

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held in the Town Hall, Ruthin on Tuesday 5 February 2002 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT

Councillors E.C. Edwards (Leader), 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.LI. Davies, G. Jones, M.M. Jones, K.N. Hawkins and P.O. Williams.

APOLOGIES

Councillor I.M. German.

ALSO PRESENT

Chief Executive, Corporate Director of Resources, Financial Controller and the County Clerk.

WELCOME

The Leader welcomed Ian Miller to the post of Chief Executive and his first Cabinet meeting and wished him well in Denbighshire. Ian Miller thanked the Leader and Cabinet for their good wishes.

1 URGENT MATTERS

The Leader of the Council 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) Papers for information regarding Concessionary Fare Scheme - Agenda Item 10 Cabinet 29.02.2002, and
- (ii) The Leader thanked Members and officers who had participated in the Boundary Commission meeting at Llangollen on 30.02.2002 and said the presentations had been very well received. As a result of the meeting, the Chief Executive said he would be writing to the Boundary Commission on three points:
 - (a) At the meeting, a number of people in favour of moving the Llangollen and Llantysilio boundary said the reasons included services only being provided from Rhyl. This point would be challenged as Denbighshire operated a One Stop Shop in Llangollen, the Cabinet met regularly in Llangollen and face to face services were provided where necessary by Social Services.
 - (b) Health services - issues relating to the National Health Service should not drive decisions on Local Government boundaries. In time there would be a Local Health Board for Denbighshire. The Wrexham Maelor Hospital also served communities such as Bala and Dolgellau as well as Llangollen.
 - (c) The Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC) reported that the final report would be published at the end of March / early April. The LGBC would be asked to adhere to the original extended deadline of February if at all possible as the message from all attendees at the meeting had been the need for an early decision.

2 MINUTES OF THE CABINET

The Minutes of the Cabinet held on 29 January 2002 (previously circulated) were submitted.

Item 10 - Concessionary Fare Scheme: Councillor D.M. Morris provided an update to the report. A Wales-wide leaflet, a letter and paper for information was provided for Members. Councillor Morris emphasised that the passes should be available from April 2002.

Item 13 - Revenue Budget: Councillor E.A. Owens confirmed that a letter had been received from Edwina Hart AM, Minister for Finance, Local Government and Communities confirming a £232k special grant adjustment on the 2001-2002 settlement. The Leader said a letter of thanks had been sent to Edwina Hart AM.

Announcement - Councillor E.W. Williams requested that his statement be included in full in the minutes: "As a member of a politically balanced cabinet & believe in inclusive policies I resign my portfolio held on the cabinet.

The cabinet system has been agreed to be inclusive, unfortunately persistent discrimination & abuse by Independent, Labour & Conservative members lead me to believe that the county policy is not being served well.

I shall retain my seat on the Cabinet to give a critical voice in the decision making process & will only take up a portfolio when reassurances are made that an inclusive policy is upheld".

RESOLVED that subject to the above, the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 29 January 2002 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

3 BUDGET 2002/2003

Councillor E.A. Owens, Lead Cabinet Member for Finance presented the report (previously circulated) seeking Members' consideration and agreement of the revenue budget proposals for 2002/2003 and agree the recommendation of the proposals to Council on 12 February 2002.

The Financial Controller asked Members to consider Appendix 2 and said the starting position for 2002/2003 was shown in column 3. He mentioned the non-recurring items of £190k allocated to Directorates from the Contingency fund in the current year only. Inflation had been split amongst the Directorates. Appendix 3 of the report detailed the new burdens which contained few changes from earlier papers. Appendix 3 also detailed potential underfunding of the teachers threshold payments which would be monitored closely during the year with a claim for additional NAW funding possible. The Service Improvements shown at column 8 had been considered by Scrutiny Committees and previously by Cabinet. Certain amendments / new issues previously considered by Cabinet were shown in italics including an annual contribution to a fund for special events e.g. for the 2006 Urdd Eisteddfod, while arrangements for international links and the potential full impact of Members' allowances were covered.

The Chief Executive reminded Members that it was important for the Corporate Priorities to be taken into account. The Priorities at Appendix 4 were for the current financial year and would be updated for the County Council meeting. The new Priorities would reflect the Cabinet's priorities for 2002/2003.

Councillor W.R. Webb, Lead Cabinet Member for Property congratulated Members and Officers on the paper. He questioned where Denbighshire appeared on the school spending league tables and whether consideration should be given at this time to increase funding to the schools' delegated budgets.

Councillor K.E. Wells, Lead Cabinet for Education and ICT said Denbighshire had been 19th in the school spending league tables and to be placed further up the table would take a large injection of money. Denbighshire would however meet the threshold payments and other pressures in full. A rise in the Council Tax to increase the schools' delegated budget would need to be balanced against other considerations.

Councillor E.A. Owens, Lead Cabinet Member for Finance said the threshold and contingency payments were in one fund. Any reallocation of priorities would be brought to Cabinet for consideration. District Audit have instructed the Authority to build reserves of £1m per year from the next financial year to a prudent level which is at least £3m.

Councillor D.M. Holder, Lead Cabinet Member for Training said he sympathised with the need for education services to be well funded but suggested that this funding should not always be paid for from Council tax increases. It would be beneficial to keep the Council tax increase to a minimum.

Councillor R.W. Hughes, Lead Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Tourism said education faced difficult problems, in particular more funding was required for the social and psychological care of children before they were taught in mainstream schools. The Corporate Director of Lifelong Learning said Educational Psychologists would be employed and funds have been passported into the base budget for specialist staff to be appointed. Schools purchase from the behavioural support unit when required.

Councillor E.W. Williams said education was important and Denbighshire's results were good. All Authorities aimed to be at the top of the performance league tables. Denbighshire and its schools should formulate a partnership for the benefit of the schools. The Denbighshire figures contained in the spending league tables include transport figures whereas some of the other Local Authorities do not include their transport figures.

Councillor G.M. Kensler, Lead Cabinet Member for the Welsh Language welcomed the comments regarding the Education budget. With regard to the Corporate Priorities item C1.3 'Implement Strategies to maximise income opportunities', based on the Price Is Right document from the Audit Commission concerning the sale of assets to raise funds, the outcome of such asset sales would need to be considered in the light of any impact on services. Councillor Kensler also mentioned the Educational Psychologist posts approved at the last Cabinet meeting and asked whether the delay in recruitment would have an adverse effect on the service. Councillor E.A. Owens, Lead Cabinet Member for Finance said if the schools' delegated budget provision was raised this would help with the Educational Psychologist provision.

Councillor E.W. Williams suggested that Cabinet produce an outline partnership between Denbighshire Education Department and Denbighshire schools. Councillor K.E. Wells, Lead Cabinet Member for Lifelong Learning said the dialogue between the Denbighshire Heads Federation, Members and officers was good and the new LMS post would take forward the local management of schools' budgets. Councillor Williams said this should be a noted process to ensure all Council Members were aware of the issues.

Councillor W.R. Webb reminded Members that because of the legacy of Clwyd County Council, Denbighshire had been at the bottom of the schools' spending league tables. He suggested consideration be given to an increase of a further 1% on the Council Tax to enable approximately £250k extra to be added to the schools' delegated budget.

The Chief Executive reminded Members that Denbighshire's performance results were generally good and that extra funding for schools would not necessarily improve on this performance.

Councillor R.W. Hughes, Lead Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Tourism said progress had been made with the CROW funds. Councillor Hughes said as the Cabinet met on a fortnightly basis she supported the £15k allocated to Cabinet Support.

Councillor Hughes also mentioned C1.3 of the Corporate Priorities in relation to the Culture and Leisure Department, which in the main provided non-statutory services. It was essential to have a marketing post within the Department to market Denbighshire.

Councillor E.A. Owens, Lead Cabinet Member for Finance detailed part of the document. The 'hypothecation' figure for CROW funding was £102k. Joint working between the Environment Directorate and the Culture and Leisure Department was required. The funding of the service could be considered further during the course of the year when additional funding may be possible from the £1m contingency, provided progress was made regarding joint working proposals. With regard to the Highways Severe Weather Response Team item, this had been considered by the Scrutiny Panel but no allocation for any improvements to additional expenditure would be included at this stage.

The CCTV contract was recommended for increase by £30k to meet current commitments as this was a recurring maintenance item. With regard to the Social Services Community Agency costs, these would need to be absorbed during the year.

The Head of Economic Regeneration had reported that Objective 1 required capital rather than revenue funding. Therefore, with the exception of the CCTV contract, the other bids would not be supported.

