

## **CABINET**

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber. Russell House, Churton Road, Rhyl on Tuesday 20th June, 2000 at 10.00 a.m.

## **PRESENT**

Councillor E.C. Edwards (Leader) D.W. Davies, I.M. German, D.M. Holder, R.W. Hughes, G.M. Kensler, D.M. Morris, E.A. Owens, A.E. Roberts, W.R. Webb, K.E. Wells and E.W. Williams.

**Observers** - Councillors M. Ll. Davies, M.A. German, R.J.R. Jones, A.J. Tobin and R. Ll. Williams.

## **ALSO PRESENT**

Chief Executive, Head of Policy, Head of Legal and Administration, Head of Accountancy and Administration Services Manager.

### **119. URGENT MATTERS**

The Leader gave notice of the following items which, in his opinion, should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100(B)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972:-

- (i) North East Wales Registration and Inspection Unit - Management Board
- (ii) Best Value Advisory Group
- (iii) W.G.L.A. - Review of S.S.A.
- (iv) Delegation to County Clare
- (v) Meeting between W.G.L.A. spokesperson on Social Affairs and Chairs and Directors of Social Services in Wales

### **120. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY LEADER**

The Leader of the Cabinet selected Councillor W.R. Webb as Deputy Leader of the Council and also indicated that Councillors W.R. Webb and D.W. Davies would continue to act as the Council's representatives on the Welsh Local Government Association.

The Leader gave a short presentation to Cabinet reminding Members of the duties and responsibilities of the Cabinet and highlighted the need for the Cabinet to work collectively to achieve their aims and objectives. Cabinet Members would need to work closely with the new Corporate Directors and Heads of Service in order to bring service provision in line with cash limited budgets. In summing up, the Leader indicated that he would be requesting the Chief Executive to draw up a list of current projects to be considered by Cabinet on 6th July 2000.

### **121. W.L.G.A./NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR WALES SEMINAR - POLITICAL STRUCTURES**

The Chief Executive referred to the above Seminar held on 9th June which aimed to share and benefit from local authorities' experiences in implementing the modernisation and scrutiny arrangements. Arising from the Seminar, the Chief Executive suggested that there was a clear need for a seminar to be arranged for Members and Officers on scrutiny arrangements which could involve the officers from Syniad/IDEA who had given reviews of the early modernising process to the Seminar on 9th June.

The Chief Executive felt that the Cabinet arrangements for Denbighshire seemed to be acceptable but the scrutiny arrangements needed further consideration. Some Councils had an overarching Scrutiny Committee which allocated subjects for examination by Scrutiny Panels thus avoiding scrutiny committees from becoming Subject Committees. The Chief Executive emphasised the need to have

protocols in place for Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees and to have a degree of delegation to individual Members of the Cabinet.

Following a brief discussion on the funding arrangements for Seminars it was:-

**RESOLVED** that the Chief Executive be authorised to make the necessary arrangements for a seminar to be held for Members and Officers on scrutiny arrangements.

## 122. **DISTRIBUTION OF PORTFOLIOS**

The Head of Policy circulated at the meeting a Cabinet Action Plan which outlined the general tasks to be undertaken by the Cabinet. The Plan would ensure that the Cabinet implemented the Council's agreed policy portfolio and the translation of the Authority's Mission Statement and Statement of Priorities into actions. With the aid of slides the Head of Policy explained the main objectives and key tasks within the Action Plan.

The Leader thanked the Head of Policy for the presentation and then announced the names of the Cabinet Members who would have lead responsibility to implement the main objectives within the Plan as follows:-

Main Objective	CABINET LEAD
<b>A. Financial</b>	
1. To achieve financial solvency.	Councillor E.A. Owens
2. To create a coherent service and financial planning system.	Councillor E.A. Owens
3. Capital Strategy.	Cabinet
4. Objective One Corporate Strategy.	Councillor D.W. Davies
5. To review Property Portfolio.	Councillor W.R. Webb
<b>B. Other</b>	
6. To implement new constitution.	Council and Modernising Panel
7. To improve service performance and service standards.	Councillor E.W. Williams
8. To review the full range of corporate agendas.	Cabinet
9. Preparation for Eisteddfod.	Councillor G.M. Kensler
10. Human Resource Strategy, including organisational development.	Councillors I.M. German and D. Holder
11. ICT and Information Strategy.	Councillor K.E. Wells
12. Develop effective partnerships.	Councillor E.C. Edwards
13. Ensuring Council has a post 16, early years, SEN and school buildings strategy.	Councillor K. E. Wells
14. Devise Tourism Strategy for the Council.	Councillor R.W. Hughes
15. Devise Leisure Strategy.	Councillor R.W. Hughes
16. Determine a strategy regarding the role of in house provision for Social Services. Determine a strategy for developing the corporate parenting role.	Councillor A.E. Roberts

In addition the Leader announced that Councillor W.R. Webb would Chair the Modernising Panel and Councillor D.M. Morris would take responsibility for the Environment Portfolio.

The Leader indicated that he did not wish the Cabinet to discuss the nominations but would be happy to meet individual Cabinet Members on their assigned responsibilities.

**123. CABINET TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS**

The Head of Policy submitted a report (previously circulated) setting out a timetable of meetings for the Cabinet to the end of the current year. The timetable involved Cabinet meeting on a fortnightly basis which would cater for the volume of work; provide for written feedback both from and to the monthly Policy Review and Scrutiny Committees and ensure that Cabinet would be able to provide effective leadership.

