

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
25 SEPTEMBER, 2012

Minutes of the Meeting of Flintshire County Council held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Mold on Tuesday 25 September, 2012

PRESENT: Councillor A. Minshull (Chair)

Councillors: L.A. Aldridge, J.B. Attridge, G. Banks, G.H. Bateman, M. Bateman, R.C. Bithell, A. Bragg, H. Brown, C.S. Carver, D.L. Cox, R. Davies, A. Davies-Cooke, A.G. Diskin, R. Dolphin, C.A. Ellis, D. Evans, E.F. Evans, J.E. Falshaw, V. Gay, R.J.T. Guest, A.M. Halford, R.G. Hampson, G. Hardcastle, C. Hinds, H.T. Howorth, R. Hughes, H.D. Hutchinson, H.T. Isherwood, C.M. Jones, R.K. Jones, R.B. Jones, S. Jones, R. Lloyd, M. Lowe, R.P. Macfarlane, D.I. Mackie, N.M. Matthews, H.J. McGuill, W. Mullin, M.J. Peers, N. Phillips, M.A. Reece, I.B. Roberts, A.P. Shotton, P. Shotton, I. Smith, N.R. Steele-Mortimer, C.A. Thomas, W.O. Thomas, D.E. Wisinger and A. Woolley

APOLOGIES:

Chief Executive and Councillors: D. Butler, P.J. Curtis, G.D. Diskin, C.J. Dolphin, I. Dunbar, P.G. Heesom, J. Johnson, R. Johnson, C. Legg, P. Lightfoot, B. Lloyd, H.G. Roberts, L.A. Sharps, D.T. Williams, S. Williams and M.G. Wright

IN ATTENDANCE:

Director of Environment, Director of Lifelong Learning, Director of Community Services, Head of Finance, Democracy and Governance Manager, Planning Strategy Manager, Member Engagement Manager and Committee Officers

Ms. Amanda Hughes and Mr. John Herniman of Wales Audit Office for minute number 71

61. PRESENTATIONS

The Chair welcomed Jade Jones, Bev Jones, Amy Brierly and Scott Robertson to the Council Chamber. She congratulated them on their recent achievements at the Olympic and Paralympics games and how proud the residents of Flintshire had been with regard to their achievements. She commented on the Gold Medal won by Jade Jones in Taekwondo at the Olympic Games and the Bronze Medal won by Bev Jones in Discus at the Paralympics Games. She said that it had been an honour to have met each of the athletes and wished them all well in the future.

Councillor A.P. Shotton, Leader of the Council also congratulated the athletes on their achievements and for taking part in one of the most successful Olympic Games. He commented on the careers of Scott Robertson and Bev Jones, the achievement of Jade Jones, which would be marked with the re-naming of the Flint Pavilion in due course and the achievement of Amy Brierly. He said that he would be following the progress

of each of the athletes in the future and said that all Members were proud of them.

A number of Members congratulated the athletes and their families and commented on their achievements prior to and during the Olympic and Paralympics Games. All Members said that they were proud of what the athletes had done for Flintshire and said that they would continue to follow their progress in the future.

The Chair presented a plaque and bouquet of flowers to each of the athletes. Following the presentation there was a 10 minute adjournment to allow for photographs to be taken.

Following the adjournment the meeting resumed at 3.20 p.m.

62. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Democracy and Governance Manager confirmed that no questions had been received.

63. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Members declared a personal interest in agenda item number 12: Clwyd Pension Fund Update:-

Councillors: J.B. Attridge, R.C. Bithell, A. Bragg, C.A. Ellis, D. Evans, E.F. Evans, C. Hinds, R.K. Jones, S. Jones, N.M. Matthews, H.J. McGuill, A.P. Shotton, I. Smith and W.O. Thomas

Councillor R.C. Bithell declared a personal interest in agenda item number 7: Notice of Motion. Councillor R.J.T. Guest had given notice of a similar interest and had left the meeting following minute 61.

64. CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Chair explained that details of her communications had not been made available to Members as the previous County Council meeting had recently been held on 11 September, 2012.

65. PETITIONS

Councillor R. Dolphin submitted a petition against the eviction of a resident at Trinity Road, Greenfield.

Councillor H.T. Howorth submitted a petition regarding the conditions of Plas Pen Y Glyn, Flint Mountain.

Councillor J.B. Attridge asked that his thanks be passed to the Streetscene Team who had been working tirelessly during the recent bad weather ensuring the safety of the residents of Flintshire. His comments were

echoed by a number of Members who praised the efforts of the teams who had been helpful and courteous.

