

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
WEDNESDAY 15 FEBRUARY, 2012

Minutes of the special meeting of Flintshire County Council held at County Hall, Mold on Wednesday 15 February, 2012

PRESENT: Councillor H.J. McGuill (Chair)

Councillors: Eng. K. Armstrong-Braun, J.B. Attridge, D. Barratt, G.H. Bateman, M. Bateman, R.C. Bithell, H. Brown, C.S. Carver, J.C. Cattermoul, E.G. Cooke, D.L. Cox, R. Davies, A.J. Davies-Cooke, Q.R.H. Dodd, R. Dolphin, B. Dunn, C.A. Ellis, V. Gay, F. Gillmore, R.J.T. Guest, R.G. Hampson, G. Hardcastle, C. Hinds, R. Hughes, G. James, C.M. Jones, N.M. Jones, R.B. Jones, S. Jones, R.P. Macfarlane, D.L. Mackie, N.M. Matthews, D. McFarlane, A. Minshull, W. Mullin, E.W. Owen, M.J. Peers, P.R. Pemberton, N. Phillips, M.A. Reece, H.G. Roberts, L.A. Sharps, A.P. Shotton, C.A. Thomas, W.O. Thomas, D.T. Williams, A. Woolley and M.G. Wright

APOLOGIES:

Councillors: S.R. Baker, P.J. Curtis, C.J. Dolphin, E.F. Evans, A.M. Halford, P.G. Heesom, H.T. Howorth, H.D. Hutchinson, H.T. Isherwood, R. Johnson, C. Legg, D.I. Mackie, N.R. Steele-Mortimer and D.E. Wisinger

IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Executive, Head of Finance, Head of Housing, Interim Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Democracy and Governance Manager and Committee Officer

Project Director, Mike Gaskell (Legal Advisor, Trowers and Hamblins) and Mark Longhill (Financial Advisor, Sector Group) for minute number 127.

126. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Members declared a personal interest for Agenda item number 4 – Housing Ballot:-

Councillors: D. McFarlane, H.J. McGuill and E.W. Owen.

127. HOUSING BALLOT

The Chief Executive introduced a report which outlined the responses from tenants and leaseholders during the Stage 1 Consultation (Choices Document) and recommended that the Council proceed to issue the Stage 2 Notice and to ballot secure and introductory tenants.

The Council resolved to ballot tenants on the choice of transfer at its meeting on 17 February, 2009. At its meeting on 22 November, 2011 the Council approved the draft Choices Document, Assured Tenancy Agreement and Leaseholder Consultation Document. All secure, introductory tenants (including joint tenants) and leaseholders had been sent a copy of the Council's Choices Document. A total of 252 tenants had responded and the

comments were listed in Appendix 1 of the report. None of the leaseholders had responded and the report indicated that none of the comments received necessitated a change to the Choices Document.

The Stage 2 Consultation process involved a ballot of secure and introductory tenants which would be administered by the Electoral Reform Services (ERS). Details of the ballot process were outlined within the report.

The Chief Executive commented on the recommendations outlined within the report and sought Members approval to proceed to issue the Stage 2 Notice and to ballot secure and introductory tenants and make no changes to the Choices Document as a result of the Stage 1 Consultation. He advised that following the meeting he would be writing to all Members to give protective advice on conduct during the ballot process.

Councillor H. Brown, Executive Member for Housing proposed that the Council support the recommendations outlined within the report. She said that the Council had followed the guidelines set by the Welsh Government (WG) and encouraged all tenants to vote on the future of the Council housing stock. This was seconded by Councillor C.A. Ellis.

Councillor J.C. Cattermoul raised concern on the neutral position of the Council which she did not feel was reflected in the Choices Document and the decision previously taken to demolish the maisonettes at Flint regardless of the outcome of the ballot. She said that she was disappointed with the letter published in the local press from the Project Director in response to a published letter which had not included any positive comments on the option for the Council housing stock to remain with the Council.

