

CABINET

Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held in the Conference Room 1, Council Offices, Ruthin on Tuesday 14 September 2004 at 11.00 a.m.

PRESENT

Councillors S A Davies, Lead Member for Business & Communications; P A Dobb, Lead Member for Health & Wellbeing; E C Edwards, Lead Member for Communities; M A German, Lead Member for Children and Young People; R W Hughes, Leader and Lead Member for Regeneration; P J Marfleet, Lead Member for Finance and Personnel; D Owens, Lead Member for Lifelong Learning; S Roberts, Lead Member for Promoting Denbighshire; J Thompson Hill, Lead Member for Property and Asset Management and E W Williams, Lead Member for Environment.

Observers: Councillors R E Barton, G C Evans, H H Evans, K N Hawkins, N Hugh Jones, D Jones, E R Jones, M M Jones and J A Smith.

ALSO PRESENT

Deputy Chief Executive / Corporate Director: Resources, County Clerk and the Financial Controller.

APOLOGIES

Chief Executive.

165 URGENT MATTERS

[i] Councillor S A Davies: Verbal report on recent meeting with First Minister, Rhodri Morgan AM.

166 MINUTES OF THE CABINET

The Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 20 July 2004 were submitted.

Item 8 Revenue Budget 2004-2005 - Members referred to the top slicing of £150k in respect of County Voice and asked that details of when and where the agreement had been made be provided for the next Cabinet meeting by the Assistant Chief Executive: Strategy, as originally the production of County Voice was to be self-financing.

Item 6 Changes to Delegations: In response to a query from Members, Councillor E W Williams said commuted sums consultation was being undertaken with the Community Councils and would be finalised as soon as possible.

Item 16 Acquisition of Former Gwasg Gee, 12-18 Chapel Street, Denbigh: Councillor P A Dobb said she had voiced her concerns regarding heritage works being undertaken, the lack of parking facilities in Denbigh and that there would not necessarily be any job creation.

RESOLVED that subject to the above, the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 20 July 2004 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

167 BEST VALUE REVIEW OF DEBT RECOVERY

Councillor P J Marfleet presented the report seeking Cabinet approval of the completed Best Value Review and the Revenues Improvement Action Plan for 2004-2007 Appendix 1 in the format specified by the Corporate Performance Management Unit. Members were also asked to monitor the key actions of the five year Action Plan for Revenues via the Quarterly Performance Report.

Councillor Marfleet informed Members that the Debt Recovery Team based at Rhyl is responsible for the collection of £70m income on behalf of the Authority and had achieved a 75% reduction in complaints from residents. They had, to date, won the National Direct Debit Council Tax Category Award and were

currently on a national shortlist of three for an award from the Institute of Revenues, Rating and Valuation, which is the professional body for all UK Local Authority Revenue Departments. He asked that Cabinet's congratulations be passed on to the Team.

Councillor E C Edwards and Councillor P A Dobb endorsed Councillor Marfleet's comments and said the work carried out by the Team was very impressive.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approve the Best Value Review of Debt Recovery and the five year Action Plan.

168 CORPORATE QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT AGAINST IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2004 / 2005

Councillor P J Marfleet presented the report seeking Members' consideration of the Corporate Quarterly Performance Report against the Improvement Plan for 2004 / 2005 and monitor closely the progress being made against corporate and service risks with reference to local performance indicators with a view to considering any issue in greater depth as deemed necessary. Monitoring of progress towards target of the statutory performance indicators with a view to considering any issues in greater depth as deemed necessary was also required.

Councillor Marfleet stressed the need to address the measures where figures were unavailable. Unavailable figures could mean targets had not been set initially, lack of funding or a potential problem could be developing.

Members agreed the information be provided by the next Cabinet meeting.

RESOLVED that Members note the progress on the Corporate Quarterly Performance report attached at Appendices I and II to the report.

169 REVENUE BUDGET 2004-2005

Councillor P J Marfleet presented the report for Members, in the light of the budget performance figures for the current financial year as detailed in the appendices attached to the report, to consider any actions necessary to reduce the balance of overspending on services. Councillor Marfleet said the figures in the report were based at end July 2004.

Councillor Marfleet stressed that the current £571k overspend would need to be resolved, for example the Personal Services Directorate had an overrun in one area and a shortfall in another whilst the Environment Directorate needed to address the discrepancies in the ledger profile. The Chief Executive had assured Councillor Marfleet that the Chief Executive's department overspend of £83k would be addressed. He reminded Members that top slicing of Directorate budgets was not necessarily the way to address overspending issues and Departmental budget meetings were to be held in the coming weeks.

Councillor P A Dobb said she would welcome the opportunity to discuss the Personal Services budget in depth, particularly in regard to changes in nursing care etc.

Councillor E W Williams said the Environment Directorate's overspend of £78k was a very small percentage of the total £5m budget and the Directorate was on track to deal with the overspend.

RESOLVED that Cabinet note the figures in the Appendices and agree the remedial actions to align projected spending levels with approved budgets.

Councillor R W Hughes, Leader took the opportunity to remind Observers that it was not appropriate for non Cabinet Members to speak on items on the Cabinet Agenda. Should this persist, the rules on speaking at Cabinet meetings would be reviewed and strengthened and a specified number of written questions only would be accepted. The Leader hoped this course of action would not prove necessary.

170 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS AND CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES - AMENDMENTS

Councillor P J Marfleet presented the report seeking Cabinet approval to the amendments to the Financial Regulations and Contract Procedure Rules for submission to County Council and inclusion in the Council's constitution. Further amendments proposed by the Monthly Management Conference / Corporate Governance were submitted for Members' consideration.

