

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held in the Assembly Rooms, Town Hall, Ruthin on Thursday 30th August, 2001 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT

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

Observers: Councillors S. Drew and M.Ll. Davies.

APOLOGIES

Councillor D.M. Morris.

ALSO PRESENT

Corporate Director of Resources, Financial Controller and the Legal Services Manager.

473. 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 100B(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972:-

- (i) Foot and Mouth Enquiry - Letter from the WLGA.
- (ii) Joint CLAW / WLGA Conference: Launch of Asset Management Planning Guidelines for Wales.
- (iii) Agenda Item 18 be withdrawn.
- (iv) Agenda Item 23 be withdrawn.

474. MINUTES OF THE CABINET

The Minutes of the Cabinet held on 31 July (previously circulated) were submitted.

Matters Arising:-

Item 12 Teachers - Premature Retirement Benefits: Councillor G.M. Kensler asked whether the matter was to be discussed at the meeting. The Corporate Director of Resources said a report on the item would be produced for the Cabinet meeting to be held on 13.09.2001.

Item 14 Flood Emergency Works - Design and Supervision: Councillor W.R. Webb referred to the temporary traffic lights at Pwllglas. He was concerned that the matter had not been resolved to date and enquired as to the cost to the County over the last 12 months. The Leader undertook to ask the Corporate Director of the Environment to provide a full report for the next Cabinet meeting.

RESOLVED that subject to the above the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 31 July 2001 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

475. RECRUITMENT

Councillor A.E. Roberts, the Lead Cabinet Member for Personal Services submitted the following applications for approval and said it was hoped that young people would be encouraged to apply. Councillor G.M. Kensler queried whether finance for the posts deferred from the last Cabinet meeting had been resolved. In response, Councillor E.A. Owens said that although budgets were limited, the Director of Personal Services had stressed the need for the posts:-

- (i) SO2 Occupational Therapist: Personal Services, Occupational Therapy, Prestatyn

- (ii) Sc 1 Data Input Assistant : Personal Services Admin Section, Ruthin
- (iii) Sc 1 Admin Assistant: Personal Services Admin Section Henllan - This would be advertised as a Modern Apprentice post
- (iv) Sc 1 Word Processor Operator: Personal Services Admin Section, Ruthin
- (v) PO1 Two Senior Practitioners: Personal Services Children's Services, Rhyl
- (vi) SW2-3 Social Worker Brain Injury Service: Social Work, Colwyn Bay Hospital
- (vii) Sc 2 Team Clerk to Occupational Therapy Team: Personal Services Admin

RESOLVED that the external advertisement of the above mentioned posts be approved.

476. APPOINTMENT OF NEW REPRESENTATIVE TO SERVE ON THE COUNCIL FOR EDUCATION IN WORLD CITIZENSHIP (CEWC) - CYMRU

Councillor E.C. Edwards, Leader of the Council presented the report (previously circulated) seeking Members' agreement to the nomination of a Member for consideration by the WLGA to represent them on the Council for Education in World Citizenship (CEWC) - Cymru. The Leader said Councillor T.M. Parry had been the representative on CEWC - Cymru but was not well at the present time. Members agreed the Leader send Councillor Parry the Cabinet's good wishes.

Councillor W.R. Webb suggested Councillor K.E. Wells, Lead Cabinet Member for Education and ICT be nominated.

RESOLVED that Members nominate Councillor K.E. Wells for consideration by the WLGA to represent them on the Council for Education in World Citizenship (CEWC) - Cymru.

477. INCORPORATION OF A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE TO DELIVER LEADER PLUS

Councillor E.C. Edwards, Leader of the Council presented the report (previously circulated) seeking Members' approval to the County Council's membership of a company limited by guarantee to be incorporated to deliver LEADER Plus, to nominate a representative to serve as a director of the company and to authorise the Head of Economic Regeneration to nominate an officer of his unit to act as company secretary.

The application for LEADER Plus funding by a local action group serving the rural areas of Denbighshire and Flintshire had been approved and it was necessary to make arrangements to deliver the programme by the formation of a company limited by guarantee with equal representation from the public, private and voluntary sectors.

After discussion, Members approved the report in its entirety and the Council nomination of a member to represent the Council on the new group would be brought back to a later meeting of the Cabinet.

