

## **COUNTY COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the County Council held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Ruthin LL15 1YN on Tuesday, 9 October 2012 at 10.00 am.

### **PRESENT**

Councillors Ian Armstrong, Raymond Bartley, Brian Blakeley, Joan Butterfield, Bill Cowie, Ann Davies, Meirick Davies, Richard Davies, Stuart Davies, Peter Duffy, Hugh Evans, Bobby Feeley, Carys Guy-Davies, Huw Hilditch-Roberts, Martyn Holland, Colin Hughes, Rhys Hughes, Hugh Irving, Huw Jones, Pat Jones, Gwyneth Kensler, Geraint Lloyd-Williams, Margaret McCarroll, Jason McLellan, Bob Murray, Peter Owen, Arwel Roberts, Gareth Sandilands, Barbara Smith, Bill Tasker, Julian Thompson-Hill, Joe Welch, Cefyn Williams, Cheryl Williams, Eryl Williams and Huw Williams

### **ALSO PRESENT**

Chief Executive (MM), Corporate Directors: Economic and Community Ambition (RM); Customers (HW); Modernisation and Well-being (SE), Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer (RGW), Head of Business, Planning and Performance (AS), Head of Finance and Assets (PM), Senior Solicitor (LJ), Corporate Improvement Manager (TW), Planning Policy Manager (AL), Planning Policy Officer (BB) and Committee Administrator (CIW).

In the absence of the Chair, Councillor J. Chamberlain-Jones, the Vice Chair, Councillor J.R. Bartley took the Chair for the meeting.

The Chair referred to the recent disappearance of April Jones from Machynlleth and Members and officers stood in silent tribute.

### **PRAYERS**

Prayers were offered by Councillor M.LI. Davies prior to the commencement of the meeting. Councillor M.LI. Davies paid tribute to Reverend Morris Jones Morris who died following a tragic road accident near Dolgelleu on Sunday evening.

### **1 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors J. Chamberlain-Jones (Chair), J.M. Davies, P.A. Evans, E.A. Jones, W.M. Mullen-James, B. Mellor, D. Owens, T.M. Parry, A.G. Pennington, D. Simmons and D.I. Smith.

### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following interests were identified in business items to be considered at the meeting.

Councillors Raymond Bartley, Brian Blakeley, Janet Ann Davies, T. Rhys Hughes, Bill Tasker and Geraint Lloyd-Williams all declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 9 – Council Response to Betsi Cadwaladr UHB Service Reviews.

### **3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR**

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 CHAIRMAN'S DIARY**

A list of civic engagements undertaken for the Council by the Chair and Vice Chair, for the period 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 2012 to 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2012, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

**RESOLVED** – *that the list civic engagements undertaken for the Council by the Chair and Vice Chair be received and noted.*

### **5 MINUTES**

The minutes of the Council meeting held on the 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2012 were submitted.

Accuracy:-

6. NHS Service Reviews – Councillor H. Hilditch-Roberts explained that he had submitted a question requesting details, from BCUHB, of the evidence provided in respect of the decision to choose Denbigh Infirmary as a hub rather than Ruthin Hospital.

**RESOLVED** – *that, subject to the above, the minutes of the Council meeting held on the 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2012 be confirmed as a correct record.*

### **6 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW 2011/2012**

A copy of a report by the Corporate Improvement Team Manager, which sought approval of the Council's draft Annual Performance Report for 2011-12, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

The Council was required to publish an annual report of its performance by the 31<sup>st</sup> October each year and a decision was required to approve the draft Annual Performance Review 2011-12, which had been included as Appendix I to the report.

The Lead Member for Modernisation and Performance, Councillor B.A. Smith, introduced the report and explained that the Corporate Plan 2009-12 set the strategic direction for the Authority and the publication of the annual Corporate Plan Delivery Document for 2011-12 outlined how it intended to contribute to the delivery of its Corporate Plan during that financial year. Each Council service produced a service plan for 2011-12 to describe how it intended to contribute to the delivery of agreed outcomes for the communities of Denbighshire. The Annual Performance report provided a retrospective evaluation of the Council's success in delivering against the plans during 2011-12, and provided an indication as to whether the

Council had successfully fulfilled its obligation to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement.

