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Gareth Owens LL.B Barrister/Bargyfreithiwr
Chief Officer (Governance)
Prif Swyddog (Llywodraethu)



To: Cllr David Roney (Chair)

CS/NG

Councillors: Clive Carver, Glenys Diskin,
Chris Dolphin, Ian Dunbar, Andy Dunbobbin,
Brian Dunn, Robin Guest, Ron Hampson,
Dave Mackie, Mike Reece, Tony Sharps,
Paul Shotton, Nigel Steele-Mortimer and
Carolyn Thomas

15 July 2015

Sharon Thomas 01352 702324
sharon.b.thomas@flintshire.gov.uk

Dear Sir / Madam

A meeting of the **ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** will be held in the **DELYN COMMITTEE ROOM, COUNTY HALL, MOLD CH7 6NA** on **TUESDAY, 21ST JULY, 2015** at **2.00 PM** to consider the following items.

Yours faithfully

Democracy & Governance Manager

A G E N D A

- 1 **APOLOGIES**
- 2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**
- 3 **MINUTES** (Pages 3 - 16)
To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on 8 June and 15 June 2015.
- 4 **COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER** (Pages 17 - 22)
Report of Chief Officer (Organisational Change) enclosed.
- 5 **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 23 - 26)
Report of Member Engagement Manager enclosed.

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ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE **8 JUNE 2015**

Minutes of the meeting of the Organisational Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the Flintshire County Council held at County Hall, Mold on Monday, 8 June 2015

PRESENT: Councillor David Roney (Chairman)

Councillors: Clive Carver, Glenys Diskin, Ian Dunbar, Andy Dunbobbin, Brian Dunn, Ron Hampson, Dave Mackie, Mike Reece, Paul Shotton, Nigel Steele-Mortimer, and Carolyn Thomas

ALSO PRESENT: (Initiators of the Call-In who were not Members of the Committee): Councillors: Adele Davies-Cooke, and Alison Halford.
Councillor Nancy Matthews

CONTRIBUTORS:

Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment, Chief Officer (Organisational Change (1)), Chief Officer (Organisational Change (2)), and Principal Libraries and Arts Officer.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Member Engagement Manager and Committee Officer

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

The Member Engagement Manager advised the Committee that Councillor David Roney had been appointed to this role.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee noted the appointment of Chair.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

The Chair sought nominations for the appointment of Vice-Chair for the municipal year. Councillor Nigel Steele-Mortimer nominated Councillor Brian Dunn and the proposal was duly seconded.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Brian Dunn be appointed Vice-Chair for the Municipal year 2015/16.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. CONSIDERATION OF A MATTER REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE PURSUANT TO THE CALL IN ARRANGEMENTS

The Member Engagement Manager explained the procedure for the Call-in of a Cabinet decision.

5. MEDIUM TERM PLAN FOR LIBRARIES – PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP A NEW HUB LIBRARY AT DEESIDE LEISURE CENTRE AND RE-LOCATE HAWARDEN, MANCOT AND QUEENSFERRY LIBRARIES

The Member Engagement Manager referred to the Call-in to the decision of the Cabinet from its meeting held on 19 May 2015 relating to Medium Term Plan for Libraries – proposal to develop a new hub library at Deeside Leisure Centre and re-locate Hawarden, Mancot and Queensferry libraries. The Call-In notice had been signed by five Members of the Council. To assist Members, the following documents had been circulated with the agenda:-

- (a) A copy of the procedure for dealing with a called-in item.
- (b) A copy of the report considered by Cabinet on 19 May 2015
- (c) A copy of the Cabinet Record of Decision No. 3173
- (d) A copy of the Call-in notice signed by Councillors Clive Carver, Alison Halford, Adele Davies-Cooke, Dave Mackie, and Glenys Diskin.

The Member Engagement Manager explained the procedure for a Call-in meeting and detailed the four options available to the Committee.

The Chair invited the Call-in signatories to address the Committee. Councillor Clive Carver, as the first of the signatories, detailed the reasons for the Call-in. He explained that the decision had been called-in as the signatories felt that the Medium Term Plan for libraries did not take into account the impact of the Hawarden and Mancot library closures on the existing and prospective users. The signatories also felt that it did not show the future plans for the Flintshire Record Office which is co-located with Hawarden Library, and did not take into account the closeness of the existing Connah's Quay Hub with the proposed new Hub within the Deeside Leisure Centre.