RESOLVED accordingly.

478. WALES EUROPEAN CENTRE ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

Councillor E.C. Edwards, Leader of the Council presented the report (previously circulated) seeking Members' approval to the use of the County Council's Corporate budget to meet the cost of its annual subscription to Wales European Centre Limited. The payment of membership fees is consistent with a reduction in the payments made to the WLGA during the period 1999-2000 and 2000-2001.

Members queried both the non-payment of the subscription for the period 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 and whether other Authorities in Wales were in a similar position. After discussion, Members agreed to defer the report until more detail became available.

RESOLVED that Members:-

- (a) defer the report, and
- (b) the Financial Controller and Head of Economic Regeneration jointly provide information on the non-payment of the subscription in a further report to Cabinet.

479. ATTENDANCE AT BEST VALUE CONFERENCE 2001

Councillor E.C. Edwards, Leader of the Council presented the report (previously circulated) seeking Members' agreement to nominate one Member and one officer to represent Denbighshire County Council at the District Audit Best Value Conference due to be held on 7 November 2001 at the Millennium Stadium, Cardiff.

Councillor Edwards suggested that Councillor E.W. Williams, Lead Cabinet Member for Best Value, the Chair of Best Value Scrutiny and the Best Value Manager attend the Conference. Members agreed with Councillor A.E. Owens suggestion that the travel costs be minimised.

RESOLVED that Councillor E.W. Williams and the Chair of Best Value Scrutiny along with the Best Value Manager attend the Best Value Conference on 7 November 2001 at Cardiff.

480. REPRESENTATION ON THE COURT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WALES

Councillor E.C. Edwards, Leader of the Council presented the report by the Chairman of the Lifelong Learning Policy Review and Scrutiny Committee (previously circulated) seeking Members' agreement to reconsider Denbighshire County Council membership on the Court of the University of Wales. At the Cabinet meeting on 28.06.2001 Members agreed to a reduction from 5 to 3 Members representing Denbighshire County Council on the Court of the University of Wales. It was further agreed at the Cabinet meeting that 1 Independent, 1 Labour and 1 Cabinet Member be Denbighshire's representatives until 21.03.2002.

Councillor K.E. Wells suggested that a misunderstanding over membership had arisen at the earlier Cabinet meeting. Councillor Wells suggested the membership should cover the whole of County Council by having 2 Non-Executive Members and 1 Executive Member.

Councillor E.W. Williams suggested that Cabinet should be structured on a political balance.

RESOLVED that two Non-Executive and one Executive Member be nominated to represent Denbighshire County Council on the Court of the University of Wales.

481. REVENUE BUDGET 2001/2001

Councillor E.A. Owens, Lead Cabinet Member for Finance presented the report (previously circulated) seeking Members' consideration to the latest budget performance figures for the current financial year as detailed in the Appendix to the report and to consider necessary actions to ensure the budget was not overspent.

Councillor Owens detailed the budget pressures as set out in the Appendices. Some were recommended to be funded from the contingency fund which would then be fully allocated so if a major emergency occurred Members would need to look at the budgets across the Directorates again.

Councillor G.M. Kensler queried the Chief Executive's Department budget position. Councillor Owens said that the Chief Executive's Department had budget pressures but efficiency savings had been made and at this stage no net pressures were evident. All the budgets would be subject to a flexible review process.

Councillor W.R. Webb queried the closure of the Old Chapel, Llangollen. The Assistant Director of Culture and Leisure said the Old Chapel was a capital development and that the grant to ECTARC was unaffected.

Councillor E.W. Williams congratulated the Lead Cabinet Member for Finance and officers on all their hard work. However, he felt that not all the Directorates were working in the same way with some of the Directorates not filling vacant posts to stay within budget. This could be detrimental to service provision and could lead to further pressures, Cabinet should address the principles and ensure a uniform approach to service delivery was taken by all Directorates. Councillor Owens said Cabinet had earlier agreed to the advertisement of some vacancies in Personal Services that were essential to the delivery of services despite the budget implications.

Councillor E.A. Owens thanked the Corporate Director of Resources who had attended all the budget meetings along with the Financial Controller and said she was pleased with the number of Non-Executive Members who have attended the budget meetings.

