

**EXECUTIVE**  
**13 JULY 2010**

Minutes of the meeting of the Executive of Flintshire County Council held at County Hall, Mold on Tuesday, 13 July 2010.

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

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

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Councillors: K. Armstrong-Braun, J. B. Attridge, R. Baker, F. Gillmore, R. Hampson, D. I. Mackie and A. P. Shotton

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Chief Executive, Director of Environment, Director of Lifelong Learning, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Head of Finance, Head of Housing, Head of Development and Resources and Team Manager – Committee Services

**APOLOGY:**

Councillor N. Steele-Mortimer

**47. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 22 June 2010 were confirmed as a correct record.

**48. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor A. Woolley declared a personal interest in agenda item number 11 – Food Waste Pilot Scheme Update, due to his membership of Zero Waste (UK) and GAIA. Councillor C. A. Ellis and Councillor H. D. Hutchinson also declared personal and prejudicial interests in agenda item number 11 due to their ward interests and indicated that they would leave the meeting during consideration of the item.

**49. HOUSING BALLOT – PROGRESS REPORT**

The Chief Executive presented the report which explained the progress to date in managing the Housing Ballot project and the next key stages and issues. He expressed his appreciation for the work of the Housing Ballot Project Board which was managing the process with neutrality in the planning, management and delivery of the project.

A detailed project plan had been developed which was currently on target and was being managed in line with the timescales set out in the plan. The specific timing of the ballot would be mid/late 2011.

In accordance with Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) Guidance, housing ballot advisors had been appointed. A communications strategy and

work programme had been developed by the communications advisors which had been agreed by the Project Board.

WAG had advised that all eligible costs were capable of reimbursement within a £1M limit, on condition that the project was conducted in accordance with the Guidance. Confirmation of provisional approval and the reimbursement of eligible costs had been received in June.

The main issues were, the creation of a preferred alternative landlord; the 'offer' on 'choice' document; and the exploration of corporate impacts of the ballot, such as pensions' deficits, Housing Revenue Account recharges, assets, employees and services.

### **RESOLVED**

That the contents of the report, the progress being made with the Housing Ballot project and the key issues and decisions that will be required in the next phase of the project be noted.

## **50. STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP PERFORMANCE – MID YEAR REVIEW**

The Executive Member for Corporate Management introduced the report which provided an overview of the progress of the Strategic Partnerships and the priorities of each of the Partnerships and the key milestones for the year ahead. The report also provided an update on the implementation of a strategic partnership governance framework and the Executive Member drew attention to the introduction of the Housing Partnership.

The Chief Executive explained that each Strategic Partnership was required to perform to a consistently good standard. Flintshire's Strategic Partnerships were critically important towards contributing towards the quality of life for the County of Flintshire.

Many Partnerships received short term funding or grant funding which for some, would inevitably decrease because of the financial future. The Strategic Partnerships would undergo an annual Partnership self assessment. The self assessments would include a review of the forward financial commitments of the partners in a challenging financial context.

At the Local Service Board (LSB) meeting on 5 July, it was agreed that their terms of reference would be revised to incorporate a fifth role 'to promote collaboration in the design and provision of local public services and to make best economic use of local partners resources, such as people, money, assets and technology'.

Information had been received following the Public Services Summit the previous week which included the need for the pace of identifying efficiencies to be increased.

The Executive Member for Regeneration and Tourism informed the Executive that the Federation of Small Businesses had been invited on to the Regeneration Partnership and the Accord was being signed the following day.

### **RESOLVED**

- (a) That the addition to the terms of reference for the Local Service Board as highlighted in section 3.01 of the report be noted;
- (b) That the mid year review of the Strategic Partnerships be noted and the key priorities and the work programmes to achieve them be supported; and
- (c) That the development and implementation of a Strategic Partnership Governance Framework be noted.

## **51. CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION**

The Chief Executive introduced the report which provided an overview on the progress and development of the Changing Climate: Changing Places pilot project. The project identified the possible impacts of climate change on Flintshire and the services it provided and also outlined the partnership approach. He expressed his appreciation to Carl Longland, Director of Environment, and Erica Mackie, Sustainable Development Officer, for the work undertaken on the project.

Flintshire County Council was one of four councils chosen to be part of a Climate Change Adaptation Planning project based on the enthusiasm, commitment and achievements of colleagues in Flintshire. A summary of the Local Climate Impact Profile (LCLIP) of Flintshire for the period 2003-2008 was attached to the report.

### **RESOLVED**

- (a) That the climate change risks identified by this pilot project be assigned or shared by Flintshire and its partners be endorsed;
- (b) That the Council continues to work with its partners to jointly identify the control measures (eg coastal flood plans), test the robustness of them against the perceived collective and/or individual organisational risk and assign the risk to a specific organisation or service; and
- (c) That the risks which may require a regional approach be recognised and reported through regional channels.