Councillor Eng. K. Armstrong-Braun asked what the risks to the continuity of services would be in the event of a 'yes' vote and for clarification on the difference between an Assured Tenancy and Secure Tenancy. He said that local Members would not be able to address the concerns/questions of tenants as pro-actively in the event of a 'yes' vote and asked whether responses had been provided to the tenants who had raised specific questions during the consultation process.

The Chief Executive explained that section 9.01 of the report referred to Corporate Services, for example, IT, Finance and Ground Maintenances which were provided to the Housing Revenue Account by the Council under Service Level Agreements. The specific questions raised by tenants during the consultation process had been answered by the Independent Tenant Advisor. Mike Gaskell (Legal Advisor) explained the difference between a Secure Tenancy and Assured Tenancy. The terms of an existing Secure Tenancy could be changed following consultation, whereas an existing Assured Tenancy could not be changed unless individual tenants agree in writing.

Councillor J.B. Attridge raised concern on the neutrality of the Choices Document and also that responses had not been made in the local press to

comments supporting the transfer of the housing stock. He also asked why the Council could not borrow the money required to bring the Council housing stock up to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) through prudential borrowing.

The Chief Executive explained that in 2009 the Council had presented a business case to the WG which had included projections for prudential borrowing but it had not been affordable to borrow the level of funding required through the Housing Revenue Account. In line with the Council's neutral position the Choices Document had accurately reflected this and had been supported at the County Council meeting held on 22 November, 2011. In line with the WG guidance, during the pre-ballot period, the Council had a duty to challenge misleading or factually inaccurate information.

Councillor R.C. Bithell raised concern on the wording of the ballot papers which he felt did not reflect the Council's neutral position. He asked how many tenants would be entitled to vote during the housing ballot and whether the result of the ballot would be accepted if there was a low return. He also asked, in the event of a 'yes' vote, how the cost to continue to provide the services that would remain with the Council would be met.

The Project Director said that all tenants named on a tenancy agreement, including joint tenancies would be entitled to vote in the housing ballot. This equated to approximately 8,900 tenants. The Chief Executive advised that following consultation with the WG the wording shown on the ballot papers would be amended and would read 'do you want your home to transfer to a new landlord, Dee Housing?'. In line with the WG guidance, a majority result would be acceptable and the result of the housing ballot would be considered by County Council following the 20 March, 2012. Other housing ballots carried out by a number of Welsh Local Authorities had this far seen a majority of tenants voting. In the event of a 'yes' vote the services remaining with the Council would be funded through the Housing General Fund.

Councillor C.A. Thomas read out a statement on behalf of Councillor P.G. Heesom, who had been unable to attend the meeting. The statement criticised the Choices Document as not providing a neutral stance and that it had not been able to be called in by Overview and Scrutiny.

In response, Councillor H. Brown said that the Choices Document had been presented to County Council on 22 November, 2011 and all Members had been given the opportunity to comment on it during the meeting.

Councillor R.P. Macfarlane asked how the pension deficit which would remain with the Council in the event of a 'yes' vote would be met. Councillor C. Hinds asked how much the set up costs would be in the event of a 'yes' vote.

The Head of Finance explained that during the Overview and Scrutiny budget meetings a number of options on how the pension deficit would be met

had been considered. This was estimated to be between £7M and £9M and various options on how this would be met would need to be taken forward with the WG if there was a 'yes' vote. The Chief Executive explained that, in the event of a 'yes' vote, the post ballot costs involving set up costs for Dee Housing, which the Welsh Government expected to be limited to £4M, would need to be funded from 'the Dowry'. These costs had been factored into the Dee Housing business plan.

Councillor M.G. Wright commented that the Council had complied fully with the WG guidelines. He said that during a meeting of the County Council on 5 December, 2007, the Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Housing of the previous Administration had commented that the retention of the Council's housing stock could no longer be supported. He said that the Council needed to progress this matter to allow tenants to have their vote. His comments were supported by Councillor A. Woolley who said that the Council had complied with the WG guidelines.

