

CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held in Conference Room 1a, County Hall, Ruthin on Tuesday, 19 February 2013 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

Councillors Hugh Evans (Chair), Julian Thompson-Hill, Eryl Williams, Bobby Feeley, Hugh Irving, David Smith, Huw Jones and Barbara Smith.

Observers: Councillors J.R. Bartley, J. Butterfield, W.L. Cowie, M.LI. Davies, J.R. Davies, T.R. Hughes, D. Owens, P. Penlington, A. Roberts and D. Simmons.

ALSO PRESENT

Chief Executive (MM), Corporate Directors: Economic and Community Ambition (RM), Customers (HW), Modernisation and Wellbeing (SE), Head of Legal and Democratic Services (GW), Head of Finance and Assets (PM), Head of Adult and Business Services (PG), Head of Community, Marketing and Leisure (JG), Chief Accountant (RW), Community Housing Manager (SK), Corporate Communications and Marketing Manager (GW), Project Manager NE Hub (JE), Commissioning Officer (CW), Scrutiny Coordinator (RE), Carers Co-ordinator (AD) BCU Representative and Administrative Officer (CIW).

The Leader welcomed Councillor Paul Penlington to the meeting.

Councillor E.W. Williams informed Members that a school pupil had received rib injuries following a road traffic accident outside Rhyl High School earlier in the day.

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Members were invited to declare any personal or prejudicial interests in any business identified to be considered at the meeting.

***RESOLVED** that Cabinet note there were no declaration of interests.*

3 URGENT MATTERS

No items were raised which in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972.

4 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 20th March, 2012 were submitted.

RESOLVED:- that the Minutes of the meeting held on 15th January, 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

5 FINANCIAL UPDATE REPORT

Councillor J. Thompson Hill presented the report which detailed the Council's revenue budget and savings as agreed for 2012/13, as at the end of January 2013. It provided a summary update of the Capital Plan, the current financial position of the Council and sought approval for recommendations made by the Strategic Investment Group.

He explained that the latest revenue budget forecast had been included as Appendix 1 and indicated an under spend across service and corporate budgets of £631k (£435k last month), which represents a variance of 0.55% across the total net budget. The position for schools forecasts positive net movement on balances of £286k on delegated budgets and £161k on non-delegated school budgets. The Housing Revenue Account summary had been included in Appendix 1 for information but this was a separate fund and not part of the Council's main revenue budget.

Appendix 2 provided an update on progress against the savings and pressures agreed as part of the 2012/13 budget setting process. In total, net savings of £3.443m had been agreed and £3.102m (90%) have been achieved with £316k (9%) classed as in progress and £25k (1%) had been deferred to next year. The deferral related to savings due to printer rationalisation. The remaining items still classed as 'in progress' were all considered achievable, but in most required analysis of a full year's activity to properly assess whether the saving measure listed had actually been achieved.

Cllr Thompson Hill provided a summary of the following Service Budgets which had been detailed in the report:-

- Business Planning and Performance.
- Adult & Business Services.
- Highways & Environmental Services.
- Children & Family Services.
- Communications, Marketing & Leisure.
- Customers & Education Support.
- School Improvement & Inclusion.
- Schools.
- Corporate Budgets.

He explained that the additional cost of the immediate response to the recent flooding events had fallen short of the Emergency Financial Assistance Scheme threshold, and there had been an assumption that the Council would fund the cost. The Head of Finance and Assets (HFA) confirmed that a claim for all eligible costs had been submitted to Welsh Government for discretionary funding. There were on-going costs in relation to exemptions from Council Tax and a further emerging pressure had arisen from the winding up of the Mutual Municipal Insurance Company in 1992, as Local Authority Members would be responsible for liabilities

still arising relating to events prior to 1992. The HFA explained that Denbighshire would meet a proportion of the liability claims, based on population figures, which would amount to approximately 20% of the costs. He informed Members that a contingency fund would be built into the budget and details of the costs would be included in the next finance report to Cabinet.

There were potential liabilities in respect of the former Rhuddlan Borough Council, and additional liabilities were now arising in respect of the former Clwyd County Council. The amount of the potential Clwyd liability was uncertain and the Council's total exposure to the Clwyd claims was approximately £2.5m, but it was unlikely that the liability would be triggered at this level.