Councillor G.M. Kensler asked for further detail on both the Elderly Residential Services loss of income and the Community Care Mental Illness client numbers referred to in the Appendix. In response the Acting Director of Personal Services said a trend had appeared over the last year or so that clients had less capital available when entering residential care homes which resulted in the loss of income to the service. The numbers entering such homes could not be forecast. Turning to the increasing numbers of clients with mental illness requiring residential care, the Acting Director of Personal Services said many of the patients from the now closed North Wales Hospital, Denbigh still reside in Denbighshire. The Acting Director of Personal Services said even greater financial contributions were required and there was a need to forge strategic partnerships to pool resources wherever possible to ensure a cost effective approach to care is achieved.

RESOLVED that Members agree the report.

482. RUTHIN TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB

Councillor W.R. Webb, Lead Cabinet Member for Property presented the report (previously circulated) seeking Members' approval to the grant of a lease to Ruthin Town Football Club to utilise the area detailed on the plan attached to the report.

Ruthin Town Football Club had approached the Council with a view to utilising the area in conjunction with existing football pitches and to provide an adequate training / playing area for the junior / youth sector of the Club. Currently the site is 'landlocked' The land would be retained by the County Council with ground maintenance and grass cutting becoming the responsibility of Ruthin Town Football Club.

RESOLVED that Members:-

- (a) *approve the grant of a lease to Ruthin Town Football Club for the use of the land hatched black on the attached plan, in conjunction with their existing pitches. The lease to be of sufficient length and in such terms as to be able to gain possession when required, to enable the development of the new proposed school. The rent to be set at £10.00 per annum and the Club to be responsible for the maintenance of the boundaries and grass cutting, and*
- (b) *the lease to contain such other terms and conditions as requested by the County Clerk.*

483. PRESTATYN: ICE CREAM PARLOUR, FFRITH BEACH FESTIVAL GARDENS

Councillor W.R. Webb, Lead Cabinet Member for Property and Councillor R W Hughes, Lead Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Tourism presented the report (previously circulated) seeking Members' approval for an abatement of rent for the Ice Cream Parlour at the Ffrith Beach Festival Gardens.

The unit was let on a five year lease from 23.05.1997 at a rent of £6,000.00 per annum. A 66% abatement of rent had been granted from 23.05.1997 to 22.05.2000 due to poor trading conditions. The tenant had requested a further abatement of rent to include the 2001 and 2002 season (up to the end of the term of the lease).

RESOLVED that Members approve the grant of a further abatement of rent of 66% for the period up to 22 May 2002, the abatement to be a personal arrangement with the tenant. This would be subject to the payment in full of any rent arrears.

484. COMMUNITIES FIRST

Councillor A.E. Roberts, Lead Cabinet Member for Personal Services presented the report (previously circulated) seeking Cabinet approval to include an additional four areas of the County within the Communities First Programme.

The National Assembly for Wales have already informed Denbighshire County Council that Rhyl West and Rhyl South West had been selected for inclusion in the Communities First Programme and further communication received had made clear that the National Assembly for Wales was prepared to consider sub-ward pockets of deprivation which met the specific criteria. Areas of Meliden, Upper Denbigh, Rhyl East and Bodelwyddan met the criteria and information on these areas has been sent to the National Assembly for Wales.

RESOLVED that Cabinet endorse the inclusion of the four areas in the Communities First Programme and required a further report once the outcome of the bid was known.

485. AUTHORISATION OF NEW INSPECTOR

Councillor A.E. Roberts, Lead Cabinet Member for Personal Services presented the report (previously circulated) seeking Cabinet approval to authorise Roger Beresford Rowett to inspect homes within Denbighshire.

RESOLVED that Members approve the authorisation of the named officer.

486. PARTNERSHIPS WITH HEALTH

Councillor A.E. Roberts, Lead Cabinet Member for Personal Services presented the report (previously circulated) seeking Cabinet endorsement to ask the Social Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee to assist in the development of policies related to strategic partnerships with Health Services.

The National Assembly for Wales has clear expectations that Social Services and Health need to work in partnership to achieve better outcomes for local people.

Councillor E.A. Owens said it was most important that Members understood the expanding role of both the County Council and Councillors. Scrutiny Committee needed a clear perception of the role and support would be required for individual Councillors for their enhanced role. Councillor Owens said she hoped clear and definite training proposals would be provided for Councillors, with funds set aside to achieve this. Councillor G.M. Kensler said a link with ICT would be required. Councillor D.M. Holder agreed training courses needed to be provided.