The Annual Performance Review included a specific evaluation of the Council's success in delivering its corporate priorities. It evaluated its performance in relation to the key indicators and performance measures, and indicated how the corporate priorities had impacted locally within the six areas of Denbighshire. The Council had delivered its pledge to become a High Performing Council, Close to its Communities and Councillor Smith explained that the aim of providing an honest and balanced view of the Council's performance had been achieved. A number of challenges remained and these had formed the basis for the development of the new Corporate Plan.

Details of the consultations undertaken had been included in the report. However, it was confirmed that an Equality Impact Assessment had not been undertaken in respect of this report.

The following responses were provided to questions and issues raised by Members:-

- Page 22 - officers agreed to ensure the language sign post in the Annual Report was amended and Welsh version positioned ahead of English in accordance with the Council's policy.
- Page 24, Road and Flood Defences – officers agreed to seek clarification and provide details in relation to Welsh Government funding for the flood relief schemes in Rhyl and Corwen.
- Page 25, Priority Area, Highways – The Chief Executive informed Members that a recommendation would be submitted to the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet not to proceed with the merger of the Denbighshire and Conwy Highways Departments. He confirmed that this would not affect the investment made by Denbighshire and assured Members that the project in question would be secure. The Chief Executive responded to concerns expressed by Members and explained that the situation should not be presented as a failure of collaboration but viewed as Denbighshire having been proactive in assessing and responding to the options available.
- Page 63, Denbigh Area – it was agreed that officers seek clarification and provide details in relation to Tai Clwyd funding for the development relating to the relocation of Youth Services. Councillor C.L. Hughes confirmed that funding had not yet been secured.
- Page 25, Priority Area, Highways – The Chief Executive explained that the Government stance in respect of the introduction of Collaboration had not changed, and if not progressed voluntarily other alternatives could be imposed. The purpose of collaboration had been to deliver major savings. However, there would be initial financial implications involved in merging which, in the case of Highways, had been considered unsustainable. There would also be a need for political and executive will, which would be imperative from all parties involved, if success was to be realised.
- Councillor J. Butterfield referred to Performance Indicators which reveal that priorities had not been met and pupils had left school without the appropriate qualifications. Councillor E.W. Williams supported the views expressed by

Councillor J. Butterfield regarding the need to fast track improvements at Rhyl High School and suggested that representations be made to the Welsh Government to release funding for the improvement work at the school.

- Page 30, High Performing Council, Close to its Communities – The Corporate Improvement Manager endorsed the view expressed by Councillor J. Butterfield of the importance of improving working relationships between elected Members and officers of the Council and the Community.
- Page 15, Regeneration – The Corporate Improvement Manager explained that Performance Measures in respect of HMO taken through licensing had been included as green as the target set had been surpassed. However, he explained that under the new Corporate Plan all the indicators and measures would be reviewed in an attempt to achieve the threshold for excellence.
- Page 19, Demographic Change - It was explained that Performance Indicator relating to People Supported Below 60% Poverty Lines, indicated as red, was misleading as it only measured the activity of the Welfare Rights Unit and did not include the partnership work being undertaken. The Head of Business, Planning and Performance referred to work being undertaken in Communities First areas which had been designated as a priority, together with, the European Social Fund Project being promoted by the Local Service Board.
- Performance Measures, People supported below 60% Welfare Rights Team works well with the Citizen's Advice Bureau, Rhyl Benefits Advice Shop should provide more assistance recognise and address changes to benefits.
- Page 66, Ruthin, Cae Ddol Project – the Corporate Improvement Manager agreed to review the situation pertaining to Cae Ddol to ensure accuracy.
- Page 35, Demographic Change – In response to a question from Councillor Feeley regarding the discrepancy between the data and the target for the NWC: Number of People Supported out of NEET and report back to Councillor Feeley. The Corporate Director; Modernisation and Well-being outlined the problems experienced in securing European funding, particularly in terms of the economic situation, and made reference to the specific targets outlined in the report.
- Page 61, Oaktree Centre, Rhyl - the Corporate Improvement Manager agreed to review the situation pertaining to the Oaktree Centre, Rhyl and ensure the inclusion of the latest information in report.
- In response to points raised by Councillor C. Guy-Davies regarding the amount of detailed information contained in the Annual Performance Report, the Head of Business, Planning and Performance explained that Denbighshire were required by the Wales Audit Office to publish information and there were difficulties in maintaining a balance. However, consideration could be afforded to providing a summary to accompany future Annual Performance Report.