## **52. FINAL DRAFT OF THE SOCIAL SERVICES ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Executive Member for Social Services introduced the final draft Social Services Annual Performance Report. The report was in two main sections:

- (1) How good are the services? and
- (2) How good is the supporting infrastructure?

Improvement priorities were identified in each sub-section.

Key stakeholders reviewed the draft report and provided comments on its accuracy as an assessment of current Social Services performance and the robustness of the improvement plans. Also, a Member workshop had been held to consider the first draft of the report and Members' comments were included in the final draft, which was considered by the Social and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 26 May 2010.

The Head of Development and Resources explained that the report would be submitted to the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW). CSSIW would visit the authority and examine the background evidence and the action plans that had been prepared. A joint letter from the Council and CSSIW would then be prepared and issued.

The Chief Executive welcomed the input from Social and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. He said self assessments were a developing approach to assessing performance and prospects in Social Services which could result in a reduction of the number of formal inspections. He commented that he was Acting Director of Community Services, not Social Services as detailed on page 2 of the report.

### **RESOLVED**

That the Social Services Annual Performance Report be endorsed for submission to the CSSIW.

## **53. IMPROVING THE REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE SERVICE**

The Executive Member for Housing introduced the report which provided data on the performance of the repairs service for 2009/10. She highlighted the improvement in productivity levels and the performance of the service overall.

At the Community and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 23 June 2010, Members recommended to the Executive that additional funding of approximately £800k be approved to address the repairs backlog. The original budget approved for 2010/11 provided for a closing HRA balance of 5%. Recommended good practice was a minimum of 3%. If the full £800k was made available now, this would leave a closing balance of 2.55%, which was below the recommended levels. If £400k was made available, this would leave a projected HRA closing balance of 4.08%. The Head of Finance said this was achievable with the HRA and was still comfortably above the minimum recommended balance level of 3% of total HRA expenditure.

The Executive Member said the report recommended that employees at Canton depot should be relocated to alternative offices, which would

release Canton depot for sale and release the allocated capital programme identified for relocation.

The Head of Housing added that the item had been debated at Community and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee where the changes were welcomed. The report highlighted the full measures of success for the new service which included repairs service available on Saturday mornings and at least one evening and all repair requests to receive written receipts. Consultations with the Trades Unions had commenced.

The Chief Executive said the report represented sustained work over time with the vision coming to fruition, including the impact of settled professional leadership. On the HRA, the balance would be kept under review. There was now more confidence in the predicted budget figures which could enable the minimum balance to be reduced therefore releasing more expenditure.

The Executive Members for Waste Management and Leisure Services and Public Protection congratulated the Executive Member for Housing and the officers for their hard work.

### **RESOLVED**

- (a) That additional budget of £400k from HRA balances be allocated to the housing repairs budget in this financial year to reduce the repairs backlog, and to note that further proposals will be brought forward early in the second half of the year to potentially allocate a further £400k from HRA balances – subject to the in year financial position of the HRA at that time indicating that the further allocation is affordable;
- (b) That the outsourcing of the stores service be approved;
- (c) That the relocation of the workforce from Canton Depot to an alternative location, releasing the Canton depot for sale and freeing up the allocated capital programme identified for relocation be approved; and
- (d) That the provision of a more flexible customer orientated service be approved.

### **54. SECONDARY SCHOOLS REVIEW STRATEGIC OUTLINE CASE (SOC)**

The Director of Lifelong Learning provided Members with an update on the progress made in reviewing education provision in the secondary sector, with a key focus on sustainability of Post-16 provision. He delivered a presentation which covered the following areas:

- 14-19 transformation
- Problems associated with current arrangements
- Treasury 5-Case Process
- Local Solutions

- Summary of scoping options
- Summary assessment of implementation options

The Executive Member for Environment asked if parents and students would be consulted on specific proposals and the Director confirmed that they would be.

The Chief Executive added that positive feedback had been received from the project management consultants CPC who would assist with the bid for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools funding and overall progress and inclusive approach.

### **RESOLVED**

That the progress made to date be noted and the submission of the SOC to the Welsh Assembly Government's Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLs) be endorsed.

## **55. PRIVATE WATER SUPPLIES REGULATIONS AND CHARGING FEES**

The Executive Member for Leisure Services and Public Protection introduced the report which provided information on the new Private Water Supplies (Wales) Regulations 2010 and the report sought approval for a set of charging fees in Flintshire.

The Director of Environment explained that the Private Water Supplies (Wales) Regulations 2010 came into force on 4 February 2010, implementing the requirements of EC Directive 98/83 and Flintshire County Council had a statutory duty to implement the Regulations. The prime focus of the Directive and Regulations was to ensure that private water supplies were safe and wholesome to drink.

