

ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
27 NOVEMBER 2017

Minutes of the meeting of the Organisational Change Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held in the Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold on Monday, 27 November 2017

PRESENT: Councillor Dave Mackie (Chairman)

Councillors: Janet Axworthy, Marion Bateman, Sean Bibby, Ian Dunbar, Mared Eastwood, Veronica Gay, Dennis Hutchinson, Mike Reece and David Wisinger

SUBSTITUTES: Councillors: Andy Dunbobbin (for Paul Shotton) and Patrick Heesom (for Brian Lloyd)

APOLOGIES: Councillors: Geoff Collett; Tudor Jones; Billy Mullin, Cabinet Member for Corporate Management; and Ian Roberts, Cabinet Member for Education

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Bernie Attridge attended as an observer. Richard Hayward from Wales Audit Office was also present to observe the meeting as part of the ongoing Overview & Scrutiny review.

CONTRIBUTORS: Councillor Aaron Shotton, Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance; and Chief Officer (Organisational Change)

For minute numbers 25-29

Kate Leonard - Libraries Development Manager, Aura Leisure & Libraries Ltd

IN ATTENDANCE: Community and Education Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Democratic Services Officer

25. OPENING COMMENTS

Councillors Dunbar and Bateman raised concerns on parking availability to attend meetings at County Hall. Councillor Heesom said that this was unacceptable and proposed that the concerns be expressed in writing to the Democratic Services Manager or Chief Executive. This was seconded and supported by the Committee.

In response, Councillor Shotton gave a reminder that the County Hall car park was open to the public and that an Order would be required to reserve spaces.

The Chairman pointed out that ample parking was available in the Theatr Clwyd lower tier car park.

Councillor Hutchinson questioned the time of the meeting as he had only taken on the role on the Committee on the basis of morning meetings which were convenient to him. The Facilitator advised that the time had not changed from that in the Diary of Meetings which had been approved by all Members in May

and that the Committee generally met at 10am where possible. Councillor Dunbobbin pointed out that Members' views would be sought on the Committee's pattern of future meetings as part of a later agenda item.

Councillor Hutchinson asked that consideration be given to a suggestion made at a previous meeting on whether outside space near the committee rooms could be used as parking spaces for Members attending meetings.

RESOLVED:

That the Facilitator write to the Democratic Services Manager and Chief Executive to express the concerns raised by some Members on parking availability for meetings.

26. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were received.

27. MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 25 September and 9 October 2017 were submitted.

RESOLVED:

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

28. COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND COMMUNITY BENEFITS STRATEGY

The Chief Officer (Organisational Change) presented the report which gave an overview of the work being done to build on previous work to grow the social sector through social enterprise development.

Achievements on Community Asset Transfers (CATs) and Alternative Delivery Models (ADMs) had helped to strengthen the social sector and community resilience. This was supported by the work of the Public Services Board whose draft Well-being plan included a range of initiatives for the development of the sub-priority 'Resilient Communities' under the 'Connected Council' priority within the Council Plan. The Community Benefits Strategy, recently approved by Cabinet, set out the benefits that could be used in all types of procurement contracts and was a tool to assess the level of benefit delivered by an organisation.

Councillor Shotton said that the report was wide-ranging and that the projects listed were linked to ambitions within the Council Plan. The success of work to date had helped to build capacity and further development would help to encourage community ownership and promote local spend. The achievements of social enterprise initiatives in Merseyside were an example where the Council could extract learning to the benefit of its local economy.

Councillor Hutchinson commended the running of Buckley library and leisure centre by Aura Leisure & Libraries. In response to queries, explanation was given on issues including progress with the CAT for Buckley community centre to accommodate different groups and support available through the 'Amser Babi Cymraeg' social enterprise.

The success of the CAT programme was welcomed by Councillor Dunbar. On questions raised, the Chief Officer spoke about building community resilience and skill sets as part of area based work previously supported by Communities First. He also provided details of the partnerships within the Public Services Board.

In response to comments on Community Share initiatives in other parts of the UK, Councillor Shotton said that the principles of procurement with local firms was amongst the Council's ambitions. The Community Benefits Strategy incorporated certain aims that linked to those of Communities First but did not replace that programme which had been phased out by Welsh Government.