The Chair thanked the officers for the hard work undertaken in producing a comprehensive report.

**RESOLVED** – *that, subject to above changes, Council approves the draft Annual Performance Report 2011-12 to enable translation and publication before 31<sup>st</sup> October, 2012.*

A copy of a report by the Corporate Improvement Team Manager, which sought approval of the Council's draft Corporate Plan 2012-17, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting. Members were informed that a decision would be required to approve the final draft version of the Corporate Plan 2012-17, attached as Appendix I to the report.

The Leader, Councillor H.H. Evans introduced the report and explained that although the work of improving Denbighshire was not yet complete, the foundations were now in place and ambitions should now be realised. Achievements from the Corporate Plan 2008/12 were outlined and reference made to the Authority's attainment as High Performing Council, however, opportunities for improvement were recognised. The Leader referred to the two practical challenges encompassed in the Plan which were the need to monitor and measure the effectiveness of the priorities, and ensure the Corporate Plan was responding to the needs of the residents. The four values for which Denbighshire stood, Unity, Respect, Integrity and Pride were highlighted for Members.

The Chief Executive explained that the Corporate Plan was a high level strategic document developed to guide the direction of the Council for the next 5 years, with the £134m investment in the delivery of key priorities including a major investment of £97 million in education. The Corporate Plan had been prepared within the policy and financial context for Welsh Local Authorities and defined the Council's top strategic priorities and clearly set out its ambitions for the future. The Council had been transformed over the last 5 years and was now viewed as being proactive rather than reactive, and the Chief Executive explained that he was confident that the Senior Management Team would maintain the high standards now being achieved, with political and officer leadership being an important ingredient for success.

Members were informed that the draft Corporate Plan would look at the following key areas:-

- Improving performance in education and the quality of school buildings
- Developing the local economy
- Improving roads
- Vulnerable people are protected and are able to live as independently as possible
- Clean and tidy streets
- Ensuring access to good quality housing
- Modernising the council to deliver efficiencies and improve services for customers.

Key proposals for investment for the five year period would include:-

- £97 million in improving school buildings, implementing area reviews, refurbishment and other improvements to schools.
- £10.4 million investment in roads
- £21 million in three extra care facilities across the county
- £2 million investment in the economy.

- £4 million in information communication technology (ICT) and office building assets.

It was anticipated that Welsh Government grants would assist the funding of planned work to improve schools and roads, with other partners being likely to contribute to planned extra care housing projects. A total of £78 million would be found from a range of sources including funding generated through prudential borrowing.

The Chief Executive explained that the Corporate Plan had a clear focus on improving services for customers with the Council being committed to becoming more responsive to the needs of customers. The delivery of the Corporate Plan would transform the lives of people in Denbighshire and create a legacy for the future. He confirmed that each of the priorities would be approached in a different way with differing timescales and financial investment requirements. Priorities focussing on the economy and education would have timescales beyond the five years of the Plan. Although real progress would be expected in these priority areas, with the full benefits being realised beyond 2017.

The need to become more cost-effective would be essential with the introduction flexible working methods. Delivering the modernisation agenda would be key to protecting frontline services and protecting jobs, and this priority would also be important in underpinning the Council's other priorities.

