend on the Out of County Placements and the uncertainty and volatility of this was an issue affecting all Local Authorities and there was a difficulty in being able to predict what budget requirements were needed. She emphasised the importance of the Welsh Assembly Government changing the way in which the budget was determined. In this regard, the Leader referred to a recent WLGA meeting when this had been discussed and it was an issue for all 22 Welsh Local Authorities and the Assembly needed to re-examine its funding mechanism. The Chief Executive referred to the annual discussions on this budget and suggested that through the WLGA the Welsh Assembly Government should recognise the

greater collaboration being undertaken on a regional basis and for the Assembly to create flexible reserves for Councils to support higher demands being placed on the service. He would pursue this through the WLGA.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the overall report be noted;
- (b) That the General Fund Contingency sum available as at 31st March, 2010 as set out in section 5 of the report be noted; and
- (c) That the projected final level of balances on the Housing Revenue Account as set out in paragraph 6.05 of the report, be noted.

196. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2009/10 (MONTH 6)

The Head of Finance presented a report which provided Members with the latest Capital Programme information for 2009/10 at month 6. Section 3.00 of the report set out the programme movements, the contractually uncommitted (generally finance) budget and released funding of £1.458m. This uncommitted sum would feed into the Capital Report for 2010/11 to be considered by the Executive at its meeting on 22nd December, 2009.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted and approved.

197. EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN BYE-LAWS

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services presented a report, the purpose of which was for the Executive to recommend that the County Council approve the making of new bye-laws in respect of the employment of children in Flintshire which were attached as an appendix to the report. He explained that this was one of a number of ongoing reviews of the Council's bye-laws.

RESOLVED

That the County Council be recommended to approve the making of the proposed bye-laws in the form attached to the report and that they then be submitted to the Welsh Assembly Government for confirmation.

198. MATRIX CONTRACT UPDATE – (MANAGED AGENCY STAFF SOLUTION)

The Executive Member for Corporate Management and Strategy introduced the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development's report which provided an update on the contract for the provision of agency workers.

The Leader referred to the recommendations of the report and proposed an addition "and decreasing agency staff numbers to a properly evidenced minima" and this was duly seconded.

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development referred to her report which showed the quarter 2 of 2009/10 savings and provided an update on the development of procedures to maximise efficiencies and improve practice in relation to the use of agency workers. It was noted that as a result of the contract, savings were consistently being made. Additional objectives were being applied in respect of the quality of service being provided by Matrix and also to ensure that agency staff were being used in an appropriate manner. A revised process had been implemented for the extension of temporary agency staff beyond six months and this was having a positive impact on reducing number of agency workers in quarter 3, and the early indications were that the number of agency workers during the first month of quarter 3 had reduced by more than 40. The total net saving for quarter 2 was £84,852.63.

The Chief Executive referred to the high profile given to the use of agency staff and this linked to a number of issues particularly in relation to changing organisational structures which would impact on the need for agency staff.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the update be noted;
- b) That the approach has been taken to manage the use of agency workers more closely be endorsed; and
- c) To explore further options for increasing savings for Flintshire and decreasing agency staff number to a properly evidenced minima.

199. LEARNING DISABILITY SERVICE REDESIGN

The Director of Community Services presented a report which sought approval to formalise the existing arrangements for commissioning and contract monitoring arrangements in Learning Disability Services. The recommendation of the report was to seek approval to re-designate the existing Workforce Quality Manager post to Commissioning and Contracts Officer.

RESOLVED:

- a) That approval be given to re-designate the existing Workforce Quality Assurance Manager post to Commissioning and Contracts Officer;
- b) That approval be given to appoint a further Commissioning and Contracts Officer post with the post being ring fenced for recruitment purposes and advertised across the Directorate; and
- c) That the reporting lines for these posts be contained within the revised role of Supporting Living Team Manager post, be approved.

200. TRAINEESHIP PROGRAMME FOR CARE LEAVERS

The Executive Member for Social Services introduced the Director of Community Services report which sought support for the proposed traineeship programme for care leavers.

The Executive Member referred to work undertaken to identify the potential for a County scheme to assist young people leaving care to experience work placement in the Council. This proposal had been developed with support from Members including the Chair of the Social and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Children's Services Forum. The proposal would also progress a key element of the County's corporate parenting. Work had also been undertaken with Deeside College to look at the potential for them to support a traineeship scheme for care leavers. In conclusion the Executive Member thanked the officers involved in Community Services, Human Resources and Deeside College.

The Executive Member for Education and Youth Services welcomed this initiative and also referred to his attendance at the recent launch at the "Best Chances" scheme which had links to the traineeship programme and with the assistance from the private sector this was an excellent scheme.

RESOLVED:

That the traineeship scheme be supported and Directorates be encouraged to participate.

201. LICENSING OF ANIMAL BOARDING ESTABLISHMENTS

The Executive Member for Leisure, Public Protection and Team Clean Activity introduced the Director of Environment's report the purpose of which was to request approval to model licence conditions for the home boarding of dogs and to confirm the proposed licence fee. He also referred to paragraph 3.02 of the report and the reference to domestic property which should read "properties".