Councillor A.P. Shotton said that the Labour Group supported the ballot taking place and said that all Members from the Group would be distributing leaflets to all tenants to ensure they had an informed choice. He said that as the previous Leader of the Council, he had, together with a cross party delegation of group leaders or their representative, met with the Deputy Minister for Housing, Jocelyn Davies AM in the WG on 15 November, 2007. He said that he had been seeking flexibility from the WG to increase the projected growth of the Management and Maintenance Allowance from 3% within the Council's business plan but this had not been supported by the WG, even though the average Management and Maintenance Allowance over the previous 10 years had been much higher than 3%. He raised concern that the statement within the Choices Document on the £49M available for the Council to improve the housing stock was misleading as it was based on the Council receiving a Management and Maintenance Allowance of 3%.

The Chief Executive said that the information within the Choices Document was not misleading as it was based on the WG formula for projecting forward Management and Maintenance Allowances. He agreed that if this Allowance had been based on an average of previous years this could have provided the Council with greater funding.

In response to questions on the expected salary of the Chief Executive of Dee Housing and whether the Council would incur financial penalties if all housing stock did not meet the WHQS, Mark Longhill explained that the salary of the Chief Executive of Dee Housing would be considered by the Dee Housing Board and would be in line with the salary for a similar position within similar sized housing associations in Wales.

Councillor S. Jones asked what processes were in place for tenants if following a 'yes' vote Dee Housing got into debt. Mike Gaskell said that if Dee Housing got into debt the WG had the power to intervene. The WG had similar powers in the event that Dee Housing did not meet the commitments given to tenants within their business plan.

Councillor Shotton asked if a copy of the Dee Housing business plan could be provided to all Members. The Chief Executive said that the business plan had been shared with the Housing Project Board and would be made available to all Members.

Councillor Shotton, said that in line with the comments/queries from tenants during the consultation process, he proposed an amendment to the proposal that funding available to the Council through the Management and Maintenance Allowance be clarified within the Choices Document, to outline that the £49M available had been formulated through the criteria set by the WG, and was not a true reflection of the money which would be available. This amendment was seconded by Councillor Attridge.

The Chief Executive said that any amendment to the Choices Document would have to be agreed by the WG. He suggested that if the amendment was passed and supported by the WG, that the Council continue to allow to ballot all tenants on the current document as agreed at County Council on 22 November, 2011.

The Democracy and Governance Manager advised the Chair that the amendment could be accepted at her discretion if it related to the comments received on the Choices Document. The Chair did not accept the amendment from Councillor Shotton and therefore the proposal from Councillor Brown was put forward.

Councillor Shotton said that in view of the Chair's decision, the Labour Group could not support the Choices Document in its current format.

A recorded vote was requested and the requisite number of Members stood in support of this. On being put to the vote the proposal was carried.

For the proposal:-

Councillors: G.H. Bateman, M. Bateman, H. Brown, C.S. Carver, A.J. Davies-Cooke, Q.R.H. Dodd, R. Dolphin, B. Dunn, C.A. Ellis, V. Gay, F. Gillmore, G. Hardcastle, G. James, N.M. Jones, R.B. Jones, D.L. Mackie, N.M. Matthews, H.J. McGuill, E.W. Owen, M.J. Peers, N. Phillips, H.G. Roberts, L.A. Sharps, W.O. Thomas, D.T. Williams, A. Woolley and M.G. Wright.

Abstentions:-

Councillors: Eng. K. Armstrong-Braun, J.B. Attridge, D. Barratt, R.C. Bithell, J.C. Cattermoul, E.G. Cooke, D.L. Cox, R. Davies, R.G. Hampson, C. Hinds, R. Hughes, C.M. Jones, S. Jones, R.P. Macfarlane, D. McFarlane, A. Minshull, W. Mullin, P.R. Pemberton, M.A. Reece, A.P. Shotton and C.A. Thomas.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Council proceeds to issue the Stage 2 Notice and to ballot secure and introductory tenants on the options to transfer the Council's housing stock to Dee Housing; and
- (b) That no change be made to the Choices Document as a result of the Stage 1 consultation.

128. DURATION OF MEETING

The meeting commenced at 2.00 p.m. and ended at 3.38 p.m.