Councillor B.A. Smith invited Members attention to the monitoring process, which had been incorporated in the report, which was a working document.

The potential impact of the scale of funding within the Corporate Plan which represented a huge step change for the Authority was outlined by Councillor J. Thompson-Hill. He assured Members that although the Plan was ambitious it was deliverable and would assist in driving the economy forward. He also confirmed that the Plan could in future be modified, if necessary, to adapt to any external factors.

The Corporate Plan had not contain details of everything the Council would be doing during the period to support the corporate priorities. As the Corporate Plan was intended to be an accessible document and details of all the indicators and performance measures used to evaluate the Council's success had not been included. A separate document defining the tools used to monitor the Plan would be published and a Corporate Plan Delivery Document would be produced annually to provide specific details of what the Council were expected to deliver in that particular financial year to support the priorities.

In response to questions from Members, the Head of Business, Planning and Performance explained that a summary of the consultations carried out had been provided and a draft set of corporate priorities had been published for public consultation, all comments received had been included in Appendix 2. The consultation period for Town and Community Councils had been extended and a complete list from the feedback, together with one further consultation response, was circulated to Members. The Corporate Improvement Team were currently

following-up on the other priorities identified by individual Members during the Corporate Plan event and a document demonstrating how services were currently responding to those priorities would be circulated to Members. Appendix 3 included the conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment on the draft Corporate Plan 2012-17, undertaken by the Corporate Improvement Team in consultation with the respective services.

The following responses were provided to questions and issues raised by Members in relation to the Corporate Plan:-

- Page 87 - In reply to concerns raised by Councillor M.LI. Davies, the Corporate Improvement Manager agreed to review the wording relating to costs.
- Page 94, Vulnerable People living independently – Members were informed that there was uncertainty regarding the number of additional Extra Care Housing schemes to be provided across the County and this was the reason for the current wording.
- Page 105, Cemeteries – Councillors J. Butterfield and A. Roberts expressed concern regarding the lack of availability of burial blots in both Rhyl and Rhuddlan Cemeteries, and the safety aspect of grave stones in terms of meeting Health and Safety requirements. The Head of Business, Planning and Performance explained that a consultation exercise had been undertaken in relation to this issue and Members comments would be noted and referred to the Head of Environment.
- In response to questions from Councillors W.L. Cowie and R.L. Feeley regarding the need for positive enforcement action in respect of dog fouling, illegal parking offences and the inclusion of schools in the Clean and Tidy initiative, the Head of Business, Planning and Performance explained that these issues would best be addressed corporately through enforcement, education of the public and changing attitudes and culture.
- Page 115, Developing the Local Economy – In reply to concerns raised by Councillor C.L. Hughes regarding the need to emphasise the word “local” and secure the services of local businesses, the Head of Finance and Assets explained that procurement was governed by legislation. However, work was currently being undertaken in respect of the procurement strategy.
- Page 82 - Councillor S.A. Davies requested details of the costs relating to the provision of translations. The Corporate Improvement Manager explained that two requests had been received during the past two years for translations into languages other than English or Welsh, and only information pertaining to the specific questions had been translated.
- The Corporate Director: Modernisation and Well-being responded to a question from Councillor S.A. Davies and confirmed that the Extra Care Housing facilities provided by Denbighshire were fully occupied. She confirmed that she did not anticipate encountering any problems in securing occupants for the new developments proposed in the Corporate Plan.
- In response to issues raised by Councillor H. Hilditch-Roberts regarding clarity in respect of the delivery of the proposals, the Chief Executive explained that Denbighshire had provided a clear indication of their intentions. However, given certain circumstances any changes imposed by Government, such as those relating to grant funding, could influence the delivery of the proposals contained in the Corporate Plan. He also explained that due to publication requirements agendas for meetings were published prior to the consideration of issues at meetings,

particular reference being made to the Forward Plan, and this provided the Media with the opportunity to publish stories prior to discussion of an issue by Members.

