

COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the County Council held in Council Chamber, County Hall, Ruthin and by video conference on Tuesday, 19 July 2022 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

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

ALSO PRESENT

Chief Executive (GB); Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services (GW); Steve Gadd, Head of Finance and Property Services (SG); Tony Ward, Head of Highways and Environmental Services (TW); Head of Children Services (RM); Principal Manager – Support Services (AL); Joint Acting Head of Business Improvement and Modernisation (NK); Strategic Planning and Performance Team Leader (IMcG); Pay and Reward Specialist (SV); Democratic Services Manager (SP); Scrutiny Co-ordinator (RE); Zoom Host (RT-J) and Committee Administrator (SLW)

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones, Councillor Ellie Chard, Councillor Hugh Evans, Councillor Raj Metri and Councillor Arwel Roberts

Apologies for absence were also received from the HR Manager, Louise Dougal.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Cheryl Williams declared a personal interest in Item 5 (Council Performance Self-Assessment 2021-2022) as she was on the SARTH waiting list.

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

None.

4 MINUTES

The minutes of Full Council held on 5 July 2022 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of Full Council held on 5 July 2022 be confirmed as a correct record.

5 COUNCIL PERFORMANCE SELF-ASSESSMENT 2021 TO 2022

At this juncture, Councillor Cheryl Williams declared a personal interest in this item as she was on the SARTH waiting list.

The Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets, Councillor Gwyneth Ellis, introduced the report (previously circulated).

The Joint Acting Head of Business Improvement and Modernisation, Nicola Kneale, and the Strategic Planning and Performance Team Leader, Iolo McGregor, summarised the report to provide the end of year analysis of progress and challenges with the key performance objectives and in each of the seven areas of governance. The report also provided narrative on council activity in support of Equality and Diversity.

The report was the first statutorily required document written in response to the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, which required the council to produce a Self-Assessment of its performance against its functions. The report also responded to the council's duty around equality monitoring (under the Equality Act 2010 and Wales Measure 2011, which included the Socio Economic Duty), and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Within the report, 3 documents had been presented:

Appendix 1 – presented the Executive Summary, which sought to draw out the highlights of the council's performance against the objectives. The document also contained the seven governance areas together with the challenges faced and areas for improvement.

Appendix 2 – Quarterly Performance Update Report, which was the process for ongoing self-assessment.

Appendix 3 – a report to summarise the performance of the Corporate Plan 2017 to 2022 now it had reached its final year.

The Performance Objectives within the Corporate Plan 2017-2022 were:

- Housing
- Connected Communities
- Resilient Communities
- Environment, and
- Young People.

The Governance Functions which were statutory requirements were:

- Corporate Planning
- Financial Planning

- Performance Management
- Risk Management
- Workforce Planning
- Assets, and
- Procurement.

During discussions the following points were raised:

- The Chief Executive confirmed that to maintain the challenge going forward, it would be a team approach. SLT, Officers and Members were working together to present a new Corporate Plan in October. Regular update reports were submitted at Scrutiny, Cabinet and Full Council to ensure consistency in communication.
- Surveys – it was confirmed that during the previous council, residents survey had been carried out on a bi-annual basis. The survey was to ascertain how the council were performing against the priorities. Going forward, surveys would be carried out by mail drops, electronic surveys, and paper copies to be made available in libraries and reception points. The Local Government and Elections Act put a statutory duty on the council to survey residents annually together with other stakeholders. The next survey was to be produced in October/November which would give members the opportunity to encourage residents to complete.
- The issue of problems recruiting and retaining care staff was raised. It was confirmed that the issue was not just within Denbighshire but was nationwide. A Project Team had been established recently and had held a job fair to promote health and social care as a career.

PROPOSED by Councillor Gareth Sandilands, SECONDED by Councillor Cheryl Williams.

RESOLVED that Council approve the Performance Self-Assessment 2021 to 2022.

6 PAY POLICY STATEMENT

The Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services introduced the Pay Policy Statement 2022/23 (previously circulated) as the HR Manager, Louise Dougal, was unable to attend the meeting.

The Localism Act 2011 required local authorities to prepare pay policy statements. These statements must articulate an authority's own policies towards a range of issues relating to the pay of its workforce particularly its senior staff (or "chief officers") and its lowest paid employees. Pay Policy Statements had to be approved by the Council on an annual basis, and published on the relevant website.

The Pay Policy had been updated with the 2021/22 Pay Award as the 2022/23 was yet to be agreed.

