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Contact Officer:
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To: Cllr Rita Johnson (Chair)

Councillors: Glyn Banks, Marion Bateman, Chris Bithell, Clive Carver, Bob Connah, Jean Davies, Rob Davies, Ian Dunbar, David Healey, Joe Johnson, Ted Palmer, Mike Peers, Michelle Perfect, Neville Phillips, Paul Shotton, Ian Smith, David Williams, David Wisinger and Arnold Woolley
(+ 1 vacancy Independent group)

15 June 2018

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Constitution and Democratic Services Committee which will be held at 2.00 pm on Thursday, 21st June, 2018 in the Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold CH7 6NA to consider the following items

A G E N D A

1 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

Purpose: To appoint a Vice-Chair for the Committee.

2 APOLOGIES

Purpose: To receive any apologies.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

Purpose: To receive any Declarations and advise Members accordingly.

4 MINUTES (Pages 3 - 10)

Purpose: To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 26th April 2018.

5 **EXTENDING THE CARE FIRST SCHEME TO COUNTY COUNCILLORS**
(Pages 11 - 16)

Purpose: To inform the Committee of the Care First service which is being extended to provide support to Members.

6 **CALL IN DURING THE BUDGET PROCESS** (Pages 17 - 20)

Purpose: To consider whether to impose any limitations on the use of call in during the budget setting process.

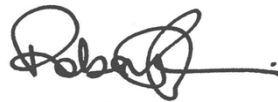
7 **AUDIT AND OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY LIAISON GROUP** (Pages 21 - 24)

Purpose: To inform the committee of arrangements for liaison between the Audit and Overview & Scrutiny functions

8 **MEMBER DEVELOPMENT UPDATES** (Pages 25 - 28)

Purpose: To inform the committee of recent and forthcoming Member development events and initiatives.

Yours sincerely



Robert Robins
Democratic Services Manager

CONSTITUTION AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE **26TH APRIL 2018**

Minutes of the meeting of the Constitution and Democratic Services Committee of Flintshire County Council held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Mold on Thursday, 26th April 2018.

PRESENT: Councillor Rita Johnson (Chair)

Councillors: Glyn Banks, Marion Bateman, Clive Carver, Rob Davies, Ian Dunbar, Joe Johnson, Mike Peers, Michelle Perfect, Neville Phillips, Paul Shotton, Ian Smith, David Williams and David Wisinger.

SUBSTITUTES: Councillors Patrick Heesom for Arnold Woolley and Christine Jones for Chris Bithell.

APOLOGIES: Councillors: Dave Healey and Ted Palmer.

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive, Chief Officer (Governance), Democratic Services Manager and Team Leader – Committee Services.

22. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were received.

23. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 31st January 2018 were submitted and confirmed as a correct record.

Matters Arising

Councillor Peers asked for an update on his proposal that new Members of the Planning Committee should attend their first few meetings as observers to help them to participate at further meetings. The Democratic Services Manager explained that the suggestion had been submitted to the Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) for consideration by the Planning Strategy Group.

RESOLVED:

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

24. BUDGET CONSULTATION PROCESS

The Democratic Services Manager introduced the report which provided feedback from Members and officers in developing the new approach for the budget consultation process. Member consultation feedback was appended to the report, as was a proposed staged budget process flow chart. An amended form of words for insertion into section 16 of the Constitution was recommended in the report.

Following the consultation with Members, a set of requirements and responses/comments were outlined in the report which had been used to inform the proposed flow chart. The flow chart was also based on the 2018/19 approach but it was not prescriptive; the flow chart demonstrated a three stage process but dependent on circumstances, a two or four stage process could also be adopted.

The proposed wording for the Constitution was:

Based on good practice and the need for efficiency, the Council had developed a staged Budget Process, as illustrated in the flow chart. This is not prescriptive; between two and four stages would be equally reasonable, depending on the circumstances in different years. At each stage, there is four weeks available for consultation, both on an individual member basis and through one of the six Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Time is made available for individual Members and Overview and Scrutiny Committees to ask for additional information, up to and including a final deadline which will be set out at the start of the process.

At the end of the consultation, Cabinet will draw up firm proposals, having regard to the responses to the consultation. Any report to Council will reflect comments made by consultees and the Cabinet's response. Overview and Scrutiny Committees may also prepare a response direct to Council for a non-executive decision, such as the Budget. Throughout the process, up to the deadline which will be determined on an annual basis, the Council's statutory officers will be available to guide and assist Members who wish to explore alternative proposals.