- In response to concerns raised by Councillor E.W. Williams, the Head of Business, Planning and Performance explained that the number of priorities identified would be monitored by the Wales Audit Office. He also confirmed that priorities were now more structured and focused.
- Councillor T.R. Hughes stressed the importance of ensuring that update and progress reports in respect of the Corporate Plan were submitted to Full Council for monitoring purposes. Councillor J. Thompson-Hill confirmed that reports in respect of the Capital Plan would be submitted to Council on a quarterly basis. The Head of Business, Planning and Performance explained that a Quarterly Performance Report would be submitted to Cabinet and Scrutiny, together with, the publication of an Annual Delivery document outlining support provision for the Corporate Plan during the coming year.
- The Head of Business, Planning and Performance confirmed that the issue of public relations and the conveying and communication of messages in relation to the Capital Plan, and the work of the Council in general, would be crucial.

During the ensuing discussion Members expressed their unanimous support for the recommendation contained in the report, and it was:-

**RESOLVED** – *that, subject to the agreed changes, Council approves the final draft of the Corporate Plan 2012-17 to enable the document to be translated and published.*

## **8 REPORT ON THE CONSULTATION OF THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE DOCUMENT**

A copy of a report by the Head of Planning, Regeneration and Regulatory Services, on the consultation of the World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Guidance (WHS SPG) document, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

The Lead Member for Tourism, Leisure and Youth, Councillor H.L. Jones, provided a detailed summary of the report and explained that Denbighshire had published a series of SPG Notes, with the aim of further explaining policies in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP). The Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal WHS SPG Note also aimed to amplify Local Development Plan (LDP) policies, should the plan be considered 'sound' by the Planning Inspectorate and formally adopted to replace the UDP.

A decision had been sought on whether to formally adopt the WHS SPG to enable its use as a material consideration when determining planning applications. The WHS SPG would assist the public, developers, Town and Community Councils, Councillors, and officers understand the implications pertaining to development undertaken in the WHS and its surrounding 'Buffer Zone'.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that the WHS and Buffer Zone had been decided, and subsequently designated, in 2009 and could not be changed. Since 2009, the impact development would have on the WHS with the Buffer Zone having been a material consideration when determining planning applications. It had not



affected which developments could be undertaken without planning permission, or introduce the need for Design and Access Statements which had been a national requirement introduced in 2009.

The Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal had achieved World Heritage Site status from the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in June 2009, following recognition of its 'Outstanding Universal Value' significant to the whole of humanity. The 'Buffer Zone' had been established to define the surrounding areas which contributed to the 'Outstanding Universal Value' of the World Heritage Site.

In response to observations by Councillor T.R. Hughes regarding the significance of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct to the WHS SPG, it was emphasised that the bid had been extended to include the Canal and the Horseshoe Falls to embrace their attributes towards the Aqueduct.

It was confirmed that the WHS SPG had been jointly prepared by Wrexham County Borough Council, Denbighshire County Council and Shropshire Council. The objective of the Local Planning Authorities responsible for protecting the World Heritage Site had been to manage development in a positive way which supported the vision outlined in the Management Plan.

The content of the draft SPG and the scope and intention to undertake public consultation had been agreed at Planning Committee in August 2011. Issues arising from the 10 responses received from the consultation process, which extended from the 26<sup>th</sup> September to 16<sup>th</sup> December 2011, had been summarised in the report. Detailed consultation responses had been summarised and included in Appendix 1, and these also contained reference of any subsequent amendments to the WHS SPG. In response to a suggestion from Llangollen Town Council, an informal WHS application checklist had been drafted for applicants and this had been included as Appendix 2. A summary of the key changes to the document had been incorporated in the report and a final copy of the WHS SPG had been included as Appendix 3.