Councillor G.M. Kensler, Lead Cabinet Member for the Welsh Language asked Councillor K.E. Wells for figures on the provision of Educational Psychologists. Councillor Kensler supported joint working, for example with the Health Authorities. Councillor Kensler reminded Members that Denbighshire did not currently have a full time officer with responsibility for the Welsh Language.

The Chief Executive asked for Members' agreement to the amended budget paper being presented to County Council on 12 February 2002 with the final budget report being produced for County Council on 26 February 2002. Included in the paper for County Council on 12 February 2002 would be the breakdown of the proposed further increase to the delegated budget for schools. The Chief Executive asked for Cabinet agreement to put forward 2 options for increases to the schools' delegated budget within the paper to be discussed by County Council on 12 February 2002.

Councillor W.R. Webb, Lead Cabinet Member for Property supported the inclusion of a possible further increase to the schools' delegated budget and said County Council should take the decision. Members agreed.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) *Cabinet confirm acceptance of the principles and objectives which have governed the budget-setting process;*
- (b) *the detailed allocation outlined in Appendices 2 and 3 attached to the report are accepted as the framework for the budget for 2002/2003, and*
- (b) *the budget paper is recommended for discussion at the Council meeting on 12 February 2002 together with consideration of a possible further increase in the schools' delegated budget funded by a small increase in Council Tax.*

The meeting concluded at 11.10 p.m.

REPORT TO CABINET

AGENDA ITEM NO: 3

CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR E C EDWARDS, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

DATE: 14 FEBRUARY 2002

SUBJECT: REPRESENTATION ON THE COURT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WALES

1. DECISION SOUGHT

To consider the re-nomination of the current Members representing the County Council on the Court of the University of Wales for the next three year term of office from 1 April 2002 to 31 March 2005.

2. REASONS FOR SEEKING DECISION

Cabinet Members will recall considering at their meeting on 20 December 2001, nominations for three Members to represent Denbighshire County Council on the Court of the University of Wales.

At that meeting, it was agreed that the names of Councillors M.LI. Davies, N. Hugh-Jones and W.G. Thomas be submitted.

The County Clerk, having submitted the above names to the University of Wales, subsequently received a further letter informing the Council that the present period of office of the Council's three representatives would terminate on 31 March 2002 and that the next term of office would be for the three year period 1 April 2002 to 31 March 2005.

If Members agree, the University are quite happy to accept the names of Councillors M.LI. Davies, N. Hugh-Jones and W.G. Thomas as this Council's representatives for the new period of office. However, they are seeking this Council's confirmation of that.

3. COST IMPLICATION

Approved Duty

4. FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

N/A

5. CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT

All Members
Full Council 27 November 2001
Previously considered by Cabinet on 20 December 2001

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS INCLUDING CORPORATE

N/A

7. RECOMMENDATION

That Members consider the re-nomination of Councillors M.LI. Davies, N. Hugh-Jones and W.G. Thomas as Denbighshire County Council's representatives on the Court of the University of Wales for the next three year term of office from 1 April 2002 to 31 March 2005.

CE - IKH

REPORT TO CABINET**AGENDA ITEM****NO: 4****CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR E C EDWARDS, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL****DATE: 14 February 2002****SUBJECT: Small Towns and Villages Enterprise Initiative****1 DECISION SOUGHT**

The Welsh Development Agency's Small Towns and Villages Enterprise Initiative which has benefited the Dee Valley is being rolled out to further communities in North Wales. The report seeks to confirm the identification of Ruthin as the Council's next STVEI priority and Denbigh as the subsequent STVEI priority.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

Ruthin has been identified as an eligible candidate for the STVEI initiative and the Agency has offered to fund 75% of the costs of a post to serve Ruthin. Ruthin has been identified on account of the need to encourage business start ups, a diversification of the housing and the opportunities arising from investment in the development area being created at Glasdir.

The designation of Ruthin will be an important step for the business regeneration of the town. The designation is for the County Council ward of Ruthin and will require the establishment of an Action Group to take the work forward as in the Dee Valley. The Group will be led from the business sector and will involve local business representatives as well as the Town Council and County Councillors.

The Agency has agreed, in principle, a scheme up to the end of November 2004 with the Agency providing an estimated £21,000 per annum with the County Council providing the remaining costs including support costs. These sums have been provided for in the Economic Regeneration budget.

The Agency has also, in principle, agreed to support the designation of Denbigh to enable access to the STVEI for the town. The Business Group in Denbigh have been successful in obtaining Objective One grant for a project which complements STVEI. Further discussions with the WDA will be required to determine the most effective working arrangements for delivery of the two projects in the town and will be the subject of a further report.

3 COST IMPLICATIONS

These are contained within the Economic Regeneration budget.

4 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

It will be necessary to contain all costs from this proposal within the funding available which should be clearly earmarked for this purpose.

5 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

I have consulted with the WDA, the Denbighshire Enterprise Agency and representatives of Ruthin Town Council who have supported the proposal. Local Members have also been consulted.

6 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

The proposal will help take forward the Economic Development's Strategy, the Culture and Tourism Strategies as well as helping with the evolving Community strategies.

7 RECOMMENDATION

To approve the establishment of a Ruthin Town STVEI and the nomination of the three Ruthin County Councillors onto the STVEI Business Action Group, and the designation of Denbigh to enable access to STVEI for the town.

REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR E C EDWARDS, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

DATE: 14 FEBRUARY 2002

SUBJECT: Wales / Ireland Interreg IIIA Programme

1 DECISION SOUGHT

Cabinet approval to proceed with the development of the Interreg project proposals the first of which are listed at Annex A and consent to continue to develop Denbighshire's relationship with Counties Kildare and Carlow in Ireland in particular. To agree that further project approval be obtained through the Council's Objective One Committee.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

2.1 The Wales/Ireland Interreg IIIA programme was officially approved by the European Commission on 23 November 2001 and the launch is being planned for February 2002. The National Assembly for Wales will implement the programme through a system of approximately three bidding rounds per annum and the first closing date for applications is likely to be in April.

2.2 Given this timescale, the Council needs to progress with projects as a matter of priority. The projects listed at Annex A have been developed as a result of identified need in Denbighshire and as a result of a positive response from our Irish contacts and should be regarded in the first group of projects.

2.3 All Interreg IIIA projects have to have at least one Irish partner, so identifying partners is crucial to the success of the programme in Denbighshire. Council officers have visited equivalent officers in Counties Kildare and Carlow and further progress was made when the Leader of Denbighshire County Council accompanied officers on a visit to County Kildare in November. [please see a note on the visit at Annex B]

3 COST IMPLICATIONS

Interreg IIIA can be an important source of funding for Denbighshire. There is almost 30 million euros available in total until 2006, approximately 30 million euros for the seven eligible counties of Wales. Importantly the grant intervention rate is a maximum of 75%. The remaining 25% of project costs will be financed by the project sponsor and this match funding can be found from the private, voluntary or public sectors. The maximum the Council would have to pay is 25% but joint funds will be sought in all instances from other partners.

4 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

Any match funding requirements by the Council will need to be identified in due course and considered by the Capital Projects group or as part of future year's budget setting exercises as appropriate.

5 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

The North West Wales Interreg Co-ordinator is responsible for promoting and consulting on the Interreg programme in the region. A press advert and a leaflet have been published to promote the programme. I have held discussions with the Lead Member for Culture and Tourism and with the wider Objective One partnership as well as representatives of County Kildare and County Carlow who are wholly keen to see this programme progressed.

6 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

Involvement with the Interreg programme will assist the Council's developing Culture and Tourism Strategies, Economic Regeneration Strategy and Objective One Strategy.

7 RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1** In light of the good relationship, Denbighshire County Council has begun to develop with Counties Kildare and Carlow, and the necessity of finding Irish partners for Interreg, I recommend that Cabinet gives its approval for officials to continue the process of partnership building. I also recommend that Cabinet gives its consent to the continued development of the project proposals listed in Annex A.

ED ~ GE

INTERREG IIIA PROJECT SUMMARIES

1. RHYL – ATHY LINK

Rhyl and Athy are two towns of significant deprivation in the Wales/Ireland Interreg IIIA area. They share similar difficulties of unemployment, low incomes, poor level of skills and social problems, some of which can be addressed through joint action funded by Interreg. It is envisaged that County Kildare and Denbighshire County Council develop joint bids to add value to the social economy businesses of the two towns and to encourage social inclusion within the two communities. The project will form a cross-border grouping to facilitate economic, environmental and social integration and regeneration in Rhyl and Athy and it will aim to empower local communities, contribute towards the diversification of the economy and develop skills of local people. The first phase of the project will be a feasibility study of the socio-economic needs and opportunities of the two towns. The bid will benefit the two communities not only through specific action, but also by allowing representatives to share experiences, understanding and best practice.

