

## CABINET

Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held in the Assembly Rooms, Town Hall, Ruthin on Tuesday 9th April 2002 at 10.00 a.m.

## PRESENT

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

Observers: Councillors M.L.I. Davies, S. Drew and R.J.R. Jones.

## ALSO PRESENT

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

## ANNOUNCEMENT

The Leader referred to the sad death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother. The Leader referred to the years of service The Queen Mother had given, particularly during the years of the 1939-1945 War. Members stood in silence as a tribute.

Councillor E.A. Owens, again referred to the need for the unsteady folding tables in the Assembly Rooms, Town Hall, Ruthin to be replaced.

### **1571. URGENT MATTERS**

The Leader of the Council gave notice of the following item 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) WLGA Environment Agency National Forum nomination.

### **1572. MINUTES OF THE CABINET (CABINET 2002 - 47)**

The Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 23 March 2002 (previously circulated) were submitted.

2 Housing Stock Transfer: Councillor E.A. Owens, Lead Member for Finance emphasised that, if stock transfer were to proceed, savings would be required across the Directorates. The Chief Executive agreed.

***RESOLVED** that subject to the above, the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 23 March 2002 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.*

### **1573. BEST VALUE REVIEW OF THE AGRICULTURAL ESTATES IN THE OWNERSHIP OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL - PHASE ONE (CABINET 2002 - 48)**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor E.C. Edwards presented the report (previously circulated) seeking Members' agreement to further research into the main options identified during the review, as detailed in Appendix One to the report, prior to the formulation of the final report and recommendations to Cabinet. The Leader reminded Members that the agricultural estates were founded as 'starter farms' for tenancy by those returning from the War but that many of the tenants had not progressed to their own farms.

The Head of Public Protection and Regulatory Services outlined the current situation and gave a brief resumé of the options to the report.

Councillor W.R. Webb, Lead Member for Property supported changes to the agricultural estates and reminded Members that capital receipts would be provided if farms were sold as they became vacant.

Councillor E.A. Owens, Lead Member for Finance agreed changes were required to the way the Council's agricultural estates business was run and suggested perhaps the way forward was with commercial partners and perhaps the involvement of Llysfasi College which would develop the agricultural industry.

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet approve the options for further research as outlined in Appendix One to the report.

**1574. NEW OPPORTUNITIES FUNDING FOR PE AND SPORTS (CABINET 2002 - 49)**

Councillor K.E. Wells, Lead Member for Education and ICT presented the report (previously circulated) seeking Members' approval to the agreement of a priority list of potential capital projects for bringing about a step change in the provision of sporting facilities for young people and the community in general.

The New Opportunities Fund for Physical Education and Sport had allocated £1,316,000 for modernising existing provision and/or to build new facilities for PE and sport in Denbighshire. The allocation was based on the size of the school population and levels of deprivation in the County. The priority list was to be submitted to the New Opportunities Fund by 22 April 2002.

Councillor G.M. Kensler, Lead Member for the Welsh Language queried whether the allocation was just for schools and mentioned the deprivation element within the guidelines. Councillor Kensler said nowhere in Denbigh had been included in the list of priorities. Councillor Wells said the guidelines stated the aim was to improve provision and opportunities for 5-16 year old pupils but that any improvements would have impacts on the communities outside the schools. Councillor D.M. Holder, Lead Member for Training commented that only a few rural schools had been included. Councillor I.M. German, Lead Member for Human Resources welcomed the report and said this was consistent with 'Better Health, Better Wales'.

**RESOLVED** that Members approve the projects listed in the report for submission to the New Opportunities Fund.

**1575. MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR WELSH PUBLIC LIBRARIES (CABINET 2002 - 50)**

Councillor R.W. Hughes, Lead Member for Culture, Leisure and Tourism presented the report (previously circulated) seeking Members' approval for the proposed recommendations as detailed in the Appendix to the report, to ensure the Library and Information Service complied with the 23 Minimum Standards established by the National Assembly for Wales for the development and improvement of Welsh Public Libraries by March 2005. No additional monies would be available from the National Assembly for Wales.

Councillor E.A. Owens, Lead Member for Finance congratulated the Principal Librarian on the production of the report and the 3 year plan and wished the Library and Information Service every success. Councillor Owens stressed that every department should be producing 3 year plans.

Councillor D.M. Holder, Lead Member for Training queried the provision of mobile libraries. The Principal Librarian said the existing lease on mobile libraries was coming to an end and a new 7 year lease would be drawn up.

Councillor G.M. Kensler also congratulated the Department on the report and reminded Members that the Service had the lowest spend in Wales.

