

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
16 APRIL 2024

Minutes of Flintshire County Council held as a hybrid meeting on Tuesday, 16 April 2024.

PRESENT: Councillor Gladys Healey (Chair)

Councillors: Bernie Attridge, Glyn Banks, Pam Banks, Marion Bateman, Sean Bibby, Chris Bithell, Gillian Brockley, Helen Brown, Mel Buckley, Teresa Carberry, Tina Claydon, David Coggins Cogan, Geoff Collett, Steve Copple, Bill Crease, Rob Davies, Ron Davies, Adele Davies-Cooke, Chris Dolphin, Rosetta Dolphin, Mared Eastwood, Carol Ellis, David Evans, Chrissy Gee, David Healey, Ian Hodge, Andy Hughes, Dave Hughes, Ray Hughes, Dennis Hutchinson, Alasdair Ibbotson, Paul Johnson, Christine Jones, Richard Jones, Simon Jones, Fran Lister, Richard Lloyd, Dave Mackie, Gina Maddison, Roz Mansell, Allan Marshall, Hilary McGuill, Ryan McKeown, Billy Mullin, Debbie Owen, Ted Palmer, Andrew Parkhurst, Mike Peers, Michelle Perfect, Vicky Perfect, Carolyn Preece, David Richardson, Ian Roberts, Dan Rose, Kevin Rush, Dale Selvester, Jason Shallcross, Sam Swash, Linda Thew, Linda Thomas, Roy Wakelam, Arnold Woolley and Antony Wren

APOLOGIES: Councillors: Mike Allport, Paul Cunningham, and Ant Turton

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive, Chief Officer (Governance), Chief Officer (Planning, Environment & Economy), Corporate Finance Manager, Corporate Manager, People and Organisational Development, Transport Manager, Service Manager – Enterprise and Regeneration, Democratic Services Manager, Democratic Services Officers and Fr. P. Wheeler for prayers

Prior to the start of the meeting the Chair welcomed Councillor Frances Lister as the newly elected Member of the Brynford and Halkyn Ward. She also took the opportunity to welcome back Councillor Ray Hughes who had joined the meeting following a period of illness and extended her best wishes for his full recovery.

90. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

91. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2024 were received.

The minutes were moved as an accurate record by Councillor Sean Bibby and seconded by Councillor Chris Bithell

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2024 be approved as a correct Record.

92. CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Chair drew attention to her communication which had been circulated prior to the meeting and listed the events attended from 21 February 2024 to 16 April 2024.

The Chair referred to her Charity Dinner which was held on 8 March, and thanked Members and officers for their attendance and generous support on the evening. She also thanked officers for their work to organise and facilitate the event and said it had been an enjoyable success. The Chair informed that £4788 had been raised for her chosen charities.

93. PETITIONS

The Chief Officer (Governance) advised that the following petition had been received and gave a brief outline of the Council's process for administering petitions.

Councillor Roz Mansell presented a petition on behalf of the residents in her Ward: Keep Connah's Quay Tidy – please provide more litter bins in and around the shopping area.

94. RECRUITMENT OF A TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE TO THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Chief Officer (Governance) introduced a report to ask Members to consider the appointment of the favoured candidate to the Standards Committee. He provided background information and explained that all Town and Community Councils were asked whether they wished to nominate candidates and five were nominated. Councils were asked to select their 1st and 2nd preference candidates. Councillor Ros Griffiths from Saltney Town Council and Broughton and Bretton Community Council had a clear majority of both 1st and 2nd preference votes.

The recommendations in the report were moved by Councillor Ian Roberts and seconded by Councillor David Evans

RESOLVED:

- (a) That all the candidates be thanked for their interest; and
- (b) That Councillor Ros Griffiths be appointed as the Town and Community Council Representative until 6 May 2027.

95. REVIEW OF POLITICAL BALANCE

The Chief Officer (Governance) introduced the report and explained that due to a change in group membership there was a need to review the Political Balance and allocation of seats on Committees. He provided background information and referred to the key considerations as detailed in the report.

The Chief Officer advised that the political balance would be subject to ongoing review and it had been agreed that a meeting would be held with the Chair

and Leader of the Council prior to the next Annual General Meeting of the County Council to undertake a full review of the composition of the political groups to ensure the allocation of membership was in accordance with the political balance and, if possible, with the wishes of Members. The Chief Officer explained that the political balance calculation was attached as Appendix A; which set out one possible allocation of seats and said other possible allocations may exist.

The Chief Officer responded to the questions raised by Councillor Mike Peers around the notional calculations provided in Table 2 of the appendix on the Group entitlement to Scrutiny Chairs and gave an explanation of how the allocation had been calculated.

The recommendation in the report was moved by Councillor Ian Roberts and seconded by Councillor David Healey.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That seats on Committees be allocated in accordance with political balance as shown in appendix A; and
- (b) That any changes to nominees be notified to the Democratic Services Manager as soon as possible.

