

COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the County Council held in Council Chamber, County Hall, Ruthin and by video conference on Tuesday, 4 July 2023 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

Councillors Michelle Blakeley-Walker, Joan Butterfield, Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones, Ellie Chard, Kelly Clewett, Ann Davies, Karen Edwards, Pauline Edwards, Gwyneth Ellis, Chris Evans, Hugh Evans, Justine Evans, Bobby Feeley, Gill German, Jon Harland, Elen Heaton, Huw Hilditch-Roberts, Martyn Hogg, Carol Holliday, Alan Hughes, Hugh Irving, Alan James, Brian Jones, Paul Keddie, Diane King, Geraint Lloyd-Williams, Jason McLellan, Barry Mellor, Terry Mendies, Win Mullen-James, Merfyn Parry, Pete Prendergast (Chair), Arwel Roberts, Gareth Sandilands, Peter Scott (Vice-Chair), Rhys Thomas, Andrea Tomlin, Cheryl Williams, David Williams, Elfed Williams, Eryl Williams, Huw Williams, Emrys Wynne and Mark Young

ALSO PRESENT

Chief Executive (GB), Corporate Director: Governance and Business / Monitoring Officer (GW), Corporate Director: Environment and Economy (TW), Head of Finance and Audit / Section 151 Officer (SG), Strategic Planning and Performance Team Leader (IMcG), Planning and Performance Officer (EH), Democratic Services Manager (SP), Scrutiny Co-ordinator (KE), Zoom Host (SJ) and Committee Administrator (SLW).

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors James Elson, Delyth Jones and Raj Metri

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

None.

4 CHAIRMAN'S DIARY

The Chair of the Council, Councillor Pete Prendergast, reported on the civic events he and the Vice-Chair had attended.

RESOLVED that the Chairman's diary be noted.

5 MINUTES

The minutes of Full Council held on 9 May 2023 were submitted.

Matters Arising –

Item 11, Page 13 – had further discussions taken place with North Wales Police. It was confirmed a meeting had taken place the previous week and a further meeting was due to take place with the Chief Constable later in the week.

Item 12, Page 16 – had a meeting taken place with Alex Angels regarding the health and social care in the county. It was confirmed a meeting had taken place on 22 May 2023.

RESOLVED that, subject to the above, the minutes of the Council meeting held on 9 May 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

6 GOVERNANCE FOR DELIVERY AND OVERSIGHT OF THE CORPORATE PLAN, AND OTHER COUNCIL WORK

Councillor Gwyneth Ellis, Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets, introduced the report (previously circulated) to ensure Members were aware of the governance arrangements for delivery of the themes in the Corporate Plan, and mechanisms for oversight and scrutiny for members. The report also clarified how Members could engage with wider Council activity.

Iolo McGregor, the Strategic Planning and Performance Team Leader summarised the report.

Quarterly reports were to be made available and all members would have sight of those reports.

The themes for the Corporate Plan were as follows –

- (i) A Denbighshire of Quality Housing that meets people's needs
- (ii) A prosperous Denbighshire
- (iii) A healthier, happier, caring Denbighshire
- (iv) A learning, growing Denbighshire
- (v) A better connected Denbighshire
- (vi) A greener Denbighshire
- (vii) A fairer, safer more equal Denbighshire
- (viii) A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language, and
- (ix) A well-run, high performing Council.

Issues regarding wifi connectivity in rural areas was raised and it was confirmed that Openreach were responsible for the wifi connectivity and not the council. Rather than discuss the issue during full Council, it was agreed the Chief Executive would speak to the Digital Officer and relay the outcome of the meeting to all Members. The contact details of the digital officer would be circulated to all Members following the meeting. The Monitoring Officer confirmed that Openreach would be attending Performance Scrutiny Committee in January 2024.