The Chief Executive explained that a lot of work had been undertaken on possible options to inform the flow chart. He said the budget process for 2019/20 had already commenced with a report to Cabinet earlier that week on the projected budget gap. Following the budget process the previous year, an early meeting with head teachers and Chairs of Governors had been arranged to take place the following week to consider budget scenarios. Following an Income Generation Workshop where Members were challenging, work was now underway on options. He referred to items such as Tracking Budget Efficiency and the Income Strategy which had already been placed on the forward work programme for Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee to track outcomes.

Councillor Dunbar commented on the efficiencies that had been achieved over recent years but emphasised the Council was now dependent on help from National Government and Welsh Government (WG). He supported the recommendations in the report and welcomed the flow chart. He said discussions with Group Leaders were essential so that they could report back to their respective groups. Councillor Shotton concurred with those views and said the process the previous year enabled all Councillors to be part of the transparent process.

Councillor Carver said the process the previous year had worked well. However, because the Council was dependent on the final settlement from WG close to the end of the budget process, he asked whether there would still be an opportunity to hold extra meetings if they were needed. The Chief Executive said the provisional settlement, which was received in October, was reliable except for information on

specific grants. WG would be approached formally by May with the Council's budget forecast. It was possible to hold additional meetings if and when they were required.

The Democratic Services Manager commented on the contribution Councillor Peers had made to the budget process proposals and the gap analysis example he had provided which had been passed on to colleagues in Finance. On the requirements, he asked members of the Committee to consider number 19 'We need to establish whether the use of call-in should be limited to non-Budget items, especially where a consultation item has already been to an Overview and Scrutiny Committee'.

Councillor Heesom said questions needed to be asked as to how the Council found itself in the position of setting a Council Tax rise as it did the previous year. The proposed flow chart provided Members with the opportunity to participate in an informed manner; however he felt that at stage one the previous year a "curtain had been brought down" which resulted in Members not being able to revisit stage one options. He also said that Members may have differing views and it was important to be able to compare levels of expenditure from one portfolio to another; he felt more focus was needed at stage 1 and base budgets.

The Chief Executive challenged the comment on Council Tax – tax setting had been a decision of whole Council. On the staged approach it was not the case that Members could not revisit stages or defer options to a later stage. Stage one would provide a set of options for individual service portfolios. Those particular proposals were then "locked down" only once agreed, so that implementation planning could begin at an early stage. Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee received Risk Assessments for their related portfolios and were invited to agree options for their portfolio. For 2019/20 options would be put forward at stage one and once those were agreed at County Council they would not be able to be revisited. However, that did not mean that other options could not be considered; if options needed further consideration they could move into stage two of the budget.

Councillor Peers agreed that the flow chart illustrated the process including key significant dates. He felt that requirements 3 and 24 conflicted with each other and on number 7, he concurred with Councillor Heesom that stage one did appear to close down when Members were trying to be helpful and find further efficiencies in an aim to close the budget gap. He also commented on, and welcomed, numbers 18, 19 and 22. On the proposed wording for the Constitution, he suggested that the words "or query proposals" be added after "additional information" in the first paragraph. Whilst he would have liked to see the gap analysis referred to in the report, he welcomed that it had been forwarded to the Finance team. On income and expenditure, he suggested a breakdown for each portfolio. He felt that stage one on the flow chart would benefit from some narrative and a Gantt chart with timescales and dependencies. The Chief Executive explained that numbers 3 and 24 were not the same; number 3 was information required by Members and advice on specifics before carrying out their own analysis. Number 24 was about before a decision was being reached but the wording could be amended to be clearer. These two inclusions needed to be clarified in the written form. He reiterated that each stage did not result in closing down further options. On breakdowns for each portfolio, he explained that this work was carried out as a strategic risk exercise.

Councillor Wisinger commented on the budget consultation events that had taken place over previous years which helped to convey the message to the public on the financial situation that the Council faced. The Chief Executive explained that press and social media work contributed to those events and referred again to the early consultation that had commenced the previous week with the meeting with head teachers and Chairs of Governors.