66. NOTICE OF MOTION

The following Notice of motion had been received from Councillor A. Woolley:-

'That this Council should recommend to the Executive Committee that the Executive Committee should grant the Board of Trustees of the Daniel Owen Community Centre Association, a new 25 year Lease on the Daniel Owen Centre Building that they presently occupy, in order that they may themselves take steps to secure available funding for necessary improvements to the buildings and facilities within it, so as to better secure the future of the building and the several and varied community supportive activities that are provided on a daily basis at and within the Centre.'

In speaking to his motion, Councillor Woolley commented on the varied community supportive activities that were provided on a daily basis at and within the Centre. He asked that Members support the motion to enable the Daniel Owen Community Centre Association to access available funding to make necessary improvements. This was seconded by Councillor H.T. Isherwood who also spoke in support of the motion.

Councillor A.P. Shotton, Leader of the Council spoke in support of the motion and said that he was aware of many organisations who in recent years had been seeking the support of the Council in order to secure available funding for necessary improvements; therefore he had requested a report on Community Asset Transfers which would be presented to Cabinet on 16 October, 2012. The report would detail ways in which the Council could be pro-active and ensure appropriate policies were in place to deal with future requests. Councillor J.B. Attridge supported these comments and said that together with the Leader of the Council he had visited the Daniel Owen Centre to see first hand the varied community support within the centre.

Councillor R.B. Bithell said that he had been a member of the Daniel Owen Community Centre Association for 16 years and thanked Councillor Woolley for bringing the motion to the Council. He outlined a number of improvements which were necessary at the centre and looked forward to the report to be presented to Cabinet in October, 2012.

Councillor Woolley, in summing up, thanked the Leader of the Council for his comments and said that the report to be presented to Cabinet would assist many organisations in the future.

RESOLVED:

That the Council recommend to the Executive that the Executive should grant the Board of Trustees of the Daniel Owen Community Centre Association, a new 25 year Lease on the Daniel Owen Centre Building that they presently

occupy, in order that they may themselves take steps to secure available funding for necessary improvements to the buildings and facilities within it, so as to better secure the future of the building and the several and varied community supportive activities that are provided on a daily basis at and within the Centre.'

67. QUESTIONS

The Democracy and Governance Manager confirmed that no questions had been received.

68. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS ON COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Democracy and Governance Manager confirmed that no questions had been received.

69. CHANGE IN ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chair announced that there would be a change to the order of business and that agenda item number 11 would be considered before agenda item number 10 at the request of the representatives from the Wales Audit Office.

70. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The Democracy and Governance Manager introduced the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) and explained that the preparation of the draft AGS had been co-ordinated by the Corporate Governance Working Group who had reported to the Chief Executive, the Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer on its work. Details of the core membership of the Corporate Governance Working Group were provided in Appendix 1 of the report.

The Democracy and Governance Manager drew Members attention to pages 113 to 127 of the agenda which detailed the Annual Governance Statement part of the Statement of Accounts 2011/12.

Councillor R.C. Bithell suggested that a bullet point be added before the words 'Planning Protocol Working Group' at the bottom of page 120 of the agenda. The Head of Finance confirmed that this amendment would be carried out following the meeting.

Councillor W. Mullin proposed that the County Council approve the Annual Governance Statement and this was seconded by Councillor J.B. Attridge.

RESOLVED:

That the Annual Governance Statement be approved.

71. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2011/12

The Head of Finance introduced the Statement of Accounts 2011/12, together with the Wales Audit Office (WAO) reports in connection with the audit of the 2011/12 financial statements for Flintshire County Council and the Clwyd Pension Fund.

The Director of Environment introduced Mr. John Herniman and Ms. Amanda Hughes of the Wales Audit Office to the meeting.

Mr. Herniman confirmed that there were no further issues, additional to the report, which needed to be brought to the attention of Members. He advised that although an unqualified opinion would be issued, a query on Communities First had been raised by a member of the public and as a result the audit closure certificate could not be issued until the query had been reviewed. He explained that there had been a long and detailed consideration of this agenda item at the Audit Committee earlier in the day. Members attentions were drawn to the following areas of the report:-

- Uncorrected and corrected misstatements
- A new fixed asset software system
- Style and format of the Statements of Accounts 2011/12
- Pension contributions on equal pay settlements
- Members declaring related party interests

The Head of Finance said that the points raised by the WOA had been accepted by management and would be dealt with accordingly in future years.