Councillor Carver outlined his concerns, citing a number of legal precedents and interpretations and expressed the view that the consultation which had taken place regarding the closure of Hawarden, Mancot and Queensferry libraries could not be described as "fair" or as required by law. He said that the face-to-face consultation exercise had only involved a limited number of users at Hawarden library and there had not been a fact finding exercise as required. The same process had been applied to the Mancot and

existing Queensferry library. He said that consultation must take place when the proposal was still at a formative stage.

Councillor Carver referred to the decision taken by Cabinet at the meeting on 19 May 2015 which stated that the Council should work with the three communities to address the concerns raised about the Deeside location, plan community library services for each of these areas and identify if a community asset transfer was feasible and could be supported. He commented that the decision was not helpful as it appeared to request consultation after agreement had been made to the development of a library at Deeside Leisure Centre and re-location of services from Hawarden, Mancot and Queensferry libraries.

Councillor Carver reported that many residents at Hawarden and Mancot had stated that they would experience difficulty travelling to Deeside Leisure Centre. He also referred to the suggestion that a mobile library service be provided for Hawarden as a replacement for the library and said it could not provide a like for like replacement for the existing services and it would be difficult to find a suitable site from where the service could be provided,

Councillor Glenys Diskin raised concerns regarding the difficulty some residents in her Ward had said they would experience in gaining access to Deeside Leisure Centre. She explained that there was a bus service from Mancot to ASDA in Queensferry, however, library users would have to walk to Deeside Leisure Centre which involved crossing a busy main road with a high volume of traffic. She said many of the residents in her Ward were elderly and mothers with young children and they said they would not use the Deeside Leisure Centre as a library. Councillor Diskin said that Mancot community had been offered a mobile library service, however, this would not provide a service for young people who would be at school during the allocated time.

Councillor Adele Davies-Cooke referred to the Welsh Government (WG) requirement concerning library provision in an area. She commented on the services provided by libraries and cited the promotion of literacy, education, Welsh language, information and digital technology, and well-being of the people of Wales, as some examples. She expressed the view that the needs and opinions of the residents of Queensferry, Hawarden and Mancot communities were being ignored.

Councillor Davies-Cooke commented on the WG initiative that every child should be a member of a local library and said that children in school had been issued with a library card so they could gain further access to books from their local library service. She made a comparison between the location of the existing library in Hawarden and its close proximity to a primary school and the location of Deeside Leisure Centre which was not within walking distance for children or elderly people.

Councillor Alison Halford commented that Hawarden and Mancot areas were required by law to have a library service to keep communities together. She said that if the Authority went ahead with the closure of the existing three libraries in Hawarden, Mancot and Queensferry then it was taking no account of community cohesion or provision as a whole. Councillor Halford concurred with the views expressed by Councillor Diskin that many residents, particularly the elderly, vulnerable, and young children, would experience significant difficulty and expense travelling to Deeside Leisure Centre. She also referred to the information reported by Councillor Davies-Cooke that the WG were encouraging children to be a member of their local library. She stated that libraries were intended to give free and equal access to books for everyone. Councillor Halford commented on the finance, management and administration required for a community to set up its own library service and cited the need for an adequate range of stock, booking request systems, and provision and the ongoing maintenance of IT equipment as examples.

Councillor Halford also raised concerns around the future of Flintshire Record Office which was co-located with Hawarden Library and referred to Flintshire's reputation as a centre of excellence in archiving. She expressed concerns around the proposal to develop a new hub library at Deeside Leisure Centre and referred to reduced computer provision, lack of a reading room or study area, a noisy and busy environment, poor parking provision, and self-service facilities. In summing up Councillor Halford acknowledged the current and future financial restraints on the Authority but asked that the decision to develop a library at Deeside Leisure Centre be reconsidered for the reasons she had stated.

Councillor Dave Mackie expressed the view that insufficient thought had been given to the implications for the proposal and that there was a need to consider all the alternative options for the areas concerned. He referred to the cost of providing a new hub library at Deeside Leisure Centre and the need to be certain that the expense was justified. He asked the Committee to consider the areas maps he had provided relating to the provision of library services in the Deeside area. He explained that Hawarden was the third largest community in the County and said it was unacceptable that there was not a hub library in at least the three largest communities.

Councillor Mackie also commented on the application for grant funding from CyMAL which had to be submitted by 9 February 2015 and asked why this matter had not been reported to the meeting of the Lifelong Learning Overview & Scrutiny Committee which had been held on 15 January 2015. In summary Councillor Mackie said that the proposal to develop a new hub library at Deeside Leisure Centre did not add a great deal to the existing provision for library users in Deeside and said that other options should be considered to ensure that funds were spent in the most effective way. He said that there were other buildings in Flintshire, some in the Community Asset Transfer programme, that could be considered under the proposal. He continued that a significant number of library users who had been consulted on the proposal were not in favour of the Deeside Leisure Centre location and emphasised the need for other options to be considered.