Council Tax collection rates had exceeded assumptions and it had been presumed that any benefit would be utilised to contribute to the funding of the Council's strategic investment priorities as part of the Corporate Plan, Councillor J. Thompson-Hill confirmed that full details would be included in the yearend report. Expenditure to the end of January, 2013 had been £19.4m against an agreed Plan of £31.4m. Last year the final quarter accounted for 43% of the total expenditure for the year. Appendix 3 provided a summary of the current plan and how it had been financed. Appendix 4 provided an overview of major capital projects and details of the two schemes proposed for approval by the Strategic Investment Group had been outlined in Appendix 5. The proposed latest Housing Revenue Account had been included as a separate item on the Cabinet agenda.

The Chief Accountant provided confirmation that the financial markets remained quite volatile which continued to limit investment opportunities. The Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy 2013/14-2015/16 would be presented to Council for approval on the 26th February, 2013. Total borrowing remained at £134.08m and total investments were £19.2m, and details of risks and measures to reduce them had been outlined in the report.

Councillor E.W. Williams provided a brief summary of the major changes to education finance with schools being funded directly, through fair funding for schools, based on the requirements to deliver education and not on historical basis. He felt consideration should be afforded to arranging a social event to discuss the implications of the new system and to provide clarification.

In response to questions from the Leader regarding the funding provision for the initial feasibility works/detailed design and pre-construction stages to enable formal grant approval to be offered by the Welsh Government in respect of Rhyl High school and Bodnant Community School, Prestatyn, the HFA explained that the design works would be undertaken at risk on the assumption that that funding would be provided. Councillor E.W. Williams highlighted the importance of being proactive and having strategic plans in place to proceed with identified projects. The Chief Executive expressed the view that Denbighshire had adopted the correct approach to the 21st Century Schools Programme. However, he confirmed that there were risks in proceeding with the design works as there were no guarantees and only verbal assurances had been received with regard to the provision of funding. Members were informed that the approach had been reviewed by the

Strategic Investment Group in January, 2013, when approval had been recommend for the design works to commence at an estimated cost of £1.8m.

During the ensuing discussion, it was:-

RESOLVED - that Cabinet:-

- (a) notes the budgets and savings targets for the year, as specified in the report, and progress against the agreed budget strategy, and
- (b) agrees to the funding of feasibility works in relation to Rhyl High School and Bodnant Community School, Prestatyn in the sum of £1.8 million

6 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT / REVENUE BUDGETS AND CAPITAL BUDGETS 2013/14

Councillor H.C. Irving presented the report which sought approval for the Housing Revenue Account Revenue and Capital Budgets for 2013/14.

Councillor M.LI. Davies declared a personal interest as he rented a garage form the Council.

Councillor Irving introduced the report and explained that the budget for 2013/14 would need to be set to conform with the Housing Stock Business Plan (HSBP) established when the Council decided to retain its housing stock and fund improvements to reach WHQS by the end of 2013 and maintain it until 2041. The latest forecast out-turn had been detailed in Appendix 1 and balances at year end had been forecast to be £857,000, an improvement of £17k when compared to the December, 2012 forecast out-turn. The proposed budget for 2013/14 had been detailed in Appendix 1.

The Chief Accountant (CA) summarised the process for calculating the budget, which had been outlined in the report, and the Final HRA Subsidy Determinations were imminent. The Determination governed the negative subsidy paid to Welsh Government annually and it was assumed that "Guideline Rents" were charged, "Management and Maintenance" costs were fixed and older supported capital repayments were made. The "notional" HRA account produced from the calculation was in surplus and paid to Welsh Government and then to the Treasury as negative subsidy. It was unlikely that there would be any significant change to the Housing Revenue Account Subsidy System until 2014. Welsh Government had indicated that it would be suspending the rent convergence policy for another year and reducing the Guideline Rent to 1% above the September, 2012 inflation figure and this had resulted in the following recommendations from Welsh Government:-

- Management and Maintenance allowances to be uplifted by 6.6% to £2,610 compared to £2,267 per dwelling in 2012/13.
- Guideline Rent increases to £69.45 per dwelling per week which equated to a weekly increase of £3.37 or 5.18% increase.
- Benchmark Rents (RSL) would increase to £75.21 from £72.95, an increase of £2.26 equating to 3.10% uplift.

