

ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
14 MAY 2018

Minutes of the meeting of the Organisational Change Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held in the Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold on Monday, 14 May 2018

PRESENT: Councillor Dave Mackie (Chairman)

Councillors: Janet Axworthy, Marion Bateman, Sean Bibby, Geoff Collett, Ian Dunbar, Mared Eastwood, Dennis Hutchinson, Tudor Jones, Brian Lloyd, Mike Reece, Paul Shotton, and Andy Williams

APOLOGIES: Councillors: Sean Bibby, Ralph Small and David Wisinger

CONTRIBUTORS: Councillor Billy Mullin, Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets, Ian Roberts, Cabinet Member for Education and Youth, Chief Officer (Governance), IT Business Services Manager, Digital Solutions Manager, and Customer Service and Registration Manager.
Ben Welsh – Assistant Manager, Holywell Leisure Centre, and Magali Lovell-Pascal – Treasurer, Holywell Leisure Centre, attended for minute number 9.

IN ATTENDANCE: Overview and Scrutiny Facilitator and Democratic Services Officer

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

The Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator advised that it had been confirmed at the Annual Meeting of the County Council that the Chair of the Committee should come from the Independent Alliance Group. As Councillor Dave Mackie had been appointed to this role by the Group, the Committee was asked to endorse the decision.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Dave Mackie be confirmed as the Chair of the Committee.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

Councillor Ian Dunbar nominated Councillor Paul Shotton as Vice-Chair of the Committee and this was seconded by Councillor Dennis Hutchinson.

On being put to the vote Councillor Paul Shotton was appointed Vice-Chair of the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Paul Shotton be appointed Vice-Chair of the Committee.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Tudor Jones declared a personal and prejudicial interest on agenda item 9 'Holywell Leisure Centre Community Asset Transfer' as he was Chair of the Trustees of the leisure centre and landlord of the library and café. He was also a signatory of the Service Level Agreement for use of the sports facilities at Ysgol Treffynnon. Councillor Jones had been advised, prior to the meeting, that he could participate in the item as a contributor and respond to any questions but would withdraw from the room for the vote.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2018 were submitted.

RESOLVED:

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

5. DIGITAL CUSTOMER OVERVIEW

The Chief Officer (Governance) advised that the Council had agreed a strategic approach to developing Customer Services and enhancing use of Digital Technology. He introduced the report to outline the approach to delivering these strategies which focused on enabling customers to contact the Authority and use its services, where appropriate, through the use of digital technology.

The Chief Officer provided background information and referred to the main considerations, as detailed in the report. He gave a presentation which covered the following main points:

- the benefits of a 'digital customer' focus
- preview of the customer portal
- developing the payment portal
- developing Live Chat
- key decisions – early 2018
- approach to efficiencies
- resourcing
- our approach
- outline action plan

Councillor Marion Bateman asked if other authorities might be interested in purchasing the software produced by the Authority with backup support. The IT Business Services Manager, advised that a number of authorities already had the digital technology to deliver services and explained that the Council was currently investing in developing online security.

Councillor Paul Shotton commented on the need for training on the use of the customer portal and asked if all Members could be invited, in small groups, to a demonstration on how the portal worked. He said it was important

for people who may not have access to information technology to have telephone access and cited elderly people as an example. The IT Business Services Manager, acknowledged the point made and explained that work was being undertaken to inform residents in care homes of the services available.

Councillor Tudor Jones commented on the need for 'good' internet connection to be available in all areas and cited the lack of provision in some rural areas as an example. He put forward a number of suggestions which could be linked into the customer portal and referred to information on public transport services as an example. Councillor Jones also asked if a link could be provided to signpost customers to local town or community councils.

The Chief Officer explained that improving connectivity was a target in the Digital Strategy and a key consideration in promoting economic growth in Flintshire. He referred to the North Wales Economic Ambition Board's bid to the UK national government for Full Local Fibre funding of £200m which would primarily benefit businesses in the region but also improve access for residents.