The Chair invited the decision makers to respond.

Councillor Aaron Shotton, Leader of the Council, commented that the change was primarily driven by the Authority's current and future financial situation. He referred to the current £50m of savings to be achieved in the next three years and the overall £0.600m savings that were anticipated would be needed in library services. The Leader said that the proposed re-location of the three libraries into a new facility at Deeside Leisure Centre would make a significant saving in terms of building costs and future repairs and maintenance of existing buildings.

The Leader of the Council acknowledged the concerns raised. He commented on the difficult decisions to be made now and in the future and referred to the decisions of the previous Administration which had closed Bagillt, Garden City, and Halkyn libraries during financial pressures without a clear plan as to how residents in those areas would continue to have access to library services. He stated that the proposal to consolidate and re-locate the library services at Hawarden, Mancot and Queensferry was intended to best protect a public library network for Flintshire residents. He advised that Deeside Leisure Centre was also subjected to financial cuts as part of leisure services, however, the Authority still endeavoured to maintain leisure service provision whilst other authorities had chosen to close leisure centres. The Leader also commented on the terms of the CyMAL grant funding which required the need to demonstrate co-location of services.

The Leader of the Council said the Authority would do all it could to support and assist communities coming together to provide services in a sustainable way for the future and cited the possibility of capital one-off funding to provide alternative provision, and community asset transfer as examples of such support. He also commented on the opportunity for all local Community and Town Councils and community groups to express interest in working co-operatively with the Authority to provide a joint solution for community service provision going forward.

In response to the concerns raised by Councillor Clive Carver regarding the consultation exercise, the Chief Officer (Organisational Change) gave an overview of the consultation process. He explained that a full consultation exercise had been undertaken with users, community representatives, young people and the equality assurance group. The outcome of the exercise had been taken to scrutiny for consideration and debate including any petitions and correspondence that had been received. The final proposals had then been submitted to Cabinet and County Council.

The Chief Officer referred to the final option analysis which had identified the preferred option as Option 4, a new library at Deeside Leisure Centre with additional community based services and consideration of the feasibility of a community asset transfer(s).

Councillor Paul Shotton emphasised the need to address the 30% reduction in budget funding for library services which may increase in future years due to further reductions in Government funding. He also commented on the opportunity to make good use of grant funding from CyMAL for Flintshire residents.

Councillor Ian Dunbar spoke in support of the proposal and said he anticipated that the library service would be greatly appreciated and used by visitors using the leisure facilities at Deeside Leisure Centre. He reiterated the views expressed by Councillor Paul Shotton concerning the need to address a 30% reduction in service provision. He also commented on the need to safeguard the leisure service provision in Deeside Leisure Centre.

Councillor Andy Dunbobbin commented on the Gladstone Residential Library in Hawarden which he said was a social enterprise provision.

Councillor Nigel Steele-Mortimer raised concerns around the future of the Flintshire Record Office which co-shared the building with Hawarden Library. He asked what were the plans for the Record Office if Hawarden Library was relocated to Deeside Leisure Centre. Councillor Steele-Mortimer also referred to the area maps provided by Councillor Mackie and said that the existing library provision in Connah's Quay Connects Centre covered almost the same area as Deeside Leisure Centre. He said the facilities in Connah's Quay library were excellent and he saw no reason to establish new and expensive provision in Deeside Leisure Centre.

In response to the concerns raised by Councillor Steele-Mortimer regarding Hawarden Record Office the Leader of the Council explained that the decision making about Hawarden Library was not related to Hawarden Record Office. The Chief Officer (Organisational Change) also responded to the concerns around the Record Office and commented on the issue of sustainable storage facilities which would need to be addressed in the future.

Councillor Carolyn Thomas referred to the closure of the Schools Library Service and commented that there was a reliance on other library services as a result. She expressed a number of concerns around the proposal and reiterated the issues around travel, the elderly, young and vulnerable people. She also commented on the mobile library service and asked how many communities it served. The Chief Officer explained why the Authority had withdrawn from the Schools Library Service. He responded to the further questions and concerns raised by Councillor Thomas and advised that the vision for a sustainable library service in the future was one that provided access to reading, learning, and information. The key elements to achieving this were the buildings, community based services such as mobile services, and where there was interest from local communities locally provided bookstock and IT supported through the Community Asset transfer programme.