The estimated HRA Subsidy payment to Welsh Government for 2013/14 would total £3,243,000, an increase of 5.3% compared with 2012/13. Details of the work undertaken by Housing Services on scoping the impact of welfare reform and developing strategies to manage and mitigate the risks associated with it had been summarised in the report. The Corporate Director: Modernising and Wellbeing confirmed that all affected tenants would be supported with housing options advice and the service had been restructured to create a bespoke income management function to develop a more pro-active and interventionist approach to manage and mitigate the risks of increased arrears as a result of wider welfare reforms. It had been recommended that all tenants pay the Guideline Rent uplift for 2013/14 and a summary of the charges being applied to the stock had been provided in the report.

The Community Housing Manager (CHM) explained that the Housing Stock Business Plan (HSBP) would be monitored and a Due Diligence exercise would be undertaken on an annual basis. The latest review confirmed that many of the original assumptions remained unaltered and concluded that the Business Plan was both viable and robust and the plan would be viable over the next 30 years.

It was explained by the CHM that the 2012 stock condition survey had identified a need for significant additional expenditure over the next 30 years ranging from £50million to £33 million. The plan would be viable over the 30 year period with balances rising from £43 million from the original Savills survey to £52 million when taking account the stock investment requirements through the Rands Survey. The Capital Programme for 2013/14 would consist of completing the framework contracts so that all properties would meet WHQS and the total cost of capital works for 2013/14 would be in line with the Housing Stock Business Plan. Details of heating charges, garage rents and contractor appointments, framework agreement had been included in the report

In reply to questions from Councillor R.L. Feeley, the CHM provided details of the implications relating to the introduction of welfare reform. He referred to the restructure process being undertaken which incorporated projects being implemented in respect of garages and home heating systems. The Leader emphasised the importance of maintaining a consistent approach by the Authority and Voluntary Sector, regarding information provided to the public in relation to the welfare reform.

During the ensuing discussion, the CHM agreed to provide a response to concerns raised by Councillor J. Butterfield regarding rental parity between the North and South of the County.

RESOLVED:- *that*

(a) the Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2013/14, Appendix 1, and the Housing Stock Business Plan, Appendix 2, be adopted.

(b) rents for Council dwellings be increased in accordance with the Rent Setting Policy guidance from Welsh Government with effect from Monday, 1st April 2013, and

(c) rents for Council garages and Heating Charges be increased in line with Guideline Rents with effect from Monday 1st April 2013.

7 COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Councillor H.C. Irving presented the report which set out the Communications objectives for the Authority for the next three years, with key sections around internal communications and engagement, Member communications, improving the Council's reputation and enhancing the corporate brand.

The Council were restructuring its Communications and Marketing functions to meet the demands defined within the Corporate Plan. The Council would adopt a proactive approach to marketing and communication and keep under constant review the means by which it communicates to meet the needs of residents and visitors. The a key focus for the new department would be the creation of a Marketing Strategy for Denbighshire, which would recognise the need for an overall Corporate Communications Strategy to underpin all communications activity within the Authority. Details of other drivers for the Strategy had been outlined in the report and reference was made to:-

- The Chief Executive's document, 'An Excellent Council Closer to the Community' outlines the need to become closer to the community.
- The need for Members to become ambassadors for the Council.
- The financial position requiring a smarter way of delivering and the need for more effective communication.
- Feedback from residents.
- A need to strengthen internal communication activity both internally and with external audiences.
- Improving links with Town and Community Councils.

A co-ordinated Action Plan would address the future communication challenges of the Authority which would include marketing council services, destination marketing, major events, social media and web development. In reply to questions from the Leader the Corporate Communications and Marketing Manager confirmed that the welsh language policy development and the introduction of new standards set by the Welsh Language Commissioner would be addressed through the re-establishment of the Member bilingual forms. The Head of Community, Marketing and Leisure (HCML) explained that Denbighshire had been proactive in meeting the Welsh Language Standards requirements which were emerging. With regard to addressing the Local Government Measures in terms of supporting and enhancing Member communication with the community, the HCML referred to the work undertaken within the Communications Plan, Member Area Groups, Town, Community Clusters and the Councils' Customer Strategy.