2. GARDEN ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

This is a tourism project designed to increase tourism numbers and enhance the economy of Ruthin in Denbighshire and Ballitore in County Kildare. It will be a joint action bid to refurbish and develop the grounds of Nant Clwyd House in Ruthin and the Mary Ledbetter House in Ballitore. Nant Clwyd House is a building with tremendous unrealised potential. It occupies a central position in Ruthin's most architecturally attractive and unspoilt street. Central to any proposed restoration of the site is the garden, which could add an extra dimension to a multifaceted tourism attraction. To achieve its aims the project will carry out a feasibility study into the restoration proposals of both sites, outlining the various options for development. The study will also assess the impact of the restoration on the economy of the two towns and the surrounding areas. The project will facilitate the establishment of working groups to assist in the implementation of the project and to steer the restoration work through to completion.

3. ICT HERITAGE INTERPRETATION SCHEME

The project will build on and enhance the tourism potential of two major heritage monuments by using innovative ICT techniques to interpret the sites. The remains of the 13th century Valle Crucis Abbey in Llangollen and the Moone High Cross set in the remains of Moone Abbey in County Kildare are two picturesque sites that are little visited by tourists. The ICT element will recreate the two sites by using a virtual reality system. A pilot project has already been successfully tested at Tintern Abbey in South Wales. The facilities will be developed to be as interactive as possible so that visitors feel involved. The project will fund joint marketing and promotional campaigns once the sites have been developed and will also explore methods of increasing visitor numbers by, in the case of Denbighshire, improving transportation links between Valle Crucis and Llangollen.

4. RIVER INTERPRETATION SCHEME

The scheme will attempt to secure increased visitor numbers to Denbighshire and an eligible area of Ireland by using rivers as a theme. The project will develop and improve tourism and heritage sites along a river and link them together in an innovative interpretation scheme. The river will be used as a storyboard and each development along the river will feature an historic site of interest or a recreational activity linked to the overall interpretation. In addition to attracting visitors, the project is intended to promote interest among the community and get local people involved in developing and enhancing the natural environment. The project has potential as a sub-regional scheme that would benefit and link the North Wales Interreg area to the Mid East Interreg region in Ireland.

NOTE ON THE VISIT TO COUNTY KILDARE, 22-24 NOVEMBER 2001

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The visit was arranged with the intention of pursuing Interreg links with County Kildare and to discuss and visit potential projects. It was also an opportunity for the Leader of Denbighshire County Council to forge links with councillors in Kildare, in particular in the town of Athy, which has been identified as a possible project partner for Rhyl.
- 1.2 The delegates were Councillor Elwyn Edwards, Leader of the Denbighshire County Council, Gareth Evans, Head of Economic Regeneration and Dyfan Sion, Assistant European Officer.

2. Background

- 2.1 Denbighshire has been accepted into the Interreg IIIA programme under Article 10(2) of the programme guidelines, commonly known as the adjacency rule. As a condition of its inclusion, no more than 20% of programme expenditure can be incurred in the county. The grant intervention rate is 75% and there will be a total of approximately 30 million euros available for the eligible parts of Wales.
- 2.2 The draft Programme has been submitted to the European Commission for approval and a decision is expected in the next few weeks. The Assembly is currently working on the programme complement, this will have to be formally approved within 3 months of the Programme's approval. The formal launch of the programme is likely to take place in February 2002.
- 2.3 In anticipation of the launch of Interreg IIIA, Council officers have started to form project ideas using the draft priorities and measures as a guide. Officers have made contact with their equivalent officers in Counties Kildare, Carlow and Meath. County Kildare in particular has been identified as a possible partner in the Interreg programme and officers have had regular contact with the Director of Community and Enterprise for the County.

3. The Visit

- 3.1 The delegation met the County Manager of Kildare Mr Niall Bradley, the Finance Director, the Economic Development officer and the Director of Community and Enterprise. The group engaged in a discussion about the aims of the visit and also about the potential ties between the two counties.
- 3.2 The group received a presentation on Irish local government. The group discussed the differences between the Welsh and Irish systems, the role of the County Manager, and the role of members in the respective systems. County Kildare operated Area Committees, based on electoral areas, where local members would tackle issues concerning the locality. A discussion took place on members' allowances and Cllr Edwards explained that the National Assembly was about to rule on new arrangements for Wales. The allowance system in Ireland is based on the size of the Council and members' allowance is dependent on 80% attendance. The trend in Ireland was that members were becoming full-time politicians.
- 3.3 The group discussed potential Interreg projects between the two counties. The following ideas were discussed:
- Nant Clwyd House garden link - photographs of the garden were distributed. Kildare Council own an old Quaker house in Ballitore which has a wild garden behind the premises. It was agreed that this had the potential to become an

Interreg project. Willie Carroll made arrangements for the delegates to view the site later in the day.

- Valle Crucis Abbey - it was suggested that this could link with the Moone High Cross, a famous granite cross found in the south of Kildare and located in a ruined monastery.
- Rivers Clwyd and Dee - Willie Carroll was shown photographs of the two rivers at specific points within Denbighshire. He commented that there was potential in developing a project linking one, or both rivers, with the river Liffey.
- Kildare have two forest sites they wish to develop for tourism purposes. Gareth Evans suggested that Denbighshire could provide a match - probably Clocaenog.

3.4 The group discussed the economic development role of both authorities. In Kildare the role and responsibilities included:

- the management of the Council's business sites and land;
- co-ordination of the various agencies responsible for promoting Kildare;
- managing business parks' development and construction, including appointing site managers;
- development of integrated framework plans with consultants, to include 20 year vision for towns, identifying opportunities for development and maximising resources;
- attracting higher value jobs through the marketing and promotion of Kildare abroad, making it an attractive location for business and professional people.

3.5 County Kildare does not have business start up sites where it needs them. Gareth Evans suggested that Interreg could help by providing funding for maintenance and marketing of new sites. It was mentioned that Denbighshire could provide a match for Kildare if the county was to develop any new SME start up sites.

3.6 Willie Carroll accompanied the delegates to the Mary Leadbeater House in Ballitore, an old Quaker house and garden that had been identified as a possible partner for the Nant Clwyd House garden and to the Moone High Cross that had potential as a possible partner for a mutual matching project at Valle Crucis. The visit to Ballitore was particularly useful. Behind the house was a large undeveloped plot with unused units. It was agreed that this could be a good match for development at Nant Clwyd.

3.7 The group met Carlow's Director of Community and Enterprise. County Carlow, like Denbighshire, is new to the Interreg programme and Carlow would be eager to work with Denbighshire on Interreg projects if areas of co-operation could be found. The Denbighshire delegation agreed to keep in contact with Carlow.

3.8 The delegation met representatives of Athy Town Council, also in attendance were County Councillors, the local member of parliament, a representative of the chamber of trade and a member of the national training authority. The Chair of the council welcomed the Denbighshire delegation and expressed his hope for closer ties that could lead to joint initiatives between Athy and Rhyl. Cllr Edwards thanked the Chair and spoke of the existing links between Ireland and Wales and of the need to make the most of the opportunity offered by the Interreg programme.

4. Action

- 4.1** Representatives of Carlow, Kildare and Athy Town Council were invited to visit Denbighshire. Denbighshire Council officers will make the necessary arrangements once a date has been agreed.
- 4.2** Officers agreed to list some of the priorities for Rhyl and Athy so that work could start on project development. It was also agreed that some work should be done on developing project ideas into firm project descriptions.

REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER : COUNCILLOR E C EDWARDS, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

DATE : 14 FEBRUARY 2002

SUBJECT : Business Connect Denbighshire Steering Group

1. DECISION SOUGHT

To seek Cabinet approval to the establishment of a Business Connect Steering Group and to nominate 3 Members to represent the Council on the Group.

2. REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

The County Council, the Welsh Development Agency, ELWa and Denbighshire Enterprise Agency are partners in Business Connect. Business Connect is a National Assembly for Wales initiative to improve the delivery of business support services to SME's.

Business Connect North Wales, a major source of funding for Business Connect, is anxious to ensure private sector input in to the delivery of this service. All Councils in North Wales are, therefore, being encouraged to establish Steering Groups to involve the private sector. Whilst the long term future of Business Connect is uncertain, it is prudent to consider establishing such a Steering Group. A suggested Terms of Reference is attached as Appendix 1.

It is suggested that the Steering Groups be established to include private sector representatives, an officer of both WDA and ELWa and a nomination from the Cabinet. County Council officers would attend in an advisory capacity. In terms of private sector representation, it is suggested that the County Advisory Board, Federation of Small Business and the Objective 1 Members Partnership will be invited to nominate.

