

ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
19 DECEMBER 2023

Minutes of the hybrid meeting of the Environment and Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held on Tuesday, 19 December 2023.

PRESENT: Councillor David Evans (Chair)

Councillors: Mike Allport, Mel Buckley, David Coggins-Cogan, Chris Dolphin, Richard Lloyd, Mike Peers, Vicky Perfect, and Dan Rose

SUBSTITUTIONS: Councillor Bill Crease for Councillor Roy Wakelam, Councillor Ted Palmer for Councillor Ray Hughes, and Councillor David Richardson for Councillor Ian Hodge

APOLOGIES: Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation)

CONTRIBUTORS:

Councillor Dave Hughes (Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Regional Transport Strategy), Councillor Dave Healey (Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy), Chief Officer (Planning, Environment & Economy), Community and Business Protection Manager, Contaminated Land Officer, Bereavement Services Manager, Transport Manager (Streetscene and Transportation), and Access and Natural Environment Manager

IN ATTENDANCE: The Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Democratic Services Officers

54. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Ted Palmer and Mel Buckley declared a personal interest on agenda item 5 – unsafe memorials at Flintshire cemeteries

55. CONTAMINATED LAND STRATEGY

The Community and Business Protection Manager introduced a report to explain the purpose of the Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy and the updates which had been made since the previous Strategy was adopted in 2017. She provided background information and advised that the Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy described how Flintshire County Council was required by Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to identify and inspect land within its administrative control and explained the steps that the Council will take to investigate the land to secure remediation of contamination.

Flintshire County Council's Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy was updated to reflect current Council policies, objectives, and the replacement of a principal piece of regulatory guidance relating to the assessment of land contamination.

Councillor Mike Peers raised questions and made suggestions for improvement on a number of points in the report and the updated Contaminated

Land Inspection Strategy document which was appended to the report. The Community and Business Manager thanked Councillor Peers for his input and said his comments were noted and the suggested changes would be made where appropriate. In response to the request from Councillor Peers for a list of contaminated land in the County, Officers advised that the Public Register contained an updated list of contaminated land and was available to view on the Council's website. It was agreed that a link to the document would be sent to members of the Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the updates to the Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy including the additional amendments proposed by Councillor Mike Peers during the meeting be endorsed.

56. WORKFORCE RECYCLING REGULATIONS

The Chair explained that the item would be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee on 9 January 2024.

Referring to the following sentence in the first paragraph of the Executive Summary of the report, Councillor Mike Peers suggested that the wording "This will require all workplaces, such as businesses, public sector, and charities to separate their recyclable materials in the same way that our households already do" be changed to read: "This will require all workplaces, such as businesses, public sector, and charities to separate their recyclable materials in the same way that our households should do".

Councillor Peers also referred to the final paragraph in section 1.07 of the report and exploration of the option of designating one site for trade waste in the future on a chargeable basis, and sought assurance that the designated site would not be exclusive to trade waste to the detriment of domestic waste use. Councillor Peers also asked what the consequences would be for the Council if the possible risks as outlined in section 3.04 of the report were carried out.

Councillor Dan Rose moved the recommendation to defer the item and this was seconded by Councillor David Coggins-Cogan.

RESOLVED:

That the report be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee.

57. UNSAFE MEMORIALS AT FLINTSHIRE CEMETERIES

The Bereavement Services Manager provided background information and presented the report to seek support and approval for an alternative and permanent method of making unsafe memorials at Flintshire cemeteries safe, if the memorial is not repaired by the registered grave owner, as well as making safe any kerb sets that had become detached from the main structure of the grave.

The Bereavement Services Manager responded to the questions and comments raised by Councillor Mike Peers regarding definition of the term "grave owner", funding to address the proposals to make unsafe memorials at cemeteries safe, testing programmes, and the retention of headstone inscriptions.

Officers responded to the further comments and concerns raised by Councillor David Coggins-Cogan around the cost of making memorials safe and the need to retain grave inscriptions.

Councillor Ted Palmer moved the recommendations in the report and this was seconded by Councillor David Coggins-Cogan.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the proposal to adopt the "digging in" method to stabilise those memorials deemed to be structurally unsafe when the grave owners cannot be traced be supported.
- (b) That the proposal to address unsafe kerb sets by repositioning all kerb sections within the structure of the grave, either above or below the surface depending on the presence of a concrete slab foundation, be supported.

58. ACCESS BARRIER REVIEW UPDATE

The Access & Natural Environment Manager presented the report to seek agreement on the implementation of access improvements to the Wales Coast Path. He provided background information and referred to the main considerations as detailed in the report.

Councillor David Coggins-Cogan expressed a number of concerns around the proposed improvements as set out in the report which he said he could not support.

Councillor David Healey commented on the need to ensure the safety of users on the Wales Coastal Path.

Councillor Dan Rose suggested that alternative options should be considered.

Members acknowledged the need to mitigate illegal activity and also ensure the quality of access for the general public.

The Access & Natural Environment Manager responded to the further concerns and questions raised by Members around the use of radar keys, codes, and alternative schemes to prevent illegal and anti-social use on the Coastal Path.

Councillor Richard Lloyd moved the recommendations in the report and this was seconded by Councillor Ted Palmer.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That feedback on the proposed access improvements and the potential risks to the Authority be noted; and
- (b) That the proposed improvements to the access points in the Saltney Footbridge areas detailed in the plan and specification be agreed.

59. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

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

(The meeting started at 10.00 a.m. and ended at 11.42 a.m.)

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Chair