

ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
29 MARCH 2016

Minutes of the meeting of the Organisational Change Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held in the Gwernymynydd Village Centre, Ruthin Road, Gwernymynydd, CH7 5ND on Tuesday, 29th March, 2016

PRESENT: Councillor David Roney (Chairman)

Councillors: Chris Dolphin, Ian Dunbar, Andy Dunbobbin, Robin Guest, Dave Mackie, Paul Shotton, and Nigel Steele-Mortimer

SUBSTITUTION: Councillor Adele Davies-Cooke (for Clive Carver)

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors: Veronica Gay

APOLOGIES: Councillors: Bernie Attridge, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Environment, Brian Dunn and Mike Reece.

CONTRIBUTORS: Councillor Kevin Jones, Cabinet Member for Waste Strategy, Public Protection & Leisure; Councillor Chris Bithell, Cabinet Member for Education, Chief Officer (Organisational Change 1), Chief Officer (Organisational Change 2), and Play Development Officer. (For minute no.52: Simon Morgan and Sarah Breeze (Cambrian Aquatics Limited), Councillor Nancy Matthew, Kevin Hughes and Carl Jackson (Gwernymynydd Village Hall Committee), Councillor Sara Parker (Caffi Isa, Mynydd Isa Community Centre and Library) and Ann Woods, Chief Officer, Flintshire Local Voluntary Council (FLVC)

IN ATTENDANCE: Member Engagement Manager and Committee Officer

50. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

The Member Engagement Manager explained that Councillors Nancy Matthews and Sara Parker were in attendance as contributors to the meeting and not in their role as Members of the Council, but that they had both made personal declarations.

51. MINUTES

- (i) The minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2015 were submitted.
- (ii) The minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2016 were submitted.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

52. COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFERS

The Chair introduced a report on the Community Asset Transfer scheme. He explained that it was intended that the views of the current applicants who had been involved in all stages of the scheme and Flintshire Local Voluntary

Council, would be heard in the first instance. Those views and the review of the scheme, as detailed in the report, would then be considered to enable the Committee to finalise its comments on the scheme to formalise a final review.

The Chair welcomed the applicants to the meeting. He introduced Mr. Simon Morgan and Sarah Breeze, Cambrian Aquatics Limited (in relation to Connah's Quay swimming pool), Councillor Nancy Matthews and Mr. Kevin Hughes (Gwernymynydd Village Hall Management Committee, in relation to Gwernymynydd Village Centre), and Councillor Sara Parker (Caffi Isa, in relation to Mynydd Isa Community Centre and Library). The Chair invited each of the applicants to give a brief overview of their projects, their experience of the CAT scheme, and comments on what had worked well and what could be improved to inform future learning.

Mr. Simon Morgan provided verbal feedback concerning the transfer of Connah's Quay swimming pool and explained that he felt there was room for improvement in the following areas:

- liaison with staff at an early stage to resolve Human Resource issues
- clarity on the requirements for a business model/business case
- clarity around legal documents and completions
- the need for some form of initial funding to be provided for set-up costs
- some key elements to be addressed to ensure buildings are in a suitable condition before transfer

Councillor Nancy Matthews and Mr. Kevin Hughes, spoke in relation to Gwernymynydd Village Centre and gave background information and context. Councillor Matthews and Mr. Hughes raised a number of concerns for community groups around the 'hidden costs' regarding the CAT scheme, such as legal fees and responsibilities, and the personal liabilities of the trustees.

Councillor Sara Parker gave a brief overview of her experience in relation to Caffi Isa, Mynydd Isa Community Centre and Library. She explained that her experience had been positive overall and that the project was scheduled to be completed in April 2016. She raised a concern regarding communication to Council staff who are affected by the transfer and making sure it is clear how the community group best communicates with staff during the process.

The Chair thanked the applicants for their presentations and invited Members to raise questions.

Councillor Paul Shotton referred to the financial contribution made by Connah's Quay Town Council to the transfer of Connah's Quay swimming pool and commented on the use of the pool by residents across the whole of Deeside. He asked if other local Town and Community Councils had responded to a request for financial support for the project. Mr. Morgan advised that Cambrian Aquatics Limited had written to all local Town and Community Councils, local industries and organisations, to seek support, however, only one formal response

had been received to date and he urged Members to encourage support from other local Councils to sustain the project. In response to the concerns raised by Councillor Ian Dunbar, Mr. Morgan explained that a meeting had been arranged with Connah's Quay Town Council to be held in April 2016 to update on progress so far.

During discussion Officers responded to the further comments and observations put forward by the Applicants and Members. The Chief Officer (Organisational Change 1) explained that learning had been developing for all stakeholders as the schemes progressed and areas where improvement was required were acknowledged and would be addressed to ensure a "smoother" transition in the future. He advised that a full review of the scheme taking on board the views of the above projects would be completed.

Councillor Chris Dolphin commented on the financial pressures on local Town and Community Councils and referred to the need to consider additional costs in the future through the potential transfer of other community assets from the Authority and cited play areas and village halls/community centres as an example. Councillor Robin Guest concurred with the comments expressed by Councillor Dolphin and emphasised there was a need to lobby for funding from business rates to support Town and Community Councils to take on board community asset transfers from the Authority.