Councillor Ian Dunbar commented on the need to provide face-to-face contact for people who wanted this and spoke of the valuable services provided by local Connect Centres. In response to a query from Councillor Dunbar regarding online payment services the Chief Officer advised that it was intended to increase the range of services that residents could pay for online. He spoke of the advantages and cost savings to be achieved through direct payments.

Councillor Brian Lloyd expressed concerns that the introduction of the digital customer portal might result in closure of the Connect Centres. The Chief Officer gave an assurance that the portal was not intended to replace the services provided by the Connect Centres and there were no current plans for closures. In response to a further question from Councillor Lloyd concerning the 'Live Chat' service, the Chief Officer explained that the operators who addressed enquiries via 'Live Chat' also answered telephone enquiries. He explained that the intention of 'Live Chat' was to assist people to use the portal.

In response to a query from the Chair, the IT Business Services Manager, explained that security was a primary issue and said that people would be able to access their own account information via a secure link.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee support the approach to implementing both the Digital Strategy and Customer Strategy through a priority and focus on improving services for 'Digital Customers' as outlined within the report; and
- (b) That the comments around how the use of the Customer Account could be maximised, be noted.

6. YEAR-END COUNCIL PLAN MONITORING REPORT 2017/18

The Chief Officer (Governance) introduced the Year-end Council Plan Monitoring Report 2017/18. He explained that the report presented the monitoring of progress for the Council Plan priority 'Connected Council' which was relevant to the Committee.

The Chief Officer provided background information and advised that the monitoring report for the 2017/18 Council Plan was a positive report, with 81% of activities being assessed as making good progress, and 69% likely to achieve the desired outcome. Performance Indicators showed good progress with 84% meeting or near to period target. Risks were also being successfully managed with the majority being assessed as moderate (67%) or minor (10%).

The Chief Officer reported that the following performance indicator showed a red status for current performance against target for the Committee:

Priority: Connected Council
Indicator: Percentage of community benefit clauses in new procurement contracts under £1M

The Chief Officer advised that no major risks had been identified and progress against the risks in the Council Plan were included in the appendix to the report.

Referring to the above indicator, Councillor Ian Dunbar asked for further information on the community benefits attributable to the 5 projects procured. The Chief Officer agreed to provide details to the Committee following the meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

7. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator presented the current Forward Work Programme for consideration. She drew attention to the items scheduled for the next meeting of the Committee to be held on 25 June, and asked Members to forward to her any suggestions for items they wished to be added to the Programme for the year ahead. It was suggested that regular update reports for the Committee on Community Asset Transfer and Digital Strategy and Customer Strategy be added to the forward work programme.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the Forward Work Programme as submitted be approved; and

- (b) That the Facilitator in consultation with the Chair of the Committee be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings should this be necessary.

8. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 – TO CONSIDER THE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That the press and public be excluded for the remainder of the meeting for the following items by virtue of exempt information under paragraph(s) 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

9. HOLYWELL LEISURE CENTRE COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER

Councillor Tudor Jones, Chairman of Holywell Leisure Centre, introduced a presentation which outlined the review of progress during the 2017/18 year and plans for 2018. He provided background information and invited Ben Welsh – Assistant Manager, Holywell Leisure Centre, and Magali Lovell-Pascal – Treasurer, Holywell Leisure Centre, to report on the following key points:

- Building a sustainable business
- Financial report: the story so far
- Financial year 2018-19 and beyond
- Social Media / Marketing
- Income

Members congratulated the Managers, Trustees, and employees on their hard work and impressive first year of operating as a Charitable Organisation. Following a suggestion by the Chair it was agreed that a letter would be sent to Holywell Leisure Centre to express the Committee's appreciation.

Members raised questions around seeking financial contribution from local town and community councils to the running cost of the Leisure Centre. Further questions were raised regarding the opportunities to increase income from external sources, and energy efficient measures.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Tudor Jones, Ben Welsh and Magali Lovell-Pascal for their presentation and for answering Member's questions.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee congratulate the Managers, Trustees and Employees on their hard work and impressive first year of operating as a Charitable Organisation and wish Holywell Leisure Centre well for the future.

10. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

There were no members of the press or the public in attendance.

(The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 12.33 pm)

.....
Chairman