Councillor Shotton concurred with the earlier remark from Councillor Carver on the importance of funding being made available to Council's at the earliest opportunity. The Chief Executive said better forecasting at WG would help the Council to forecast and suggested that a future report could be submitted to Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the number of late underspend allocations by WG that had occurred in 2017/18.

Councillor Carver suggested that the meeting of Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee that was held in December, to which all Members were invited to, could be webcast which was supported. Councillors Johnson and Perfect spoke about the popularity of Facebook live which could be explored as an additional tool to show meetings live via social media.

Councillor Heesom suggested that a further report be brought back to the next meeting of Constitution and Democratic Services Committee on requirement 19 "we need to establish whether the use of call-in should be limited to non-Budget items, especially where a consultation item has already been to an Overview and Scrutiny Committee" which was supported. Councillor Peers suggested a pre call-in meeting could be added into the flow chart which would establish why the call-in had been requested and enable officers to consider whether all of the required information had been provided previously. If it had been then a call-in would not be required. He also suggested that the call-in deadline could be extended to enable the pre call-in meeting to be built into the timetable. The Chief Executive reiterated that if something was not concluded at stage one, it could be set back into stage two of the process for further work and review rather than hold a call-in meeting.

It was also agreed that following the comments made at the meeting a revised version of the report would be made available at the County Council meeting the following week.

Councillor Banks commented on the public consultation events which he felt were not cost effective; he suggested that a "question time" event could be arranged.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That subject to a further report on call-ins, the staged budget process as outlined in the flow chart be approved for budget consultation purposes;
- (b) That a report be submitted to the next meeting of Constitution and Democratic Services Committee on the call-in process;
- (c) That the December meeting of the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to which all Members are invited, be webcast;

- (d) That the words in requirement 24 be amended to read “Members must recognise the need to await professional officer advice/guidance before moving to a decision”;
- (e) That section 16 of the Constitution be amended to the suggested wording in the report, including the additional words “or query proposals” in the first paragraph after the words “additional information”; and
- (f) That the report be submitted to the County Council meeting on 1st May 2018 for budget consultation purposes.

25. INFORMATION SHARING WITHIN THE COUNCIL

The Chief Officer (Governance) introduced the report on information sharing within the Council. At the Committee meeting in November it had been agreed that a working group would be established to draw up fresh guidance on how to share information within the Council.

The working group, chaired by Councillor Marion Bateman, met twice in December 2017 and drew up draft guidelines which had been shared with officers and Members in consultation. The results of that work were a set of principles relating to how and when the Council would share information in its internal communications. If approved by County Council the guidelines would be inserted into the Constitution.

At the working group meetings a number of principles were approved. A number of scenarios were also considered which looked at sharing information from a number of different perspectives such as a Councillor speaking to an officer, a Councillor speaking to another Councillor or a Councillor speaking to a constituent.

The principles and examples were then subject to consultation with officers and an all Member workshop. The principles were broadly supported during the process through a few improvements were made and the final document was appended to the report.

The Chief Officer reinforced the importance of what information could be shared and provided details of consequences that could be faced from under or over sharing information. The report would be submitted to County Council on 1st May 2018.

The Chief Executive thanked everybody who had been involved in the process for their contributions and said that as well as the principles being included in the Constitution, they would also be disseminated amongst officers so that they were properly understood.

Councillor Heesom thanked the Chief Officer for the report which was welcomed. The Chief Officer added thanks to the Democratic Services Manager and the Information Governance Manager for their contributions. Councillor Bateman also expressed her thanks, as Chair of the working group, to the officers for their advice and the Members for their contributions.

Councillor Williams said the process should not end at this point and further discussions should take place with officers on the decision making process. The Chief Officer responded that proactivity was an important point.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the guidelines be recommended to County Council for adoption into the Constitution; and
- (b) That the members of the working group be thanked for their work.

26. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

The Democratic Services Manager presented the Member Development Update report and explained that following the local elections the previous year an Induction Programme was designed to provide new and returning Members with essential knowledge to function effectively as a Councillor.

Regular update reports on progress on the Member Development events would be reported to the Constitution and Democratic Services Committee. In addition, if Members had any suggestions for future Member Development events they could contact the Democratic Services Manager.

