

**CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**22 JANUARY 2015**

Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held at County Hall, Mold on Thursday, 22 January 2015

**PRESENT: Councillor Carolyn Thomas (Chair)**

Councillors: Marion Bateman, Paul Cunningham, Peter Curtis, Andy Dunbobbin, Robin Guest, Ron Hampson, Richard Jones, Mike Peers, Paul Shotton

**APOLOGY:**

Councillor Ian Dunbar

**SUBSTITUTIONS:**

Councillor Owen Thomas for Councillor Clive Carver and Councillor Mike Peers for Councillor Richard Lloyd

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Councillor: Haydn Bateman

**CONTRIBUTORS:**

Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Chief Executive, Chief Officer People & Resources, Chief Officer Governance, Chief Officer Organisational Change, Chief Officer Organisational Change, Corporate Finance Manager, Finance Manager, Revenues & Benefits Manager, Customer Services Manager

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Member Engagement Manager and Overview & Scrutiny Support Officer

**64. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**

No declarations of interest were made.

**65. BUDGET CONSULTATION PROCESS 2015/16**

The Chairman welcomed the contributors to the meeting.

The Leader outlined the budget consultation process to date, which included briefing meetings with Group Leaders and Chairs of Overview & Scrutiny Committees, culminating with the Overview & Scrutiny mop-up session scheduled to be held on Friday, 30<sup>th</sup> January, 2015, prior to the final budget proposals being presented to County Council on the 17<sup>th</sup> February, 2015. Regular updates had been given to Members over recent months and the Leader commented on the unprecedented financial challenges facing all Councils across Wales. The draft budget report, presented to Cabinet on 16<sup>th</sup> December, 2015 highlighted a £16.4m budget gap for 2015/16. Following

intensive work a balanced budget had been achieved. The risk to frontline services was a unique challenge with no magic formula and no additional money available.

The Leader commented on the consequential revenue provision and briefed Members on his lobbying of Ministers and the Welsh Government (WG). He expressed his disappointment following the Autumn Statement that no additional funding for service protection was being allocated to Local Government.

The Fire Authority levy was raised by Members and a discussion followed on value for money efficiencies that had been achieved to bring the levy down to 0.21%. The Flintshire Members who sat on this board were praised in helping to achieve this.

A discussion was held on the Police Authority precept with the Chief Executive commenting that Flintshire would be unlikely to influence this as it was set by the Police & Crime Commissioner. Cllr. Richard Jones suggested that a letter be sent through the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) requesting that this be looked at. The Leader agreed saying this needed to be discussed at UK level. It was reported that the Police & Crime Commissioner was scheduled to attend the Community Profile & Partnerships Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 2015. Following discussion, the Committee agreed with the suggestion that the Leader ask the WLGA to write to the Police & Crime Commissioner asking that the level of Police Authority precept be looked at.

The Chief Executive gave a brief presentation which covered the following areas:-

- National Position
- Revised Local Position
- Impacts of 14-15 on 15-16
- Strategy to close the extended gap
- Up to date Strategy position
- Remaining Strategy Actions
- Big Budget Conversation
- Member Involvement
- Overview & Scrutiny
- Final Steps in the Budget
- Medium Term Financial Plan Review

The Chief Officer (People and Resources), Chief Officer (Governance), Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise) and Chief Officer (Organisation Change) each gave a detailed presentation on budget proposals within their respective portfolios.

**The comments and questions which were raised by Members of the Committee on the presentations, together with the responses given, are detailed in Appendix 1 (attached).**

During discussion, the Chair thanked Officers for the openness in which the workshops and verbal updates had been delivered to Members. She felt members of the public were better prepared for the year ahead.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the presentation be received and that the Member's comments and the responses thereto be incorporated into the budget consultation section of the report to Cabinet on 17<sup>th</sup> February; and
- (b) That the Leader ask the WLGA to write to the Police & Crime Commissioner asking that the level of Police Authority precept be looked at.

**66. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE**

There were one member of the public and three members of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 1.28 pm)

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**Chairman**