The Deputy Chief Executive / Corporate Director: Resources thanked the Audit Manager and Solicitor for their work on the amendments to the Rules.

After discussion, Members:

RESOLVED that Cabinet recommend to Council the amendments, as detailed in Appendix A and the paper circulated at the meeting, to be incorporated into the Financial Regulations including Contract Procedure Rules, to be included in the Council's Constitution with effect from 1 October 2004.

171 APPROVAL OF SPG PARKING REQUIREMENTS IN NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Councillor E W Williams presented the report seeking Members' recommendation that Council adopt the Supplementary Planning Guidance Note [SPG] No 21 Parking Requirements for New Developments [Appendix A], as a material consideration for use in both development plan policies and determining development control applications.

Councillor P A Dobb referred to paragraph 5.2 New Developments and stressed the need for more spaces at residential institutions as apartment style accommodation becomes more prevalent for sheltered housing. Complaints were also often received regarding insufficient room in disabled parking bays and she wondered whether 10% was sufficient for the provision of all car spaces provided to the mobility standard. Councillor Dobb also enquired whether the Disability Forum had been consultees.

Councillor M A German reminded officers of the need to provide spaces for motorised scooters.

The Head of Planning and Public Protection informed Members that sheltered housing needs would be considered again in light of comments by Councillor Dobb. The space allocated for disabled parking bays met the current national guidance. With regard to the query on commuted sums, he said that not all new build would require parking spaces and if this was the case, these could be provided elsewhere which would result in commuted sums being paid.

Councillor P J Marfleet said parking was also becoming a requirement wherever possible in schools, both for staff and pupils and suggested this requirement should be incorporated into the report to Full Council.

RESOLVED that Members recommend Council adopt the Supplementary Planning Guidance Note [SPG] No 21 Parking Requirements for New Developments [Appendix A] as amended above, as a material consideration for use in both development plan policies and determining development control applications.

172 COLLABORATIVE PROCUREMENT - VEHICLES AND VEHICLE RELATED COMMODITIES

Councillor E W Williams presented the report seeking Members' authorisation for the Fleet Manager to enter into collaborative procurement arrangements, along with other North Wales Authorities (Wrexham County Borough Council, Flintshire County Council, Conwy County Borough Council, Wirral Borough Council, North Wales Fire Service) and the All Wales Public Sector Fleet Procurement Project, for vehicles and vehicle related commodities. The process constituted a joint procurement arrangement as referred to in Section 7.1 of the Financial Regulations (CPRs).

RESOLVED that Cabinet authorise the Fleet Manager to enter into collaborative procurement arrangements, along with other North Wales Authorities (Wrexham County Borough Council, Flintshire

County Council, Conwy County Borough Council, Wirral Borough Council, North Wales Fire Service) and the All Wales Public Sector Fleet Procurement Project, with a view to enabling joint procurement arrangements in respect of vehicles, bodywork, vehicles spares and consumables, fuels and lubricants and other related commodities.

173 CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Councillor R W Hughes informed Members that Councillor S A Davies was the Lead Member for Business and Communication and also the Cabinet Business Manager.

Councillor S A Davies presented the report and asked Members to ensure that in discussions with the Corporate Directors and Heads of Service that items are included in the Cabinet Forward Work Programme as soon as possible. It was essential that Lead Members were fully involved in developing the Cabinet work programme.

Councillor Davies took the opportunity of discussing the need for efficiencies and said the Authority was committed to providing better services. He suggested the number of hard copies of reports sent to Members for meetings be reviewed, and wherever possible, more use of electronic equipment should be made. Members also received hard copies of all the Delegated Decisions taken and this would also be reviewed.

Members agreed in principle that more use of electronic equipment should be made but emphasised that Members who did not wish to use such equipment should not have to do so.

Members agreed Councillor Davies write to all Members seeking their views on both electronic and hard copy provision of reports.

RESOLVED that Cabinet note the contents of the Forward Work Programme.

174 URGENT ITEMS

MEETING WITH RHODRI MORGAN AM, FIRST MINISTER

Councillor S A Davies had represented the Leader at a meeting with Rhodri Morgan AM, First Minister on 3 September 2004 with Leaders of the other Local Authorities in Wales. The meeting had been informative and would in future take place twice a year.

Councillor Davies reported that although he had suggested some of the funding and relevant work of the WTB, ELWa and WDA (to be incorporated into the Welsh Assembly Government) be devolved to Local Authorities, this would not prove possible.

Councillor Davies had also spoken with the First Minister on Denbighshire's innovative Area Partnerships and Community Strategies and had agreed to send the Plans to the Assembly. Councillor Davies has also asked for funding to further the Plans.

RESOLVED that Members note the report.

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 paragraph 8 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

PART II

175 IBM SINGLE TENDER APPROVAL

Councillor S A Davies presented the report seeking Members' agreement to the ICT Department obtaining an exemption from seeking quotations for the procurement of Enterprise backup, server consolidation and archiving solutions as IBM, the preferred supplier, has already been properly tendered for by another body, GCAT. [GCAT - a catalogue of prime suppliers that have met exacting standards set by the Government to provide the best contractual/price/quality requirements to supply to government bodies.]

RESOLVED that Cabinet agrees the single tender agreement to use IBM as the prime contractor for the procurement of Enterprise Backup, Server Consolidation and Archiving Solutions.

The meeting concluded at 12 noon.