Councillor Diskin reiterated her previous comments that the majority of library users in Mancot had informed her they would not wish to use Deeside Leisure Centre to gain access to library services.

Councillor Nancy Matthews expressed her concerns around the proposal to develop a new hub library at Deeside Leisure Centre as she felt it was not the right location. She said the decision to locate the hub at Deeside Leisure Centre should not be influenced by the footfall at the Centre as it attracted visitors from across the country to use its leisure facilities.

The Chair invited Members to sum up.

Councillor Glenys Diskin said she did not agree with the decision that Deeside Leisure Centre was the right location for a new hub library. She welcomed the opportunity for local Town and Community Councils and community groups to work collaboratively with the Authority to explore community based provision and said that this would be given due consideration in the Mancot area.

Councillor Alison Halford also expressed the view that Deeside Leisure Centre was not a suitable location for all users and asked that a further opportunity be given to all stakeholders to find an alternative location.

Councillor Dave Mackie said he had outlined the reasons why he did not agree that Deeside Leisure Centre was the most appropriate location and said that other options should be sought and examined before proceeding with the development of a hub at the Leisure Centre.

Councillor Clive Carver referred to the WLGA legislation concerning consultation.

The Chair invited the decision makers to sum up.

The Leader of the Council asked the Committee to acknowledge the decision which had been made at the meeting of the Cabinet on 19 May 2015. He said there was still the opportunity for further discussions with communities but emphasised that the Authority had to keep within the budget it had set as a Council.

The Member Engagement Manger outlined the Committee's four options for decision.

Councillor Clive Carver proposed Option 4 which was seconded by Councillor Nigel Steele-Mortimer. On being put to the vote the proposal was lost.

Councillor Paul Shotton proposed Option 1 which was seconded by Councillor Ian Dunbar. On being put to the vote the proposal was carried; the decision could be implemented. Councillor Brian Dunn abstained from the vote.

RESOLVED:

That having considered the decision, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee was satisfied with the explanation that it had received and therefore the decision could be implemented.

6. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

There were 11 members of the public and one member of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 1.30pm and ended at 3.25 pm)

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Chairman

ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
15 JUNE 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the Organisational Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the Flintshire County Council held at County Hall, Mold on Monday, 15 June 2015

PRESENT: Councillor David Roney (Chairman)

Councillors: Clive Carver, Glenys Diskin, Chris Dolphin, Andy Dunbobbin, Robin Guest, Ron Hampson, Dave Mackie, Nigel Steele-Mortimer, and Carolyn Thomas

SUBSTITUTIONS: Councillors Richard Lloyd (for Paul Shotton) and Vicky Perfect (for Mike Reece)

CONTRIBUTORS: Cabinet Member for Waste Strategy, Public Protection and Leisure, Chief Officer (Organisational Change (1)), and Chief Officer (Organisational Change (2))

ATTENDANCE: Member Engagement Manager and Committee Services Officer

7. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

8. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE (ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE)

The Member Engagement Manager introduced a report to advise the Committee of its terms of reference. He advised that the creation of the Organisational Change Overview & Scrutiny Committee had simplified reporting lines, however, there was still a small element of shared responsibility as the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee also had a role in the development of Alternative Delivery Models (ADM) and in the overview of the Organisational Design and Change programme.

The Member Engagement Manager took the opportunity to remind Members of the workshop which was to be held on 29 June 2015 on Alternative Delivery Models.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

9. YEAR END IMPROVEMENT PLAN MONITORING REPORT

The Chief Officer (Organisational Change (1)) introduced a report to consider elements of the 2014/15 Year End Improvement Plan Monitoring

Report relevant to the Committee. He advised that the following Improvement Plan sub-priority reports were attached at Appendix 1 and Appendix 2:

- Organisational Change
- Asset Strategy

The Chief Officer advised there were currently no high (Red) risk areas identified within the elements of the Improvement Plan Monitoring Report relevant to the Committee.

The Chief Officer (Organisational Change (1)) reported on the sub-priority report for Organisational Change and referred to structural reviews and alternative models of delivery. He highlighted the areas which had progressed well and areas where the measure had not been achieved as expected. He advised that a further detailed report on Alternative Delivery Models (ADM) would be submitted to the meeting of the Committee to be held on 28 September 2015.