The report provided information on how the decision would contribute to the Corporate Priorities, the effect of costs on other services, costs arising from communications activities, consultations carried out and possible risks and the means of reducing them.

In reply to concerns raised by Councillor W.L. Cowie regarding Customer Relationship Management response times, Councillor H.C. Irving explained that this matter had been raised with the Head of Customers and Education Support, and he agreed to liaise with Councillor Cowie on this matter. Councillor M.Ll. Davies was informed that complaints received in Welsh would be responded to through the medium of Welsh.

The Corporate Director: Customers responded to an issue raised by Councillor B.A. Smith and agreed to provide details pertaining to the lack of responses received in relation to the Town and Community Charter. The Corporate Director: Modernising and Wellbeing agreed to convey concerns expressed by Members in relation to the operation of i-Pads.

During the ensuing discussion, Councillor H.C. Irving outlined the recommendations in the report and informed Members that their concerns regarding Customer Services and Communications would be conveyed to the Head of Customers and Education Support.

RESOLVED:- that Cabinet approves the Corporate Communications Strategy and associated Action Plan for 2013.

8 NORTH WALES CARERS INFORMATION AND CONSULTATION STRATEGY

Councillor R.L. Feeley presented the report which detailed the implementation of the new Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure 2010 (the Carers Measure) as now set out in the North Wales Carers Information and Consultation Strategy 2012 – 2015. A copy of the Regional Strategy had been included as Appendix 1 to the report.

The Regional Strategy had been approved by Welsh Government (WG) and each of the six Local Authorities in North Wales had been required to scrutinise and approve the Regional Strategy. The report outlined how the Regional Strategy would address the requirements of the Carers Measure and the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee had expressed their support the implementation of the Strategy.

The Measure, Regulations and Guidance on implementing the Measure had been issued to all Local Health Boards and Trusts, and to Social Services (the 'designated authorities') in January 2012, and this was the first time that statutory duties in regard to Carers had been placed on Health Authorities in Wales.

The Partnerships Scrutiny Committee had considered a report which outlined the requirements of the new Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure 2010, and in particular the requirement to publish and implement a regional Information and Consultation Strategy for Carers.

The Head of Adult and Business Services (HABS) explained that the Local Health Boards had been designated as the 'lead authority' in the implementation of the Carers Measure Regulations and the North Wales Carers Leads Strategic Group (NWCSLG) had been established in 2011 to develop the Regional Strategy. In addition, BCUHB had established a Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure Project

Board to scrutinise the work of the NWCSLG and provide advice and assurance to the Health Board that it was meeting its responsibilities with regard to the Carers Measure.

The WG had concluded that the Strategy was proactive and demonstrated strong partnership working between the Health Board, six Local Authorities and Third Sector organisations. Some areas for improvement had been identified and these included the need for a separate chapter on young carers, strengthening some of the Key Actions for Year 3, especially those on staff and carer training, and stating how the Strategy would relate to Black and Minority Ethnic communities and other groups with protected characteristics. The mental health element of the Strategy also required strengthening and the WG were looking at ways of providing support to the Health Boards.

The key objectives of the Regional Strategy included:-

- All NHS and local authority professionals will be made aware of their responsibilities in relation to the Carers Measure through opportunistic awareness raising and staff training.
- Carers will be identified at the earliest opportunity.
- Carers will be given sufficient timely information according to their needs.
- Where patient consent is withheld, carers will be provided with as much information that can be shared without breaching patient confidentiality to enable them to carry out their caring role safely.
- Every carer will be informed of their right to an independent assessment of their support needs as a carer
- Carers will be involved as a matter of course in all decision making processes around care management.
- NHS staff are able to signpost identified carers to carer support organisations.

In order to meet these objectives, the Regional Strategy sets out key actions in relation to:

- Identification and Signposting of Carers
- Carers Needs Assessments
- Information provision
- Communication and consultation with Carers
- Staff Training and Carers Training
- Monitoring the effect of the Carers Measure

The report included details of how the decision contributed to the Corporate Priorities, the effect of costs on other services, costs arising from communications activities, consultations carried out and possible risks and the means of reducing them.

