

CABINET

Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday 15 January 2008 in Conference Room 1, County Hall, Ruthin.

PRESENT

Councillors P A Dobb, Lead Member for Social Services; E C Edwards, Lead Member for Customer Care and Community Safety; H H Evans, Leader and Lead Member for Education; M A German, Lead Member for Environment; G M Kensler; Lead Member for Promoting Denbighshire; P J Marfleet, Lead Member for Modernisation and Improvement; G O Rowlands, Lead Member for Regeneration and Housing; J A Smith, Lead Member for Business Management, Communications & Personnel and J Thompson Hill, Lead Member for Finance.

Observers: Councillors R E Barton; G C Evans; N Hugh Jones and C H Williams.

The meeting was chaired by Councillor J A Smith.

ALSO PRESENT

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

APOLOGIES

Interim Corporate Director: Lifelong Learning and the Financial Controller.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Councillor J A Smith referred to the sad loss of Councillor T Hodgson, who had passed away. Councillor Hodgson was the Member for Rhyl South and Chair of Social Services and Housing Scrutiny Committee. He also referred to the sad loss of Mrs Margaret Wilde who worked in the Building Cleaning Section of Environmental Services and had worked for Denbighshire County Council and previously Rhuddlan Borough Council since 1994. Reference was also made to the passing of Councillor Emrys Williams, who had been a Councillor on Glyndwr District Council and Denbigh Town Council, and past Chair of both Councils. Members stood in silent tribute.

Councillor H H Evans, Leader thanked both Councillor J A Smith, the Cabinet Officer and officers for their work in ensuring the Cabinet papers were available for Members a day earlier than usual. The Authority was working towards ensuring the Welsh translations would also be available at the same time. Earlier despatch of papers contributed to making the Authority more efficient.

640 URGENT MATTERS

There were no Urgent Matters.

641 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 18 December 2007 were submitted.

Item 3 Draft Action Plan in Response to Estyn: Councillor H H Evans, referring to the Post 16 Education Provision in Rhyl, said this was 'in the process' of being addressed.

Item 5 Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Llangollen Canal World Heritage Site: Councillor G M Kensler congratulated Denbighshire and Wrexham officers on the project and said as a result of winning the first round, it would be considered by UNESCO.

Item 7 Revenue Budget and Summary Capital Plan 2007-2008: Councillor P A Dobb asked for an update on the latest position regarding Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn. Councillor H H Evans said a meeting had been held with the Welsh Assembly Government and the Head of Partnership and Inclusion was contacting all Local Authorities in Wales to see if there was a need for the facility. The outcome would be reported to the February Cabinet meeting, with options should the response be unfavourable.

Councillor G M Kensler, declaring an interest in the item, said regular meetings had been held between officers, the site manager and the Welsh Assembly Government. Alan Lansdowne, Welsh Assembly Government had emphasised the facility as a regional one and every Authority in North Wales should use the facility whenever possible.

Item 8 Budget Setting 2008-2009 Update: Councillor J Thompson Hill referred to the Councillors' Budget Seminar held on 04.01.08 and the consensus that further savings of approximately £1m were required should the Council Tax increase be set at 3% for example. The Welsh Assembly Government final settlement was due on 22.01.08. Councillor G M Kensler reminded colleagues of the importance when drawing comparisons with neighbouring Authorities of the fact that some had the majority of their population located in one large town.

Item 12 Clwyd Leisure Joint Study: Councillor J Thompson Hill informed colleagues that the Task and Finish Group had met and have asked for further work to be carried out by the consultants. A further report would be prepared for the Cabinet on 19.02.2008.

RESOLVED that, subject to the above, the minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2007 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Deputy Leader.

642 REGENERATION STRATEGIC GROUP ARRANGEMENTS

Councillor G O Rowlands presented the report for Members to approve the regeneration strategic group arrangements for the Council and its partnerships. The 3 main strands were regeneration, skills and environment and the tasks for the Group were to ensure progress in developing, actioning, expanding and monitoring the Economic Growth Strategy approved by the County Council. The Lead Member for Finance would be included as part of the Group on a need basis.