The Chief Officer (Organisational Change (2)) gave an overview of the sub-priority report for Asset Strategy. He reported on work and achievements during 2014/15 and referred to intensive work around the development of Community Asset Transfers. He also commented on the work undertaken to develop and integrate services to achieve a more community based approach and cited the Connects Centre in Connah's Quay as an example. The Chief Officer referred to implementation of the agile and mobile working policy in the Authority which enabled the workforce to work in different areas and referred to the change workspace initiative and the need for scanning and storage of appropriate documentation.

The Chairman invited questions from Members.

Councillor Carolyn Thomas raised questions around the ADM and acknowledging the need to achieve value for money asked if all services areas were being considered by the Authority, citing local service areas such as streetlighting, grass cutting, and play areas as examples. She asked further questions around the Independent Review and the workspace initiative and raised concerns around the retention and storage of records for future reference.

The Chief Officer (Organisational Change (1)) responded to the questions concerning ADM and explained that the aim was to explore the feasibility of providing alternative delivery models that retained as many services and jobs as possible. He commented on the need to work with the Chief Officers and their teams responsible for service delivery to identify what would be possible in terms of protecting services and being more cost efficient; this may or may not require changes to be made. He said a report would be brought back to the Committee to update on progress following the Workshop to be held on 29 June 2015. The Chief Officer also responded to the queries and concerns raised by Councillor Thomas in relation to play areas and asset transfer.

Concerning retention and storage of documentation and records, the Chief Officer (organisational Change (2)) gave an assurance that work would be undertaken sensitively in conjunction with the Council's Archivist to determine what documentation and records needed to be retained by the Authority and for the benefit of Community Groups.

Referring to organisational change Councillor Robin Guest asked what were the projected dates for completing the phase 2 proposals. He referred to the integration of services to achieve a more community based approach and asked what had been done and what could be done to achieve a greater degree of involvement from other public services. The Chief Officer (Organisational Change (2)) explained that some services did adopt a public approach and some did not. He commented on discussions taking place around viability and said there may be a need for a local development plan. He commented that whilst the Authority was working hard to drive discussions forward there had not been a lot of interest back.

Concerning structural reviews of service areas, the Chief Officer (Organisational Change (1)) advised that a number of services took a "top down" approach whilst other services were making changes in service delivery which were bringing about a structural review. In response to the comments and queries raised by Members, the Chief Officer explained that an update on how many structural reviews had been completed across the Authority and what the effects were would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

On the subject of Community Asset Transfer (CATs) the Chief Officer (Organisational Change (1)) said that over 65 expressions of interest had been received for a range of assets and covering all town and community Council areas. A total of six Expressions of Interest had been cleared to proceed to stage 2, Business Modelling and 5 had been passed. In response to Members questions he gave a brief outline of the conversion process and advised that the procedure would be faster in future following changes to the legal proceedings. The Chief Officer (Organisational Change (2)) commented on the organisational planning around asset transfers and gave a brief outline of how the Authority supported the process from expressions of interest to final decision for transfer. The Chief Officer (Organisational Change (1)) said the Authority would encourage Town and Community Councils to discuss with their communities about which assets might be capable of being taken on to sustain for the future and cited play areas and leisure centres as examples.

The Cabinet Member for Waste Strategy, Public Protection and Leisure, commented that there was no assumption that "one size fits all" and said that open discussion and exchange of information was needed to determine what level of interest there was from Town and Community Councils, Community Groups and schools, and what support could be given by the Authority. He expressed the view that the current and future financial

restraints presented a valuable opportunity to explore how services could be provided in the future.

Councillor Dave Mackie expressed a number of concerns around community asset transfers. He commented that half of the Community Councils within the County had fewer than 2000 voters and therefore taking on any additional responsibility would need to be carefully considered. He raised concerns around the loss of expertise and the financial advantage of scale and said that communications were not as good as could be regarding CATs. He expressed the view that the “goal posts were changing” and said that some assets may have been looked at differently if information that was provided later had been made known earlier. The Chief Officer (Organisational Change (1)) acknowledged the comments and explained that the Authority was not seeking to delegate responsibility to Town or Community Councils but wished to encourage discussion and interest from such bodies and community organisations and groups, which may consider taking on an asset with support from the Authority or Town or Community Council. He cited community centres, community buildings, and libraries as being achievable and advised that some local authorities provided a professional service run from a community owned building.

Councillor Chris Dolphin raised concerns around match-funding for play areas and expressed the view that assets and services could be withdrawn or lost altogether if not taken on board by Town and Community Councils or community groups and referred to play areas and buildings as examples.