### **RESOLVED**

That the charges set out in paragraph 2.06 be agreed and delegated authority be given to the Director of Environment, following consultation with the Executive Member for Leisure Services and Public Protection, to vary them in the future.

## **56. FOOD WASTE PILOT SCHEME UPDATE**

Councillors C. A. Ellis and H. D. Hutchinson had declared personal and prejudicial interests in this item and left the room.

The Executive Member for Waste Management introduced the report which highlighted the progress of the food waste pilot collection scheme. The report also sought approval for the introduction of Managed Weekly Collections for residual waste.

The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) had introduced a new Measure (Waste {Wales} Measure 2010) which would come into force during

this calendar year. This would result in many of the targets of the strategy becoming statutory and would give WAG powers to fine Local Authorities that failed to meet the recycling, composting and food targets.

In April 2010 a pilot food waste collection scheme was introduced to approximately 24,000 properties in Flintshire. The pilot scheme had been well received by those residents that had taken part. The overall amount of food waste collected in the first three months was 350 tonnes which was all biodegradable waste that had been diverted from landfill.

Results of a food waste analysis undertaken by MEL Consultants identified that there was approximately 30% of food waste within the black sack that could be captured and diverted from landfill. If the scheme was continued and expanded countywide it would further reduce the amount of waste that was collected by the black sack service. To assist in this transition, it was proposed that the residual waste normally collected in black sacks would be collected in a 140 litre wheeled bin, where operationally possible. In order to provide this service in the most economical way and to ensure the impact on existing employees was minimised, it was considered important to introduce a Managed Weekly Collection Service as food waste collections across the County were rolled out further. This would enable the Authority to divert any spare resources from the weekly black sack service to the expansion of the food waste scheme.

The food waste collection scheme was currently funded from a ring fenced element of the Sustainable Waste Management Grant (SWMG) provided by WAG specifically for food waste diversion and had to be spent before March 2011.

The Director of Environment added that the involvement of Overview and Scrutiny was important and suggested that a Task and Finish Group could be established to assist with a round review of the Council's residual waste collection services.

The Chief Executive updated Members on the approval by WAG Ministers of the North Wales Residual Waste Treatment Project (NWRWTP) Outline Business Case (OBC). WAG would, as part of their ongoing support for these projects, provide a proportion of funding towards the gate fee (up to 25%).

The Executive Member for Environment congratulated the Executive Member for Waste Management and Strategy and officers for the work undertaken and said the refuse collection in Flintshire was one of the best in Wales.

## **RESOLVED**

- (a) That a round review of the Council's waste collection services be supported and approved;

- (b) That expansion of the food waste collection service and introduction of Managed Weekly Collections where operationally possible using wheeled bins be supported and approved; and
- (c) That the involvement of the Environment and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the development of the round review be supported and approved.

**57. FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2010/2011**

The Executive Member for Leisure Services and Public Protection introduced the report which detailed the service delivery programme for the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Food Service Plan 2010/11 be approved and submitted to the County Council for adoption.

**58. COUNCIL TAX HELP FOR PENSIONERS**

The Head of Finance introduced the report which provided information on the continuation of the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) Pensioner Discount Grant Scheme in 2010-11 which provided financial assistance for some pensioners to pay their Council Tax. Replication of the scheme was recommended with the introduction of two further options for the distribution of the Discount Grant for 2010-11.

The report detailed the qualifying criteria for a fixed grant award in 2010-11, which would be credited against Council Tax accounts.

The Council continued its proactive approach in promoting benefit 'take-up'. An amount of £5,000 had been made available from WAG to cover the further administrative costs associated with the implementation of the scheme.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the amended Pensioners Discount Scheme for 2010-11 be adopted;
- (b) That officers be authorised to accept the £164,571 grant from WAG and to administer the grant in line with the proposals detailed seeking an equitable award in the payments made based on a qualifying date and limiting any hardship payments to the same level; and
- (c) That officers inform Members as soon as practicable of the typical grant value once applicant numbers are established on the qualifying date.

**59. EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS**

An information report on the actions taken under delegated powers was submitted.

The actions taken were as set out below:-

Community Services

- Direct Payment Rates for 2010/11
- Temporary re-grade to an existing post of Senior Repair Liaison Officer

Finance

- Write off of Business Rates in June 2010 in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules

Environment

- A5119 Northop – Proposed Puffin Crossing – unresolved objections

**60. DURATION OF MEETING**

The meeting commenced at 9.30a.m. and ended at 10.53a.m.

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

There were 2 members 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**

<b>EXECUTIVE</b>	<b>DATE: 13 JULY 2010</b>
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<b>MEMBER</b>	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>MIN. NO. REFERS</b>
Councillors C. A. Ellis, H. D. Hutchinson and A. Woolley	Number 11 – Food Waste Pilot Scheme Update	56