The Chairman welcomed the Council's efforts to do the best it could to continue with work in those areas.

Councillor Heesom said that whilst he supported any mechanism for managing pressures on social services, he did not feel that the area based work would reduce demand on those services. In response to further comments, Councillor Shotton explained that some of the themes behind Community Shares were about community ownership models of delivery. Reducing demand on social services was part of the strategy, for example the 'Toe to Toe' community organisation which offered an affordable, accessible service in helping to prevent ongoing health issues.

The Chief Officer explained that on procurement contracts, the objective was for contractors to demonstrate value for money and deliver realistic community benefits.

Councillor Dunbobbin cited one of the largest independent co-operatives in Spain as a positive example of social enterprise.

Officers noted a request by the Chairman to refrain from using bullet-points and ticks in appendices. His proposal that the Committee support the recommendations was seconded and agreed.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee supports the overall approach to developing Community Resilience; and
- (b) That the Committee supports the draft Community Benefits Strategy and the approach to implementation of this Strategy.

29. WELSH PUBLIC LIBRARY STANDARDS: REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE 2016/17

The Chief Officer (Organisational Change) presented a report on the review of Flintshire's performance of the library service in 2016/17 against the against the Welsh Public Library Standards (WPLS).

Kate Leonard, the Libraries Development Manager, provided an overview of performance which had improved from the previous year. She summarised achievements on the Core Entitlements and Quality Indicators, providing explanation on those which had not been met in full, as detailed in the report. There had been a continued focus on improving performance and the filling of vacant posts would have a positive impact on the following year. The Annual Assessment Report noted the achievements of the service in maintaining performance during the period of change but also the importance of ongoing investment. The Manager advised that the prospect of further reductions would present a risk in the operation and resilience of the service.

Councillor Dunbar commended the success of the Deeside library and Wi-Fi provision across libraries.

In response to questions, it was explained that two new library managers had been recruited and that the team restructure earlier in the year had created a new tier to support career progression. On the future direction of the service, it was clarified that the continuation of the 10% reduction in overall funding from the Council was part of the existing business plan.

When asked by Councillor Gay about the future of the mobile library service, the Manager advised that a new vehicle would shortly be in use. Members were encouraged to contact the library manager if they had any specific requirements for the mobile library service.

The Chairman proposed that the Committee welcome that performance had been maintained and the progress of delivery against the WPLS.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee welcome that performance had been maintained and the progress of delivery against the Welsh Public Library Standards.

30. COUNCIL PLAN 2017/18 MID YEAR MONITORING

The Chief Officer presented the report to consider progress towards the delivery of the impacts set out in the 2017/18 Council Plan, focussing on the areas of under-performance relevant to the Committee at the mid-year stage.

The only performance indicator with a red status was on the percentage of community benefit clauses in new procurement contracts under £1m. The strategy had been changed to reflect a lower threshold, as approved by Cabinet in October, and the impact of this would be seen at a later stage.

RESOLVED:

That the Council Plan 2017/18 mid-year monitoring report be noted.

31. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Facilitator presented the current Forward Work Programme for consideration and sought views on the meeting pattern for the Committee, in line with the request by the Constitution & Democratic Services Committee.

As some Members had left the meeting earlier, Councillor Wisinger proposed that the request be considered at the next meeting to seek views from the full membership. This was duly seconded. The Facilitator confirmed that this would still enable feedback to be given to the Constitution & Democratic Services Committee in January.

Councillor Axworthy referred to Councillor Hutchinson's comments earlier in the meeting and spoke in support of morning meetings due to the availability of parking.

The Chairman proposed that the Committee continue to meet on Mondays at 10am, with occasional afternoon meetings scheduled where required. This was seconded and on being put to the vote, was carried.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Forward Work Programme as submitted, be approved;
- (b) That the Committee would prefer to continue to meet on Mondays at 10am, with occasional afternoon meetings where required; and
- (c) That the Facilitator, in consultation with the Chairman, be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, should this be necessary.

32. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

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

(The meeting started at 2pm and ended at 3.20pm)

.....
Chairman