The Chief Officer (Organisational Change (1)) explained there was a lot of positive interest in CATs. He commented that they could work well and that the Authority supported any firm expressions of interest with the provision of a business model; the process could take between 9 to 12 months.

In response to a further question from Councillor Dolphin concerning developments in relation to Wrexham County Council, the Chief Officer (Organisational Change (2)) said discussions were continuing with Wrexham in line with Ministerial expectations. He commented that Flintshire was more advanced in its programme of CATs than Wrexham.

Councillor Andy Dunbobbin spoke in support of social enterprise which he felt was a positive way to sustain services within the County so that the residents of Flintshire would not lose out. He commented on the assets which were owned by the Authority and let on lease and asked what would happen in this situation. The Chief Officer (Organisational Change (2)) explained that the Authority intended to simplify the leasing process for the future. In response to the further comments made by Councillor Dunbobbin the Chief Officer (Organisational Change (1)) advised that a number of Town and Community Councils were exploring the opportunities for Community Asset Trusts to form bodies to take on assets.

Councillor Richard Lloyd referred to the disposal of farms and asked if the Authority intended to increase the leases on farms. The Chief Officer

(Organisational Change (2)) reported that farm disposals continued to be progressed with some positive movement in sales leading up to the end of the financial year. He stated that overall the Authority's strategy remained consistent in terms of sustaining assets.

Referring to the subject of CATs, Councillor Robin Guest expressed concerns around the increasing financial pressures on Town and Community Councils and said that some contribution from the business rates needed to be considered for the future.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee formally receives the report but that the comments of Members be commended to the Policy & Performance team where necessary.

10. YEAR END CHIEF OFFICER PERFORMANCE REPORTS

The Chief Officer (Organisational Change (1)) introduced a report on the 2014/15 Year end Service Performance Reports produced at Chief Officer level for their respective portfolios. Copies of the detailed Year end Chief Officer Performance reports were attached at Appendix 1 for Organisational Change (1) and Appendix 2 for Organisational Change (2).

Members were invited to raise questions.

Councillor Clive Carver congratulated the Chief Officer (Organisational Change (1) and his team on the Flintshire Record Office achievement as the first archive repository in North Wales to gain accredited status by the National Panel

Councillor Carver commented on the information that parish registers had been sent to DeepStore and expressed concerns that this may prohibit access to them by individuals undertaking research. In his response the Chief Officer (Organisational Change (1) explained that prior to sending to DeepStore records were digitised/microfiched. He advised that the primary records which were of most interest to the public and researchers were retained on site. The Chief Officer said he would provide further information to Councillor Carver concerning which records had been sent to DeepStore.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee formally receives the report but that the comments of Members be commended to the Policy & Performance team where necessary

11. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Member Engagement Manager introduced the Forward Work Programme. He drew attention to the Alternative Delivery Model workshop to be held on 29 June 2015 to which all Members had been invited.

In response to a request from Councillor Carolyn Thomas the . Chief Officer (Organisational Change (1)) agreed to provide further information on the subject of play areas during consideration of the item on Community Asset Transfers which was scheduled on the Programme for the next meeting of the Committee on 21 July 2015.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Forward Work Programme as submitted, with the verbal amendments be approved;
- (b) That the Member Engagement Manager, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-chair be authorised to alter the forward work programme between meetings.

12. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

There were no members of the press or public in attendance.

(The meeting commenced at 10.00am and ended at 11.51am)

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Chairman

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **TUESDAY, 21 JULY 2015**

REPORT BY: **CHIEF OFFICER (ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE)**

SUBJECT: **COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To update Scrutiny on progress in relation to Community Asset Transfers (CATs).

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Council re-launched its approach to the delivery of CATs in November 2014. Public assets owned by Flintshire County Council are one of its major strengths. However, the Council must balance the requirement to dispose of surplus or underutilised assets to provide funding for its' capital programme with the need to regenerate local communities and encourage social enterprise through the alternative use of its building and land assets.

2.02 Under the Local Government Act 1972 General Disposal Consent, Local Authorities have discretion to dispose of surplus property at less than best consideration subject to Member approval (provided that the difference between the prices is less than £2million). This allows for the consideration of bids from Community and Voluntary Groups for Council owned property.

2.03 The public assets owned by Flintshire County Council are one of its major strengths. However, the council must balance the requirement to dispose of surplus or underutilised assets to provide funding for its' capital programme with the need to regenerate local communities and encourage social enterprise through the alternative use of its buildings and land assets.