Llangollen Ward Members expressed concerns that the WHS and the associated buffer zone would introduce and impose development and planning restrictions not applicable in other areas of the County. It was also felt it would impede economic development for the local area and community, which could discourage investment and in turn reduce employment prospects in the Dee Valley. The Planning Policy Officer explained that the WHS SPG would not introduce any new requirements, seek to prevent or rule out the principle of development in the area, but would seek to increase the quality of development and enhance the area. Councillor S.A. Davies expressed concern regarding the criteria for Membership to the Joint Advisory Committee of the AONB.

In the absence of an adopted WHS SPG there would be potential for developers and applicants to misunderstand the requirements for planning applications in the qualifying area. This would result in the Council failing in its responsibility to deliver the UNESCO required document, and in its commitments already signed up to in the WHS Management Plan.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that the officer Steering Group currently responsible for overseeing the World Heritage Site Management Plan would be reviewed and confirmed that Member involvement in the Group would be crucial. Members supported this view and agreed that the Steering Group include elected Member representation from each of the relevant Authorities.

In reply to a question from Councillor M.Ll. Davies, confirmation was provided that the Local Access Forums of Denbighshire and Wrexham had been consulted as part of policy development.

Councillor M.L. Holland highlighted the need to improve timescales in respect of the planning process with a view to improving employment prospects. The Planning Policy Officer explained that the Welsh Government were currently reviewing the planning process by encouraging pre-application discussions, and reviewing Chapter 7 of Planning Policy Wales in order to ensure that the economic benefits of planning applications were fully considered.

Following further discussion, it was:-

**RESOLVED** – *that*

- (a) *Council formally adopts the World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Guidance to be used to inform the determination of planning applications, and*
- (b) *the Steering Group to oversee the World Heritage Site Management Plan should include elected Member representation from each of the relevant Authorities.*

## **9 COUNCIL RESPONSE TO BETSI CADWALADR UHB SERVICE REVIEWS**

A copy of a report by the Corporate Director: Modernising and Wellbeing, which recommended a final Council response to the public consultation “Healthcare in North Wales is Changing”, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting. A copy of an update of amendments to the Council’s response was circulated at the meeting.

The Lead Member for Social Care and Children Services, Councillor R.L. Feeley introduced the report and thanked various individuals and bodies for the assistance provided in producing the response. Councillor Feeley explained that “Healthcare in North Wales is Changing” and other Service Reviews considered by the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) in July, 2012, contained proposals for significant changes to health services across North Wales. A formal consultation process on the proposals extended from 20<sup>th</sup> August to 28<sup>th</sup> October and Council had been requested to agree formally the proposed response at Appendix I to the report.

Details of the seven key areas of which BCUHB had undertaken reviews in the last 2 years had been incorporated in the report. The result of the reviews “Healthcare

in North Wales is Changing: report on service change proposals” had been reported to the BCUHB on 19<sup>th</sup> July, 2012.

Council had previously received background information, a summary of the proposals, a copy of the consultation document and a draft response to the proposals prepared by a Working Group of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee. Members had also received a presentation by representatives of the Health Board and had been afforded the opportunity to ask questions on key issues. Following discussions in MAGs, Town and Community Council Cluster meetings, formal consultation meetings organised by BCU and through consultation activities organised by the Community Health Council, the draft consultation response had been amended following a further meeting of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee Working Group. The Corporate Director: Modernisation and Well-being provided a summary of the following key amendments which had been highlighted in the report:-

- the need to have a Strategic Group in place for Denbighshire to enable ongoing discussion about the detailed implementation of the proposals (paragraph 1.4)
- stronger wording about the need to have alternative services in place before existing services are closed (paragraphs 1.5, 1.6.4, 1.8.2, 2.3) and for the development of services for carers (Paragraph 1.9.2)
- a proposal that the Health Board consider developing Denbigh Infirmary and Ruthin Hospital as a “joint hospital hub” with complementary functions (paragraph 1.7)
- specific support for the delivery of a Minor Injuries Service in Llangollen (paragraph 1.8.3)

It was confirmed that close and integrated working with health services, especially in localities, formed a key part of the Council’s work to respond to demographic change, and the BIG Plan had set out objectives for effective joint working to support families.