Councillor G M Kensler suggested that Promoting Denbighshire was an essential strand and felt as the portfolio holder she should be a member of the Group and would promote co-operation between different parts of the County. Referring to paragraph 2.10 of the report, she declared an interest as a Board Member of Clwydfro and stressed the importance of the Denbighshire Enterprise Agency and Cyberskills as being essential to feed into the Strategy Group. She queried who would be monitoring the officer requests for international visits. Councillor Rowlands said the 3 Members on the Strategy Group would monitor such requests.

Referring the Council's Vision, Councillor P J Marfleet said it was important to know what was required for the area in 10 years' time, and the regeneration policy for the County would stem from this. The Head of Development Services reminded Members that certain strategies were already in place in the County, for example the Spatial Plan, and there were structures in place to ensure delivery. It was important to have governance arrangements in place where currently there were none and to link in to where governance was already in place. Partnerships were in place and both Clwydfro and Cyberskills would be included. The International Group would prioritise and recognise opportunities.

Councillor P A Dobb asked whether the new Group would replace the Working Group for Convergence and the International Development Forum, and stressed the need for Health to continue to be included. The Head of Development Services confirmed

the Working Group for Convergence would be replaced by the Regeneration Strategy Group and that the Lead Member for Social Inclusion or Health would be included in relevant discussions. Officer groups would continue.

The County Clerk outlined the situation regarding Clwydfro as a Council-controlled body and said Members were there as 'directors' and were then subject to company law. Councillor E C Edwards supported Councillor Kensler's recommendation that she as Lead Member for Promoting Denbighshire should become a member of the Regeneration Strategy Group. However, Councillor G O Rowlands said he could not support the amendment to the resolution. He also confirmed that all projects, however funded, would be considered by the Capital Task Group.

Councillor J Thompson Hill questioned whether attendance as appropriate by the Lead Member for Finance was determined by the 3 Members; whether the Group's agendas and papers would be circulated to all Members and reporting mechanism. Councillor H H Evans agreed the importance of keeping all Council Members informed of discussions and decisions. The Head of Development Services informed Members that the first meeting would discuss partnership arrangements outside the Council and links to the Local Service Board, a report on the strategic situation e.g. Spatial Planning, along with a matrix of projects for public funding which would lead to a priority set of projects. Decisions would then be made on which projects the Authority would wish to submit for European funding. The Rural Partnership Forum would also be involved. One of the Group's first main tasks would be to review existing strategies. He confirmed that all Cabinet Members would receive agendas and reports for each meeting.

Referring to the chart attached to the report, Councillor H H Evans stressed the need for the Area Members Groups to drive regeneration forward and that the Groups should be included on the chart. People skills would become an essential component of regeneration. In regard to the tourism aspect, he felt tourism should be included as this had the potential to become a massive industry. The Head of Development Services agreed Councillor Kensler would wish to attend the first meeting.

Responding to a query from Councillor R E Barton, the Corporate Director: Social Services and Housing said the Social Inclusion and Voluntary Sector Manager had been involved in developing work opportunities and best use of convergence opportunities rather than dealing with adoption of the Social Inclusion Strategy.

Councillor E C Edwards stressed the importance of including the Enterprise Agency as part of the Regeneration Strategy Group.