Asset categories that are appropriate for CATs include:

- Community centres
- Youth centres
- Children's play areas
- Visitors / tourist attractions
- Public toilets
- Street lighting

- Former civic buildings
- Former schools

2.04 Flintshire County Council recognises however that community ownership can play a part in enhancing the local environment and providing opportunities for all sectors of the community. The Council has land and buildings that are used for a variety of community and public purposes. Benefits can include:

- Buildings used more frequently and effectively
- Extra funding opportunities
- Local decision making

2.05 Community Asset Transfers can also help to **promote public value** through:

- Community empowerment
- Encouraging a sustainable voluntary and community sector
- Encouraging social enterprise
- Delivery of corporate priorities
- Value for money

As noted above the process has been significantly overhauled simplified.

2.06 Since the launch of the refreshed CAT process a number of meetings have been undertaken with Town and Community Councils and other interested groups to explain the three stage process. As of the beginning of July 2015 the following EOIs have been processed:-

Number of enquiries = 255
 Expressions of Interest received = 68
 Moving to stage 2 panel July = 2
 Stage 2 panel cleared to date = 5

2.07 In re-launching its CAT strategy the Council and as explained above the Council has sought to simplify its approach and methodology into three basic stages:-

- Stage 1 – Expression of Interest: This can be made by an individual or community group.
- Stage 2 – Business Model Application: This can only be made by a community group and is the formal application stage of this process.
- Stage 3 – Completion and Transfer of Asset: The final stage in the process which will be between the Council and an appropriate organisation.

The guidance notes are located on the Councils website.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 In supporting the delivery of this activity Flintshire has engaged Flintshire Local Voluntary Council (FLVC) to support and lead aspects of this process. They are providing a package of flexible, tailored support delivered by FLVC staff with experience of:

- Community Development
- Third Sector Funding & Finance
- Governance
- Administration
- Charity Management

3.02 Specifically FLVCs role comprises:-

- The Administrative processes for FLVC to log, assess, signpost and report on CAT enquiries
- A team of FLVC staff to provide bespoke support to community groups in the development of potential Community Asset Transfers
- A programme of surgery/workshop-type events tailored to the needs of interested parties (at least one event per month)
- Participation and support for a multi-disciplinary panel to filter Expressions of Interest (EOI's) and assess business plans for due diligence by FCC.
- Bespoke training and support for those groups/organisations who's EOIs have sufficient merit to progress towards a detailed business plan submission.
- Partnerships with existing and potential partner organisations within the sector to provide direct and in-kind support to empower the transferee.
- Monitoring of Expressions of Interest and support for a smooth and efficient transfer process.
- Liaison with FCC to identify potential assets, issues and beneficiary groups.

3.03 The intention is to transfer assets on a 27 year lease to the local community with the Council retaining the freehold interest in the asset. Responsibility for all costs; revenue (running, repair and maintenance costs) and any capital works; would pass to the community. The asset would transfer over at a peppercorn rent, usually £1.

- 3.04 Discussions and information sharing between community groups and officers to date have included current condition surveys of the buildings, asbestos information, building plans and running costs. The intention, as part of the transfer process, is to provide groups with one off capital funding (within defined thresholds) to support the undertaking of work they may wish to carry out on the building, it may also be possible for such groups to use this funding to match other grants the group may be able to lever in and which the Council would not be in a position to access. The intention is to use capital receipts to support this 'pump priming' initiative with approximately £500,000 needed in each of the 2015/16 and 2016/17 financial years.
- 3.05 In considering the role, type size and complex nature of some assets which are currently forming part of the Councils CAT the following financial support thresholds were supported at Cabinet on the 16th June 2015.

Asset Type	Funding allocation per asset type
Sports Pavilions (bowling clubs, cricket clubs etc)	Up to a maximum of £20,000
Community and Youth Centres	Up to a maximum of £50,000
Leisure Centres, Libraries and other complex assets	Subject to negotiation and on a case by case basis

- 3.06 Expenditure that extends the useful life, increases the level of performance, or value an asset can be capitalised.

Illustrative examples:-

- Window replacement. Repair of broken / worn out windows is revenue expenditure. Upgrading a whole buildings windows to make the building more energy efficient and extend its life could be capital.
- Building refurbishment. Works to reverse the decline in an assets useful life or suspend it could also be considered as capital.

- 3.07 The Council's accounting policy includes a de-minims concept (similar to all other Councils) that expenditure under £20,000 will not be capitalised.

- 3.08 When assets are transferring to community groups under CAT with funding, the funding must be more than £20,000 and is given in the form of a capital grant with strict limitations or conditions placed on its use to ensure the Council complies with capital accounting regulations.