130. ATTENDANCE BY MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were four members of the press present.

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Chair

SUMMARY OF DECLARATIONS MADE BY MEMBERS
IN ACCORDANCE WITH FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S
CODE OF CONDUCT

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL	15 FEBRUARY, 2012
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MEMBER	ITEM	MIN. NO. REFERS
Councillors: D. McFarlane, H.J. McGuill and E.W. Owen	Housing Ballot	127.

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
TUESDAY 21 FEBRUARY, 2012

Minutes of the special meeting of Flintshire County Council held at County Hall, Mold on Tuesday 21 February, 2012

PRESENT: Councillor H.J. McGuill (Chair)

Councillors: L.A. Aldridge, Eng. K. Armstrong-Braun, J.B. Attridge, S.R. Baker, D. Barratt, G.H. Bateman, M. Bateman, R.C. Bithell, H. Brown, C.S. Carver, J.C. Cattermoul, D.L. Cox, P.J. Curtis, R. Davies, A.J. Davies-Cooke, Q.R.H. Dodd, C.J. Dolphin, B. Dunn, C.A. Ellis, J.E. Falshaw, V. Gay, F. Gillmore, R.J.T. Guest, R.G. Hampson, G. Hardcastle, H.T. Howorth, R. Hughes, H.D. Hutchinson, H.T. Isherwood, G. James, C.M. Jones, R.B. Jones, S. Jones, C. Legg, R.P. Macfarlane, D.I. Mackie, D.L. Mackie, D. McFarlane, W. Mullin, M.J. Peers, P.R. Pemberton, N. Phillips, M.A. Reece, H.G. Roberts, A.P. Shotton, N.R. Steele-Mortimer, C.A. Thomas, W.O. Thomas, D.E. Wisinger, A. Woolley and M.G. Wright

APOLOGIES:

Councillors: E.G. Cooke, R. Dolphin, A.M. Halford, P.G. Heesom, C. Hinds, N. Humphreys, R. Johnson, N.M. Jones, N.M. Matthews, A. Minshull, E.W. Owen, I.B. Roberts, L.A. Sharps and D.T. Williams

IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Executive, Director of Community Services, Director of Lifelong Learning, Head of Finance, Senior Accounting Technician, Democracy and Governance Manager and Committee Officer

131. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Members declared a personal interest in agenda item number 3 – Housing Revenue Account 2012/13 and Capital Programme 2012/13:-

- Councillors: G. James and H.J. McGuill.

The following Members declared a personal interest in agenda item number 4 – Clwyd Pension Fund:-

- Councillors: J.B. Attridge, D. Barratt, R.C. Bithell, B. Dunn, C.A. Ellis, R.G. Hampson, S. Jones, H.J. McGuill, P.R. Pemberton and A.P. Shotton.

The following Members declared a personal interest in agenda item number 6 – School Modernisation Update:-

- Councillors: L.A. Aldridge, Eng. K. Armstrong-Braun, J.B. Attridge, D. Barratt, G.H. Bateman, M. Bateman, H. Brown, J.C. Cattermoul, D.L. Cox, P.J. Curtis, R. Davies, A.J. Davies-Cooke, Q.R.H. Dodd, C.J. Dolphin, B. Dunn, C.A. Ellis, J.E. Falshaw, V. Gay, F. Gillmore, R.J.T.

Guest, R.G. Hampson, G. Hardcastle, H.T. Howorth, R. Hughes, H.D. Hutchinson, H.T. Isherwood, C.M. Jones, R.B. Jones, S. Jones, C. Legg, R.P. Macfarlane, D.I. Mackie, D.L. Mackie, W. Mullin, M.J. Peers, P.R. Pemberton, N. Phillips, M.A. Reece, H.G. Roberts, A.P. Shotton, C.A. Thomas, W.O. Thomas, D.E. Wisinger, A. Woolley and M.G. Wright

132. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 2012/13 AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2012/13

The Director of Community Services presented the revenue budget proposals for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), including proposed rent and service charge changes, key areas of income and expenditure, and the level of closing balance at the year end. He also presented the budget proposals for the HRA Capital Programme 2012/13, which was year one of a six year improvement programme. The Council was informed that the Executive had met on 21 February, 2012 and had approved the recommendations outlined within the report. The detailed report presented to Executive was attached at Appendix A of the County Council report.