3. COST IMPLICATIONS

No cost implications, Business Connect North Wales will provide budget.

4. FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

Any travel etc. costs for the Council representative will need to be contained within the relevant budget for members travel costs

5. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

Welsh Development Agency, ELWa and Denbighshire Enterprise Agency, the Corporate Director of the Environment and the Head of Economic Regeneration all support the report.

6. IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

The Business Connect Steering Group will assist the County Council in meeting the targets outlined in its Economic Development Strategy.

7. RECOMMENDATION

I recommend that Cabinet approve the establishment of the Business Connect Steering Group and nominate three Members to represent the County Council thereon.

ED ~ GE ~ DM

Draft Terms of Reference for Business Connect Denbighshire Steering Group

The key purpose of the Steering Group is to help ensure that Business Connect Denbighshire achieves its objective of continuously improving the business support service received by local SMEs. The twin stands by which Business Connect seeks this improvement are:

- through providing an effective gateway to all business services for indigenous SMEs; and
- by encouraging and assisting the partners to work in a co-ordinated way to plan, promote and deliver a cohesive business support function.

Business Connect North Wales provides annual funding through a contract with Denbighshire County Council for core Business Connect operations. These include:

- co-ordination of the business support function in the County, primarily through the work of the Co-ordinator and County Operational Teams;
- the operations of local Walk-in Centres and IT Centre;
- enquiry handling and information provision within the centres and via the 08457 number, web-site and e-mail;
- delivery of Business Connect front line business support;
- Business Connect funded staff training;
- Business Connect funded marketing and promotion.

A key role of the Steering Group is to advise the Authority on the optimum disposition of these funds. Additional roles are to:

1. Agree plans and budgets for the delivery of the Business Connect service in the County, that meet local need.
2. Monitor delivery of the Business Connect service through regular feedback and reports from the County Operational Team and the Co-ordinator.
3. Monitor performance in order to secure a high quality business support service to the business customer.
4. Advise on the effective operation of the local Business Connect Walk-in Centres and IT Centre and of the Business Connect County Operational team.
5. Monitor market intelligence regarding support needs within the County and develop local responses and / or proposals for local, regional or national initiatives.
6. Encourage and support good working relationships with local business groups and organisations and with associate partners and private sector business service providers

REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER : **COUNCILLOR E C EDWARDS, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**
DATE : **14 FEBRUARY 2002**
SUBJECT : **Colomendy Industrial Estate, Environmental and Landscape Appraisal and Action Plan**

1. DECISION SOUGHT

To seek Cabinet approval to accept a fee proposal to undertake the above work, which was not the lowest fee proposal submitted.

2. REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

The County Council, in partnership with the Welsh Development Agency and the local business community is seeking to appoint consultants to undertake an environmental appraisal study, leading to the production of a landscape strategy, vision, style and branding for Colomendy Industrial Estate. To this end, fee proposals were invited from three consultants (who were suggested by the WDA) to undertake the work.

Fee proposals were received and the consultants were interviewed by officers of the County Council, WDA and private sector. Fee proposals were as follows :-

£11,799.04
 £18,740.00
 £13,750.00

It was the unanimous view that the lowest priced proposal did not meet the objectives of the project brief.

The County Council's Financial Standing Orders state that if a fee proposal, other than the lowest is to be accepted, then Cabinet approval is required.

Should Cabinet agree to the lowest fee proposal not being accepted, it is proposed to fund the project as follows :-

Denbighshire County Council	£ 5,000
WDA	£ 6,875
Private Sector	£ 1,875

Total	£13,750

3. COST IMPLICATIONS

The County Council's contribution is available through Economic Regeneration's devolved revenue budget.

4. FINANCIAL CONTROLLERS STATEMENT

The costs of the study will need to be contained within the service budget.

5. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

I have consulted the Welsh Development Agency, Arena Network and private sector businesses on Colomendy who support the report. There will be a further consultation as part of this implementation process

6. IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

The proposed project will assist the County Council in meeting the targets outlined in its Economic Development Strategy.

7. RECOMMENDATION

I recommend that the second lowest fee proposal in the sum of £13,750 be accepted.
ED ~ GE ~ DM

REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR E C EDWARDS, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

DATE: 14 FEBRUARY 2002

SUBJECT: DISTRICT AUDIT MANAGEMENT LETTER - ACTION PLAN

1 DECISION SOUGHT

To approve the attached Action Plan as a response to the District Audit Management Letter.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

The District Audit presented its Management Letter to Council on 15 January 2002. As is usual with the District Audit Letter, its observations and recommendations are followed up with an Action Plan to be produced by the Council to address the various points made. The attached Action Plan seeks to deal comprehensively with the District Auditor's observations and recommendations.

The Cabinet is asked to approve the attached Action Plan supplying comments where necessary.

3 COST IMPLICATIONS

There are none arising from this document. There will, however, be costs associated with some of the actions e.g. setting up and servicing the work of the Standards Committee.

4 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

The completion of the tasks within the Action Plan will help improve financial and budgetary control within the authority and remove the need for the District Auditor to qualify the Council's accounts.

5 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

The attached draft has been discussed by the Corporate Directors and Heads of Service have been consulted. Their contributions are included in the draft.

6 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

The delivery of this Action Plan will enable the Authority to deliver on its overall policy agenda.

7 RECOMMENDATION

That Members approve the attached Action Plan.

**DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO DISTRICT AUDIT'S
ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2000/2001**

ISSUE	PRIORITY 1 = Low 2 = Med 3 = High	SUGGESTED ACTION	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE	TIMESCALE
Accounts				
All tangible fixed assets need to be revalued at intervals of no more than five years and depreciation charged on all tangible fixed assets except for investment assets (FRS15)	3	Considerable work has already been undertaken and it is estimated that 65% of the work is complete in terms of value. The critical deadline is to have the valuation work completed by June 2002 in preparation for the Financial Statements	Chris Taylor	Work completed by 30 June 2002
An annual review of all fixed assets for impairment is required (FRS11)	3	Part of exercise above	Chris Taylor	Work completed by 30 June 2002
Implementation of and compliance with the Best Value Accounting Code of Practice (BVACOP) is required in 2001/2002	3	<p>Essential to have BVACOP in place for this year's accounts.</p> <p>The 00/01 financial statement is being reworked on a BVACOP basis so that they be included in the 01/02 financial statement for comparative purposes.</p> <p>The 01/02 financial statement must be prepared on BVACOP basis.</p> <p>The 02/03 Budget must be prepared on BVACOP basis</p>	Roger Parry / Chris Taylor	<p>00/01 accounts reworked in Feb 2002</p> <p>Completed by Sept 02 at the latest. Target date July 2002</p> <p>02/03 Budget prepared in</p>

**DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO DISTRICT AUDIT'S
ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2000/2001**

ISSUE	PRIORITY 1 = Low 2 = Med 3 = High	SUGGESTED ACTION	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE	TIMESCALE
				current form by March 2002 02/03 Budget prepared in BVACOP form by April 2002
Financial Aspects Of Corporate Governance				
<i>Legality Of Financial Transactions</i>				
A revision of the Council's arrangements for ensuring the legality of transactions with financial consequences is required	3	Work will start following the finalisation of the Council's political structures.	Alan Evans / Ivan Butler	Target dates: Presented to Cabinet May 2002 Presented to Council Jun 2002
<i>Modernising Agenda</i>				
The scope of individual Cabinet Member portfolios needs to be reviewed and clarified	3	Under the new constitution the size of the Cabinet will reduce to ten members necessitating a rethink of current portfolios	Steve Hatton	May 2002
Cabinet reports requiring decisions should be circulated well in advance of meetings	1	Given that Cabinet meetings are fortnightly, papers are already despatched as soon as is practicable	Steve Hatton	Ongoing
Scrutiny arrangements require strengthening and adequate levels of officer support and infrastructure to	3	This issue is currently being considered in the budget round with the proposed	Ian Hearle	May 2002

**DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO DISTRICT AUDIT'S
ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2000/2001**