3.09 In the context of existing leases and joint interests the Council in progressing a CAT would seek to encourage organisations to work together to develop one business model for the asset transfer of the site or building, however, if this could not be achieved then the CAT scheme would have to consider separate business models. In normal circumstances a priority would be given to an organisation who is the current or most recent leaseholder (effectively the sitting tenant) of the site or building as they have the greatest stake. For any business model to be accepted it would need to show that plans are in place to ensure both current users of the site and stakeholders in the site can be supported through the transfer of the asset.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That Members endorse the approach to Community Asset Transfers.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 A sum of £500,000 will be allocated from the Council's capital programme in the current financial year and also in 2016/17.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 Will support groups within communities in the development of social enterprises and creating community based, focussed and managed facilities.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 Positive in that it seeks to retain local assets within the community.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 Will support groups within communities in the development of community based, focussed and managed activities.

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 Local communities, Town and Community Councils, public sector organisations and other key stakeholders.

11.02 Wales Audit Office

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None

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

Community Asset Transfer located on the County Councils web site.

Contact Officer: Neal Cockerton
Telephone: 01352 703169
Email: neal.cockerton@Flintshire.gov.uk

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **TUESDAY, 21 JULY 2015**

REPORT BY: **MEMBER ENGAGEMENT MANAGER**

SUBJECT: **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Organisational Change Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 Items feed into a Committee's Forward Work Programme from a number of sources. Members can suggest topics for review by Overview & Scrutiny Committees, members of the public can suggest topics, items can be referred by the Cabinet for consultation purposes, or by County Council or Chief Officers. Other possible items are identified from the Cabinet Work Programme and the Strategic Assessment of Risks & Challenges.

2.02 In identifying topics for future consideration, it is useful for a 'test of significance' to be applied. This can be achieved by asking a range of questions as follows:

1. Will the review contribute to the Council's priorities and/or objectives?
2. Are there issues of weak or poor performance?
3. How, where and why were the issues identified?
4. Do local communities think the issues are important and is there any evidence of this? Is there evidence of public dissatisfaction?
5. Is there new Government guidance or legislation?
6. Have inspections been carried out?
7. Is this area already the subject of an ongoing review?

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 Overview & Scrutiny presents a unique opportunity for Members to determine the Forward Work Programme of the Committees of which they are Members. By reviewing and prioritising the Forward Work Programme Members are able to ensure it is Member-led and includes the right issues. A copy of the Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1 for Members' consideration which has been updated following the last meeting.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That the Committee considers the draft Forward Work Programme attached as Appendix 1 and approve/amend as necessary.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 None as a result of this report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None as a result of this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None as a result of this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None as a result of this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None as a result of this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 N/A.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Publication of this report constitutes consultation.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1 – Forward Work Programme

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

None.

Contact Officer: Robert Robins
Telephone: 01352 702320
Email: robert.robins@flintshire.gov.uk

Organisational Change Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Indicative Forward Work Programme 2015/16

DATE	SUBJECT	O&S Focus	REPORT FROM
Monday 29 th June 2015 2.00 p.m. – 4pm	Alternative Delivery Model Workshop (All Members invited)	Information	
Tuesday 21 st July 2015 2.00pm	Community Asset transfer Forward Work Programme		Chief Officer Organisational Change Member Engagement Manager
Monday 28 th September 10.00 a.m.	Clwyd Theatre Cymru (to be confirmed; meeting may be at the theatre and if so, will start with a short tour) Alternative Delivery Model Forward Work Programme	Information Development	CO-OC CO-OC MEM
Monday 2 nd November 2015 10.00 a.m.	Forward Work Programme		
Monday 7 th December 2015 10.00 a.m.	Forward Work Programme		
Monday 11 th January 2016 10.00 a.m.	Forward Work Programme		

Organisational Change Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Indicative Forward Work Programme 2015/16

Friday 15 th January 2016	Budget Consultation meeting		
Friday 26 th January 2016	Budget Consultation meeting		
Monday 15 th February 2016 10.00 a.m.	Forward Work Programme		
Monday 14 th March 2106 10.00 a.m.	Forward Work Programme		
Monday 11 th April 2016 10.00 a.m.	Forward Work Programme		
Monday 16 th May 2016 10.00 a.m.	Forward Work Programme		
Monday 13 th June 2016 10.00 a.m.	Forward Work Programme		
Monday 11 th July 2016 10.00 a.m.	Forward Work Programme		