Councillor Robin Guest commented on the need for sustainability and expressed a concern that there could be a risk to the projects if key personnel/board members were unable to continue in their role. The applicants explained the structures and measures in place to ensure no person was solely responsible for any aspect of the project and staff and volunteers had sufficient knowledge and experience to take forward.

The Chair invited Ann Woods, the Chief Officer of Flintshire Local Voluntary Council (FLVC), to present her views on the CAT process. Mrs. Woods explained that her role as representative of the FLVC had been to provide independent support to applicants and help administer the scheme up to stage 3 business planning with the aim of achieving the best possible outcome for the local community.

The Chief Officer (Organisational Change 2) reported on the initial Council review of the scheme, as detailed in the report, and referred to the key considerations around the learning that had developed as the scheme progressed and the areas where further improvement was required.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the views expressed at the meeting by all contributors and the members of the Committee be incorporated into the final first year review of the Community Asset Transfer Scheme; and
- (b) That all who attended the meeting be formally thanked by the Committee for their contributions.

53. PLAY SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT 2016 INCLUDING FUTURE PLANS FOR CONSULTING ON SUMMER PLAY SCHEMES AND PLAY AREAS

The Chief Officer (Organisational Change 1) introduced a report to inform of the summer play scheme programme 2015 and provide information with regard to the financial implications for delivery of the summer playscheme in 2016 and 2017.

The Chief Officer provided background information and advised that the securing of play sufficiency would be about how the Council and its partners strategically planned to remove the barriers that prevented children accessing their right to play. The Play Sufficiency Assessment 2016 aimed to promote inclusion and improve access to play opportunities for all children in the County. The Chief Officer explained that information on the progress made by the Authority on the Play Action Plan 2013-2014 and the revised actions for 2016-17 was appended to the report. He reported that Welsh Government feedback from the Play Sufficiency Assessment had been positive and was also appended to the report.

The Chief Officer invited the Play Development Officer to report on play provision and schemes within the County during 2015. She referred to the three play schemes which were delivered in partnership with Urdd Gobaith Cymru through the medium of Welsh and funded by the Families First grant. The Play Development Officer advised that Welsh Government funding would not be available to support delivery of the Summer play scheme in 2016, although the Council had committed to funding for one year to ensure there are funds available for the delivery of the Summer 2016 programme. Town and Community Councils were asked to consider increasing their contribution and to explore alternative delivery models to sustain the provision of play schemes in their areas. Feedback from Town and Community Councils had indicated that it would be easier if they knew which play areas the Council could continue to provide and which it could not.

Councillor Ian Dunbar spoke of the value of the Quayplay scheme held at Connah's Quay Sports Centre. He commented on the pressure on Town and Community Council budgets due to reduced funding and said it may be difficult to make financial contributions in the future. He asked what assistance and guidance could be provided by the Authority to assist Town and Community Councils to help maintain such schemes going forward. Councillor Kevin Jones and the Chief Officer gave an assurance that the Authority would do everything possible to assist Town and Community Councils and other willing organisations/partnerships to "take on board" play area provision. Councillor Jones and the Chief Officer explained that it was planned to consult with Town and Community Councils around the beginning of May on the core provision that the Council would potentially be able to provide in the future and the number of play areas in each community. The Chief Officer commented that the Authority acknowledged that play was central to the physical and emotional well-being of children and referred to the need to increase opportunities for play within local communities and encourage greater use of the countryside as a more effective way to provide creative play for the future. The Play Development Officer emphasised that children needed time, space and permission to play.

Councillor Robin Guest spoke of the increasing demands on Town and Community Councils “in all directions” as a result of the withdrawal of central funding and said there was a need for Town and Community Councils to know the cost of repairs and maintenance of play areas before engaging in CAT schemes.

Councillor Dave Mackie commented on the location and number of play areas in some communities as opposed to others and also raised concerns around the acts of anti-social behaviour which occurred in some play areas. He said he would like the Authority to review the funding for play areas and play schemes with a view to providing a more widespread and fairer allocation of provision for all local communities. Councillor Mackie also referred to S106 funding and suggested that the funding could be better used to assist play provision and build play areas in communities where there was currently no provision.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Play Sufficiency Assessment and the approach being taken for the future of Summer Play Schemes and the core offer for children’s equipped play areas be endorsed; and
- (b) That the re-establishment of the Strategic Play Forum be supported.

54. 2015/16 Q3 IMPROVEMENT PLAN MONITORING (ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE)

The Member Engagement Manager introduced a report on the monitoring of progress for the third quarter of 2015/16 focusing on the areas of under performance relevant to the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Quarter 3 Improvement Plan Monitoring Report be received.

55. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Member Engagement Manager introduced the Forward Work Programme. He explained that following consultation with the Chair, it was proposed to move the meeting which had been scheduled for 27 April 2016 to Monday, 25 April 2016, to enable key contributors to be present. This was agreed by the Committee.

RESOLVED:

- (a) Approved with additions and the next meeting being held on Monday 25th April at 10.00 a.m.; and
- (b) That the Member Engagement Manager, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair be authorised to vary the work programme between meetings.

56. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

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

(The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 12.30 pm)

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Chairman