

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE
27 JANUARY 2016

Minutes of the meeting of the Democratic Services Committee of Flintshire County Council held in County Hall, Mold on Wednesday, 27 January 2016

PRESENT: Councillor Robin Guest (Chairman)

Councillors: Alex Aldridge, Haydn Bateman, Clive Carver, David Cox, Paul Cunningham, Ian Dunbar, Andy Dunbobbin, Veronica Gay, George Hardcastle, Dave Mackie, Neville Phillips, Ian Smith, Nigel Steele-Mortimer, and Arnold Woolley

APOLOGIES: Councillors Glyn Banks and David Williams

SUBSTITUTION: Councillors David Healey (for Chris Bithell) and Tim Newhouse (for David Roney)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Officer (Governance), Member Engagement Manager, and Committee Officer

9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

10. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 1 July 2015, were submitted.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be received, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

11. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR 2016/17

The Member Engagement Manager introduced a report on the schedule of meetings for 2016/17. He explained that the Council's schedule of meetings which was set at the annual meeting has meetings held in the morning and afternoon in a ten week cycle. It is recognised that the established model of morning and afternoon meetings may make attendance difficult for Members with work or caring responsibilities and therefore consideration needed to be given to whether meetings should be held in the evening as well as during the day. Options for expanding the range of meetings could also involve early evening/'twilight' meetings at 4.30/5.00 p.m in the afternoon. It had been suggested that a short survey be undertaken to enable Members to express their preferences on when meetings are held and feedback provided to the next meeting of the Committee.

Councillor Alex Aldridge spoke in favour of the suggestion to hold meetings during the evening as well as the day. He commented on the need to engage a wide range of people from diverse backgrounds to participate in Council business and to make it easier for individuals in employment or with caring commitments to attend meetings of the Council. He emphasised the need for meaningful consideration to be given to the matter.

Councillor Neville Phillips commented on the need to be mindful of Town and Community Council meetings which were held in the evening and would have an impact on Members' availability to attend evening meetings held by the Council.

Councillor Dave Mackie commented on the historically poor attendance at training sessions which were scheduled in the evening as well as the day.

Councillor Tim Newhouse proposed that the Committee recommend that meetings of the full County Council are held at 5.00pm to make it possible for the maximum number of Members to attend. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Alex Aldridge and when put to the vote was carried.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee recommends to the County Council that it holds its meetings at 5.00 p.m. during the next municipal year; and
- (b) That officers be tasked with carrying out a survey amongst Members to enable them to express their preferences for changing when meetings of Committees are held.

12. PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

There was one member of the public and no members of the press in attendance.

(The meeting commenced at 4.21 pm and finished at 4.43 pm)

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Chairman