Following the summary of the governance and oversight of the Corporate Plan, it was unanimously –

RESOLVED that:

- (i) Council confirmed it had understood the governance arrangements, including when and how updates on progress against its Corporate Plan would be received and options for further input and scrutiny;
- (ii) Council confirmed it had understood options for engaging with business in the wider Council portfolio

7 COUNCIL PERFORMANCE SELF-ASSESSMENT 2022 TO 2023

Councillor Gwyneth Ellis, Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets, introduced the report (previously circulated). The report accompanied the council's Performance Self-Assessment for 2022 to 2023. The reports provided the end of year analysis of progress and challenges with the key performance objectives (ie: Corporate Plan themes), and, for the first time, presented data against the new Corporate Plan's performance management framework.

Regular reporting was an essential monitoring requirement of the council's performance management framework and statutory duties in relation to the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, the Equality Act 2010 and Wales Measure 2022, and the council's contributions to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Quarterly reports were taken to Scrutiny and Cabinet meetings and the Executive Summary provided an evaluative statement of the council's progress.

Iolo McGregor, the Strategic Planning and Performance Team Leader summarised the report and at this juncture expressed his gratitude to Emma Horan, the Planning and Performance Officer for producing such a comprehensive report.

The report had previously been presented at Scrutiny Committee and Governance and Audit Committee. There had been no formal recommendations from the Governance and Audit Committee.

During discussions the following points were raised –

- (i) Equality and Diversity – how would this affect both staff and elected members. It was clarified that equality training was part of the members training and also members undertook code of conduct training. Staff were encouraged to undertake equality and diversity training and to treat each other with respect. There were no issued within Denbighshire County Council but everyone were still required to be vigilant. Managers received training regarding all the council's policies and there is work evolving regarding a Diversity Champion.
- (ii) Members were pleased work was ongoing to improve Ysgol Christ the Word and it was looking a lot more positive.
- (iii) Links around Dementia had ceased but it was confirmed that work would continue with Dementia within the community.
- (iv) Councillor Chris Evans raised the issue of Mental Health as the mental health of staff and members was essential. More training would put forward to members and ensuring Managers were aware of any staff with mental health issues. It was confirmed in the 1:1's the first question

was “how are you?”. This question would also need to be asked of members. There are Mental Health First Aiders and a Mental Health Champion in each service. All present thanked Councillor Chris Evans for his input regarding mental health.

- (v) It was confirmed that the purpose of the report was it was an important tool to hold officers to account and options available to members.

Following discussions, it was unanimously –

RESOLVED that, subject to the above, Council approve the Performance Self-Assessment 2022-2023.

**AT THIS JUNCTURE (11.35 A.M.) THERE WAS A 20 MINUTE BREAK.
THE MEETING RECONVENED AT 11.55 A.M.**

8 COUNCIL POLICY ON MEMBER TRAINING

Councillor Julie Matthews, Lead Member for Corporate Strategy, Policy and Equalities, introduced the report (previously circulated) and requested Members views and directions on the requirements for member training.

At this juncture, Councillor Matthews thanked Steve Price, Democratic Services Manager and the Democratic Services team for helping Members in their roles.

The Democratic Services Manager summarised the report.

During discussions the following items were raised as training –

- (i) Councillor Hugh Irving proposed Licensing training be included in the recommendation 3.1 as mandatory together with the Code of Conduct and Planning training. Seconded by Councillor Bobby Feeley and unanimously agreed by a show of hands vote.
- (ii) Equality training to have specific training regarding Gypsy and Travellers.
- (iii) Safeguarding training. Legislation provided opportunity for personal development review (PDR) but in the past the update of the PDR's had been low.
- (iv) Where mandatory training was required by members, it was proposed attendance figures be reported to Group Leaders.
- (v) Councillor Andrea Tomlin proposed mandatory training for Chair and Vice-Chairs. No seconder for the proposal.

It was agreed that Member Training be added to the next Group Leaders meeting and then be brought back to a future Council meeting. Proposed and Seconded.

RESOLVED that Member Training be added to the Group Leaders meeting, following which be added to the Full Council Forward Work Programme.