The Director of Community Services gave a presentation which covered the following areas:-

- Housing Revenue Account (HRA)
- Scrutiny Considerations
- Welsh Government Financial Determinations
- Communal Heating 2012/13
- HRA – 2011 the year that was!
- HRA 2012 – what next?
- Budget Proposals
- Funding for HRA Capital Programme 2012/13
- HRA Capital Programme 2011/12 the year that was!
- HRA Capital Programme 2012/13 – what next?
- HRA Capital Programme 2012/13 the year ahead!

Councillor H. Brown, Executive Member for Housing proposed that the County Council support the recommendations as outlined within the report. She reported that the weekly rent increase for Flintshire for 2012/13 would be £3.09 per week and the weekly garage rent increase would be 0.19p. The proposed changes to current communal heating charges were intended to ensure that each communal heating scheme recovers the full energy cost charged in respect of individual schemes. She also reported that an investment of £3.937M had been included in the 2012/13 Capital Budget which was an increase of £1.152M and the programme details were attached at Appendix 4 of the report. She thanked the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee who had worked hard to improve the Housing Service. The proposal was seconded by Councillor G. Hardcastle.

Councillor Eng. K. Armstrong-Braun spoke in support of the report and thanked the Head of Housing and all staff within the housing service for the improvements made within the service. His comments were shared by a number of Members.

Councillor J.B. Attridge asked if the underspend identified within the HRA would be allocated within the current financial year. The Head of Finance explained that proposals on how this money could be utilised would be presented to the next meeting of the Executive on 27 March, 2012.

Councillor A.P. Shotton welcomed the report and the suspension of the convergence policy as detailed in the report. He thanked the Executive Member for the cross party working of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee and for the inclusion of improvements to bathrooms for Council tenants following his suggestion made during a meeting of this Committee. He also thanked the Executive Member for working with himself and Councillor J.B. Attridge to reduce the communal heating charges for Chapel Court, Connah's Quay. On comments he had made during the County Council meeting held on 15 February, 2012, he referred Members to the Management and Maintenance Allowance which had been increased by 8% which he said supported his argument that the 3% Management and Maintenance Allowance within the Choices Document was not an accurate reflection on the funding available.

The Chief Executive said that the Management and Maintenance Allowance of 3% had been included in line with the Welsh Government formula and was not based on past year averages.

In response to questions on the level of funding for bathroom replacements, Councillor H. Brown explained that this funding was allocated following a suggestion made at a meeting of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee and was the amount available at the moment.

Councillor C.S. Carver welcomed the report. He raised concern on the £20,000 water charge collection and asked whether consideration would be given to changing the process so that water companies collected the charges from tenants themselves.

Councillor H. Brown assured Members that a review of the collection of water charges was being undertaken with the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Senior Accounting Technician reported that the Council received £476,000 from the water companies for collecting this charge on their behalf.

A number of questions were raised on the impact the rent increase would have on the 33% of tenants not on housing benefit and how they would be supported following the introduction of the Welfare Reforms. The Chief Executive said that Flintshire County Council had lobbied the WG to ensure that rent increases were not significantly raised. The decisions around the Welfare Reform were outside the control of the Council but the Council had

invested in the Income Support Team to ensure advice and support was available to tenants.

Councillor D. McFarlane welcomed the report and asked if a further breakdown of £0.076m pressure for a P.A. to the Head of Housing and an increased charge for the Head of Housing following a review of time allocation could be provided. The Chief Executive confirmed that a further breakdown would be provided following the meeting.

In response to comments on the use of alternative forms of heating for tenants in sheltered accommodations, Councillor H. Brown confirmed that this would be considered further.

Councillor R.C. Bithell raised concern on the £0.055m pressure identified for the use of benchmarking and independent tenant satisfaction assessment services and asked if this money would be better spent on investing in the Council's housing stock. The Director of Community Services said that the satisfaction surveys would enable the housing service to benchmark performance against other local authorities on repairs and maintenance and would deliver value for money.