RESOLVED:

- a) That the adoption of licence conditions for use in Flintshire based upon the Lacors model licence conditions for the home boarding of dogs as detailed in appendix 1 to the report be approved and that the licence fee of £61.00 be confirmed; and
- b) That delegated authority be granted to the Director of the Environment following consultation with the Executive Member for Leisure and Public Protection, to amend the fee in the future to take account of inflation and other relevant pressures.

202. OUTCOME OF THE CONSULTATIONS RELATING TO THE PROPOSAL TO AMALGAMATE DEE ROAD INFANTS AND CUSTOM HOUSE LANE JUNIOR SCHOOLS

The Executive Member for Education and Youth Services introduced the Director of Lifelong Learning's report. The purpose of the report was to report on the outcome of the consultation meetings and subsequent responses to the consultations relating to the proposal and to seek approval to publish the statutory notices.

The Director of Lifelong Learning explained that this was the latest report on the process to amalgamate the two schools. He reported that presentation meetings had been conducted at the schools and with the relevant groups of parents, staff and governors who had also been invited and members of the local community were also present at two meetings. The presentations generally met with the approval of stakeholders although there were issues raised and these were set out in the report. It was noted that the impact of a new school could affect the aspect of those residing in properties adjacent to the field and some local residents have made it clear that they would lodge objections to the proposals under a planning application. It was therefore proposed that before any planning application was submitted there would be an additional opportunity for members of the community to view and discuss the school plans through local presentations and drop-in sessions.

RESOLVED:

That the progression of the proposal to the statutory stage be approved as recommended in the report.

203. PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT BETWEEN FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL AND SCHOOLS

The Executive Member for Education and Youth Services introduced the Director of Lifelong Learning's report which sought approval of the draft partnership agreements between schools and Flintshire County Council.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the draft partnership agreements as outlined in appendices 1 and 2 to the report be approved; and
- b) That the Lifelong Learning Directorate be authorised to carry out consultations with the governing bodies of all schools in Flintshire to complete individual school agreements.

204. EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS

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

- Environment - Transfer of 5 Dale Road, Higher Shotton to Flintshire County Council
- Acquisition of lease of premises at Church Street, Flint for use by Communities First, Flint.
- Community Services - Approval for a temporary part-time clerical assistant to work within the Re-ablement and Telecare service and this post would take forward redesign of older people's services and was funded by the Intermediate Care CHC Grant.
- Approval for the appointment for four additional staff needed to prepare and deliver training for approximately 500 staff from December to March 2010 for the Paris system to deliver the new Social Services business system. This would be funded from the Performance Management Development Fund which was a Welsh Assembly Government specific grant.

205. 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 remainder of the meeting to allow the consideration of exempt information by virtue of paragraphs 12 and 15 (for Agenda Item 25) and paragraph 14 (for Agenda Item 26) of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

206. CORPORATE SERVICES BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION REVIEW

The Head of ICT and Customer Services introduced the Chief Executive's report which sought agreement to the scope of the review and to the proposals for the future of the Business Development Team within the Legal and Democratic Services division of Corporate Services.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the scope for the review of Corporate Services Business Development and Administration be agreed.
- b) That the disbanding of the Business Development Team within the Legal and Democratic Services Division be agreed; and
- c) That the deletion of the posts of Head of Business Development and Business Development Assistant from the establishment be agreed.

207. VOLUNTARY SECTOR FUNDING – MID-YEAR REVIEW

At this juncture, the Leader of the Council, Councillor A. Woolley, having declared an interest at the commencement of the meeting, left the meeting during the consideration of this Agenda Item. Councillor L.A. Sharps, chaired the remainder of the meeting.

The Chief Executive presented a report the purpose of which was to note the status of the core funding agreements with voluntary organisations; to receive an update on the funding position for voluntary organisations receiving relocation costs following the closure of Ty'r Binwydden or Community Chest Grant and to resolve a grant application procedural issue within the Community Chest Grant Approval process.

The Chief Executive referred to the Community Chest update and to one of the applications for funding support in round 2 was supported by funding by the Officers Grants Panel but had not been endorsed by the Member Grants Panel. As a procedural matter this now needed to be arbitrated by the Executive. He had subsequently spoken to the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Member Grants Panel and it was proposed to defer consideration of this particular application to allow the Chief Executive and the Executive Member for Corporate Management and Strategy to meet with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Member Grants Panel, and for this matter to be subsequently dealt with by the Chief Executive under his existing delegated powers.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the current status of the core funding agreements with voluntary organisations as previously approved by the Executive in October 2008, be endorsed;
- b) That the update of the funding position for voluntary organisations receiving relocation costs following the closure of Ty'r Binwydden or Community Chest Grant be noted; and
- c) That the procedural issue arising from round 2 of the Community Chest as referred to in paragraph 3.14 of the report be deferred for further consideration and to allow the Chief Executive and the Executive Member for Corporate Management and Strategy to meet with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Member Grants Panel and for the matter to be dealt with by the Chief Executive under his delegated powers.

208. DURATION OF MEETING

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am and ended at 11.03 am.

209. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

There was one member of the press in attendance.

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Chairman

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

EXECUTIVE	DATE: 8TH DECEMBER 2009
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MEMBER	ITEM	MIN. NO. REFERS
Voluntary Sector	Councillor A. Woolley Funding – Mid Year Review	207