ISSUE	PRIORITY 1 = Low 2 = Med 3 = High	SUGGESTED ACTION	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE	TIMESCALE
enhance the progress achieved so far, should be in place		appointment of two Scrutiny Support Officers		
A Standards Committee that complies with regulations should be established	3	Implement Council decisions based on Assembly regulations and draft (December 2001) guidance; i.e., establish Advisory Panel and Special Appointments Panel ; advertise for independent members; convene panel meetings to consider applications and make appointments.	Ian Hearle	Complete by May 2002 to coincide with implementation of new constitution and executive arrangements
The role of the Audit Committee should be revisited and clarified	2	Early meetings have already taken place with the Head of Internal Audit and the role of the Audit Committee will be considered as part of the final constitution	Steve Hatton / Alan Evans / Ian Hearle / Ivan Butler	May 2002
Progress against the modernising agenda will be regularly reviewed through the Modernisation Panel, which is being reconvened and enlarged. The review of the new modernised system is within the Terms of Reference of the Panel.	2	This will be reconvened following the adoption of the constitution (In hand)	Modernisation Panel	May 2002
A co-ordinated and ongoing support and development programme for Members and officers should be developed	2	Members - a programme is already in progress. Officers - courses are offered but a more co-ordinated programme is being worked towards through the IIP and Performance Management systems.	Linda Atkin	Training and Development Strategy agreed by July 2002
<i>Civic Offices Private Finance Initiative</i>				
Members should ensure that the final PFI contract	3	Negotiations ongoing. The full	Roger Parry	PFI Board 17

DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO DISTRICT AUDIT'S ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2000/2001

ISSUE	PRIORITY 1 = Low 2 = Med 3 = High	SUGGESTED ACTION	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE	TIMESCALE
represents value for money and is affordable to the Council		Business Case has been prepared and will be submitted to Council on the 12th February and to the NAFW when approved.		Jan 2002 Special Council to be arranged in 12th / Feb 2002
<i>Compliance With The Data Protection Act 1998</i>				
The prioritised Action Plan (Appendix 1) produced by officers should be effectively monitored to ensure that the outstanding tasks required for full compliance are achieved	3	The Action Plan in effect comprises the DA's recommendations as contained in his report following an Audit of the Council's progress towards compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998.	This is being progressed / monitored by the Data Protection Steering Group, an Officer Group under the Chairmanship of the Assistant Data Protection Officer and comprising representatives from all Council Directorates.	Ongoing as there are various elements and time scales within the legislation and Action Plan. Further Audit by the DA is due sometime mid 2002.
<i>Financial Standing</i>				
Statutory recommendations remain relevant and the Council needs to continue to address them	3	See below	Alan Evans	

**DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO DISTRICT AUDIT'S
ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2000/2001**

ISSUE	PRIORITY 1 = Low 2 = Med 3 = High	SUGGESTED ACTION	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE	TIMESCALE
The recovery plan needs to be revised and should focus on building an adequate level of balances to meet future contingencies. An action plan should be compiled and agreed by Cabinet.	3	<p>Monthly management accounts now being produced. Current forecast is that negative balances will be eliminated this financial year although there are significant pressures.</p> <p>A draft high level financial strategy to be produced for the three years to 05/06 based upon currently known information and reasonable assumptions.</p> <p>Detailed plans to be prepared, subject to agreement on priorities, which ties in with the strategy phase of budget development Apr - Jun 2002</p>	Alan Evans	<p>In place</p> <p>End March 2002</p> <p>Jun 2002</p>
Allocations for inflation, the proposed cuts and income budgets require close monitoring and control if the overall budget is to be achieved for 2001/2002	3	Directorate expenditure is now regularly monitored	Roger Parry	Ongoing
An action plan should be compiled to address the increase in arrears following the implementation of the new revenues system	3	<p>Action Plans have been produced but accept the recommendation to update plans</p> <p>Additional temporary staffing agreed for specific areas of concern, i.e. Landlords' Benefit overpayments and Council Tax arrears. Progress evident. Meeting 14 Jan with users to agree improved, tighter General Debtors</p>	Roger Parry / Jackie Whalley	<p>Ongoing action</p> <p>Updates on progress presented to Resources Scrutiny</p>

**DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO DISTRICT AUDIT'S
ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2000/2001**

ISSUE	PRIORITY 1 = Low 2 = Med 3 = High	SUGGESTED ACTION	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE	TIMESCALE
		processes to chase debts quicker and more effectively.		Committee regularly.
<i>Systems Of Internal Financial Control</i>				
The Action Plan (Appendix II) produced to address recommendations by District and Internal Audit regarding the weaknesses in Revenues systems should continue to be progressed and monitored	3	See above	Roger Parry / Jackie Whalley	As above
A corporate risk management system should be developed following the Chief Internal Auditor's initiative to identify potential risks and current risk management arrangements within the Authority	3	<p>A draft Risk Management Strategy has been prepared by Head of Audit and this is currently being discussed by the senior management team.</p> <p>Intention is that the Risk Management Strategy is agreed and implemented by December 2002 to allow it to inform the 03/04 internal audit planning process.</p> <p>A separate risk identification process has been carried out by the Head of Audit to assist in drawing up the 02/03 internal audit plan.</p>	Ivan Butler	<p>January 2002</p> <p>December 2002</p> <p>Completed</p>
<i>Fraud And Corruption</i>				
The anti fraud and corruption policy and whistle blowing arrangements require approval by Members and issued to staff. The arrangements should refer to the provisions of Public Interest Disclosure Act and provide advice on contacting external bodies	3	Both draft documents have been amended to refer to the Public Interest Disclosure Act. Consultation with staff / teachers' unions / School Governors require completion and report back to members.	Ian Hearle / Ivan Butler	June 2002

**DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO DISTRICT AUDIT'S
ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2000/2001**

ISSUE	PRIORITY 1 = Low 2 = Med 3 = High	SUGGESTED ACTION	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE	TIMESCALE
Performance Management and Performance Information				
The Action Plan (Appendix III) produced to address the recommendations in the District Auditor's report on the Council's Best Value Performance Plan 2001/2002 should be progressed and effectively monitored	3	The Action Plan to be progressed and monitored via quarterly performance reports to the Chief Executive and regular reports to Operations Management Board	Janette Ogden / Steve Hatton / Alan Evans	March instituted, thereafter ongoing.
Use Of Resources				
<i>Grants To Voluntary Organisations</i>				
A corporate grants policy which will enable the Council to more fully assess the extent to which the grant programme has contributed to its overall objectives should be developed	2	Currently being developed	Steve Hatton	May 2002
<i>ICT Management Arrangements</i>				
The Action Plan (Appendix IV) agreed with officers should be progressed and effectively monitored	2	The Action Plan to be progressed and effectively monitored through quarterly performance reports to the Corporate Director of Resources and to the Resources, Policy Review & Scrutiny Committee.	Dylan Roberts / Alan Evans	As per the Action Plan
<i>Rehabilitation Services For Older People In Conwy And Denbighshire</i>				
The Action Plan (Appendix V) agreed following the multi-agency workshop in March 2001 should be progressed and effectively monitored	2	Action to be progressed and monitored via quarterly reports to the Head of Service (Strategic Planning and Support Services) and to Scrutiny Committee	As per Action Plan	As per Action Plan
<i>Objective One - The Council Role</i>				
An approach should be developed which ensures that opportunities for the Council to contribute to the	3	Corporate Directors and Head of Economic Regeneration Services to	Ian Miller	March 2002

**DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO DISTRICT AUDIT'S
ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2000/2001**

ISSUE	PRIORITY 1 = Low 2 = Med 3 = High	SUGGESTED ACTION	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE	TIMESCALE
delivery of the emerging strategies of all the relevant Objective One task forces are identified		meet to see how the Authority can maximise its contribution to emerging strategies and increase its use of Objective One resources. Reconvene Directors' group and secure liaison officers in all departments		
The Council has not set aside any budget provision for Objective One which may deter departments from taking advantage of available funds	3	Council does not have a corporate budget, but budget provision is on a service basis. Corporate Directors/ Heads of Service being asked to ensure provision in drawing up detailed budgets in 2002/3	Ian Miller	March 2002
Involvement of Internal Audit in the Objective One programme should be developed	3	Meeting being called to agree role.	Ivan Butler	From April 2002
<i>Managing School Places</i>				
The Action Plan (Appendix VI) agreed with officers should be progressed and effectively monitored	3	The Action Plan is being progressed and a number of Area Consultative meetings have been held. A strategy paper is being drawn up to complement the Action Plan. Monitoring will be via quarterly performance reports	Gay Brooks John Williams Sioned Bowen	Ongoing

REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR K E WELLS, LEAD MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND ICT

DATE: 14 FEBRUARY 2002

SUBJECT: LOCAL MEMBERS NOMINATIONS FOR LEA GOVERNORS

1 DECISION SOUGHT

The appointment of LEA Governor representatives.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

Prior to 1st April, 1996 the appointment of LEA Governors was administered by the previous Clwyd County Council as Local Authority. Under the Education (Schools Government) Regulations 1989 this function now falls to Denbighshire County Council in respect of those Schools within County.

3 COST IMPLICATIONS

None

4 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

None at this stage.

5 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

All County Councillors.