Councillor L.A. Aldridge asked if further details on the discounts for Right to Buy sales, the length of tenancies and the reductions in sales could be provided to all Members. He also asked if a review of Disabled Facilities Grants over the last 4 years could be carried out to ensure that the Council would be able to meet the increased need in the future. The Chief Executive confirmed that further details on Rights to Buy sales would be provided to all Members following the meeting. He also confirmed that a review of a number of demographic processes would be carried out following the County Elections in May, 2012.

Councillor H. Brown thanked Members for their comments and asked all Members to support the recommendations as outlined within the report.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the proposed HRA budget for 2012/13, as set out in the report, be approved;
- (b) That the proposed level of rent and service charges for 2012/13, including the communal heating proposals, as set out in the report, be approved;
- (c) That the levels of projected balances at 31 March, 2013 of 3.25% of total expenditure be approved; and
- (d) That the proposed HRA Capital Programme, as set out in the report, be approved.

133. CLWYD PENSION FUND UPDATE

The Head of Finance introduced a report to update Members on issues relating to the Clwyd Pension Fund. Since 31 March, 2011 the market value of the Fund had marginally reduced from £1,051bn to £1.041bn as at 31 December, 2011, as volatility in global financial markets continued.

Following a review of public sector pension provision, the Government, employers and unions were involved in on-going negotiations on potential changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme. The Society of Welsh Treasurers (Pension Sub-Group) had commissioned work to look at collaboration opportunities across the eight Funds in Wales and it was planned that an Outline Business Case would be completed by October, 2012.

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) had published a new Code of Practice, The CIPFA Knowledge and Skills Framework. This had been adopted by the Fund and would be used by Members and officers to identify any knowledge or skills gaps so that appropriate training could be arranged. The Head of Finance thanked Members of the Clwyd Pension Fund Panel for their involvement and hard work.

Councillor B. Dunn proposed that the report be noted and complimented the work of the Clwyd Pension Fund Panel which worked very well as a team. This proposal was seconded by Councillor A. Woolley.

In response to comments on the assets as a percentage of liabilities which had fallen to 59% as at December, 2011 and how it would be proposed to achieve 100%, the Head of Finance said that pension officers and advisers were currently researching methods of further reducing funding risk. Pension Fund Panel Members had received training in the concept of a 'flight-path' back to 100% funding. Further information on the 'flight-path' would be provided to all Members following the Clwyd Pension Fund Panel meeting scheduled for 24 February, 2012.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

134. A COMPACT FOR CHANGE BETWEEN THE WELSH GOVERNMENT AND WELSH LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Chief Executive introduced a report to recommend the adoption of the Compact between the Welsh Government (WG) and Welsh Local Government for referral to and adoption by Council.

Flintshire had committed to working in collaboration on a number of projects and service areas, not only with local authorities but across all public sector organisations. The Chief Executive commented on a number of

significant collaboration programmes which were already underway, as detailed in the report.

An earlier version of this report had been considered by the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 19 January, 2012. In inviting the Committee to consider the Compact, the potential risks and benefits for Flintshire were explored. The resolution of the Committee was detailed in section 2.08 of the report.

Following assurances sought by Overview and Scrutiny and Audit Committee to address the governance of collaboration and performance monitoring arrangements to protect the interest of Flintshire, the protocol outlined within section 3.01 of the report was proposed to strengthen the Compact.

Councillor A. Woolley, Leader of the Council proposed that the County Council support the recommendations as outlined within the report. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Eng. K. Armstrong-Braun.

Councillor R.B. Jones proposed an amendment to the proposal that the word 'local' be added before the word 'services' within recommendation 4.02. Councillor A. Woolley supported the amendment to his proposal.

