

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: CABINET

DATE: TUESDAY, 19 MARCH 2013

REPORT BY: HEAD OF LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF INTERNAL MEMBER FORA

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To consider recommendations from Constitution Committee and County Council to conclude the 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. He 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 a 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

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 its meeting on the 20 November 2012 the Cabinet received a report on the first group of member fora that had been considered by Group Leaders, Constitution Committee and County Council. This report is dealing with the remaining group of fora that have been considered by Group Leaders at a meeting on the 29 January 2013, Constitution Committee at its meeting on the 30 January 2013 and Council on the

19 February 2013. Attached to this report as appendix 1 is a list of the executive function member fora remaining within the review, together with information in relation to them.

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, at the Constitution Committee meeting and at County Council that the following fora should continue:-
- The Joint Consultative Committee
 - The School Performance Monitoring Group
 - The Member/Officer Tenant Working Group
 - 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, Constitution Committee and Council that the following should discontinue:-
- The Waste Strategy Review Board
 - The Procurement Board
- 3.05 There was also a consensus at Group Leaders, Constitution Committee and Council 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.
- 3.06 In considering the ICT Panel, Constitution Committee and County Council agreed that it should be reconstituted. The Constitution Committee asked for more details of the membership and terms of

reference and the details shown in appendix 2 were provided to the committee members prior to the Council meeting on the 19 February 2013. Council recommended retaining the Group and reconstituting its terms of reference.

- 3.07 Further discussion has taken place between officers and the portfolio holder since the Council meeting on 19 February. In particular we have looked at whether the revised terms of reference sufficiently take into account changes in practice that have occurred since the ICT Panel last met. Since that time the level of reporting to the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet itself has increased and both of those member bodies now have an oversight of the ICT Strategy with regular update reports. In an effort to reduce duplication particularly for Members, it would on balance be better if the ICT Panel were disbanded. If, however, Cabinet concurs with the recommendation from Council then clearly the terms of reference set out in Appendix 2 could be used in order to reconstitute that panel.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 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
- 4.02 That the following should discontinue:-
- The Waste Strategy Review Board
 - The Procurement Board
- 4.03 That the following be reconstituted:-
- To combine the Teachers' Consultative Committee and the Flintshire County Council Teachers' Consultative Committee to cover all education staff, not just teachers.
 - To reconstitute the ICT Panel as shown in appendix 2.
- 4.04 That on balance the ICT Panel should be disbanded.

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, Constitution Committee and County Council.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Group Leaders, Constitution Committee and County Council.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1 - List of member fora
Appendix 2 - Revised membership and terms of reference to the
ICT Panel

**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

Report to County Council meeting 19 February 2013

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