Councillor A.M. Halford, as Chair of the Audit Committee, proposed that the County Council approve the recommendations as set out within the report. In seconding this proposal, Councillor C.S. Carver commented on the ten Members who had failed to submit details of related party transactions and asked if they were being chased for this information. He also asked for clarification and a breakdown on the transactions with Anglesey County Council as detailed in the report and also for details on the officer who had been placed in the remuneration band £160,000 - £164,000.

The Head of Finance explained that the table for officers' remuneration included details of consultants who had been employed for a short period of time but if they had been employed over a 12 month period their salary would have amounted to between £160,000 and £164,000. This was not the amount that was paid to the consultant. She also explained that there was a 'chasing up' system in place to chase Members for details of related party transactions but this would be improved in the future.

Councillor A.P. Shotton, Leader of the Council explained that there were a number of transactions between the Council and other North Wales Authorities. The reason the transactions for Anglesey County Council had been included in the Statement of Accounts was because one of the Commissioners was a Flintshire County Council Member. Councillor L.A.

Aldridge raised concern around the wording of this information and asked that it be made clear that the transaction did not relate to his salary as one of the Commissioners. The Head of Finance apologised for the confusion and confirmed that this paragraph would be reworded.

In response to a question on the Clwyd Pension Fund Accounts, the Head of Finance confirmed that she would provide Members with further information on the impact the reduced yields and inflation expectations would have on the Clwyd Pension Fund liabilities, in particular the impact on schools, following the meeting.

In response to a question on exit packages and rent arrears, the Head of Finance said that a further breakdown of the total cost attributed to exit packages could be provided to Members following the meeting. Rent arrears would continue to be considered and monitored by the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Halford, in summing up, commented on the work of the Audit Committee and confirmed that a number of issues raised by the Committee would continue to be considered and monitored. She thanked the Members of the Committee for their hard work and also the lay-member, Mr. Paul Williams for his contribution during the meetings. She suggested that the definition of an officer be made clearer within the Statement of Accounts and this suggestion was supported by Members.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the final Statement of Accounts for 2011/12 be approved;
- (b) That the Letter of Representation – Flintshire County Council be approved;
- (c) That the Letter of Representation – Clwyd Pension Fund be approved;
- (d) That the wording of the paragraph relating to transactions with Anglesey County Council be amended as discussed; and
- (e) That the definition of an officer be made clearer within the Statement of Accounts 2011/12.

72. CLWYD PENSION FUND UPDATE

The Head of Finance introduced an update on the following issues relating to the Clwyd Pension Fund:-

- Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) 2012
- Auto-enrolment
- Welsh Pension Fund collaboration
- Financial Update
- Medium Term Plan

Councillor A.G. Diskin thanked the Head of Finance and Head of Pensions and Funds for preparing the report and proposed that the County Council note the update. This was seconded by Councillor G.H. Bateman.

Councillor W.O. Thomas asked if consideration had been given to collaborating with neighbouring Local Authorities. The Head of Finance explained that Pension Officers from across the eight Welsh Pension Funds were contributing to the Outline Business Case which would provide details on the optimal number of LGPS funds in Wales and the most appropriate organisational structure. A further update would be provided to Members in due course.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

73. SYCHDYN DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

The Planning Strategy Manager introduced the Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) relating to a development brief for the UPD housing allocation HSG1(38) Former Sewage Works, Wats Dyke Way, now renamed Land off Ffordd Eldon, Sychdyn.

The SPG had been drafted in consultation with Councillor M. Bateman as the Local Member and in line with the advice of the Welsh Government (WG). The representations received on the brief during the consultation and the responses were shown as appendices to the guidance attached to the report.

Councillor J.B. Attridge proposed that the County Council support the recommendations as detailed within the report and this was seconded by Councillor R.C. Bithell.

In response to a question on the density of the development, the Planning Strategy Manager explained that the within the community there was a perceived need for bungalows in order for local persons to downsize therefore the density outlined within the SPG would be used as a guide when considering future applications on this site.

Councillor M. Bateman thanked the Planning Strategy Manager and his team for the work they had undertaken in developing the SPG and for taking on board the comments of residents during the consultation process.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Council approve the Supplementary Planning Guidance shown in Appendix 1 of the report, relating to guidance for the development of UDP housing allocation HSG1(38) Land off Ffordd

Eldon, as Supplementary Guidance for use as a material planning consideration in determining planning applications; and

- (b) That the Council give the Director of Environment delegated authority, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment, to format (and where necessary typographically correct) the wording of the Supplementary Planning Guidance into the appropriate house style for subsequent publication.

74. DURATION OF MEETING

The meeting commenced at 2.30 p.m. and ended at 4.33 p.m.

75. ATTENDANCE BY MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were five members of the press and ten members of the public present.

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Chair