

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
14 NOVEMBER 2024

Minutes of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held as a hybrid meeting on Thursday, 14 November 2024

PRESENT: **Councillor Bill Crease (Chair)**
Councillors: Tina Claydon, David Coggins Cogan, Rob Davies, Gladys Healey, Ian Hodge, Alasdair Ibbotson, Gina Maddison, Allan Marshall, Billy Mullin, Vicky Perfect and Jason Shallcross

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors: Councillor Mared Eastwood (Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language and Culture), Dave Hughes (Leader of the Council), Christine Jones (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Social Services and Well-being) and Andrew Parkhurst and attended as observers

APOLOGIES: None

CONTRIBUTORS: Councillor Richard Jones (Cabinet Member for Transformation and Assets), Councillor Paul Johnson (Cabinet Member for Finance and Social Value), Councillor Linda Thomas (Cabinet Member for Corporate Services), Chief Executive, Chief Officer (Governance), Chief Officer (Social Services), Corporate Finance Manager, Strategic Finance Managers, Corporate Manager - Capital Programme and Assets, Customer Contact Service Manager

IN ATTENDANCE: Democratic Services Manager, Committee Services Team Leader and Democratic Services Officer

56. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR ([Link to recording](#))

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Jason Shallcross be appointed Vice-Chair of the Committee.

57. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)
([Link to recording](#))

None.

58. MINUTES ([Link to recording](#))

RESOLVED:

That the [minutes](#) of the meeting held on 10 October 2024 be approved as a correct record.

59. ACTION TRACKING ([Link to recording](#))

The Democratic Services Manager presented a [report \(agenda item 5\)](#) on progress with actions from previous meetings. He agreed to include the request by Councillor Shallcross at the previous meeting and to pursue a response as soon as possible.

On that basis, the recommendation was supported.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee notes the progress which has been made.

60. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME ([Link to recording](#))

The Democratic Services Manager presented a [report \(agenda item 6\)](#) on the Committee's current Forward Work Programme. He agreed to provide the item previously requested on lessons learned from the fire at Synthite Ltd.

On that basis, the recommendations were supported.

RESOLVED:

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

(b) That the Democratic Services Manager, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises.

61. BUDGET 2025/26 - STAGE 2 ([Link to recording](#))

The Corporate Finance Manager presented a [report \(agenda item 7\)](#) for Members to review and comment on cost pressures and associated risks under the remit of the Committee.

In response to questions on Corporate Services, a detailed response would be provided to the Committee in respect of additional costs for the street lighting network. On corporate building energy bills, officers would be working through a potential reduction in the budget requirement which would be reflected in forthcoming budget reports. On the separation of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority precept, the Chief Officer (Governance) would seek confirmation on whether the Chief Fire Officer would be present at the Committee's meeting in December.

On Governance, the Chief Officer (Governance) would respond separately on the £210K carry-forward request from the previous year which had not been fully utilised to fund the designated posts.

In respect of future budget reports, the Chair said it would be useful for Members to submit more detailed questions in advance so that a full response could be provided.

The recommendations in the report were supported.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the comments raised by the Committee on the Corporate Services cost pressures be referred to Cabinet; and
- (b) That the comments raised by Committee on the Governance Portfolio's cost pressures be referred to Cabinet.

62. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2024/25 (MONTH 6) AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING 2024/25 (MONTH 6) ([Link to recording](#))

The Strategic Finance Managers presented the [reports \(agenda item 8\)](#) on the 2024/25 month 6 position for the Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Capital Programme, prior to consideration by Cabinet.

On Revenue Budget Monitoring, explanation would be sought from colleagues in Housing & Communities on the rationale for the 'red' impact assessment status of action 3 within the Action Plan for ten STORI leased properties for families requiring temporary accommodation.

The recommendations in the report were supported.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That having considered the Revenue Budget Monitoring 2024/25 (month 6) report, the comments raised by the Committee be referred to Cabinet; and
- (b) That having considered the Capital Programme Monitoring 2024/25 (month 6) report, the comments raised by the Committee be referred to Cabinet.

There was a brief adjournment during the above item.

63. CAPITAL STRATEGY INCLUDING PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2025/26 - 2027/28 ([Link to recording](#))

The Strategic Finance Manager presented the [report \(agenda item 9\)](#) on the updated Capital Strategy prior to submission to Cabinet. The Strategy was an overarching document which brought together various strategies and policies, split into a number of sections incorporating details of the Council's Prudential Indicators for 2025/26-2027/28.

The recommendations in the report were supported.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee recommends the Capital Strategy to Cabinet; and
- (b) That the Committee recommends to Cabinet:-

- The Prudential Indicators for 2025/26-2027/28 as detailed within Tables 1, and 4-8 of the Capital Strategy, and
- Delegated authority for the Corporate Finance Manager to effect movements between the separately agreed limits within the authorised limit for external debt and the operational boundary for external debt (Table 6 of the Capital Strategy).

64. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2025/26 - 2027/28 ([Link to recording](#))

The Strategic Finance Manager introduced a [report \(agenda item 10\)](#) and accompanying presentation on the proposed Capital Programme 2025/26 - 2027/28 which set out long-term investment in assets to enable the delivery of high quality and value for money public services split between three sections: Statutory/Regulatory, Retained Assets and Investment.

The recommendations in the report were supported.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee:

- Supports the allocations and schemes in Table 3 (paragraph 1.09) for the Statutory/Regulatory and Retained Assets sections of the Council Fund Capital Programme 2025/26 - 2027/28;
- Supports the schemes included in Table 4 (paragraph 1.31) for the Investment section of the Council Fund Capital Programme 2025/26 - 2027/28;
- Notes that the shortfall in funding of schemes in 2027/28 in Table 5 (paragraph 1.35) although there are surplus in years prior;
- Supports the schemes included in Table 6 (paragraph 1.39) for the specifically funded section of the Council Fund Capital Programme which will be funded in part through borrowing; and
- Notes that the comments will be referred to Cabinet to consider before the Capital Programme 2025/26 - 2027/28 report is considered by Council.

65. PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES ANNUAL LETTER 2023-24 AND HALF-YEAR COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE 2024-25 ([Link to recording](#))

The Customer Contact Service Manager presented a [report \(agenda item 11\)](#) to consider the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) Annual Letter 2023-24 for the Council, together with an overview of complaints received by each portfolio between 1 April 2023 - 30 September 2024.

The Chief Officer (Governance) and Members praised the work undertaken by the Manager and her team in contributing to the positive outcomes of the report.

The recommendations were supported.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee:

- (a) Notes the positive annual performance of the Council in respect of complaints made to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales during 2023-24;
- (b) Notes the half year performance of the Council (2024-25) in respect of complaints received in line with the Council's Concerns and Complaints policy; and
- (c) Supports the priorities outlined in paragraph 1.25.

66. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

None.

(The meeting started at 10am and ended at 12.25pm)

.....

Chair

Meetings of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee are webcast and can be viewed by visiting the webcast library at <http://flintshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>