Councillor G M Kensler withdrew her original proposal for membership of the Regeneration Strategy Group. She asked that the Resolution be amended to include (1) the Lead Member for Promoting Denbighshire be invited to the first meeting of the Regeneration Strategy Group and (2) Regeneration Strategy Group arrangements be kept under review. Councillor M A German seconded the amendment.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

- (a) *support the revised governance arrangements set out in the report for the Council's Regeneration Strategy Group.*
- (b) *support further consultation with Denbighshire's Local Service Board in relation to the Regeneration Strategy Partnership*
- (c) *the Lead Member for Promoting Denbighshire be invited to the first meeting of the Regeneration Strategy Group*
- (ch) *Regeneration Strategy Group arrangements be kept under review.*

643 JOINT HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE COMMISSIONING STRATEGY FOR OLDER PEOPLE'S SERVICES IN DENBIGHSHIRE

Councillor P A Dobb presented the report seeking Cabinet approval of the first joint Health & Social Care Commissioning Strategy for Older People's Services in Denbighshire. The demand for older people services was growing rapidly and there was a need to ensure provision of cost effective, streamlined, strengthened and appropriate services. It was essential to Lobby the Welsh Assembly Government to ensure funding 'follows the patient' and that telecare was properly funded. It was important that people had more choices as many services were becoming more community, rather than hospital based. Any new services provided or the decommissioning of services was within the current budget constraints.

Councillor P J Marfleet said whilst the Authority was now having to provide services which originally were provided by the Health Service, it was important that the budget accompanied the service provision.

Members discussed people getting older and the resultant health problems and agreed the more the Authority and others could do in providing activities and independence for residents, it should lead in many instances to better health. Telecare was developing fast with an estimated 200 users. Another area of rapid increase was older people with dementia which meant more services would be required. The development of joint equipment stores was required but the Health Service did not want to fund this. It was noted that the community services framework has to be agreed by the end of March 2008.

***RESOLVED** that Cabinet approves the proposed service developments that are considered to be the right approach to delivering a Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People living in Denbighshire.*

644 SUPPORTING PEOPLE STRATEGY 2008 TO 2011 AND OPERATIONAL PLAN 2008-2009

Councillor P A Dobb presented the report for Cabinet to consider and agree the Supporting People Strategy for 2008 to 2011 and the Supporting People Operational Plan (SPOP) for 2008-2009. The SPOP was required on an annual basis by the Welsh Assembly Government. The Strategy sets the vision, aims and objectives for the Supporting People Programme for 2008-2011 and is for the planning and funding of tenancy support services.

The Supporting People Services have been agreed as relevant and as funding was uncertain the Supporting People Planning Group would need to decide service priority. Supporting People should contribute towards homelessness and its prevention; community safety and social inclusion; and community care and older people. A remodelling of support to tenants of Clwyd Alyn would be required along with any help to stop people becoming homeless. Increasing funding to the Youth Offending Team in Rhyl for 16-17 year olds was a feature. Councillor Dobb thanked both staff and the agencies concerned for their work on providing up to date services for Denbighshire's residents.

The Supporting People Manager informed Members that the SPOP grant was uncertain and the Welsh Assembly were looking to finalising the grant and would be paying specific grants. Reductions could become likely from 2009-2010. The Corporate Director: Social Services and Housing said grant withdrawal could mean services not being provided. The Authority had achieved some success in lobbying Assembly Members. The Supporting People Manager had been invited to join a national group which could be of help to the Authority.

Members discussed various issues in detail, including the split in Womens' Aid funding, the tariff set by the Welsh Assembly Government, and the robust performance monitoring of projects.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approves the Supporting People Strategy for 2008 to 2011 and the Supporting People Operational Plan (SPOP) for 2008-2009 and supports the projects identified to proceed to meet the needs of vulnerable people.

At this juncture (11.30 a.m.) the meeting adjourned for 30 minutes to allow Members to participate in refreshments.

645 CARBON REDUCTION STRATEGY

Councillor G O Rowlands presented the report for Members to consider and agree that Denbighshire County Council make a commitment, in a partnership arrangement with the Carbon Trust, to reduce its carbon footprint by 60% over the next 10 years.

The Corporate Director: Environment informed Members that the Carbon Trust had been set up by the Government as a non profit making organisation to reduce energy use. 2% savings in efficiencies had already been built in and this would add to the savings. It was likely that the Authority's commitment to the joint agreement with Flintshire County Council would pre-empt the legislation that would be brought in. The consultancy was free to help reduce the carbon footprint. He stressed the need to focus on core energy consumption rather than just waste recycling. A 10% reduction in consumption was required in all the Authority's buildings.