6 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

None

7 RECOMMENDATION

That the following nomination(s) for LEA Governor appointment(s) be approved, the names listed below being the names nominated by the Local Members(s) for the Schools

MELIDEN C.P. (YSGOL MELYD)

Local Member: Councillor Ms R.W. Hughes

No. of LEA Governors: 3

No. of Vacancies: 1

Cllr Ms R.W. Hughes

30.3.02

Mrs Susan Margaret Agar, 15 Ffordd Gwilym, Meliden, Prestatyn

20.12.05

Mr Rick Abbas, 42 Ffordd Tanrallt, Meliden

18.11.02

NOMINATION

Cllr R.W. Hughes.

TERM OF OFFICE TO COMMENCE 30.3.02

REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: Councillor W R Webb - Lead Member for Property

DATE: 14 February 2002

SUBJECT: Lease Surrender - WRVS, King's Avenue, Prestatyn

1 DECISION SOUGHT

1.1 To seek Members approval to a surrender by the WRVS of their existing lease on King's Avenue, Prestatyn (as outlined on the attached plan).

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

2.1 The WRVS currently have a 99 year ground lease on the above property, which commenced on the 10 July 1958. Although the WRVS constructed the building, the lease dictates that the building will revert to Council ownership upon determination of the said agreement.

2.2 The WRVS have indicated that they wish to surrender their lease on the 31 March 2002.

2.3 A Community Organisation, know as Neuadd y Brenin - King's Hall, Chaired by Cllr S Drew, will be shortly expressing their formal interest in acquiring a lease on the property subject to the surrender by the WRVS. A report will be submitted in the near future, outlining their proposal.

3 COST IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The Council will be liable for non-domestic rates (if applicable) and repairs upon the reversion to ownership.

3.2 The property will increase the asset value of the Council's current property portfolio.

4 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

4.1 The future retention of this property will need to be considered by the Property Review Group [PRG] with advice from the Corporate Property Unit regarding Asset Management Planning issues. The possibility of the Council incurring large costs on repairs and maintenance etc will inform this debate over the future need to retain the property.

5 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

5.1 Property Review Group are in agreement to the Surrender, effective from the 31 March 2002.

5.2 Local Members
Cllr David Morris and Cllr Tom Parry are in favour of the views expressed by the PRG.

6 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

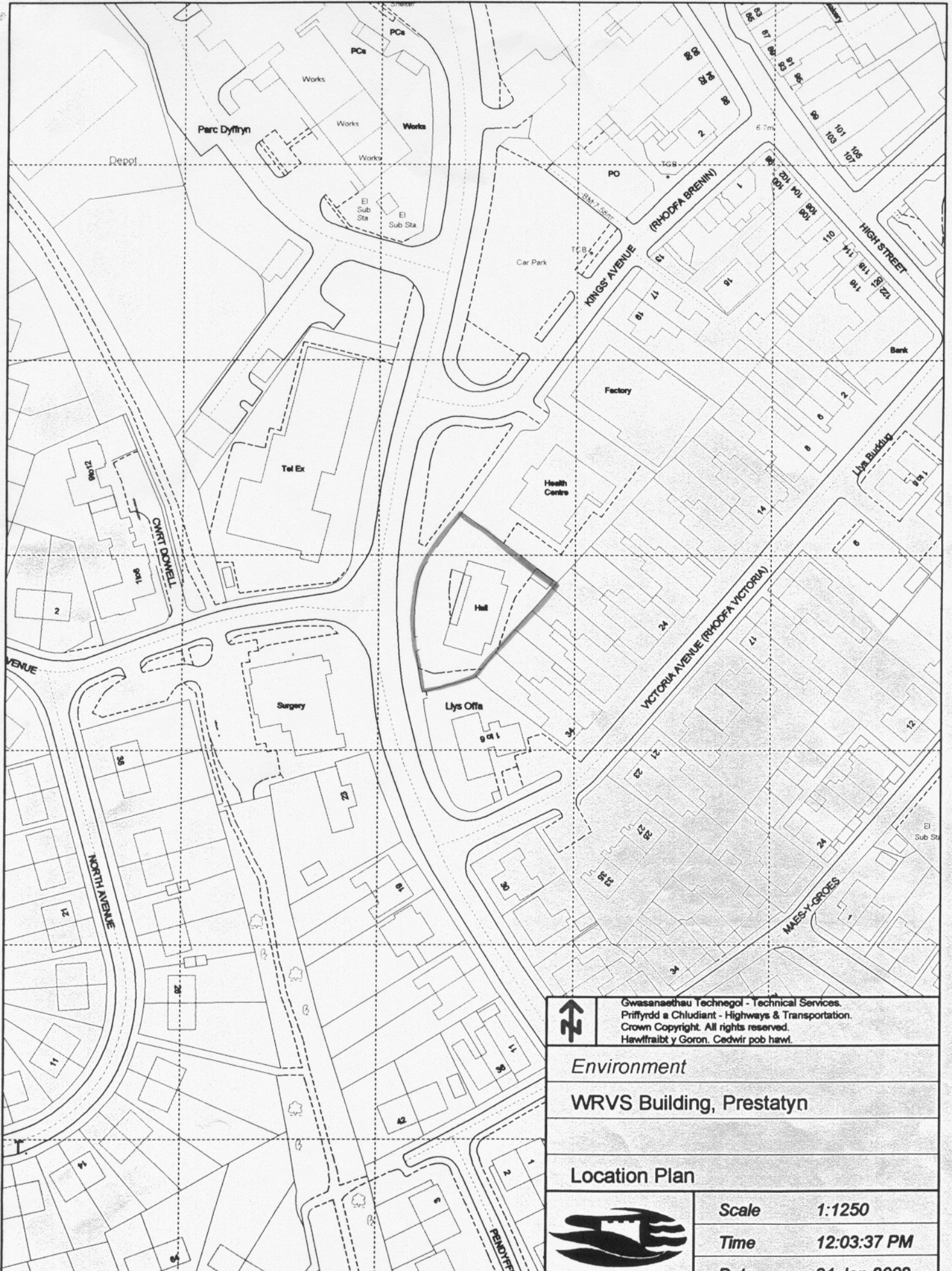
6.1 None.



7 RECOMMENDATION

7.1 That Members

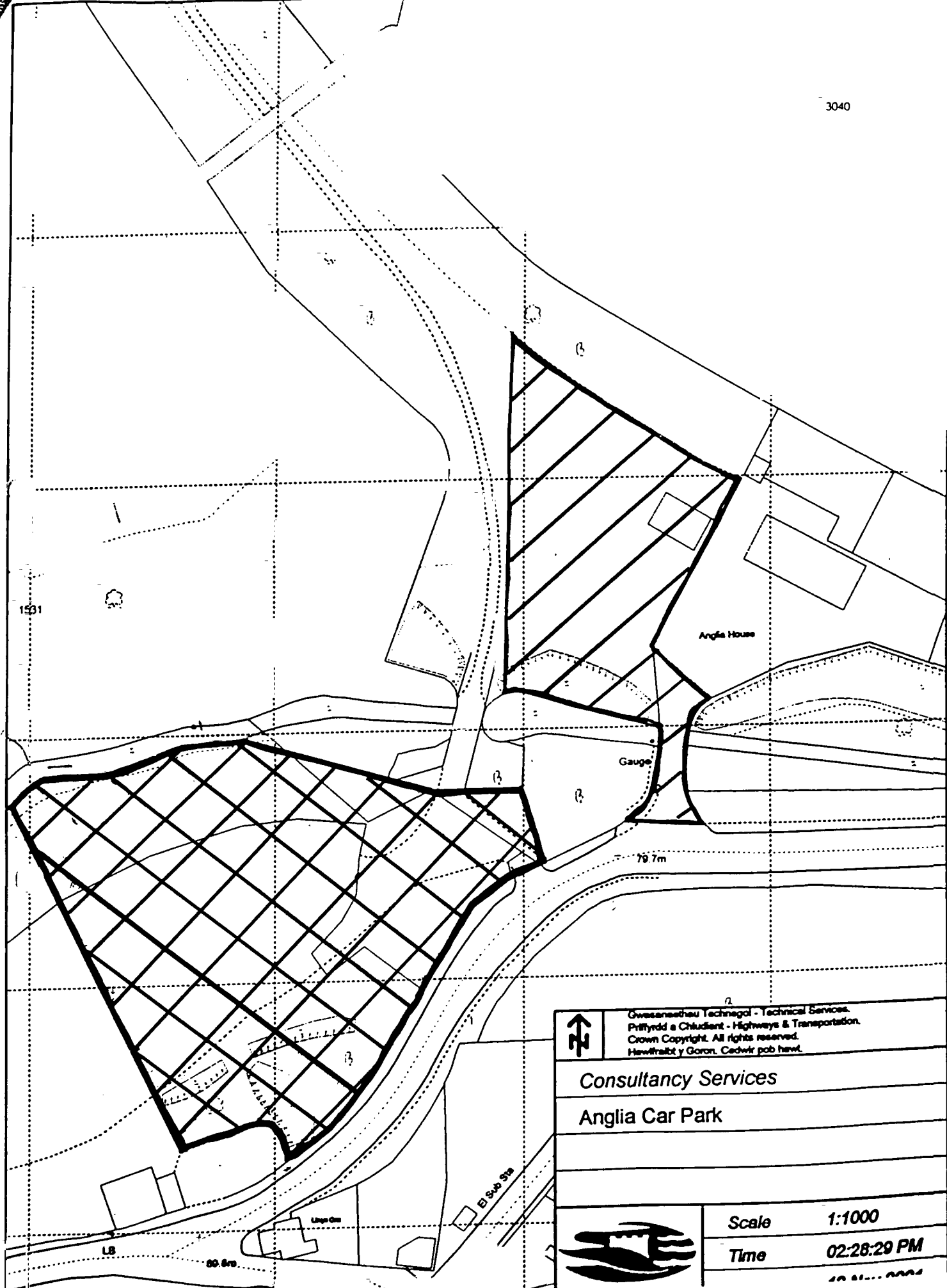
7.1.1 Approve the WRVS request to surrender their ground lease on Kings Avenue, Prestatyn, effective from the 31 March 2002, on terms to be agreed by the Head of Consultancy Services in consultation with the County Clerk.