Events that had taken place since the previous meeting were:

- Well-being of Future Generations Act Workshop – 8th February 2018
- Health and Safety for Councillors – 15th March 2018
- Planning Inspectorate Training – 9th April 2018
- Review of the Council's subsidies for Public Transport Workshop – 11th April 2018
- Information Sharing Principles Workshop – 16th April 2018
- Income Generation Workshop – 18th April 2018

Forthcoming workshops were:

- Council Plan – 29th May 2018
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) briefing – June 2018
- Performance Monitoring Workshop – July 2018

Following the rollout of Domestic Violence Awareness training for staff, it was also proposed that this be offered to Members. Similarly with the "Look at Me" campaign which was an awareness training session on Autism Spectrum Disorder.

In response to a comment from Councillor Smith, the Chief Executive said that if he was unable to attend a training session that he was interested in, officers could provide a condensed one to one session for him. He confirmed that the Welsh Language sessions that staff were invited to attend were also open to Members.

Councillor Christine Jones suggested Corporate Parenting training which was welcomed by the Democratic Services Manager.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the progress with Member Development events be noted; and
- (b) That suggestions for future Member Development events be discussed with the Democratic Services Manager.

27. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

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

(The meeting started at 2pm and ended at 3.42pm)

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Chair

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CONSTITUTION & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

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| Date of Meeting | Thursday 21 st June 2018 |
| Report Subject | Extending the Care first scheme to County Councillors |
| Cabinet Member | Cabinet Member for Corporate Management & Assets |
| Report Author | Democratic Services Manager and Senior Manager- Human Resources & Organisational Development. |
| Type of Report | Operational |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Carefirst Service was introduced for Flintshire County Council employees in April 2017. Whilst County Councillors are not employees, they are part of the County Council and it is reasonable from a well-being perspective to extend access of the service to them.

The committee is invited to consider whether the Carefirst service, available to employees should be made available to County Councillors.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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| 1 | That the Committee agrees that the Carefirst service, available to employees, should also be made available to County Councillors |
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REPORT DETAILS

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| 1.00 | EXPLAINING CARE FIRST SCHEME |
| 1.01 | The Health and Wellbeing of our employees is key to delivering a diverse range of services across all areas of the County. With ever increasing pressures at work and home, there are times when we all need some extra support to balance the demands of everyday life. With this in mind the Council recently launched an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) provided by Care First. This programme is intended to complement the service available from Occupational Health. |

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| 1.02 | <p>Who are Carefirst?</p> <p>Carefirst are an independent provider of professional employee support services. Carefirst employ professionally qualified Counsellors and Information Specialists, who are experienced in helping people to deal with all kinds of practical and emotional issues such as Wellbeing, family matters, relationships, debt management, workplace issues, and much more.</p> |
| 1.03 | <p>The service is free of charge for members of staff and they do not need to speak to their manager first to be able to use Care first, they just need to call 0800 174319 and they can speak to a professional counsellor or information specialist <u>in confidence</u>. Care first is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year and is accessible by phone or online.</p> |
| 1.04 | <p>What can the service be used for? Care first is designed to individuals with a wide range of work, family and personal issues. From work-life balance to childcare information, relationships to workplace issues, health and well-being, let your EAP support you on the issues that affect all of us at some point in our lives. Topics include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Work-life balance · Relationships · Childcare information · Health and well-being · Debt · Disability and illness · Careers · Bereavement and loss · Stress · Elder care information · Life events · Immigration · Anxiety and depression · Family issues · Bullying and harassment · Education · Consumer rights · Workplace pressure |
| 1.05 | <p>Is it confidential? Yes. We will not be advised who accesses the service without the explicit consent of the individual or an individual personally chooses to tell someone about their contact with Carefirst.</p> |
| 1.06 | <p>Whilst councillors are not council employees, they are part of the Council and so it is reasonable that the organisation provides appropriate help and support where it is able. All of the topics identified above can become a concern for councillors as well as for staff.</p> |
| 1.07 | <p>The Carefirst service can be extended to councillors for a modest cost as part of our existing contract - £1.76 per head. This is an annual flat rate payment and does not alter based on usage.</p> |

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| 2.00 | RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS |
| 2.01 | £123.20, based on 70 councillors at £1.76 each. |

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| 3.00 | CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT |
| 3.01 | None. |

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| 4.00 | RISK MANAGEMENT |
| 4.01 | None. The extension of the Carefirst service to councillors reduces enhances the existing provision across the organisation. |

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| 5.00 | APPENDICES |
| 5.01 | Carefirst leaflet |

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| 6.00 | LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS |
| 6.01 | None Contact Officer: Robert Robins, Democratic Services Manager Telephone: 01352 702320 E-mail: robert.robins@flintshire.gov.uk |

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| 7.00 | GLOSSARY OF TERMS |
| 7.01 | EAP – Employee Assistance Programme Carefirst: the independent provider of professional employee support services which is contracted to the Council. |

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Care first

Welcome to Care first, an acknowledged leader in the provision of Employee Assistance Solutions. We have a proven track record improving staff wellbeing, performance and attendance through active partnership with managers, Human Resources and Occupational Health.