Councillor P J Marfleet supported the report and suggested that staff and schools should be encouraged not to waste energy.

Councillor J Thompson Hill asked for the provision of a baseline, showing the current position. He also supported the partnership arrangement with the Carbon Trust.

As travel and fuel costs were increasing, Councillor Kensler felt it was unlikely that savings could be made and this could have a negative impact on some services.

The Strategy was supported by Councillor M A German. He thought the Carbon Trust would spell out the obvious which the Authority should have been doing.

The report was also fully supported by Councillor H H Evans, who said this was part of the bigger picture in energy efficiencies. It was important to ensure the Authority had recycling facilities in its own buildings and that any new developments should be carbon friendly. The Corporate Director: Environment said any new buildings built with Welsh Assembly Government funding or grant would have to be carbon neutral by 2010. He asked that Members give a clear message of support to the Strategy.

The Bright Ideas scheme was suggested by Councillor P A Dobb as a vehicle for staff suggestions on how the Authority could improve its carbon footprint.

RESOLVED that Members approve Denbighshire County Council's commitment, in a partnership arrangement with the Carbon Trust, to reduce its carbon footprint by 60% over the next 10 years.

646 CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Councillor J A Smith presented the Cabinet Forward Work Programme.

RESOLVED that Cabinet note the Cabinet Forward Work Programme.

647 URGENT ITEMS

There were no Urgent Items.

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 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

PART II

648 AWARD OF A 3 YEAR FRAMEWORK HIRE AGREEMENT FOR TRAFFIC LIGHTS, SELF DRIVE VEHICLES AND PLANT & VEHICLES

Councillor M A German presented the report seeking Members' agreement to award contracts in accordance with Clause 15.1 of the contract Procedure Rules for framework agreements for the hire of [1] traffic lights, [2] self drive vehicles and [3] plant and vehicles as corporate purchasing arrangements. He reminded Members of the agreement made some years earlier where the Authority's Fleet Management Service had introduced particulate collectors in its fleet which would mean non polluting vehicles wherever possible.

The hire costs had been aggregated over a period of time and this meant that in accordance with European rules, the Cabinet would have to approve the agreement. The Corporate Director: Environment informed Members that some vehicles were hired as required and that gritting vehicles, for example, were purchased as demountable vehicles which meant they could be used for other purposes at various time of the year. He confirmed there was a mutual support arrangement in place between neighbouring Authorities. Local companies were not disadvantaged by the agreement.

RESOLVED to award the Framework Agreement to the contractors listed in the appendix to the report, in line with Contract Procedure Rules and to endorse the Framework Agreements as Corporate Purchasing Arrangements in accordance with CPR 15.1.

649 AWARD OF A CONTRACT FOR THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT FOR THE SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF PLAY EQUIPMENT, FENCING AND WETPOUR SAFER SURFACING

Councillor G M Kensler presented the report for Members to agree to the Leisure Services and Strategic Procurement Framework Agreements to provide for the Supply and Installation of Play Equipment, Fencing & Safer Surfacing over then next 4 years (2 years plus a further 2 years subject to funding) as detailed in Appendix 1. Members were also asked to endorse the framework agreement in accordance with CPR 15.1 as a formal Corporate Purchasing Arrangement.

The Chief Executive reminded Members that the Sharper Focus Reorganisation 3 years earlier had moved Play to Leisure Services.

Members noted that the agreements would be open and of benefit to Town & Community Councils and community groups.

RESOLVED that Members agree the Head of Countryside and Leisure be given approval to award the Framework Agreements for the supply and installation of play equipment, fencing and wetpour safer surfacing to the suppliers identified in Appendix 1 to the report and to allow the use of the agreement by all Public Sector Authorities in North Wales.

The meeting concluded at 12.15 p.m.