7.1.2 Note the informal interest expressed by Neuadd Brenin - King's Avenue.



	Gwasanaethau Technegol - Technical Services. Prifffyrdd a Chludiant - Highways & Transportation. Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Hawffraib y Goron. Cedwir pob hawl.	
	Environment	
WRVS Building, Prestatyn		
Location Plan		
	Scale	1:1250
	Time	12:03:37 PM
	Date	01 Jan 2002

3040



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 Priflydd a Chludiant - Highways & Transportation.
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 Hwffraitt y Goron. Cedwir pob hawl.

Consultancy Services

Anglia Car Park

Scale 1:1000

Time 02:28:29 PM



REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR D M MORRIS, LEAD MEMBER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

DATE: 14 FEBRUARY 2002

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF CAR PARKS AND CHARGES IN DENBIGHSHIRE

1 DECISION SOUGHT

To approve the Environment Scrutiny Committee's review and recommendations for the County's car parks.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

The Environment Scrutiny Committee undertook a review of County Council owned car parks in Denbighshire at its meetings on 10 October 2001, 21 November 2001 and 23 January 2002. The Committee noted that the County Council has powers under Section 32 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to provide off-street parking places for "the purpose of relieving or preventing congestion".

It was noted that there is little data available on usage of the car parks other than revenue figures. The most comprehensive data have been published in the traffic and transportation studies undertaken over the past five years, these show that demand is high in a small number of the most conveniently located car parks while most car parks operate below capacity. The quality of service in the County's car parks undoubtedly contributes to lower levels of usage. Lack of maintenance since local government reorganisation has resulted in a poor image in many car parks. In addition there is a lack of direction signage to car parks to attract visitors into them. The issue of provision of suitable reserved bays for Blue Badge holders had been raised by the Disability Rights Commission and the Council's Equal Opportunities Meeting and it was accepted that alterations are needed to some car park layouts to satisfy minimum criteria for providing for Blue Badge holders.

The pricing strategy aims to maximise the use of the car parks whilst ensuring that they are self-funding. As there have been no increases in charges in Council car parks since 1998, during which time inflation has been 9.8%, it was proposed that charges should be increased by 10% from 1 April 2002. After this, it is proposed that charges are increased at the same rate as inflation as measured by the Retail Prices Index. At the end of the first four year period it is intended to undertake a full review of charges, with a renewed strategy for increasing charges in the light of inflation forecasts at that time, and accordingly a report will be submitted to Members. Other tariff changes to encourage more effective use of car parks were agreed.

The recommendations from all three Committee meetings were as follows:-

- that Members support a charging strategy for the period to April 2006 comprising:
 - an initial 10% increase on all car park tariffs and increases in line with inflation thereafter
 - an initial increase in long stay car park season ticket prices to £45 per annum and then increases in all season or contract parking prices at twice the rate of inflation
 - contract parking rates to be charged at twice the price and beach car park permits at half the price of long stay car park season tickets
 - elderly residents of the County to be offered half-price concessions for long stay and beach car park season tickets. In accordance with Government guidelines elderly means men aged 65 or over and women aged 60 or over. In April 2003 elderly will mean all citizens aged 60 or over.
 - excess charge tickets to be increased in line with Government controls
 - a new charge for stays of up to one hour be introduced at the rate of one half of the 2 hour charge in car parks where a CCTV premium applies
 - parking charges for motorcycles be removed

- that Members support a Capital bid for measures to improve the image and signage of car parks, to achieve Secured Car Park status and to provide designated bays for Blue Badge holders in line with national guidance (the Capital bid has subsequently been submitted)
- that monitoring of car park usage be undertaken and the impact of removing charges for Blue Badge holders parking in designated bays be assessed
- that charges should not be introduced at the Rhyl Gateway Offices car park
- charges to be introduced on a long stay tariff at Barkers Well Lane multi-storey car park (Denbigh) subject to the installation of CCTV and improved lighting
- charges to be introduced on a long stay tariff at Post Office Lane (Denbigh), Hall Street car park (Llangollen), Crispin Yard - Clwyd Street (Ruthin), Rhos Street (Ruthin) and Troed y Rhiw (Ruthin)
- the introduction of a premium charge for Rhyl town centre car parks, consisting of an extra 10p on tariffs up to £1 and 20p on tariffs above £1, and for Llangollen car parks in July and August, consisting of an extra 20p on tariffs up to £1 and 30p on tariffs above £1
- the experimental introduction of a charge of £1 for stays of up to one hour in the beach car parks in Rhyl and Prestatyn, where the all day charge is more than £1.50
- the experimental introduction of a graduated scale of summer daytime charges for the Sky Tower and Children's Village Underground car parks (Rhyl), subject to the Community Leisure Department sharing any financial risk
- converting Crescent Road coach park (Rhyl) to a long stay car park incorporating contract parking
- transferring the car/coach park on the east side of the Sun Centre from the Community Leisure Department to the Highways and Transportation Department, seeking planning consent for its parking use and introduction of an Off Street Parking Places Order
- transferring the East Street (Ectarc) car park (Llangollen) to the Highways and Transportation Department, introduce an Off Street Parking Places Order and charges as a long stay car park, and support a capital bid for upgrade of the car park
- further investigation into rationalising car parks at the Railway Station and West Kinmel Street, Rhyl
- moving the market to the east end of Market Street car park (Llangollen) and reviewing coach parking arrangements in autumn 2002
- to dispose of Mount Pleasant car park in Denbigh.

3 COST IMPLICATIONS

The proposed changes to the car park tariffs should increase average revenue by approximately £90,000. The cost of additional ticket machines and signage will be £18,000 which will be set off against future revenue. A capital cost of £225,000 is proposed to make necessary changes and upgrade the Crescent Road, Barkers Well Lane multi-storey, East Street and Market Street (Llangollen) car parks, this will be the subject of a capital bid.

4 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

The projected increase in income will assist the Directorate in keeping overall spending within budget. The proposal to upgrade facilities will need to progress through the Council's normal project appraisal process.

5 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

A survey and consultation has taken place with the Welsh Local Authorities and inter departmental discussions have taken place to ensure the proposals run in partnership with other priorities of the Authority. The proposals will be subject to formal advertisement inviting observations by the general public in Denbighshire.

6 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

There are no implications on other policy Areas. However, the following recommendations have been developed taking account of the economic criteria necessary to ensure no adverse pressures are introduced which prevent the necessary regeneration of our towns.

The factors identified, presented to, discussed and debated by the Scrutiny Committee include:-

- (i) The size of settlement
- (ii) An empirical evaluation of economic robustness.
- (iii) The impact on local residents, noting, tourist/visitor usage.
- (iv) Comparisons with adjacent Authorities offering similar and competitive facilities.
- (v) The levels of income achievable when compared with the overheads of collection.
- (vi) The need to upgrade the quality of the Car park stock including advanced signage to increase its attractiveness as a factor over the next 5 years.

The outcome of these detailed and complex discussions are the basis of the recommendations which form a new business plan and strategy for the car parks of Denbighshire.

7 RECOMMENDATION

To approve the Environment Scrutiny Committee's review and recommendations for the County's car parks, as summarised in Section 2 of this report.