9 COMMITTEE TIMETABLE 2024

Councillor Julie Matthews, Lead Member for Corporate Strategy, Policy and Equalities, introduced the report (previously circulated).

It was necessary for Council to approve a timetable for 2024 to enable meeting arrangements and resources to be confirmed, to publicise the timetable and to populate the Members' diaries.

The Leader and the Democratic Manager expressed his thanks to Kath Jones, Senior Committee Officer, for preparing the schedule and liaising with officers, as it required extremely careful organisation.

RESOLVED that Council unanimously approved the draft Committee Timetable 2024.

10 NOTICE OF MOTION

Councillor Mark Young presented a Notice of Motion (previously circulated) in respect of Rhyl Beach receiving the award of the Blue Flag which is one of the voluntary awards for beaches, marinas and sustainable tourism boats.

Councillor Barry Mellor responded by thanking Councillor Young for putting forward Notice of Motion. It needed to be recognised this would require a significant amount of work and for the council to work with other partners such as Natural Resources Wales and Welsh Water to identify improvements required. Councillor Mellor supported the Notice of Motion and suggested a report be presented at Scrutiny Committee during 2025.

Councillor Gareth Sandilands proposed an amendment. As a Committee Member of the Plastic Free Prestatyn Group, and also the Surfers against Sewerage connected to Prestatyn PROPOSED an amendment to the Notice of Motion as follows –

“The council will actively be working to retain and regain all Denbighshire’s beaches including Rhyl and Prestatyn enjoyed all year round by tens of thousands of residents and visitors to Denbighshire.” SECONDED by Councillor Win Mullen-James.

A vote took place and the amendment was unanimously approved.

A vote was then requested for the substantive Notice of Motion as follows –

“that council officers continue to work proactively with the relevant agencies to retain and regain blue flag status for all beaches in Denbighshire”.

It was unanimously agreed and, therefore,

RESOLVED Council Officers continue to work proactively with the relevant agencies to retain and regain blue flag status for all beaches in Denbighshire.

11 NOTICE OF MOTION

Councillor Justine Evans presented a Notice of Motion (previously circulated) in respect of Rhyl Central Promenade Kiosks.

Councillor Barry Mellor responded by thanking Justine Evans for the Notice of Motion. It would be necessary to remove the kiosks as the promenade in that area would be raised a substantial amount to create the new sea defences. It was also clarified that closure of the kiosks had been negotiated with the tenants and had their full agreement. Although there were currently no proposals to build new kiosks on the promenade neither had it been ruled out as this could be considered in the future. If this were the case the previous tenants, under certain circumstances, would have first refusal to run them. Therefore, it may not be necessary to undertake a procurement process to appoint new tenants.

In the future consideration would be taken as to whether kiosks would be required to be sited on the promenade. The central Rhyl Flood Scheme was due to be completed by October 2025.

Councillor Mellor PROPOSED an amendment to the Notice of Motion as follows –

“that the report is taken to Scrutiny Committee in spring 2025 to consider an updated masterplan for the Rhyl Promenade including the option of creating the new kiosks”.

SECONDED by Councillor Kelly Clewett.

Councillor Brian Jones stated that the Notice of Motion had been brought forward due to the outcry of local residents.

Councillors Joan Butterfield and Alan James responded that, as ward members, they had not received any complaints from local residents regarding the proposed removal of the promenade kiosks.

The Monitoring Officer confirmed a vote needed to take place on the amendment.

The vote took place and a majority voted in favour of the amendment with 1 vote against.

Therefore, a vote took place on the substantive Notice of Motion which was unanimously agreed and it was –

RESOLVED that the report be taken to Scrutiny Committee in spring 2025 to consider an updated masterplan for the Rhyl Promenade including the option of creating the new kiosks.

12 COUNTY COUNCIL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Monitoring Officer introduced the Council’s Forward Work Programme (previously circulated).

RESOLVED that the Council’s Forward Work Programme be noted.

THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 13.36 P.M.