Details of the potential costs to BCUHB had been included in paragraph 4.7 of the report to Council on 11<sup>th</sup> September. It was explained that in the process of change, especially as services transferred to communities, increased costs could transfer to local authorities, particular reference being made to adult social care and possible implications for transport provision. BCUHB had carried out Equality Impact Assessment screening on their proposals and would undertake further work prior to submitting final proposals to the Board.

It was explained that as the proposed changes had not been fully costed the implication on Council services was currently unclear. Issues such as transport provision would require consideration, and there would be a risk that the additional cost of the provision of more services in the community would inevitably fall on the Council’s social care teams. Key actions to mitigate the risks identified would include the production of detailed costed implementation plans for the proposed changes which would be discussed by a designated Strategic Group. This would enable the impact to be transparent and permit full discussion and negotiation with the Local Authority about areas which interface with Council responsibilities, and how the new pattern of services could be organised and funded.

Concerns were raised by Councillor S.A. Davies regarding the validity of the consultation process, particular reference being made to the uncertainty of the future of the minor injuries unit in Llangollen.

Councillor J. Thompson-Hill stressed the importance of ensuring services were not withdrawn until replacement services were provided and operational. He expressed concern regarding BCUHB financial circumstances and questioned their ability to deliver their proposals within the given timescales. Councillor Thompson-Hill highlighted the potential ramifications the proposals could have for Denbighshire, particular reference being made to the possible impact on the Council's revenue support grants and other external funding sources. He referred to the detrimental impact of cost shunting on Denbighshire and the need for the Council to adopt a robust stance with regard to this matter.

The Chief Executive explained that the BCUHB Executive Director of Planning had provided a guarantee that a service would not be closed prior to the opening of a new one, in the event of this happening it would be for a period of days rather than weeks. An assurance had also been received that there would be no cost shunting and that the Local Authority would not be expected to pick up any additional costs as a result of the changes. The Chief Executive stressed that it would be important for Denbighshire to adopt a robust stance when ensuring that BCUHB delivered its proposals as stated.

The Corporate Director: Modernisation and Well-being confirmed that connections had been made between BCUHB Property and the Council's Planning Department in relation to the re-development timescales pertaining to BCUHB buildings in the Rhyl and Prestatyn area.

During the ensuing discussion the following responses were provided by the Corporate Director: Modernisation and Well-being to questions and issues raised by Members:-

- the view was expressed that an evidence based reply to questions submitted would be forthcoming from BCUHB.
- it was explained that the Home Enhanced Care Service was an enhanced health care service delivered at the service users home, and differed from the Home Care Service.
- in response to a request from Councillor J.A. Davies, it was confirmed that Denbighshire could emphasise the importance of the provision of a new Hospital in Rhyl when submitting the formal business case to the Welsh Government. Councillor R.M. Murray highlighted the importance of ensuring that any new infrastructure introduced was successful prior to removing current service provisions.

Councillor Feeley explained that BCUBH had emphasised that the proposed changes had not been driven, or governed, exclusively by financial implications, but by rapidly increasing demographics, buildings being unfit for purpose and the problems encountered in attracting the top clinicians required in certain areas of

medicine. Confirmation was provided that the majority of local physicians were supportive of the proposed changes within the service.

Members requested that the Corporate Director: Modernisation and Well-being convey their appreciation to the staff for the hard work undertaken.

**RESOLVED** – that Council agree the consultation response, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, for submission to BCUHB.

## **10 COUNTY COUNCIL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Senior Solicitor introduced the Council's Forward Work Programme, previously circulated, and Members agreed the following new items be included in the Forward Work Programme:-

6<sup>th</sup> November, 2012:-

- Welfare Reform.
- The Role of Champions.

11<sup>th</sup> December, 2012:-

- Budget Workshop.

**RESOLVED** - that, subject to the above, the Council forward work programme be approved and noted.

Meeting ended at 1.45 p.m.