

CONSTITUTION AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE
5th JUNE 2019

Minutes of the meeting of the Constitution and Democratic Services Committee of Flintshire County Council held in the Delyn Room, County Hall, Mold on Wednesday, 5th June 2019.

PRESENT: Councillor Ted Palmer (Chair)

Chris Bithell, Clive Carver, Bob Connah, Jean Davies, Rob Davies, David Healey, Gladys Healey, Patrick Heesom, Joe Johnson, Paul Johnson, Mike Peers, Michelle Perfect, Vicky Perfect, Neville Phillips, Ian Smith, David Williams, David Wisinger and Arnold Woolley

APOLOGIES: Councillor Rita Johnson and the Chief Officer (Governance)

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Christine Jones (as an observer)

IN ATTENDANCE: Democratic Services Manager, Internal Audit Manager and Democratic Services Support Officer

1. **CONGRATULATIONS**

Councillor Ted Palmer was congratulated on becoming Chair of the Committee.

It was unanimously agreed that a letter of thanks be sent to Councillor Rita Johnson for her hard work and commitment during her time as Chair of the Committee.

2. **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR**

Councillor Dave Healey nominated Councillor Rita Johnson for the position of Vice Chair and this was duly seconded

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Rita Johnson be confirmed as Vice-Chair of the Committee.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None were received.

Councillor Chris Bithell referred to the last meeting and asked if a reminder had been sent to all Members to update their Declarations of Interests. The Democratic Services Manager thanked Councillor Bithell and confirmed he would ensure this was carried out if not already done.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11th April 2019 were submitted.

RESOLVED:

With the exception of one typographical amendment the minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5. CORPORATE ANTI-FRAUD AND CORRUPTION STRATEGY AND FRAUD AND IRREGULARITY RESPONSE PLAN

The report was presented by the Internal Audit Manager who explained the differences between the old and the new policy. The Chair then invited questions.

Councillor Chris Bithell raised a recent Council Tax issue to which the Internal Audit Manager responded that this was a Trading Standards issue.

Members then raised a number of questions to which the Internal Audit Manager responded, giving an undertaking to make the necessary changes to the document. It was confirmed that Member training to support the revised policy would be made available in due course.

RESOLVED:

- a) that the Committee approve the changes agreed by the Audit Committee for the Corporate Anti-Fraud & Corruption Strategy.
- b) that the Committee approve the changes agreed by the Audit Committee for the Fraud & Irregularity Response Plan.

6. WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

The report was presented by the Internal Audit Manager who explained the differences between the old and the new policy. The Chair then invited questions.

Members asked a number of questions and made a number of suggestions for clarification purposes. The Internal Audit Manager agreed to make those changes.

In response to a question from Councillor Chris Bithell regarding disclosure in exceptional cases the Internal Audit Manager assured Members they would be dealt with on a case by case basis and commented she had not had such a case during her time with Flintshire.

Councillor Paul Johnson asked for appropriate reference to be made to both Welsh Government and National Assembly for Wales

RESOLVED:

- a) that the Committee approved the changes agreed by the Audit Committee for the Council's Whistleblowing Policy.
- b) that the amendments made during the meeting be incorporated into the Policy, and
- c) that the Internal Audit Manager be given delegated authority to make the necessary changes before submitting the report to County Council.

7. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT & ENGAGEMENT

The report was presented by the Democratic Services Manager and provided the committee with an update of Member Training and Workshops held since the last meeting of the committee.

Councillor Bithell referred to the Planning Enforcement Training which had taken place in May which had been very well received and it was agreed to add these sessions to the timetable.

The Member training to support the Corporate Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy and Fraud and Irregularity Response Plan would be considered in due course.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the Committee notes the progress with Member Development and Engagement events since the last report.

- b) That if Members have any suggestions for future Member Development and Engagement they are invited to contact the Democratic Services Manager to discuss them.

8. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

There were no members of the public or press present.

(The meeting started at 2pm and ended at 2.43 pm)

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Chair