The HABS explained that the statutory duties that the Carers Measure placed on the Health Board addressed demographic issues in relation to the increasing numbers of individuals taking on a caring role, and increased support to Young Carers would help to address needs set out in Denbighshire's Young Carer's Strategy, with the involvement of Education as a key partner. Denbighshire's Big

Plan supported the development of the Regional Strategy, and the implementation of the Strategy actions. The development of the Regional Strategy would also support the performance measures included in the Big Plan in regard to the numbers of Carers identified and assessed.

Details of the allocations to be made available to BCUHB to support the implementation of the regional strategy across North Wales had been detailed in the report. The HABS confirmed that the responsibility for assessment would remain with the Local Authority and that the potential for an increase in the number of referrals would be monitored to consider capacity issues and implications for future services. He outlined the processes adopted for the identification of carers, particularly at an early stage, and for the recognition of the level and type of support required.

The Carers Co-ordinator responded to a question from Councillor J. Thompson-Hill and provided details of the range of services commission to provide assistance for carers, which included respite care provision. At the request of the Leader the Commissioning Officer agreed that information on the support services available for carers in the County could be circulated to Executive Members.

The officers provided the following responses to issues raised by Members:-

- Details were provided of the funding and payment process for the provision of services to service users.
- The HABS explained that funding issues raised in respect of the provision of carers services would be included in the budget planning process for the next financial year. Councillor R.L. Feeley explained that the cost implication were unclear and would be monitored closely. The CD:MW made reference to funding and resource provision implications which could impact on and influence the level and range of service provision.
- The role and remit of Denbighshire's Carers Champion, Councillor J.A. Davies, was summarised. It was explained that she was a standing member of the Denbighshire Carers Strategy Group and thereby received regular progress and information updates.
- In response to concerns raised by Councillor B.A. Smith, the Carers Co-ordinator explained that discharge planning would be an important element of the establishment and development of a formal referral pathway through the health journey. The strategy currently being developed to improve the process would encompass a care plan and the proposed improvement of the strategy would ensure that the process would be more robust. She confirmed the importance of the role of General Practitioners in the sign posting process and confirmed their inclusion in the training process. The Carers Co-ordinator agreed that a carers information leaflet designed by the North Wales Group, to be distributed at staff training sessions, could be circulated to Members when completed.
- The CD:MW informed Members that the strategy also encompassed young carers and explained that the access point to services for young carers differed to those for adults. She outlined the work being carried out in Denbighshire Schools and Children's Services to identify young carers and ensure a higher level of awareness, and confirmed that further work would be undertaken through the regional commissioning of services.

The Chief Executive expressed his support for the Strategy and highlighted the good partnership working relationship which existed between the BCUHB and Denbighshire. He outlined the legal requirements and highlighted the importance of making decisions which would increase and strengthen the level of partnership working which had already been established.

Following further discussion, it was:-

RESOLVED:- *that Cabinet approves the North Wales Carers Information and Consultation Strategy, 2012-2015, and the partnership approach with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and the third sector in regard to its implementation.*

9 ETAPE CYMRU CYCLING EVENT 2013

Councillor H.LI. Jones presented the report which provided details of the Etape Cymru closed road cycling event scheduled to take place in the County in September, 2013.

The Communities Scrutiny Committee had given an unqualified endorsement to the event taking place subject to some concerns being addressed and Cabinet making a decision on the proposed Road Closure Orders. Details of the Etape Cymru event, its previous success and benefits to the region, had been summarised in the report

Councillor Jones explained that although Denbighshire were not directly involved in planning the event, the organisers had stressed that it would be unlikely to proceed without the support of both Denbighshire and Wrexham Councils. The main role for Denbighshire would involve facilitating discussions around highways and safety issues. A summary of the concerns relating to certain aspects of the race had been included in section 9 of the report, and these were being addressed by the organisers. Denbighshire had continued with its regular communication with Human Race, the organisers of Etape Cymru and Wrexham County Borough Council in relation to the 2012 event and plans were now underway for the 2013 event. Organisers had met with the Safety Advisory Group and Local Members to review the 2012 event and had taken on board the Group's recommendations to avoid any problems in 2013.

A number of the risks and concerns identified by the Communities Scrutiny Committee and had been summarised in the report in sections 9.1 to 9.9, together with, some remedial plans being put in place to mitigate the risks going forward, these included:-

- Communications with residents and landowners living along the route.
- Public liability.
- Results of any risk assessments undertaken with respect of public liability matters.
- Inadequate marshalling.
- Validity of figures on economic benefit.