**RESOLVED** that the following dates for Cabinet Meetings, as amended, be approved:-

*Thursday, 6th July  
Tuesday, 18th July  
Tuesday, 1st August  
Thursday, 31st August  
Tuesday, 12th September  
Thursday, 28th September  
Monday, 9th October  
Monday, 23rd October  
Tuesday, 7th November  
Thursday, 23rd November  
Tuesday, 5th December  
Thursday, 21st December*

**124. CONFERENCES/SEMINARS**

The Head of Policy submitted the following Conferences/Seminars for Members' consideration:-

- (i) Local Business Partnerships

**RESOLVED** that the W.G.L.A. be informed that this Authority supports the setting up of local business partnerships in Wales

- (ii) Meeting with Lead Members of Education with Rosemary Butler on 14th July at Rhyader

**RESOLVED** that Councillor K.E. Wells be nominated to attend the meeting and attendance be approved for the payment of attendance allowance

- (iii) meeting with Local Authority Planning Representatives 29th June, 2000 - Cardiff

**RESOLVED** that:-

(a) Councillor D.M. Morris and a Planning Officer be nominated to attend the meeting, and

(b) attendance be approved for the payment of attendance allowance

- (v) W.L.G.A. meeting - review of S.S.A. - 3rd July 2000 - Powys

(this item was considered as a matter of urgency, notice having been given by the Leader)

**RESOLVED** that Councillor E.A. Owens be nominated to attend the meeting and attendance be approved for the payment of attendance allowance.

- (vi) meeting between W.G.L.A. spokesperson on Social Affairs and Chairs and Directors of Social Services in Wales - 30th June, 2000.

(this item was considered as a matter of urgency, notice having been given by the Leader)

**RESOLVED** that Councillor A.E. Roberts be nominated to attend the meeting and attendance be approved for the payment of attendance allowance.

**125. BEST VALUE ADVISORY GROUP**

(This item was referred to Cabinet by the Emergency Powers and Appointments Committee on 23rd May and considered as a matter of urgency, notice having been given by the Leader).

The Head of Policy sought the nomination of a substitute representative to attend meetings of the Best Value Advisory Group.

Cabinet Members felt that the lead Member on Best Value should be the appointed representative to sit on the Group and it was:-

**RESOLVED** that Councillor E.W. Williams be nominated as this Authority's representative to attend meetings of the Best Value Advisory Group.

**126. REGISTRATION AND INSPECTION UNIT**

(This item was referred to Cabinet by the Emergency Powers and Appointments Committee on 23rd May and considered as a matter of urgency, notice having been given by the Leader).

The Head of Policy sought the nomination of a representative to sit on the Management Board of the North East Wales Registration and Inspection Unit.

**RESOLVED** that Councillor A.E. Roberts be nominated as the representative to sit on the Management Board and attendance be approved for the payment of attendance allowance.

At this juncture (11.10 a.m.) the meeting adjourned for 10 minutes to allow Members to partake in refreshments.

**127. DISTRICT AUDITORS' REPORT - FINANCIAL STANDING**

Ms. Delyth Morris of the District Audit Office gave a presentation to the Cabinet on the financial standing of the Council arising from the recommendations contained within the 1998/99 Management Letter.

In taking members through the report Ms Morris, with the aid of slides, indicated that the Authority still needed to identify and approve £0.81 m of reductions; to complete an action plan and submit a recovery plan (plan to be discussed by Cabinet on 6th July, 2000).

During the presentation Ms Morris referred to the 12 recommendations within the Action Plan all of which were listed as high priority. The Auditors' overall conclusion was that the Council had to start its budget setting process much earlier so that at the beginning of a new financial year a fully agreed and supported budget was in place. Members would also have to commit themselves to supporting and implementing a robust recovery plan to address the Authority's financial problems.

Following the presentation Members took the opportunity to ask the District Auditor and his staff various questions concerning the financial standing of the Authority.

The Chief Executive summarised the current position and acknowledged the problem of closing the annual accounts and getting information on outturns. He hoped that the budget cycle would commence in September with indicative budgets being set by October. The Council and Cabinet would then need to make decisions on service delivery within cash limited budgets and those budgets would need to be monitored more effectively.

Councillor E.A. Owens thanked Mr. Ceri Stradling and Ms. Delyth Morris for their presentation.

**128. DELEGATION TO COUNTY CLARE**

(This item was referred to the Cabinet by the Emergency Powers and Appointments Committee on 23rd May, 2000 and considered as an urgent matter, notice having been given by the Leader).

The Head of Policy referred to the decision taken by the Emergency Powers and Appointments Committee on 23rd May, 2000 to develop further links with Objective 1 areas in Southwest Ireland and sought Cabinet's views on the size and composition of a delegation of Members/Officers to visit County Clare.

Councillor E.A. Owens queried which budget would be funding such a trip. The Chief Executive felt that the Economic Development Unit should be requested to identify how this and other visits to Objective 1 Regions would be funded as part of the overall European Strategy. Councillor D.W. Davies proposed seconded by Councillor R.W. Hughes that the matter be deferred to the next meeting of the Cabinet pending the receipt of the financial information referred to by the Chief Executive.

***RESOLVED ACCORDINGLY.***

**129. TEMPORARY VENUE FOR FULL COUNCIL MEETINGS DURING P.F.I. CONSTRUCTION**

The Chief Executive referred to the P.F.I. project and to the loss of the Ruthin Council Chamber for up to a period of 6 months. The other Council Chambers within the County could not accommodate all 47 Members and possible options were put forward for consideration.

Members agreed that the Council should not meet out of County and it was:-

***RESOLVED*** that the Officers be requested to make suitable arrangements for the Council to meet at the Pavilion, Llangollen (Monsanto Room), Denbigh Town Hall and Rhyl Town Hall on a rotational basis.

The Meeting concluded at 12.15 p.m.

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