

CABINET

Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held at the Monsanto Suite, Royal International Pavilion, Llangollen on Tuesday 26 April 2005 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT

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

Observers: Councillors R E Barton; M LI Davies; MM Jones and T R Hughes.

ALSO PRESENT

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

APOLOGIES

Councillors E C Edwards, Lead Member for Communities and S Roberts, Lead Member for Promoting Denbighshire.

The Leader welcomed former Llangollen Councillor Tom Clutton and a number of young people from Ysgol Dinas Bran, Llangollen and Llangollen Youth Centre.

874 URGENT MATTERS

There were no Urgent Matters.

875 MINUTES OF THE CABINET

The Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 22 March 2005 were submitted.

***RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 22 March 2005 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.*

876 DENBIGHSHIRE COMMISSIONING STRATEGY FOR OLDER PEOPLE

Councillor P A Dobb presented the report seeking Cabinet approval of Denbighshire's Commissioning Strategy and related Action Plan for Older People's Services.

As the Champion for Older People, Councillor Dobb outlined the key messages for the future commissioning of services and highlighted the importance of developing with partners preventative services to support older people in retaining their independence and improving long term services.

Councillor Dobb referred Members to the Domiciliary Care provision and the need for this provision to become more specialised. She also referred to the Reablement and Rehabilitative Services and explained that these services were also in need of improvement. She reported that 3 of the neighbouring authorities were working with Denbighshire to set up the unified assessment of older

people. She added that indications showed that Denbighshire was streets ahead of the rest of Wales and that it was important that the authority was able to determine how many people were coming through the system.

Councillor P J Marfleet said he supported the paper but said that planning was important and that it was absolutely crucial that the categories of Older People were known. He referred Members to a letter he had received from Sue Essex, the Minister for Finance, Local Government and Public Services regarding the Authority's Standard Spending Assessment and to the data that was published on the Local Government Data Unit Website. He said that the Authority needed to be satisfied that its data was accurate across all of the 30 different headings on the website and that the finance earmarked was appropriate.

RESOLVED that Cabinet adopts the Denbighshire Commissioning Strategy for Older People's Services and its Action Plan as the future direction of services to Older People in Denbighshire.

877 EFFICIENCY AND JOINT WORKING

The Leader, Councillor R W Hughes presented the report asking Cabinet to endorse involvement in work being led by the Welsh Local Government Association on national projects for collaboration. She reported that the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) was looking for greater efficiency on Joint working and that there was a need to demonstrate the Council's commitment to pursuing greater efficiency through doing this.

Councillor Hughes reported that she had attended the Joint Scrutiny Meeting for Personal Services on 22 April where this particular item had been discussed and the following comments had been made by the Committee:

- if the Authority was working towards collaboration, the movement of information needed to be improved and protocols agreed;
- this was an opportunity for the Authority to build up teams of expertise, and
- the Authority needed to be mindful that it was not responding to hidden agendas about reorganisation.

Councillor Hughes said that as far as Denbighshire was concerned there was evidence of the Authority pursuing greater efficiency through joint working, but there was still a need to remove unnecessary bureaucracy and process and deliver significant savings through improved procurement in order to move resources into front line services.

Councillor Hughes reported that it was important that the Authority should not embark on collaboration for the sake of it, and that not all collaborations had been successful in the past. She referred to the Wirral and North Wales Purchasing Consortium and the lessons learnt following that experience.

Councillor Hughes referred Members to the appendix and highlighted the five key areas which had been prioritised for further investigation: Collaborative Procurement; Waste Management; Business Rates; Looked After Children – Out of County Placements, and Capital Schemes/Maintenance of Assets.

In response to Councillor P A Dobb's question on whether the Non Domestic Rates would benefit rural non-domestic rate relief, the Chief Executive explained that this was purely around the collection process and not about the regulations surrounding it. If the Authority were to move to such a system, it would need to be designed to allow flexibility.

Councillor E W Williams said he was pleased that Waste Management had been included as one of the key areas. He referred to a recent meeting he had attended with three other Authorities and Carwyn Jones, Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside. Councillor Williams expressed his concern at what emerged from the discussions, and that it was clear that there were insufficient funds to carry out the work. He explained that it was very easy for Authorities to agree to work together, but the funds needed to be there until the work had been completed. He felt that discussions needed to be held and projections carried out at the beginning of each financial year.

Councillor P J Marfleet agreed with the concerns made by Councillor E W Williams and reported that Waste Management was a typical example where the Authority could get maximum benefit on a regional issue.

He advised Cabinet that the Authority needed to know what it was going to be doing, as collaboration could be a costly exercise. Costs could be very front end loaded and needed to be identified before the Authority embarked upon it. Statutory issues would take precedence over our own priorities. He added that it was possible that efficiencies could be achieved through collaboration if it had been well thought through and costings had been identified.