RESOLVED that Members agree that Cabinet ask the Social Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee develop policies related to strategic partnerships with Health Services and that there be a report back to Cabinet in 3 months.

487. DISTRICT AUDIT REPORT OF REHABILITATION SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE IN CONWY AND DENBIGHSHIRE

Councillor A.E. Roberts, Lead Cabinet Member for Personal Services presented the report (previously circulated) seeking acceptance of the District Audit report and requesting assistance from the Social Services Policy Review and Scrutiny Committee in developing an appropriate response. The Audit of Rehabilitation Services for Older People in Conwy and Denbighshire (from September to October 2000) looked at services across Social Services and Health.

Councillor E.A. Owens said a strategy and comprehensive plan for the Cabinet would be required within 3 months and a plan should be made available to Members within a few days. The Acting Corporate Director of Personal Services confirmed a detailed plan could be produced for Members within the time limit requested.

Councillor G.M. Kensler said she particularly welcomed the rehabilitation schemes at S6 and the development of community rehabilitation teams as the focus-one-stop-shop for a range of services at S8 within the document.

RESOLVED that Cabinet accept the District Audit report and request the Social Services Policy Review and Scrutiny Committee to develop an appropriate policy response with a report back to Cabinet in 3 months..

488. MA CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Councillor I.M. German, Lead Cabinet Member for Human Resources presented the report (previously circulated) seeking Members' approval to offer up to 5 places on an MA Change Management programme being conducted by Anglesey County Council in conjunction with Liverpool John Moore's University. By joining the Anglesey programme, Denbighshire County Council could pilot the scheme, tailored to meet the needs of local government, to evaluate the benefits for a possible Denbighshire corporate MA in the future.

***RESOLVED** that Cabinet approve the places on Anglesey's programme this year and the £5,000 cost be borne centrally.*

489. CHRISTMAS LEAVE ARRANGEMENTS

Councillor I.M. German, Lead Cabinet Member for Human Resources presented the report (previously circulated) seeking Members' approval to the proposed Christmas leave arrangements for 2001.

***RESOLVED** that Cabinet approve the additional half day's statutory leave for Monday 24 December 2001 in addition to the half day's leave traditionally granted to employees by the Council.*

490. GCAT2 AGREEMENT

The report was withdrawn.

491. NORTH WALES INDOOR ATHLETICS FACILITY

Councillor R.W. Hughes, Lead Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Tourism presented the report (previously circulated) seeking Cabinet endorsement of a decision by officers not to pursue a Sportlot bid for capital grant to develop a new North Wales Indoor Athletics Facility in Denbighshire. The closing date for submission was 20 August 2001.

***RESOLVED** that Cabinet endorse the decision not to submit a bid for Sportlot grant to develop an indoor athletics facility for North Wales.*

492. POLICY AGREEMENTS

The Corporate Director of Resources reported verbally on the current position on Policy Agreements and the individual targets agreed with the National Assembly for Wales. The Corporate Director of Resources distributed an update to Members which included a Draft copy of the Policy Agreement and the Draft Protocol for Evaluating Performance. Scrutiny Committee had discussed Policy Agreements in July 2001 but it was suggested that individual Scrutinees should take the opportunity of a final review in their September meetings, ensuring the policy and resource implications were understood. The WLGA and National Assembly for Wales had over the last 6 months produced a draft document "Consultation on Protocol for Evaluating Performance Against Policy Agreement Targets and Commitments".

The Corporate Director of Resources asked Members to agree a response to the Draft Protocol on the 13 September 2001 as well as discussing the Fundamental Themes included in the Draft Policy Agreement. Individual Scrutiny Committees would consider the documents by mid September 2001. Members could also decide how the funding of £327k would be utilised at the Cabinet meeting on 25.09.2001, as well as finalising the Policy Agreement.

***RESOLVED** that Members agree the report.*

493. FOOT AND MOUTH - ENQUIRY

The Leader, Councillor E.C. Edwards presented the paper (circulated at the meeting) seeking Members' views on the Government's intention to hold inquiries into the Foot and Mouth outbreak. The Government's preferred option was to hold specific inquiries rather than a public inquiry.