Councillor B. Dunn spoke in support of the report which he felt would give Members greater input around the review of local authority pension funds in Wales. He thanked the Chief Executive and Head of Finance who he said had provided the Members of the Clwyd Pension Fund with more information than had been provided in other local authorities.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Council become a signatory to the Compact subject to sufficient governance arrangements being in place as detailed below:-
- **For new collaborations** – the appropriate Overview & Scrutiny Committee will have a full report at the three stages of inception, outline business case (OBC) and final business case (FBC) for major projects and that Committee's full input will be presented to Executive as part of the formal decision-making process;
 - **Post-implementation of new collaborations** – the appropriate Overview & Scrutiny will receive regular post-implementation performance reports (at intervals to be agreed, for example, quarterly) for the first 12 months following implementation and thereafter main-streamed reporting in our local performance reporting;
 - **Members information on service changes** – bearing in mind the recent lessons learnt, the protocol for transition discussed at the Audit Committee meeting on 30 January, 2012 will include the above and prior detailed notice to all Members over operation changes (e.g. contacts, performance standards, service failure remedy routes etc; and

- **Regional scrutiny post implementation** – arrangements will be considered over and above the local arrangements on key collaborations e.g. school improvement. This could have the shape, for example, and using the same example, of the six local respective scrutiny chairs meeting to oversee implementation and to ensure thorough and timely reporting to their constituent authorities.
- (b) That the Council reaffirm its commitment to collaborate with other local authorities and public bodies whenever this can either provide existing services more efficiently and/or provide better local services at no additional cost, as long as a business case is provided and local sovereignty is protected through appropriate levels of democratic input and scrutiny.

135. SCHOOL MODERNISATION UPDATE

The Chief Executive provided an update on the School Modernisation consultation process. He provided the dates and times for the consultation meetings and said that hard copies of the dates and times would be placed in all Members "pigeon holes" following the meeting. Area Schools Review Booklets were being distributed this week and a hard copy would be provided to all Members before the end of the week. Consultation would also be undertaken with school staff, school governors and young people. If Members required any further information he asked that they contact the Director of Lifelong Learning or the Head of Development and Resource.

Councillor A.P. Shotton thanked the Chief Executive for the update. He asked how the consultation events would be run, as concern had been raised that the previous events had lacked co-ordination with many parents not being given the opportunity to speak to officers on a one to one basis.

The Chief Executive said that a presentation will be given at each of the consultation meetings. There would be the opportunity to raise questions before the presentation, and these could be grouped together and responded too following the presentation. The Director of Lifelong Learning said that the Executive Member for Education was scheduled to attend the consultation meetings and there would be an opportunity to speak to officers and Members on a one to one basis during the meetings. Interested persons would be encouraged to write or telephone the Council following the meetings if they had any questions/issues to raise.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

136. COUNTY COUNCIL DIARY OF MEETINGS 2012/13

The Chief Executive introduced the proposed diary of meetings for 2012/13 as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

Following a decision of County Council in March, 2010, the diary of meetings was based on a 10 week cycle. In addition to the County Council meeting in the 10 weekly cycle there were additional meetings scheduled for the Statement of Accounts, the Budget and the Annual meeting. Overview and Scrutiny Committees were scheduled to meet approximately twice in the 10 week cycle which would enable more timely reporting for budget and performance reports, with performance reporting dates being identified throughout the diary.

Following a question from Councillor Q.R.H. Dodd, the Chief Executive said that he would provide Councillor Dodd with details on whether the portrait of Herbert Lewis had been fully restored and where this would be placed in the future.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed diary of meetings 2012/13 be approved.

137. DURATION OF MEETING

The meeting commenced at 2.00 p.m. and ended at 3.18 p.m.

138. ATTENDANCE BY MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There was one member of the public and three members of the press present.

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Chair

**SUMMARY OF DECLARATIONS MADE BY MEMBERS
IN ACCORDANCE WITH FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S
CODE OF CONDUCT**

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL	21 FEBRUARY, 2012
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MEMBER	ITEM	MIN. NO. REFERS
Councillors: G. James and H.J. McGuill	Housing Revenue Account 2012/13 and Capital Programme 2012/13	132.
Councillors: J.B. Attridge, D. Barratt, R.C. Bithell, B. Dunn, C.A. Ellis, R.G. Hampson, S. Jones, H.J. McGuill, P.R. Pemberton and A.P. Shotton	Clwyd Pension Fund update	133.
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