The Leader felt that the Authority needed to be looking at what was best for Denbighshire.

Councillor E W Williams felt that the Authority needed to be identifying main issues and looking at what the Authority had to offer. All Lead Members needed to be inputting into what they believed was joint working and raising issues which arose out of their individual portfolios.

RESOLVED that Cabinet endorse involvement in work being led by the WLGA on national projects for collaboration.

878 CABINET AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Councillor S A Davies referred to the Forward Work Programme and asked Cabinet to note its contents. Councillor Davies asked officers to ensure that Lead Members were fully involved in developing the Cabinet Forward Work Programme from the onset.

Councillor Davies asked Members to look at the work programme and ensure that they had been fully informed by Officers of the items listed against their portfolios. He also suggested that as communication was a two way thing, prior to a report being presented to Cabinet, Lead Members should be communicating with their individual political groups in order to keep them fully informed of issues to be discussed, as there was evidence of a lack of communication across the Authority, and this was not just down to Officers.

Councillor Davies referred to the item on Managing School Places listed under November 2005 and to the 3 seminars arranged for Members to discuss the Managing Schools Programme. To date, only 25 Members had confirmed their attendance, and he urged all Members to attend one of the Seminars.

Councillor P J Marfleet explained that there were no items on the Forward Work Programme that could be considered in isolation. All items needed to be looked at as a bigger picture to see what shape Denbighshire would have in 10 years' time. It needed to be considered how these items fitted into plans such as the Spatial Plan/Unitary Development Plan and Infrastructure.

Councillor E W Williams said that discussions needed to be held before a Committee Meeting. All Members received copies of agendas and if there were issues arising out of a particular report, then Members needed to raise them with the relevant Cabinet Member so that their views could be considered before discussions took place at Committee.

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

879 URDD EISTEDDFOD: FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

(Councillor E W Williams declared an interest in the following item and withdrew from the meeting whilst it was considered).

Councillor D Owens, Lead Member for Lifelong Learning presented the report seeking Cabinet agreement of an advanced payment of £150k to the Urdd with immediate effect.

Councillor Owens reported that Denbighshire was very fortunate to be hosting the Eisteddfod in Ruthin in 2006. He reminded Members of the various activities being held over the coming days as

part of the proclamation week and asked Members to attend, if possible, some of the activities taking place across the County.

The Leader reported that local communities were involved in fundraising which was incredibly important, and that each town/village had been set specific targets.

Councillor M LI Davies asked whether some Members who were involved in the fundraising as part of their local communities, needed to declare their interest when items on the Eisteddfod were to be discussed. In response, the County Clerk explained that as the Members were not taking cash benefit out of this fundraising, and because they were not involved with the Urdd, there was no requirement for them to declare their interest.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) *Members agree to the immediate advance payment of £150k, and*
- (b) *Members endorse the Corporate Director of Lifelong Learning negotiating with the Urdd the amount and timing of the remainder within the agreed £300k allocation, and clarify any "in-kind" support requested by the Urdd.*

880 URGENT ITEMS

There were no Urgent Items.

At this point the Leader explained to the members of the public present that the Cabinet was about to move into confidential discussion under Part 2 of the agenda and asked them whether they had any comments or questions.

A young person representing Llangollen Youth Club responded to the questions raised by Cabinet Members regarding the skatepark and advised that the Youth Club had been involved in the design of the skatepark and that he hoped that the skatepark would be well used.

Another member of the public referred to Ysgol Glyndyfrdwy and asked how local community councillors could be involved in keeping schools open. She asked whether local community councillors had the powers to do anything.

The Leader responded explaining that Local Councillors may not have any powers, but that they could be involved as part of the consultation process. The Leader referred to a meeting between the Authority and the One Voice Wales Association and reported that a decision had been made at that meeting that both parties would work together.

The Leader also referred to work which was being progressed by the prospective Chairman of the County Council, Councillor J Smith. Meetings with young people had been initiated and Cllr. Smith was planning to make 2005/06 the year of Young People in Denbighshire.

The Leader thanked everyone for attending and for showing an interest in the work of the Cabinet.

At this juncture the meeting adjourned for 10 minutes to allow Members to participate in refreshments.

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 8 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

PART II

881 COMMUNITY CAPITAL PROJECTS

(Councillor S.A. Davies declared his interest in 8(a)(i) and Cllr. M.LI. Davies declared his interest in 8(a)(iv) and both withdrew from the meeting during consideration of the applications).

The Leader, Councillor R W Hughes presented the report seeking Cabinet approval for applications made for financial support from the allocation for Community Capital Projects. The County Council had made a block allocation of £330,000 in its capital plan for 2005/06 to support community capital projects together with a sum rolled over from 2004/05.