96. ROLLING REVIEW OF THE MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT

The Chief Officer (Governance) presented the report to approve the changes to the Code of Conduct for Councillors that had been recommended by the Standards Committee as part of the rolling review of the Constitution. He provided background information and referred to the main considerations as detailed in the report. Members were asked to consider whether the value above which gifts and hospitality etc must be registered should be increased from £10.00 to £25.00

Councillor Richard Jones expressed the view that the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) should set the monetary value above which gifts and hospitality should be registered and said this would achieve consistency across local authorities in Wales.

Councillor David Coggins-Cogan held the view that any gift should be declared regardless of the value and proposed that the recommendation in the report be amended to reflect that the value be zero. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Bernie Attridge.

Concerns were expressed by Members that reducing the value to zero would generate a significant increase in officers' workload as this would require all small gifts, citing as an example a drink of tea/coffee offered by a resident with a value of less than £1.00, to be identified and registered.

In view of the comments and points raised by Members Councillor David Coggins-Cogan withdrew his proposal.

Councillor Arnold Woolley proposed that the threshold above which gifts and hospitality had to be registered be retained at the current level of £10.00. The proposal was seconded by Councillor David Healey.

Councillor Richard Jones reiterated his view that the IRPW should give guidance to local authorities in Wales on the threshold above which gifts and hospitality should be registered and proposed that this be included as an amendment to the proposal put forward by Councillor Woolley. This was duly seconded. The amendment was accepted by Councillor Woolley and Councillor Healey.

When put to the vote the following recommendations were carried:

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the threshold above which gifts and hospitality etc must be registered remains at £10.00; and
- (b) That the IRPW be asked to consider if it would set a common value which could be applied by all local authorities across Wales

97. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chief Officer (Governance) advised that none had been received by the deadline.

98. QUESTIONS

The Chief Officer (Governance) advised that none had been received by the deadline.

99. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS ON COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Chief Officer (Governance) advised that none had been received by the deadline.

100. NOTICE OF MOTION

The Chief Officer (Governance) advised that none had been received by the deadline.

101. DIVERSITY CALENDAR

The Chief Officer (Governance) advised that the item was for information only.

102. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 - TO CONSIDER THE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Councillor Sean Bibby moved exclusion of the press and public and this was seconded by Councillor Ted Palmer.

RESOLVED:

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting as the following item is considered to be exempt by virtue of Paragraph(s) 15 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

Paragraphs 12 and 13 of the report contains information relating to or which might tend to identify a living individual and the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the interest in disclosing the information.

103. COMMUNITIES FOR WORK PLUS PROGRAMME

The Chief Executive introduced a report to seek Council approval for the proposals for Communities For Work Plus Programme. The Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) and Corporate Manger, People and Organisational Development, provided background information and referred to the main considerations as detailed in the report. Details of the Council's statutory and contractual obligations were also detailed within the report.

During discussion Officers responded to the questions and concerns raised by Members.

The recommendation in the report was moved by Councillor David Healey and seconded by Councillor Arnold Woolley.

Councillor Richard Jones put forward an amendment to the recommendation which was duly seconded.

Councillor David Healey spoke in opposition to the amendment.

A recorded vote was requested on the amendment and the requisite number of Members stood in support of this.

The following Councillors voted for the amendment:

Bernie Attridge, Glyn Banks, Pam Banks, Marion Bateman, Helen Brown, Steve Cople, Bill Crease, Rob Davies, Adele Davies-Cooke, Carol Ellis, Chrissy Gee, Dennis Hutchinson, Ian Hodge, Andy Hughes, Richard Jones, Dave Mackie, Roz Mansell, Allan Marshall, Debbie Owen, Mike Peers, Dale Selvester, Jason Shallcross, Roy Wakelam, and Antony Wren.

The following Councillors voted against the amendment:

Sean Bibby, Chris Bithell, Gillian Brockley, Mel Buckley, Teresa Carberry, Tina Claydon, David Coggins-Cogan, Geoff Collett, Ron Davies, Rosetta Dolphin, Mared Eastwood, David Evans, Gladys Healey, David Healey, Dave Hughes, Ray Hughes, Alasdair Ibbotson, Paul Johnson, Christine Jones, Simon Jones, Fran Lister, Richard Lloyd, Gina Maddison, Hilary McGuill, Ryan McKeown, Billy Mullin, Ted Palmer, Michelle Perfect, Vicky Perfect, Carolyn Preece, Ian Roberts, Dan Rose, Kevin Rush, Sam Swash, Linda Thew, Linda Thomas, and Arnold Woolley.

The following Councillor abstained: Andrew Parkhurst

On being put to the vote the amendment was lost.

The substantial motion (the recommendation in the report) having been moved by Councillor David Healey and seconded by Councillor Arnold Woolley was carried.

RESOLVED

That the severance packages (as detailed at Appendix 1 of the report) in accordance with the Council's approved 2024/25 Pay Policy Statement be approved.

104. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

There were no members of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 1.00 pm and ended at 3.12 pm)

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Chair