It was confirmed that the pay points were set nationally and the council had its own pay and grading structure which had grades within the pay spine. The grades were determined by job evaluations which had a set of criteria and awarded points to jobs for the different requirements of the job. The points total equated to a grade on

the national pay spine. The job evaluation scheme was effectively the way the council ensured that pay was approached equally in terms of equalities. Trade Union representatives were involved in the Panel for evaluation of posts.

In terms of increases in pay on an annual basis, those were negotiated nationally through the Joint Negotiating Council and the Councils policy was that they abide by and honour any nationally agreed pay award.

In respect of Chief Officers the council set up a Senior Leadership Remuneration Panel which was a politically balanced body, and they reviewed the senior leadership pay structure in 2016. Thereafter, they reviewed the pay structure annually to see whether or not it is still appropriate. The Senior Leadership Remuneration Panel did not make decisions, they made recommendations and any changes had to be presented at Full Council.

PROPOSED by Councillor Brian Blakeley, SECONDED by Councillor Huw Williams.

RESOLVED that Council agree the recommendation from the Senior Leadership Remuneration Panel to the changes to the Pay Policy for 2022/23 (copy in Appendix A)

7 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEES 2021/2022

Councillor Hugh Irving presented the Annual Report of the Council's Scrutiny Committees 2021/2022 (previously circulated) on their activities during 2021/22.

The Annual Report was to comply with Section 7.4.4. of the Council's Constitution which stipulated that Scrutiny Committees must report annually to Full Council on their work and make recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate.

Scrutiny Request Forms were submitted from members, officers and members of the public and presented to the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group who applied the criteria to determine whether the item merited scrutiny.

The report outlined Scrutiny's important role in relation to supporting the Council's work to deliver its corporate priorities and Corporate Plan, including its regular monitoring of the Plan's delivery.

The report also summarised:-

- The conclusions of the review undertaken following the only call-in of a Cabinet decision during the year;
- The work undertaken by a number of Scrutiny Task and Finish / Working Groups which reported to Scrutiny;
- The types of additional work undertaken by Scrutiny members.

Engaging with the public and encouraging residents to interact with Scrutiny continue to be a challenge. A positive was students from Ysgol Dinas Bran approached Scrutiny and requested to participate in the discussion on eradicating

the use of single use plastics in the school meals service. Scrutiny then conveyed the students' concerns and observations to Cabinet.

Families of Service Users also contributed to discussions on potential options for re-opening the Meifod work opportunities service for people with learning disabilities following the pandemic and had proved to be extremely positive.

Councillor Irving and other members expressed their gratitude to the Scrutiny Co-ordinator, Rhian Evans, for her support and hard work throughout the year.

PROPOSED by Councillor Hugh Irving, SECONDED by Councillor Alan James.

A vote took place and it was unanimously agreed to approve the report.

RESOLVED that Full Council considered and approved the Annual Report of the Scrutiny Committees for 2021/22

8 COMMITTEE TIMETABLE 2023

The Democratic Services Manager, Steve Price, introduced the report (previously circulated) to enable members to approve the draft Committee Timetable for 2023.

It was necessary for the Council to approve a timetable for 2023 to enable meeting arrangements and resources to be confirmed, to publicise the timetable and to populate the Members' diaries.

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

The timings of meetings was raised as it was felt that meetings held during the day were at a detriment to working members as some employers were reticent to release staff to attend meetings.

The Democratic Services Manager confirmed a survey would be circulated to all members at the end of August. There would be a 3-4 week consultation with members and a report would be added to the forward work programme at a future meeting.

PROPOSED by Councillor Mark Young, SECONDED by Councillor Alan James.

RESOLVED that, subject to the above, Council approves the Committee Timetable for 2023 as attached in Appendix 1.

9 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND MEMBER TO THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

The Democratic Services Manager, Steve Price, introduced the report (previously circulated) to enable Council to appoint elected members to the Democratic Services Committee and appoint the Committee's Chair.

Council considered the membership requirements of the Democratic Services Committee during its Annual Meeting in May. At that time the political membership details were not complete and therefore it was agreed to return to Council at a later date to confirm the appointments to the Democratic Services Committee.

Section 11 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 required the Council to appoint a Democratic Services Committee.

Under the Measure, there could be no more than one member of the Cabinet on the Committee (who could not be the Leader) but Council in May 2012 made the decision membership be 11 councillors and not include a Cabinet member.

Nominations for the position of Chair of Democratic Services Committee was sought.

Councillor Jon Harland nominated Councillor Hugh Evans to be Chair of Democratic Services Committee, seconded by Councillor Karen Edwards.