The Care first brand is synonymous with innovation, transparency, integrity and quality

All calls are answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in the UK.

In our counseling centre in the UK, all counselling is provided by BACP accredited counsellors.

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| 24/7 UK Based Counselling Centre | All freephone calls are answered 24 hours of every day by BACP accredited counsellors from within the UK. |
| 24/7 Telephone Counselling Support | Following an initial assessment, professional counselling support is available, in the moment, or as contracted sessions 24 hours of every day. |
| Information Specialist Access | Care first Information Specialists are experienced former Citizens Advice specialists who can quickly provide accurate information on problems such as: Financial and Legal Advice, Consumer Issues, Eldercare, Childcare, Employment and Benefits |
| Face to Face Counselling | Available within 5 days of the initial contact and within 20 miles of the employee's home or place of work. Each employee has access to, up to 4 or 6 sessions of face to face counselling per issue. Counselling is available in Welsh if required |
| Welsh Speaking Counsellors | Telephone counselling is available in Welsh using Care first's language line translation service. Face to face counselling will be offered in Welsh. |
| Online Counselling | Real time online counselling in a one to one chatroom environment |
| Online CBT | A seven session, video based and therapist supported, online programme |
| Care first <i>Zest</i> | Interactive health, wellbeing and fitness management programme. Available online, or as an iOS, Android or Blackberry App |
| Care first <i>Lifestyle</i> | A comprehensive online health and wellbeing library portal which focuses on supporting all areas of an individual's life, including: Relationships, Family, Bereavement, Change, Stress, Conflict, Promotion, Retirement, Depression, Stress, Smoking and Diet |
| Critical and Traumatic Incident Support | Immediately available by telephone, onsite response can be arranged as required. |
| Professional Launch Programme | A successful launch is the first step in establishing a new EAP as a valued, trusted and recognised service. The key goals of the launch are to establish: Awareness, Confidence, Trust, Understanding and Access |
| Marketing and Awareness Material | A leaflet will be provided for each employee. Care first will also provide, articles, newsletters and e-marketing for intranet and staff magazines, posters/flyers, Care first DVDs and Webinars |
| Dedicated Service Manager | Your launch, reporting and day to day service management will be provided by one dedicated single point of contact. |

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CONSTITUTION & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

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|------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Date of Meeting | Thursday 21 st June 2018 |
| Report Subject | Call In During the Budget Process |
| Report Author | Chief Officer (Governance) |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At its meeting on April 2018, the Committee recommended adoption of a revised process for considering and approving the Council's annual budget. As part of the debate on that process, Members asked that further consideration be given to how the call in process should work in respect of Cabinet decisions on budget reports and whether any limitations should be placed on the use of call in.

There are procedural requirements for validly requesting a call in (e.g. it must be requested within 5 working days of the publication of the decision being challenged). Cabinet can expressly declare a decision to be urgent and thus exempt from call in (this is done extremely rarely and as a safeguard must have the agreement of the Chair of Council). However there are no other limits or restrictions on the use of call in e.g. it is possible to call in a decision that has already been considered by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee ("OSC").

A range of options exist for placing limits on call in such as:

- 1) prohibiting call in for budget decisions; or
- 2) limiting call in to issues that have not already been considered by an OSC; or
- 3) limiting call in to stages 1 and 2 of the new budget process so that the final 3rd stage cannot be delayed

The new budget process allows Members to consider proposals at All Member workshops and at OSC at each of the 3 stages. If a Member is concerned about a budget proposal at stages 1 or 2, then it can be deferred for further/more detailed consideration in a later stage. This should be sufficient to enable detailed scrutiny of proposals, though at times it is not always clear what the full implications of a decision will be (especially when considering the potential cumulative impact).