- Starting the event earlier in the day.
- Member involvement at the Safety Advisory Group.
- Exploring opportunities to market Denbighshire as a destination.

Denbighshire and the event organisers had discussed arrangements for a supplementary event at Llangollen Pavilion to coincide with the registration process. This would be arranged and led by Leisure Services and supported by representatives of the local community, with the aim of securing local support for the race and for the potential of economic benefit from the event.

Organisers had worked with Highways and Regeneration officers to address concerns raised by businesses. Materials to promote and market Denbighshire as a destination had appeared on Etape Cymru's website, together with, information about hotels, tourist information centres and local eateries. Information packs would be provided at the registration point and the Council would be utilising every opportunity to promote the event. Members were informed that Denbighshire were confident that the figures relating to economic benefit of the 2012 event were valid.

Councillor D.I. Smith explained that he fully supported the event but felt assurances should be provided by the organisers that the event could be delivered in accordance with any agreements and pledges provided. The Leader explained that problems had previously been experienced in his area with regard to the event and meetings had been held with the organisers to address these issues. He emphasised the importance of consultation with the local community and the respective Local Members. Cabinet supported the view expressed by Councillor M.LI. Davies that the agreement by the organisers to address the concerns raised by the Communities Scrutiny Committee, as outlined in 9.1 to 9.9 of the report, be included in the resolution.

The Head of Community, Marketing and Leisure informed Cabinet that an events calendar had been developed which would provide Denbighshire with a clear process for the management of events and would reinforce the economic ambition aspect for the Council. In response to questions from Councillor M.LI. Davies, he confirmed that the cost of any Road Closure Orders would be met by the event organisers, and explained that the Joint Safety Advisory Group now had a clear role with regard to safety issues.

Members agreed with the views expressed by Councillor H.LI. Jones that an additional recommendation be included requesting that the organisers update Local Members on the progress in relation to the concerns raised by the Communities Scrutiny Committee and the Safety Advisors Group at three month intervals.

Following further discussion it was:-

RESOLVED - that Cabinet:-

- notes the arrangement put in place to address the concerns expressed by the Communities Scrutiny Committee, as outlined in 9.1 to 9.9 of the report.*
- agrees the road closure and endorses the event taking place, and*

(c) requests that the organisers update Local Members on the progress in relation to the concerns raised by the Communities Scrutiny Committee and the Safety Advisory Group at three month intervals.

10 CHANGES TO BUS FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

Councillor D.I. Smith presented the report which sought approval for the revised management arrangements required to deliver the new bus funding scheme via TAITH, the Regional Transport Consortium, and for a change to the Constitution of TAITH to allow the delivery of the new scheme.

The Minister for Local Government and Communities (MLGC) announced his intention to change the grants system used to support bus travel in Wales. The variations had now been finalised and the report detailed the changes and highlighted their implications.

The Bus Services Operators Grant (BSOG), provided directly to bus operators by the WG, and Local Transport Services Grant (LTSG), provided to Local Authorities to support local bus networks, currently provided support of bus services from the Welsh Government (WG). The total combined value of the grants in 2011/12 had been £33 million. In January, 2012 the MLGC announced a proposed reduction of 25 to 27% in the two schemes. There would be a transitional funding period whilst the grant was maintained, subject to a review future funding of bus services across Wales. The first phase of reduction of around 9.5% was implemented from 1st October, 2012 with local reductions in supported bus routes agreed by Cabinet in September, 2012.

The report summarised the revised bus funding arrangements and confirmed that the report from the Steering Group, established by the MLGC, had now been approved by the Minister. The key principles of the new arrangements to be in place from the 1st April, 2013 had been included in the report, together with, an outline of the work required to be undertaken to ensure that the consortia, local authorities and operators were ready to operate the new system by the 1st April. Plans for managing and resourcing the new responsibilities were being developed locally by a Task and Finish Group of the North Wales Transport Managers.

It was explained that work would be undertaken to understand the current levels of BSOG support for commercial and supported services, to determine the actual levels of funding for the commercial mileage element of the new grant and funding levels available to local authorities for supported services. The Minister had agreed the introduction of the new system could take place on a phased basis.

