

RECOVERY COMMITTEE
17 JUNE 2021

Minutes of the remote attendance meeting of the Recovery Committee of Flintshire County Council held on Thursday, 17 June 2021

PRESENT: Councillor Richard Jones (Chairman)

Councillors: Mike Allport, Marion Bateman, Helen Brown, Clive Carver, Geoff Collett, Paul Cunningham, David Healey, Patrick Heesom, Joe Johnson, Hilary McGuill, Vicky Perfect and Kevin Rush

IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor Ian Roberts - Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education, Chief Executive, Chief Officer (Governance), Chief Officer (Planning, Environment & Economy), Corporate Finance Manager, Senior Manager - Human Resources & Organisational Development, Strategic Performance Advisor, Head of Democratic Services, Environment & Social Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator, Civic & Member Services Officer and Democratic Services Officer

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

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. The Committee was advised that Councillor Richard Jones had been appointed to this role for the municipal year.

RESOLVED:

That the appointment of Councillor Richard Jones as Chair of the Committee be noted.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

Councillor David Healey's nomination to appoint Councillor Joe Johnson as Vice-Chair was seconded by Councillor Vicky Perfect and on being put to the vote, was carried.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Joe Johnson be appointed Vice-Chair of the Committee.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Chief Officer (Governance) presented the Terms of Reference for the Committee, as approved by Council.

The recommendation was moved by Councillor Paul Cunningham. On seconding, Councillor Patrick Heesom was given clarification on officers' regional roles.

RESOLVED:

That the Terms of Reference be noted.

5. CORPORATE RECOVERY OBJECTIVES

The Chief Executive introduced the updated corporate objectives for this second phase of recovery which were recommended for adoption. These would be subject to review throughout the recovery phase.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Chief Executive suggested that summarised Recovery Business Plans for Social Care and Education be considered at the July meeting, with Streetscene & Transportation and Housing & Assets shared in August.

The recommendation in the report was moved and seconded by Councillors Patrick Heesom and Joe Johnson.

RESOLVED:

That the Corporate Recovery Objectives be supported and adopted.

6. CORPORATE RECOVERY RISK PROFILE

The Chief Executive and Strategic Performance Advisor presented an update report on the Corporate Recovery Risk Register and Mitigations.

The Chief Officer (Governance), Corporate Finance Manager and Senior Manager for Human Resources & Organisational Development each provided an overview of the main changes and live issues on risk and recovery within their respective portfolios. Some improvement was reported in the only red rated risk on the impact of increasing rent arrears on the stability of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan. As an ongoing risk, the Welsh Local Government Association was working with all Councils in Wales to plan for contingency measures due to the Welsh Government Hardship Fund nearing its end.

Councillor Hilary McGuill said that the risk of the workforce impact of schools operating in a different way (CW20a) should remain open due to the changing situation. The Senior Manager advised that this applied to where schools had been closed and would be kept under review. Similar risks on changing situations with schools (CW20 and CW24) remained open to reflect the impact on working parents and those with caring responsibilities.

In response to comments from the Chairman, the risk level on the potential for increased costs from suppliers of goods and services (CF10) reflected emerging evidence of a temporary impact on costs within the construction industry which was being monitored due to its impact on the Capital Programme. The wording on mitigating actions on the risk around the impact of increased rent arrears (CF14), would be updated following the update given to the Community, Housing & Assets Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Vicky Perfect asked about support for the health and wellbeing of the workforce during the emergency and was given examples of various initiatives by the Senior Manager.

The recommendation was moved and seconded by Councillors Patrick Heesom and Geoff Collett.

The Committee supported the Chief Executive's suggestion that the Committee receive a full update in July or August prior to specific risks being reported to Overview & Scrutiny Committees where possible, for example through regular Revenue Budget Monitoring and Workforce agenda items.

RESOLVED:

That the latest risk register and risk mitigation actions within the corporate portfolios be noted.

7. PORTFOLIO RECOVERY BUSINESS PLANS

The Chief Officer (Planning, Environment & Economy) presented the Recovery Business Plan for his portfolio, for the Committee to review the format and content as a working example. He highlighted key areas such as the resilience of various teams due to unprecedented demand to services during the emergency situation, the delivery of the Local Development Plan and the implementation of the back-office system. On income loss, he paid tribute to funding made available by the Welsh Government accessed by the Finance team.