Ultimately, it is a matter for Councillors to decide whether to submit a call in request. The system is to some extent "self-policing" and OSCs are quick to reject any call in that is perceived to lack merit.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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| 1 | That the Committee recommends to Council the option it prefers in relation to call in. |
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REPORT DETAILS

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| 1.00 | AVAILABLE OPTIONS FOR RESTRICTING CALL IN |
| 1.01 | At its meeting on April 2018 the Committee recommended adoption a revised process for considering and approving the Council's annual budget. As part of the debate on that process members asked that further consideration be given to how the call in process should work in respect of budget reports and whether any limitations should be placed on the use of call in. |
| 1.02 | <p>At present the procedural requirements for a call in are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) only executive (Cabinet) decisions can be called in;2) 4 members or the chair of an OSC must sign a call in notice; and3) a call in must be requested within 5 working days of the Cabinet record of decisions being published. <p>In addition, Cabinet can expressly declare a decision to be urgent and thus exempt from call in but this is done extremely rarely.</p> |
| 1.03 | There are no other limits or restrictions on the use of call in e.g. it is possible to call in a decision that has already been considered by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee ("OSC"). Members were seeking possible options on how to prevent the call in of issues that had already been considered in full by an OSC. This had come out from the consultation on proposed changes which was undertaken in March. |
| 1.04 | <p>A range of options exist for placing limits on call in such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) prohibiting call in for any budget decision by Cabinet – under the new budget process OSCs get at least 3 opportunities to consider budget proposals over a period stretching from June/July to February. That is sufficient time for very detailed scrutiny and might be felt to be adequate; or2) limiting call in to issues that have not already been considered by an OSC – this option prevents repetitious call ins (or the strategic use of a call in to delay a budget proposal). This option most closely meets the concerns of Members. For such a limitation to work either the Monitoring Officer or the Head of Democratic Services would need to determine whether the issue had already been considered; or3) limiting call in to stages 1 and 2 of the new budget process so that the final 3rd stage cannot be delayed – if the Council fails to set its budget by the 1 March each year then the publication, and thus payment, of council tax bills is delayed. 3rd stage proposals are usually considered shortly before the Council agrees the budget and any delay could be costly. |

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| 1.05 | Each of these options would, of course, have the effect of limiting the ability of OSC's to consider some of the most important decisions taken by councillors. |
| 1.06 | Given the length and opportunity for detailed scrutiny under the new budget process, it is likely that issues will be fully considered by an OSC. During the budget setting process for 2018/2019 there was, however, an example of where important aspects of a budget proposal had not been considered until a call in was submitted. Call ins can therefore be seen as a useful fail safe. Further OSCs are swift to dismiss call ins that are perceived to have been submitted without merit. |

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| 2.00 | RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS |
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| 2.01 | <p>The purpose of the revised budget setting process was to enable the early approval and implementation of acceptable budget proposals. By agreeing proposals well ahead of the financial year to which the budget relates the Council has been able to make savings in the current financial year and has also increased its achievement of budget efficiencies to the target level of 95%.</p> <p>Also as noted in the body of the report, delay in deciding the Council's budget can delay despatch of council tax bills. The printers operate in slots or "windows" when specific jobs are undertaken. If a job is not ready for its specific window then it can be some time before another window becomes available.</p> |
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| 3.00 | CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT |
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| 3.01 | The Committee's recommendations will be reported to Council for approval. |
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| 4.00 | RISK MANAGEMENT |
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| 4.01 | These are addressed within the body of the report. |
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| 5.00 | APPENDICES |
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| 5.01 | None. |
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| 6.00 | LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS |
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| 6.01 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Report of the Democratic Services Manager to the Constitution & Democratic Services Committee, 31st January 2018 – Budget Process, together with resultant minute. 2. Report of the Chief Executive, Chief Officer (Governance) and Democratic Services Manager to the Constitution & Democratic Services |
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| | <p>Committee 26th April, together with resultant minute. 3. Report of the Chief Officer Governance to the Annual Meeting of Council, 1st May 2018.</p> <p>Contact Officer: Gareth Owens, Chief Officer (Governance) Telephone: 01352 702344 E-mail: gareth.legal@flintshire.gov.uk</p> |
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| 7.00 | GLOSSARY OF TERMS |
| 7.01 | <p>Call In – a process for suspending the implementation of an executive decision until it has been considered by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>Executive Decision – a decision made by Cabinet, a Cabinet member or a Committee or joint Committee of Cabinet.</p> |



