

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
29 JANUARY 2016

Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Mold on Friday, 29 January 2016

PRESENT: Councillor Clive Carver (Chair)

Councillors: Peter Curtis, Robin Guest, Ron Hampson, Richard Jones, Vicky Perfect, David Roney, Nigel Steele-Mortimer and Arnold Woolley

SUBSTITUTES:

Councillors: Haydn Bateman for Marion Bateman, Ian Dunbar for Andy Dunbobbin and David Healey for Richard Lloyd

ALSO PRESENT (as all Members had been invited to attend)

Councillors: Bernie Attridge, Chris Bithell, Helen Brown, Kevin Jones and Dave Mackie

Education & Youth Overview & Scrutiny Committee Co-optees: Mr David Hytch, Mrs Rebecca Stark and Mr Bernard Stuart

APOLOGIES:

Councillors: Ian Smith, Carolyn Thomas, Derek Butler and Christine Jones

CONTRIBUTORS:

Councillor Aaron Shotton, Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Chief Executive, Chief Officer (Governance) and Finance Manager (Corporate Accounting and Systems)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Member Engagement Manager and Overview & Scrutiny Support Officer

78. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

No declarations of interest were made.

79. COUNCIL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2016/17

The Chair welcomed Members and the contributors to the meeting.

The Chief Executive thanked Members commenting that this was the final Overview & Scrutiny meeting that the Council Fund Revenue Budget would be debated. Following the December mop up session there was only a need to call Overview & Scrutiny back to Education & Youth and Corporate Resources. For Education & Youth it was not because there was new information but the situation in Education & Youth was unclear. For Corporate Resources Stage 1 (situation as at today) with Phase 2 the final proposals to close the 'gap' for report to Cabinet, prior to Council, in February.

Council Fund Revenue Budget 2016/17 Stage One Proposals

The Chief Executive and Finance Manager gave a detailed presentation on the following areas:-

- The budget States, list of Tables to the report and Recommendations to the Committee
- Building Blocks of the Budget
- Initial Budget Forecast
- Budget Stage 1 Phase 1
- Budget Stage 1 Phase 2
- Budget Stage 2
- Ongoing work to balance the Budget
- First Revision of the MTFS 2017/18 Forecast
- MTFS Forecast 2017/18
- Decision making steps
- Closing steps and timetables

Councillor Dave Healey congratulated the Leader and Chief Executive on the “This is our Moment” Public Engagement Events. Focusing on finance he sought clarification on how the savings being made could be communicated to the public.

The Leader responded saying these were the best events Flintshire had held and were a success. There were lessons to be learned, but this was a model to build on, especially when the individual hits on the website were also included. The Chief Executive commented that the feedback from the public events was excellent. He also stressed that many more people had booked to attend than who actually attended.

The comments and responses sheet from the meeting are attached.

RESOLVED:

That the presentation be received and that the Member’s comments and the responses thereto be incorporated into the budget consultation section of the report to Cabinet on 16th February, 2016.

80. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

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

(The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 12.01 pm)

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Chair

2016/17 Budget Consultation**Corporate Resources Overview &Scrutiny Committee – Friday 29th January, 2016 (All Member session)**

Member Comment/Question	Response
Are the proposals still the same?	There are minor variations in the figures but the scale and complications are different this year. Members were referred to the chronology in the report which outlined the structure.
Could a table with two columns - one with the original figures and the other with the new figures with a footnote explaining the changes be prepared?	Details will be distributed. The Chief Executive referred Members to the Appendices to the Report and to the Fact Sheets which had been prepared to assist Members. Further explanations will be sent to Members to clarify.
Clarification was requested on the variations in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lighting Resources • HRC site efficiencies • Bus routes • Cleansing stand • Zero tolerance on littering 	It was emphasised that the complexity and scale was difficult to follow and the figures presented were an indication of the current position. Some of the figures presented to the December meeting had been overstated and some figures were determined too late for that meeting. There had also been a number of versions of the business plans shared with Members which may have caused confusion.
Is there confidence in the figures provided to make savings with the figures?	There is nothing else to be found, based on reasonable risk.
What in capital terms will affect revenue in future year's 17/18 budget – can you point to additional pressures?	21 st Century Schools was a 70/30 split but is now a 50/50 split which is not sustainable by Councils.
At a recent Treasury Management Training session the borrowing requirements of Flintshire were shown to be going up alarmingly in the next few years: will this impact on other services?	This is a housing revenue account issue, not an impact on the general fund budget. Assurance may need to be given on the Council House Subsidy buy out and WHQS delivery. Flintshire is investing in its communities and is confident.
On table 6, new emerging pressures and Leisure income, what is the position for Deeside Ice Rink?	Deeside Ice Rink is within the Community Asset Transfer Programme.
Clarification on the difference between earmarked reserves and un-earmarked	Levels of reserves are reported through Cabinet and CRO&SC on a quarterly basis

reserves is requested	
Levels of reserves: a town council had been advised to have a minimum of 3 months running costs to be kept in reserves, which is a large amount.	Our levels of reserves are recommended by the Wales Audit Office but are around 2 not 25% of revenue.
There is a concern that efficiencies for Flintshire could result in costs being passed on to town/community council which haven't budgeted for them.	Noted
Will further efficiencies still be looked at ahead of the budget	There isn't anything else to be identified at the moment.