Regionalisation of the LTSG would proceed as scheduled on the 1st April, 2013 with changes to the BSOG being introduced over a 12 months period.

Councillor Smith confirmed that there was a risk that the new proposals would impact on existing bus networks during the transition period and there would inevitably be a reduction in the number of commercial services operated across North Wales, placing pressure on the supported network. The level of unhypothecated funding allocated by Local Authorities would come under pressure as the changes and reduced budget impact on networks. It was explained that a close working relationship between TAITH and the Local Authorities would be essential to manage the potential changes.

The Corporate Director: Economic and Community Ambition informed Members that the current TAITH Constitution limited its role to the aims and objectives set out on paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2 of its Constitution. It was proposed to amend the Constitution by the insertion of the additional objective below into paragraph 3.2 of the document. Details of the proposed amendments had been set out in full in Appendix 1. No further changes had been proposed and any additional changes to the role of TAITH would require the further approval of the partner Authorities. In reply to a question from Councillor H.C. Irving, it was confirmed that no Denbighshire staff had been seconded into TAITH to develop the implementation process.

A number of Members highlighted the contribution made by local bus services in sustaining rural communities and developing the local economy. Reference was made to the possible negative impact resulting from the withdrawal of services and the importance of consultation with the community when considering future service provision.

The report outlined how the decision would contribute to the Corporate Priorities, costs and their impact on other services, the consultations process, Chief Finance Officer Statement and the risks and steps to reduce them.

RESOLVED - that Cabinet:-

(a) notes the new arrangements for bus funding to be implemented from the 1st April, 2013 following the approval of the bus funding report by the Minister for Local Government and Communities.

(b) approves the proposed amendments to the TAITH Constitution set out in Appendix 1 to the report, and

(c) notes that further work would be progressed to identify new management arrangements for the delivery of the new scheme during the initial implementation and transitional period for Regional Transport Services Grant.

11 CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Councillor H.H. Evans presented the Cabinet Forward Work Programme.

Members agreed that the following amendments to the Forward Work Programme with regard to future scheduled business items:-

- A report on Emergency Planning be included for consideration at the meeting on the 19th March, 2013.

- The report on the Adoption of the LDP Steering Group be deferred from the meeting on the 19th March, 2013.

- Town and Area Plans report be rescheduled from the 14th May, 2013 to the 16th April, 2013.

- The numbering of the agenda items for the meeting in June, 2013 be amended.

RESOLVED – that, subject to the above, Cabinet receive the Forward Work Programme.

PART II - CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It is recommended in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, that the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business because it is likely that exempt information (as defined in paragraphs 13 and 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Act) would be disclosed.

12 DENBIGHSHIRE RECYCLING PARK CONTRACT

Councillor D.I. Smith presented the report which detailed the variation to and the extension of the Council's Recycling Park Contract, with CAD Recycling.

In 2009 the Council awarded a seven year contract to CAD Recycling for the operation of the Council's Recycling Parks, with an option to extend the contract by a further 3 years. The contract had been extremely successful in making huge improvements across the sites and also managed to greatly reduce the amount of waste being landfilled.

The bonus structure had enabled the contractor to be innovative in their approach to recycling, and the bonus payments due had been higher than originally envisaged at the start of the contract. To reduce costs the contractor had been approached to renegotiate the bonus payment clauses and had agreed to the proposed changes to the bonus structure, which would provide savings of £100,000 per year until the end of the contract in March, 2016. In agreeing to the variation of the bonus payment clauses the contractor had requested that the 3 year extension option be invoked. Given the exceptional performance of the contractor to date, and that the variation to the contract would continue to motivate continuous improvement, it was recommended that the 3 year extension to the contract be granted.

In reply to a question from Councillor J. Thompson-Hill, it was felt that the variation would deliver cost efficiencies whilst ensuring that the contractor was still incentivised to improve services for the Recycling Park customers. Details of costs, effects on other services, consultations carried out, any possible risks and the means of reducing them had been included in the report. The main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment had been incorporated in Appendix 1 to the report.

A number of Members referred to the high standard of service provided at the Councils' Recycling Parks and the positive effect of maintaining clean towns within the County.

RESOLVED:- that Cabinet approves the variation to the bonus structure clauses of the contract, and the extension of the contract by a period of 3 years.

The meeting concluded at 12.50 p.m.