There were currently 5 vacant seats. Of those, the Labour Group were entitled to appoint 4 members and the Plaid Cymru Group 1 member.

At this juncture, Councillor Elfed Williams confirmed he would take the vacant seat for the Plaid Cymru Group.

It was stated that if the vacant Labour seats could not be nominated today, Council approve the members already nominated in paragraph 4.4 and delegate authority to the Labour Group Leader to nominate members outside the meeting.

RESOLVED that Council approves the members of the Democratic Services Committee that have been nominated and identified in the report and delegates authority to the leader of the Labour Group to provide the final names for the seats available to that Group on the Committee.

10 APPOINTMENT OF A MEMBER TO THE NORTH WALES POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

The Democratic Services Manager, Steve Price, introduced the report (previously circulated) to confirm the appointment of an elected member to the North Wales Police and Crime Panel.

Each of the six local authorities in North Wales was able to nominate a member or members to sit on the Panel. The allocation of seats to each authority was based on the political balance and population distributions across North Wales as a whole. The d'hondt methodology was used to identify the number of seats each local authority was allocated and to which political group or groups they applied.

Based on population, Conwy, Flintshire, Gwynedd and Wrexham appointed 2 members each whilst Denbighshire and Anglesey appointed 1 member each. The

size of the main political groupings across the councils in North Wales determined how many seats each group or grouping was entitled to take.

The results of the local government elections in May led to Denbighshire's seat being allocated to the Labour Group.

Councillor Diane King nominated Councillor Pete Prendergast, seconded by Councillor Brian Blakeley.

There being no further nominations, it was:

RESOLVED that Council appoints Councillor Pete Prendergast to the North Wales Police and Crime Panel for the term of this Council or until a new appointment is made.

11 DENBIGHSHIRE LEISURE LIMITED - APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTORS

The Leader, Councillor Jason McLellan introduced the report (previously circulated to brief members as to the composition of the Board of Directors of Denbighshire Leisure Limited and to appoint new directors following the local government elections.

The two positions on the Board to be filled by Lead Members were vacant as their directorship ceased when they ceased to hold those roles following the election. The Lead Member roles set out in the report reflected the fact that the relevant Lead Members held the Leisure portfolio and the Education portfolio. Therefore, Councillors Rhys Thomas and Gill German were proposed as Members of the Board of Directors.

PROPOSED by Councillor Mark Young, SECONDED by Councillor Cheryl Williams.

There was one other position to be filled on the Board by an elected member who was not a member of the Cabinet. The position was currently filled by Cllr Peter Prendergast. Council was asked to confirm the appointment of a non-Cabinet member to this position.

Councillor Jason McLellan nominated Councillor Peter Prendergast, seconded by Councillor Barry Mellor.

Councillor Mark Young nominated Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts, seconded by Councillor Andrea Tomlin.

A vote took place and the results were as follows –
Councillor Peter Prendergast – 23
Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts – 16

Therefore, it was:

RESOLVED that -

- Council appoint Cllr Gill German, Lead Member for Education, Children and Families, and Cllr Rhys Thomas, Lead Member for Housing and Communities to be Directors of Denbighshire Leisure Ltd
- Council confirms the appointment of a non-Cabinet Member, Councillor Peter Prendergast, as a Director of Denbighshire Leisure Ltd.

12 APPOINTMENT OF TOWN, CITY AND COMMUNITY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE TO STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Monitoring Officer, Gary Williams, introduced the report (previously circulated) for Council to appoint a Town, City and Community Council representative to Standards Committee.

On 24th May 2022 Council agreed that officers should consult Town, City and Community Councils on the re-appointment of Cllr Gordon Hughes to serve as a Town, City and Community Council representative on the Council's Standards Committee for a second term.

Town, City and Community Councils were contacted and asked for their view regarding the re-appointment of Cllr Hughes. All of the responses received were supportive of Cllr Hughes' re-appointment.

PROPOSED by Councillor Gwyneth Ellis, SECONDED by Councillor Alan James.

RESOLVED that the Council appoints Cllr Gordon Hughes of Corwen Town Council to be the Town, City and Community Council representative on Standards Committee for a second and final term.

13 COUNTY COUNCIL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services introduced the Council Forward Work Programme together with the Council Workshop Forward Work Programme (previously circulated).

It was confirmed that the result of the Councillors Survey for timings of meetings would be presented at the October 2022 meeting.

RESOLVED that, subject to the above, the Council and Council Workshop Forward Work Programme be approved and noted.

THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 11.55 A.M.