**RESOLVED** that Members endorse the recommendations put forward to ensure compliance with the Minimum Standards established by the National Assembly for Wales, and note that the funding of some improvements are subject to the annual budget setting process of the Council.

**1576. GUIDELINES FOR FUTURE PARTNERSHIP WORKING WITH TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCILS  
(CABINET 2002 - 51)**

(Councillor G.M. Kensler declared an interest in the item) .

The Leader of the Council, Councillor E.C. Edwards presented the report (previously circulated) seeking Members' approval of a protocol for future working relations with the Town and Community Councils in Denbighshire, as detailed in the Appendix to the report.

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet approve the report as the basis for working with Town and Community Councils in Denbighshire.

**1577. DRAFT CULTURAL TOURISM STRATEGY (CABINET 2002 - 52)**

Councillor R.W. Hughes, Lead Member for Culture, Leisure and Tourism presented the report (previously circulated) seeking Members' agreement in principle of the Draft Cultural Tourism Strategy subject to the amendments from the consultation process. The Cultural Tourism Strategy was an overarching document that advanced the aims of the Culture and Leisure Strategy 'Pick and Mix' and was a key component of Denbighshire's Tourism Strategy. Councillor Hughes referred to the £167m spend on tourism within Denbighshire and that Denbighshire tourism provided for 4,000 jobs. Councillor Hughes took the opportunity to inform Members that she was delighted to report that The Wales Tourist Board had granted £53k for Yr Hen Garchar, Ruthin.

Councillor G.M. Kensler, Lead Member for the Welsh Language congratulated Councillor Hughes on the report and said she was particularly pleased to see Gwasg Gee Museum, Denbigh included in the proposals. However, Councillor Kensler said the partnership between Denbighshire County Council, Denbigh Town Council and CADW was not working well enough and referred to the recent brochure produced by CADW which had not included Denbigh Castle. She felt that CADW should be approached by the Council to see if further provision for Denbigh could be made.

Councillor E.A. Owens, Lead Member for Finance reminded Members that the Council's contingency fund could not be spent at will. Councillor Owens asked that the Corporate Director for Lifelong Learning provide a paper for Cabinet summarising the costs of the proposals as outlined in the report.

Councillor D.M. Morris, Lead Member for the Environment also congratulated the Department on the report and reminded Members that the Roman Bath House at Prestatyn could become a tourist attraction.

Councillor W.R. Webb, Lead Member for Property said an excellent paper had been produced and that Leisure Services had been treated as the poor relation of the Authority in the past owing to budget cuts and it was now time to remedy the situation. Councillor K.E. Wells, Lead Member for Education and ICT agreed with the report but suggested that Members should revisit the structures in the form of a paper to Cabinet to see whether tourism could be utilised to better effect. The Chief Executive said it was his role to advise Members on structures and he would therefore produce a paper on structures for Cabinet in the near future.

**RESOLVED** that Members agreed in principle the Draft Cultural Tourism Strategy subject to amendments from the consultation process. It was further resolved that the Chief Executive would provide a paper to Cabinet on Structures.

**1578. EXTERNAL RECRUITMENT (CABINET 2002 - 53)**

The Chief Executive presented the report (previously circulated) seeking Members' agreement to the delegation of decisions on external recruitment to the Chief Executive and various proposed changes to the recruitment and selection procedure. The Chief Executive suggested Cabinet delegate the decisions on external recruitment to himself in consultation with the Corporate Directors. The existing arrangements whereby proposals had to be endorsed by the relevant Corporate Director and Lead Member, would continue. The Chief Executive said there were instances where posts were externally

grant funded and the funding was dependent upon external recruitment. It seemed a trivial matter when set beside the many important matters considered by Cabinet.

The Chief Executive said the Modernisation Panel had agreed there was still a need for a Local Joint Consultative Committee (LJCC) and this would be recommended to Full Council in May 2002.

Councillor E.A. Owens, Lead Member for Finance agreed there was a need to move forward but said that Members needed to be made aware of any increases to the workforce and what was happening within the Directorates. Councillor Owens reminded the Chief Executive and Members that there were still constraints with regard to the budget and she would prefer for Cabinet to retain control over any new posts.

Councillor W.R. Webb, Lead Member for Property said he was not entirely in agreement with the paper, nor was it a trivial matter. He agreed with Councillor Owens views and said that at one point cuts in budget had been partly achieved through careful consideration and approval of any recruitment requests. Councillor Webb said he had asked on more than one occasion for the number of posts in each Department and also the increase in staff in post figures over the last 12 months. The figures had not been provided. The Head of Personnel said the figures had not previously been available owing to the changes in sections within the Directorates, but Payroll Section would be able to provide staff figures from April 2002 and that currently just under 5,000 staff were employed by Denbighshire (although some staff had more than one part-time contract).