Members of the Resources Scrutiny Committee had recommended that in relation to the 8 projects for consideration, 3 of these should be recommended for approval, 1 should be recommended for a conditional approval valid for 6 months, subject to the applicant securing match funding, and 4 should be deferred to provide the applicants with an opportunity to seek match funding for their projects.

Councillor P J Marfleet referred to an e-mail he had received indicating that the closing date for applications was 16 May 2005, and asked how the applications before Cabinet fitted into this timescale. He asked that the date be extended to the end of May to correspond with the information on the website.

The Principal Regeneration Manager explained that the funds allocated had to cover the costs of the applications presented today and for those applications received by the closing date of 16 May 2005. The Resources Scrutiny Committee had asked that the 8 applications on file be considered and a decision made by Cabinet at its meeting on 26 April 2005. The remainder of the applications sent in by the closing date would be considered at a future meeting.

A detailed discussion followed around the issues of match funding for projects following the recommendations made by the Resources Scrutiny to defer some of the applications.

Councillor E W Williams queried the requirement placed upon applicants to use the funds allocated within a six month timescale, or face the money being taken back into the Community Capital allocation by the Council.

The Principal Regeneration Manager explained that the rules of the scheme stated that the offer was valid for 18 months with the exception of those granted conditional approval for 6 months, to allow them to seek external funding.

Councillor E W Williams referred to the heavy insurance bills being faced by community groups and the expensive running costs of projects. He asked whether the Authority could look at assisting community groups with their insurance costs.

Councillor P J Marfleet agreed and said that the Authority needed to look at what it could offer. Work needed to be undertaken to ascertain whether or not the Authority could use blanket insurance cover for skateparks/playgrounds.

The current 8 applications were discussed in detail and having taken into account the recommendations made by the Resources Scrutiny Committee it was -

RESOLVED that-

(s) *the deadline for submission of applications be extended until 31st May, 2005, and*

(b) *the following applications be agreed:-*

8(a)(i) Llangollen Partnership – Improvements to Riverside Park

8(a)(ii) North Wales Music Schools, Rhuddlan

8(a)(iii) Rhyl South West Central Resident's Association

*8(a)(iv) Trefnant Village Hall & Memorial
Agreed to grant conditional approval subject to match funding being secured*

- (c) *it was agreed to defer the other 4 applications to provide the applicants with an opportunity to seek match funding for the projects.*

882 WINDOW AND DOOR REPLACEMENT CONTRACT - COUNCIL HOUSE PROPERTIES

Councillor P A Dobb, the Lead Member for Health and Well-being presented the report asking Cabinet to approve the awarding of the contract to the Tenderer who submitted the most economically advantageous tender. She explained that this was a major contract involving the supply and fitting of 20,500 PVCu windows and 4,500 doors to 2,500 Council properties. The Housing Department had held a roadshow inviting tenants to come to view the windows and doors. Of those who attended, they were pleased with what they saw.

Councillor Dobb referred to how the tenders were evaluated using a matrix that took account of operational and financial quality issues as well as price. She explained to Members the number of measures put in place or already carried out to minimise the financial risk to the Authority.

A discussion ensued regarding the possible variations in sizes of windows and doors to be fitted. Members also asked that when the new doors were fitted, consideration be given to the elderly as to the position of the thresholds and handles so that they were not fitted too high.

Members were assured by Officers that the thresholds and handles would be fitted in accordance with Part M of the Building Regulations which addressed the height of the door thresholds and positions of opening handles.

Councillor M A German also referred to the fitting of the doors and explained that in order to lock the doors the handle needs to be raised, and that this could be very difficult for the elderly. It is very important that the doors were installed properly.

The Head of Housing Services explained that this programme needed to commence and that Housing Services would work closely with the Public Relations Team to ensure a photo shoot was arranged when the first few houses had the new doors and windows installed.

RESOLVED that in accordance with Contract Procedure Rule (C.P.R.) 25.4.c the tender which was the most economically advantageous submitted for the Window and Door Replacement Programme be approved.

883 CLWYD LEISURE: GRANT ALLOCATION

The Acting Corporate Director for Lifelong Learning presented the report seeking Cabinet approval to refuse Clwyd Leisure's claim for an additional amount of money for buildings insurance on the grounds that the authority had been fair and reasonable in its approach and funding of Clwyd Leisure. She outlined the background to the claim which dated back to when Clwyd Leisure had been established in 2001.

Following a discussion it was:-

RESOLVED that Cabinet refuse Clwyd Leisure's claim for an additional amount of money for buildings insurance on the grounds that the authority had been fair and reasonable in its approach and funding of Clwyd Leisure.

The meeting concluded at 11.55 a.m.