The Chief Executive suggested that the Committee may wish to focus on the Public Protection service where resources had been in overwhelming demand during the emergency.

The Chief Officer said that whilst Environmental Health resources had been maintained in Flintshire over the years, there had been significant demand for these services. He paid tribute to the resilience within teams for dealing with these challenges and highlighted increased demand on services for flooding and town centre recovery.

When asked by the Chairman about support for town centre recovery, the Chief Officer spoke about the current recruitment process and Tactical Group work streams featured in the next agenda item.

Whilst Councillor Ian Roberts acknowledged the need to support town centres, he said that services in smaller communities were equally important to residents.

The recommendations in the report were moved and seconded by Councillors Hilary McGuill and David Healey.

It was agreed that the remaining service portfolio Recovery Business Plans would be emailed to the Committee, and a summary of each presented at the July and August meetings with presentations highlighting the main issues.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Portfolio Recovery Business Plan format and content be noted; and
- (b) That the Committee is assured by the Planning, Environment and Economy Portfolio Recovery Business Plan, and will refer any further and specific risk management work to the respective Overview and Scrutiny Committees as is necessary.

8. COMMUNITY RECOVERY

The Chief Officer (Planning, Environment & Economy) gave a presentation on work undertaken by the Flintshire Community Recovery Group, covering:

- Community Recovery - Flintshire
- Community Recovery - Joint Public Services Board with Wrexham County Borough Council
- Team Environment 1
- Opportunities that we have

Following the presentation, Councillor David Healey requested further information on the Moel Famau uplands project and spoke about the need to provide opportunities for local community groups to meet.

As requested by Councillor Marion Bateman, the Chief Officer agreed to arrange for the Woodland Strategy to be circulated to the Committee.

Councillor Paul Cunningham commended the work on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty throughout the emergency.

Following a suggestion by the Chairman, it was agreed that lead officers would be invited to the July and August meetings to discuss the work of the tactical groups on Economy and Poverty. On that basis, the recommendations were moved and seconded by Councillors Patrick Heesom and Joe Johnson.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That Members note the governance arrangements, priorities and progress undertaken so far in relation to Community Recovery; and
- (b) That the Enterprise & Regeneration Manager and Benefits Manager provide details of work on their respective tactical groups at the next two meetings.

9. REGIONAL RECOVERY COORDINATING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Chief Executive introduced a report on the Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG) which comprised strategic multi-agency partners to coordinate and implement the regional recovery strategy. As Chair of the RCG, he gave a presentation covering:

- Strategic Aims as a Partner Council
- Local Surveillance, Protection and Enforcement
- Trace and Protect Service
- Vaccination Programme
- Testing

The Chairman paid tribute to all officers involved in the response to the emergency. His comments were endorsed by Councillor Ian Roberts and Members of the Committee.

The Chief Executive responded to questions on rapid lateral flow testing, local vaccinations and the responsibilities of self-isolating. He went on to give an update on the current situation locally and nationally.

The recommendation was moved and seconded by Councillors Marion Bateman and Joe Johnson.

RESOLVED:

That the regional Recovery Coordinating Group Terms of Reference be noted.

10. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND MEETING SCHEDULE

The items for the next two meetings were:

15 July

- Summarised Recovery Business Plans for Social Services and Education & Youth; and
- Enterprise & Regeneration Manager to present on Tactical Group work to support town centres.

5 August

- Summarised Recovery Business Plans for Streetscene & Transportation and Housing & Assets; and

- Benefits Manager to present on work of the Poverty and Vulnerability Recovery Tactical Group.

In addition, the full updated Corporate Risk Register would be shared at one of those meetings together with an update on the local position. Dates of meetings and presentation slides would be circulated to the Committee.

This was moved by the Chairman and seconded by Councillor Hilary McGill.

RESOLVED:

That the agenda items for July and August be agreed as discussed.

11. ATTENDANCE BY MEMBERS OF THE PRESS

There were no members of the press in attendance.

The meeting commenced at 11am and finished at 1.05pm

.....
Chairman