Councillor K.E. Wells, Lead Member for Education and ICT said a certain amount of control over recruitment was required by Members to enable the Executive to be aware of what was happening, as they (the Executive) were responsible for the Authority. Councillor Wells suggested that the staffing numbers in each Department, showing gains and losses in the figures, be provided for Cabinet on a quarterly basis.

Councillor G M Kensler, Lead Member for the Welsh Language agreed the recommendation and would be happy to receive the staff in post figures.

The Leader said he agreed that the Lead Member and Corporate Director involvement in external recruitment should continue and said that the previous Acting Chief Executive had not provided Members with the structures and grades of staff within Denbighshire. However, these would now be provided.

Councillor I.M. German, Lead Member for Human Resources said she welcomed the report.

The Chief Executive said external advertisement of new posts should be decided by Cabinet. If Directorates could fund posts within the existing level of running costs there should be no need for Cabinet to consider such posts. However, if a post could not be contained within budget recruitment of that post would have to become a Cabinet decision.

**RESOLVED that:-**

- (a) *the Cabinet delegates to the Chief Executive in consultation with Corporate Directors, on a trial basis, decisions on external recruitment for replacement posts, grant funded posts or posts funded within budget in accordance with the Council's recruitment and selection procedure as amended from time to time;*
- (b) *the Cabinet would approve external recruitment of all new posts which could not be funded within budgets;*
- (c) *quarterly reports containing structures and staffing figures within each Department, showing gains or losses to be provided for Cabinet, and*
- (ch) *the Cabinet agrees to propose to the Local Joint Consultative Committee, Resources Scrutiny Committee and full Council amendments (as set out in the appendix) which: -*

- (i). *reflect the need for some posts to be subject to external requirement;*
- (ii) *require all advertisements to state the Council's commitment to its Welsh language scheme, and*
- (iii) *bring the arrangements for advertising posts where Welsh is essential into line with the Council's Welsh language scheme.*

**1579. RECRUITMENT (CABINET 2002 - 54)**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor E.C. Edwards submitted the following applications for approval:

- (i) PO 2 Schools Finance Planning Officer - Lifelong Learning: Education
- (ii) Sc 2 Database Assistant - Resources Directorate: Corporate Property Unit
- (iii) Up to Sc 6 Graduate Valuation & Estates Surveyors x 3 - Environment Directorate: Consultancy Services
- (iv) PO 1 Senior Practitioner - Personal Services Directorate: Mental Illness Services
- (v) SW 1 - 3 Locum Social Workers - Personal Services Directorate - Children's Services
- (vi) Scale 2 Admin Assist - 20hrs Personal Services Directorate - Admin Section

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

**1580. WLGA ENVIRONMENT AGENCY NATIONAL FORUM (CABINET 2002 - 55)**

The County Clerk informed Members that a nomination for the WLGA Environment Agency National Forum was required by the 24 April 2002 and suggested that the most appropriate nomination would be Councillor D.M Morris, Lead Member for the Environment.

**RESOLVED** *that Members nominated Councillor D.M. Morris, Lead Member for the Environment as the Authority's nomination for the WLGA Environment Agency National Forum.*

**1581. 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 5 and 10 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.*

**1582. FFRITH BEACH DEVELOPMENT (CABINET 2002 - 56)**

Councillor W.R. Webb, Lead Cabinet Member for Property presented the report (previously circulated) seeking Members' approval to market the site in accordance with the recommendations contained in Option 2 of the report, Ffrith Beach Development Brief.

The Corporate Director: Environment said not all options were acceptable and the identified opportunities had been considered by the Property Review Group which recommended Option 2 to Cabinet.

Members discussed the Ffrith Beach Development and were in agreement that marketing of the site should take place and that the provision of a centre of sports excellence, if feasible, could be incorporated into the plans for the site. Members were also in agreement not to enter into any 'lock-out' agreements.

**RESOLVED** *that Cabinet recommend to Council that Option 2, to market the site (in line with guidance from Legal and Finance Departments) is approved.*

1583. DENBIGHSHIRE WELSH CHURCH ACTS SCHEME GRANT APPLICATIONS (CABINET 2002 - 57)

(Councillor R.W. Hughes and the Assistant Chief Executive: Strategy declared an interest in the item)

The Leader of the Council, Councillor E.C. Edwards presented the report (previously circulated) seeking Members' approval of applications for grant aid from the Denbighshire Welsh Church Acts Fund commencing for the 2002/2003 financial year.

**RESOLVED** that Members approve the list of grants as detailed in paragraph 6.1 of the report.

The meeting concluded at 11.50 a.m.

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