ED ~ PB

REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR R W HUGHES, LEAD MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE AND TOURISM AND COUNCILLOR D M MORRIS, LEAD MEMBER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

DATE: 14 FEBRUARY 2002

SUBJECT: RIVERSIDE PARK, LLANGOLLEN

1 DECISION SOUGHT

1.1 To seek Cabinet support to develop proposals to upgrade and improve Riverside Park in Llangollen in partnership with the local community.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

2.1 Riverside Park and Victoria Promenade is a very popular open space facility which serves the needs of local people and is a vital part of Llangollen's tourism infrastructure. Unfortunately there has been little investment over many years and the park is now in need of sensitive upgrading and improvement to meet current standards and expectations. The local community have made it plain that improving Riverside Park is one of their priorities.

2.2 A project team approach has been adopted to take the initiative forward, which includes representation from relevant Council service departments together with the local community and key agencies. The Project Team has been led by the Community Partnerships Manager. They have undertaken some preliminary work and are now making arrangements to consult local people over the next few weeks about what they want to see at the park. This will eventually be fed into a proposed design study which will come up with more detailed proposals, outline capital and revenue costs, and provide guidance on potential funding sources, which will be the subject of further reports to Cabinet.

3 COST IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Costs for improving and upgrading the park cannot be accurately identified at the present time. This information will be available when the detailed design study is complete. However, funding will be required for the design study so that we can proceed to this stage. It is estimated that the study will cost £6,500, but there are good indications that external funding of up to £6000 will be available from the New Opportunities Fund 'Enfys' scheme and the WDA Small Towns and Villages Initiative.

3.2 Cabinet should also note that there are costs associated with the current consultation exercise which are being absorbed by service departments, but some sponsorship has been secured from a prominent local business to offset these costs.

4 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

4.1 The funding for the initial study will need to be identified before a firm commitment is entered into.

5 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

5.1 It has been noted above that a multi - departmental team is taking the project forward. This includes representatives from Chief Executives, Leisure, Countryside, Economic Regeneration, Grounds Maintenance and Property. In addition, the Town Council, Llangollen Civic Society, Llangollen Tourism Association, Llangollen Chamber of Trade, Welsh Development Agency and the Police are represented on the Project Team. Local County Councillors also take part.

5.2 The Head of Public Protection and Regulatory Services has also pointed out that there could be implications relating to the Councils current grounds maintenance contract which must be considered as part of this work.

5.3 Initial public consultations are underway which will inform any future proposals for the site. An extract of some of the material produced for the public consultation is appended to this report.

6 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

6.1 The main impacts relate to Local Agenda 21. Parks and open spaces are an important part of local quality of life. There are also impacts in relation to economic regeneration given that Riverside Park is a vital tourist facility/attraction for Llangollen.

7 RECOMMENDATION

7.1 To endorse the setting up of a project team to evaluate and take forward proposals to improve and upgrade Riverside Park, Llangollen.

7.2 To support the need for extensive public consultation in relation to the project..

LL ~ TH

PUBLIC NOTICE

**RIVERSIDE PLAYPARK
& GARDENS, LLANGOLLEN**

REDEVELOPMENT

The regeneration group have, at their recent meeting in the Town Hall, decided on the dates for the public consultations. The group is a partnership of all facets of the community brought together by Denbighshire County Council and the North Wales Police.

They all hope that as many people as possible will make the effort to make their wishes known so that when the redevelopment is complete Llangollen will have a

busy, well loved and maintained community and tourist facility. The consultation is from Tues 5th February to Saturday 9th at various times at six venues around the town. It will be manned by members of the group so that everyone will have a chance to have their say on what they would like to see included in the park. The regeneration group will then set about the task of obtaining the funding and implementing the popular choices from the public consultancy.

The group would welcome positive comment from the residents of the area about their wishes.

You can e-mail your suggestion to riverside@deevalley.com.

Please include your address and postcode. There are a series of photos on the website at www.deevalley.com showing the park as it is now which might help your thoughts about its future which must be sustainable.

..... taken from The Courier



PUBLIC NOTICE

RIVERSIDE PLAYPARK & GARDENS, LLANGOLLEN

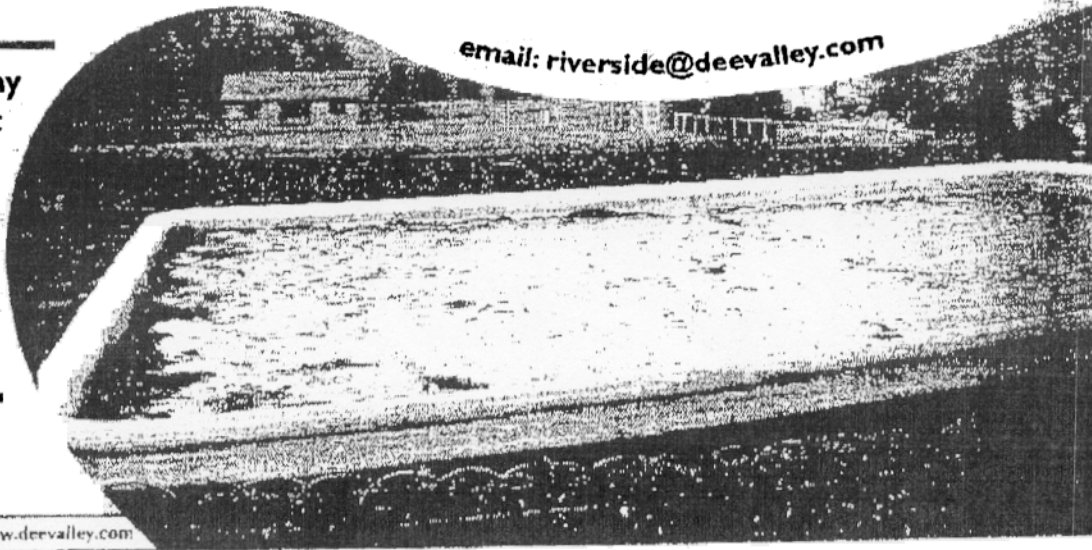
REDEVELOPMENT

PUBLIC CONSULTATION TIMES & VENUES

Day/Date	Location	Time	Staff
Tuesday 5th February	Library	10.00am - 11.30am	Mike Brown, Mike Hall and David Shiel
Tuesday 5th February	Leisure Centre	12.30pm - 2.30pm 5.00pm - 7.00pm	Brian Williams, Dave Lloyd
Wednesday 6th February	Bryn Collen	2.00pm - 4.00pm	Brian Williams, Pete Barrett, David Shiel
Wednesday 6th February	Youth Club	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Jeff Jones, Dermot Kay
Friday 8th February	Town Hall, Foyer	10.00am - 12.00pm	Betty Lowe, Elizabeth Roberts, Margaret Pierce-Jenkins
Friday 8th February	Kwiksave	4.00pm - 6.00pm	Sue Haygarth, Michaela Coutakis, Wendy Davies
Saturday 9th February	Kwiksave	10.00am - 12.00pm	Sue Haygarth, Michaela Coutakis, Wendy Davies

If you cannot visit any of the venues but would like to make suggestions please address them to Llangollen One Stop Shop, Parade Street.

email: riverside@deevalley.com



REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR E A OWENS, LEAD CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE

DATE: 14 February 2002

SUBJECT: PREMATURE REDEMPTION OF PUBLIC WORKS LOAN BOARD LOAN 482008 WITH PRINCIPAL OF £2,480,269

1 DECISION SOUGHT

Denbighshire County Council's Treasury Management Strategy for 2001/02 states that all rescheduling will be reported to Cabinet and then to Council at the meeting following its action. In accordance with the Strategy, Cabinet is asked to note and endorse the action taken.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

On Monday January 21st 2002, arrangements were put in place for an early redemption of Public Works Loan Board loan number 482008, with the full principal of £2,480,269 repaid. This action was taken in consultation with the County Council's external treasury advisors. The action reduced borrowing and external investments held prior to 11th September 2001, to take advantage of the change in market conditions.

3 COST IMPLICATIONS

The transaction will generate in the region of £150,000 of discount to assist the Council in meeting its overall budgetary targets for the year. Additional benefits of long term interest savings, in excess of foregone investment receipts, are anticipated.

4 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

It is a requirement under the terms of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy for members to be advised of all debt restructuring undertaken. The action taken will significantly assist in meeting delivery of the Council's recovery plan.

5 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

This action was taken in close liaison with the Council's external treasury advisors.

6 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

The decision to make this repayment giving rise to a discount contributes towards the Council's Priority C1: to continue delivery of the Financial Recovery Plan so that revenue and capital debts are cleared by the end of the period.

7 RECOMMENDATION

Cabinet is asked to note and endorse the content of this report.