Councillor G.M. Kensler agreed the need for an inquiry and pressed for a public inquiry. Councillor E.A. Owens said if a public inquiry was the first choice the WLGA would need to consult again with the 22 Authorities in Wales.

Councillor E.W. Williams said whilst the letter was vague, Authorities should press for a public inquiry but if support for this was not forthcoming then a specific inquiry should be held.

RESOLVED that Members agree the Leader write to the WLGA stating Denbighshire's preference for a public inquiry but accepting a specific inquiry if that was the only available option.

494. JOINT CLAW / WLGA CONFERENCE - LAUNCH OF ASSET MANAGEMENT PLANNING GUIDELINES FOR WALES

The Leader, Councillor E.C. Edwards presented the paper (circulated at the meeting) seeking Members' agreement for attendance at the Joint CLAW / WLGA Conference on the Launch of Asset Management Planning Guidelines for Wales to be held on 13 September 2001 at the Hotel Metropole, Llandrindod Wells.

After discussion Members agreed to send an officer rather than a Member to the Conference. A Cabinet meeting to review budgets was planned for that day.

RESOLVED that one officer attend the Conference to be held on 13 September 2001.

At this juncture (11.10 a.m) the meeting adjourned for 15 minutes to allow Members to participate in refreshments.

495. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 8, 9 and 10 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

496. SINGLE TENDER APPROVAL

The report was withdrawn.

497. CULTURE AND LEISURE ZERO BUDGET 2001-2002

Councillor R.W. Hughes, Lead Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Tourism presented the report (previously circulated) seeking Members' consideration of the financial position of Culture and Leisure in the context of the zero base exercise, to ratify the remedial actions taken to countermand the projections for 2001-2002 and make recommendations for the future. Councillor Hughes stressed to Members that none of the facilities in Denbighshire had been closed but options were detailed in the report which could secure sufficient savings.

The Leader suggested the formation of a task group to consider the way forward. Councillor E.A. Owens said this would be useful to formulate the next year's budget but would not resolve the current budget pressures. The Corporate Director of Resources agreed and recommended the validation of this year's budget pressures but the formation of a task group to consider the services was essential for next year.

Councillor K.E. Wells said Local Authorities provide services on behalf of the community which are not always profitable.

Councillor G.M. Kensler congratulated both Councillor R.W. Hughes and E.A. Owens on the paper. Councillor Kensler reminded Members that Libraries in Denbighshire already spend the least on the purchase of books in Wales.

Councillor W.R. Webb agreed with the need for a task group to consider the way forward. Councillor Webb said more social problems are created when leisure facilities are diminished. Turning to the One Stop Shops, Councillor Webb suggested that these should be managed by the Chief Executive's

Department as they were not compatible with Culture and Leisure. Councillor E.W. Williams said the Corwen One Stop Shop situated in the Library worked well.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) *Members note the implications from the zero based exercise of the Culture and Leisure budget, and*
- (b) *a task group be established and report back to Cabinet by November 2001.*

498. REVENUES DIVISION REVISED STRUCTURE

Councillor E.A. Owens, the Lead Cabinet Member for Finance presented the report (previously circulated) seeking Members' agreement to the revised management structure of the Revenues functions based in Russell House as part of the response to the operational problems previously identified. This included the transfer of the Housing Rents function to the Housing Department.

The Financial Controller reported that Cabinet had previously agreed to increase the budget and staffing in Revenues and also requested the Resources Scrutiny Committee to review the recovery of the services involved. Part of this exercise had been a review of the management structure of the services which was felt to have a lack of focus on reserves other than Benefits. The proposed structure would improve the focus on other services. It was felt that the Housing Rents should be part of the Housing Service and that the support functions would be better placed with the Head of Exchequer. The proposed structure would devolve the work to the teams which would lead to better management and supervision of the services.

Councillor D.M. Holder asked whether the revised structure would lead to additional costs. In response the Financial Controller said this would not incur additional costs at the top level of the structure.

RESOLVED that Members:-

- (a) *approve the proposed management structure detailed in the Appendix, and*
- (b) *approve the transfer of the Housing Rents service to the Housing Department.*

The meeting concluded at 11.55 a.m.