CONSTITUTION & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

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|------------------------|--|
| Date of Meeting | Thursday, 21 June 2018 |
| Report Subject | Audit and Overview & Scrutiny Liaison Group |
| Cabinet Member | Cabinet Member for Corporate Management & Assets |
| Report Author | Democratic Services Manager & Internal Audit Manager |
| Type of Report | Operational |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following a meeting between officers from Internal Audit and Overview & Scrutiny, it was agreed that there is considerable merit in now resurrecting the liaison meeting approach, with the Chair and Vice-chair of Audit committee and each of the six Overview & Scrutiny committees being invited to attend, alongside officers from both teams. Meetings would be scheduled to take place on a quarterly basis and would ensure that issues of interest to both Audit and Overview & Scrutiny – such as the management of strategic risk - are properly dealt with.

The committee is asked to support this initiative.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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| 1 | That the committee supports regular meeting of the Audit and Overview & Scrutiny chairs and appropriate officers. |
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REPORT DETAILS

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| 1.00 | EXPLAINING THE NEED FOR A LIAISON GROUP. |
| 1.01 | The County Council has operated with six Overview & Scrutiny Committees and an Audit Committee for some considerable time. The respective roles of both functions are detailed in the Council's Constitution. |
| 1.02 | As Members will be aware, Overview and Scrutiny Committees are powerful |

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| | committees that can contribute to the development of Council policies and also hold the Cabinet to account for its decisions. Another key part of the Overview and Scrutiny role is to review existing policies, consider proposals for new policies and suggest new policies. |
| 1.03 | Overview and Scrutiny should be carried out in a constructive way and should aim to contribute to the delivery of efficient and effective services that meet the needs and aspirations of local inhabitants. Overview and Scrutiny Committees should not shy away from the need to challenge and question decisions and make constructive criticism. |
| 1.04 | The Overview & Scrutiny committees are concerned with pre and post decision scrutiny of Cabinet decisions (including call in); contributing to policy development and review; and carrying out elements of external scrutiny. The six committees cover the entire range of the County Council's functions. |
| 1.05 | The Audit committee is concerned with reviewing the effectiveness of the Authority's systems of corporate governance, internal control and risk management systems making reports and recommendations to the County Council on the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements. It oversees the reporting of the statutory financial statements process to ensure the balance, transparency and integrity of published financial information, and reviews the financial statements prepared by the authority and recommends them to County Council. |
| 1.06 | The Audit Committee also monitors the performance and effectiveness of the internal and external audit functions within the wider regulatory context; and reviews and scrutinises the County Council's financial affairs, making reports and recommendations on them. The role of the committee is to assure the budgetary control systems of the Council rather than the scrutiny of the use and value for money of expenditure which is the role of the respective Overview and Scrutiny Committees. |
| 1.07 | Until 2012, there was an Overview & Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee, with the Chair of the Audit Committee as a co-optee, thus providing useful linkages and reduction in duplication. Subsequently we have operated liaison between both functions with ad hoc meetings involving the Audit Chair and Overview & Scrutiny Chairs. |
| 1.08 | The 2018/19 Budget has involved some significant risk issues such as car park charges, introduction of garden waste charges and the costs of out of county placements. This has prompted Officers from the Internal Audit and Overview & Scrutiny teams to consider how best to ensure that strategic risks are properly considered by the Overview & Scrutiny committees and that the Audit Committee is assured that the process has sufficient controls therein. |
| 1.09 | There is considerable merit in our now resurrecting the liaison meeting approach, with the Chair and Vice-chair of Audit committee and each of the six Overview & Scrutiny committees being invited to attend, alongside officers from both teams. We envisage meetings being scheduled to take place on a quarterly basis if there is business to transact. |

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| 2.00 | RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS |
| 2.01 | Minimal resources are required and more effective liaison is a business efficiency. |

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| 3.00 | CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT |
| 3.01 | Chairs of Audit and Overview & Scrutiny committees. |

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| 4.00 | RISK MANAGEMENT |
| 4.01 | The creation of the liaison group effective risk management |

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| 5.00 | APPENDICES |
| 5.01 | None. |

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| 6.00 | LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS |
| 6.01 | None. Contact Officer: Robert Robins, Democratic Services Manager Telephone: 01352 702320 E-mail: robert.robins@flintshire.gov . |

