

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

DATE: TUESDAY, 19 FEBRUARY 2013

REPORT BY: DEMOCRACY & GOVERNANCE MANAGER

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF INTERNAL MEMBER FORA

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To consider recommendations from the Constitution Committee as part of the ongoing review of internal Member fora.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 At the Annual Council meeting on the 15 May the Head of Legal & Democratic Services' report on constitutional matters included a section on internal member bodies. It explained that in the light of the recent implementation of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 and at the start of a new Council it was an opportune time to review the various internal member bodies. The Council agreed to the recommendation that the review be undertaken by the Head of Legal & Democratic Services in consultation with Group Leaders and reports submitted to the Constitution Committee and Council. It also agreed that pending the outcome of the review the existing internal bodies be retained.

2.02 Most of the internal member fora are undertaking or advising upon executive functions which are the responsibility of Flintshire's Cabinet. In relation to such member fora, any Council decision can only be a recommendation to the Cabinet who have the final decision on whether such member fora should continue or not. Attached as appendix 1 is a list of the internal member fora, including a column indicating whether or not each forum is discharging an Executive or Council function and a column indicating the recommendation of the Constitution Committee.

2.03 The review covers those internal member fora that have been established for an indefinite period rather than those set up to deal with a specific task which automatically ends once that task has been completed. The review therefore, does not include any task and finish working groups set up by Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

- 2.04 At the Constitution Committee meeting on the 24 July it was agreed that the following information should be obtained for each internal body:
- a) the membership
 - b) the terms of reference or function
 - c) the frequency of meetings
 - d) the view of the relevant senior officer as to whether the body should continue or not and the reason for this view
 - e) for those internal bodies that relate to executive functions, to obtain the view as to whether the body should continue from the appropriate Cabinet member
 - f) the view of the chair of each forum
- 2.05 Following consideration by Group Leaders and Constitution Committee the first report to County Council on this was to the 13 November 2012 meeting. This report deals with the remaining member fora considered by Group Leaders on the 29 January 2013 and Constitution Committee on the 30 January 2013.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.01 All internal member fora require resources from both members and officers in terms of preparation, attendance and actioning outcomes. The review may identify that whilst a member forum is discharging a valuable function there is a more efficient way of doing so that is less resource intensive.
- 3.02 Whilst some internal fora served a valuable role when they were initially established, with the passage of time the need for that role may have diminished. There may for instance have been a change in legislation or policy that reduces the need for a particular member forum. Whilst new member fora are periodically created to meet new legislation or new policies, there needs to be a periodic review of existing fora to ensure that they are still needed and are an efficient way of discharging their role.
- 3.03 There was consensus at the Group Leaders meeting and at the Constitution Committee meeting that the following fora should continue.
- The Joint Consultative Committee
 - The School Performance Monitoring Group
 - The Member/Officer Tenant Working
 - The Voluntary Sector Grants Panel
 - The Inclusion Service Steering Group
 - The Welsh in Education Strategic Forum
 - The Foster Care Panel
 - The Children's Forum
 - The Adoption Panel

- The Health & Safety Board
- 3.04 There was also a consensus at Group Leaders and at the Constitution Committee that the following should discontinue:-
- The Waste Strategy Review Board
 - The Procurement Board
 - There was the same consensus that the Teachers Consultative Committee should be combined with the Flintshire County Council Teachers' Consultative Committee and for the combined body to cover all education staff not just teachers.
- 3.05 In relation to the Planning Delegations Body, this received specific consideration at the Group Leaders meeting on the 29 January 2013. There was agreement that the body should be discontinued if either of two options made by Members during the meeting were put in place. Following consultation with the Head of Planning the option of Planning and Development Control Committee papers being available to Members a week before the meeting was the more practicable of the two options. This option was agreed by the Constitution Committee and for the Planning Delegations Body to discontinue.
- 3.06 In considering the ICT Panel, both Group Leaders and Constitution Committee agreed that it should be reconstituted as suggested by the Head of ICT to have high level officer/elected Member representation with terms of reference to shape the direction of the service and help direct resource allocation and investment to support the organisation as a whole. At the Constitution Committee whilst agreeing to the planned reconstitution it resolved that more detail be provided of this at the next meeting of the County Council. This is to be provided at the meeting.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 For the Planning Delegations Body to be discontinued.
- 4.02 For Planning and Development Control Committee papers to be made available to Members a week in advance of committee meetings.
- 4.03 To recommend to Cabinet that the ICT Panel be reconstituted.
- 4.04 To recommend to Cabinet that the Waste Strategy Review Board and the Procurement Board be discontinued.
- 4.05 To recommend to Cabinet that the following fora continue.
- The Joint Consultative Committee
 - The School Performance Monitoring Group
 - The Member/Officer Tenant Working
 - The Voluntary Sector Grants Panel
 - The Inclusion Service Steering Group
 - The Welsh in Education Strategic Forum

- The Foster Care Panel
- The Children's Forum
- The Adoption Panel
- The Health & Safety Board

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 A reduction in member fora will result in some savings that are difficult to quantify.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None as a result of this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None as a result of this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None as a result of this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 A reduction in member fora may lead to some reallocation of duties.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Group Leaders and Constitution Committee

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Group Leaders and Constitution Committee

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1 - List of member fora

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Report of the Head of Legal & Democratic Services to Council meeting 15 May 2011 on constitutional matters

Minute of Council meeting 15 May 2011 relating to internal bodies

Report to Constitution Committee meeting 30 January 2013

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