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| 7.00 | GLOSSARY OF TERMS |
| 7.01 | Corporate Governance: the system by which local authorities direct and control their functions and relate to their communities. It is founded on the basic principles of openness and inclusivity, integrity and accountability together with the overarching concept of leadership. It is an inter-related system that brings together the underlying set of legislative requirements, governance principles and management processes. |

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CONSTITUTION & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

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| Date of Meeting | Thursday 21 st June 2018 |
| Report Subject | Member Development Update |
| Cabinet Member | Cabinet Member for Corporate Management & Assets |
| Report Author | Democratic Services Manager |
| Type of Report | Operational |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following last year's elections, our Induction Programme was designed to provide new and returning Members with essential knowledge to function effectively as Councillors. At previous meetings of this committee, a progress report on the Member Development events which had been organised subsequently was submitted.

It is the intention to provide a similar update to each meeting of this committee. In addition, if Members have any suggestions for future Member Development, they are invited to contact the Democratic Services Manager to discuss them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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| 1 | That the Committee notes the progress with Member Development events since the last report. |
| 2 | That if Members have any suggestions for future Member Development they are invited to contact the Democratic Services Manager to discuss them. |

REPORT DETAILS

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| 1.00 | EXPLAINING OUR APPROACH TO MEMBER DEVELOPMENT |
| 1.01 | Following last year's elections, we had an Induction Programme. At previous meetings of the committee, a progress report on the Member Development events which had been organised subsequently was submitted. It is the intention to provide a similar update to each meeting of this committee. |

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| 1.02 | <p>Since the last meeting on 26th April, we have held the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 22nd May 6pm – 8pm Second All Member Workshop - Countrywide Review of FCC Subsidies for Public Transport (9 attendees) • Tuesday, 29th May 2pm -5pm Council Plan and Target Setting Workshop (35 attendees) • Tuesday, 12th June 2pm- 5pm North Wales Economic Growth Vision and Strategy and the Growth Bid Deal Workshop (18) attendees) • Tuesday, 12th June 5.30 -7.00 Role of the Planning Inspectorate in relation to appeals and the production of the Local Development Plan. (Second session, for those unable to attend the 9th April session) (5 attendees) |
| 1.03 | <p>We have organised the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday, 10th July 2pm- 5pm Understanding Performance Monitoring workshop • Friday, 13th July 10.30 am- 1pm First Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget 2019/20 workshop • Thursday, 19th July 10am - 12pm General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) briefing • Monday, 23rd July 2pm -5pm Second Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget 2019/20 workshop • Tuesday, 18th September 2pm -5pm Third Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget 2019/20 workshop. |
| 1.04 | <p>Members at a meeting of Social & Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee have asked that training on Domestic Violence Awareness be made available to Councillors. The Welsh Government had required all staff to undertake an e - learning package. This is being adapted to be made available to Members and will be available soon.</p> |
| 1.05 | <p>At the previous meeting of the committee, Cllr Christine Jones, Cabinet Member for Social Services suggested that a Corporate Parenting workshop would be worthwhile. This is being arranged to take place in September and will also include a presentation on Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) awareness.</p> |
| 1.06 | <p>Members are also reminded that in addition to the Welsh language training offered through Coleg Cambria, they are welcome to participate in the staff lunchtime Welsh Conversation Group, which meets on Wednesdays.</p> |

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| 1.07 | There are two new members on the Audit Committee. They have both received the appropriate training at sessions held on 16 th & 24 th May. |
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| 2.00 | RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS |
| 2.01 | There is a small training budget which can be accessed if necessary: most development sessions are provided using the Council's own officers. |

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| 3.00 | CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT |
| 3.01 | None |

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| 4.00 | RISK MANAGEMENT |
| 4.01 | The provision of information through workshops and briefings contributes to effective risk management. |

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| 5.00 | APPENDICES |
| 5.01 | None. |

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| 6.00 | LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS |
| 6.01 | <p>Reports of the Democratic Services Manager on the Induction Process and Member Development to the Constitution & Democratic Services Committee at the 25th October 2017, 31st January 2018 and 26th April meetings and associated minutes.</p> <p>Contact Officer: Robert Robins, Democratic Services Manager Telephone: 01352 702320 E-mail: robert.robins@flintshire.gov.</p> |

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| 7.00 | GLOSSARY OF TERMS |
| 7.01 | None |

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