

## **HAWARDEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the MEETING of the STAFF AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held on 13 FEBRUARY 2012**

**PRESENT:** Chair: Councillor George Hardcastle  
Vice-Chair: Councillor Clive Carver

Councillors: As per Council Meeting

Officers: Mr R N Barnes, Clerk & Financial Officer

#### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Helen Brown, Alan Diskin, Glenys Diskin, Alison Halford and John Walker.

#### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**

No declarations of interest were made by Members.

#### **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:**

IT WAS RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 9 January 2012, be received as a true record and that they be signed by the Chair.

#### **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:**

##### Police Matters

The Clerk confirmed the following matters:

Police attendance at meetings of Shotton Town Council was on the same basis as that at Hawarden Community Council and was consistent throughout the Town and Community Councils in Deeside. The Clerk confirmed that an email report had been received from Inspector McKeown and that it had been forwarded to Members. Councillors Kevin Jones and Brian Williams indicated they had not received the email and the Clerk undertook to forward a further copy.

##### A Shared Community – Charter between Flintshire County Council and the Town and Community Councils

The Clerk said that the Charter had been launched at a meeting of the County Forum held in the previous week which he and Councillor Mackie had attended. He said that representatives of the Town and Community Councils in attendance were invited to sign the Charter and that Councillor Mackie had duly signed it on behalf of Hawarden Community Council.

## **FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL MAJOR ISSUES – PRESENTATION BY MR COLIN EVERETT, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER:**

The Chair welcomed Mr Colin Everett, Flintshire County Council’s Chief Executive to the meeting of the Staff & General Purposes Committee and invited him to make his presentation.

Mr Everett said that it was a personal desire of his to meet all 34 Town and Community Councils in Flintshire in order to improve communication and to provide an update on key issues affecting Flintshire County Council and also to hear of issues important to Town & Community Councils.

Mr Everett spoke on 10 key issues with which the County Council was dealing.

- Council Reform – He said that it was important that Flintshire should be as modern as possible at times of financial pressure.
- Council Finances – He said that it was a challenging time for Flintshire County Council and that he was pleased to be able to confirm that Flintshire County Council had been able to balance its budget and that there would be no public service cuts or job cuts nor any invisible passing across of services to Town & Community Councils. Mr Everett also advised that the County Council would be raising the base level of funding for school spending in the coming year and that discussions were being held with the Welsh Assembly in connection with raising funding for road improvements in view of the loss of the Assembly’s Road Grant.
- Regional Collaboration – he said that the County Council was exploring ways of working with other neighbouring local authorities to achieve economies of scale. However he was adamant that jobs would stay local.
- School Modernisation – Mr Everett said that public consultation would commence shortly in connection with secondary and post sixteen education in respect of proposals for Connah’s Quay/Queensferry, Buckley/Mynydd Isa and Holywell. He said that he was confident that the problems encountered during the first consultation would not be repeated. He further said that the concern of the County Council was about performance and standards and not about empty school places.
- Street Scene and Waste – The Chief Executive admitted that there had been teething problems in the roll out of the new system but he said that it was already achieving positive results in terms of recycling targets.
- Economic Development – Mr Everett confirmed that the Flintshire Unitary Development Plan had been adopted. He referred to the Enterprise Zone which had been approved for Deeside. He advised that the Assembly Government had no funding at present for the development of Warren Hall. He said that the County Council was adamant that the Warren Hall site must be retained for economic development and not allowed to be developed for any other purpose.
- Housing and Housing Ballot – Local Authority tenants would shortly be balloted in connection with either remaining with the County Council as their Landlord or transferring to a new Social Landlord. Mr Everett said that the County Council had been unique in taking a neutral stance on this issue and allowing tenants to freely decide their preference.

- Highways and Winter Maintenance – Mr Everett said that following the severe winter of 2010/2011, the County Council had invested in a third salt barn and had 30% larger stocks than last year. He said that the Winter Maintenance Service had also been extended to include the clearance of footpaths serving sheltered housing complexes in the County.
- Boundary Review and the Local Elections – The Chief Executive said that the work of the Boundary Commission was not proceeding at present and that the 2012 elections would be on existing County Ward boundaries. He said that a Review of Community Ward boundaries would be undertaken in the late summer of 2012 and that Community Councils would be consulted as part of the process.
- The Charter for County-Town and Community Council Joint Working - Mr Everett said that this was intended to improve relationships between Town and Community Councils and as mentioned previously the Charter had now been approved by Town and Community Councils and signed on their behalves.

The Chair thanked the chief Executive for his presentation and invited Members to respond to it or raise any relevant issues.

Councillor Hardcastle commented that the new Street Scene service had been launched at a difficult time in that it had coincided with the strike action being taken by Unison workers. Councillor Hardcastle paid tribute to the Officers involved with the Winter Maintenance work.

Councillor Judith Hough referred to the forthcoming housing stock transfer ballot saying that the proposals seemed to be regularly “under attack” by a small number of County Councillors and questioned whether this was having an effect on the process. Mr Everett said that Councillors were free to speak on the issue and that if there were any inaccuracies in what was being said or reported the County Council had a duty to correct it.

Councillor Clive Carver said that in general the Street Scene service seemed to be working well although there had been some local glitches. Councillor Carver referred to the amount of fast food litter in the Hawarden Community Council area by virtue of it being between outlets in Queensferry and Broughton and asked whether this could be taken into account when planning applications for fast food outlets were submitted. Finally Councillor Carver referred to the speed of traffic coming into Hawarden from the Broughton direction citing the entrance to the Farm Shop as a particularly dangerous location. The Chief Executive acknowledged that the road in question had a speed limit of 60mph and commented that the County Council was adopting speed variation policies to tackle issues such as this.

Councillor Small commented that the County Council’s Recycling Staff did not always pick up litter which they themselves dropped and said that this contributed to the accumulation of litter in the Council area.

Councillor David Hough commented that the Street Scene Team worked well in the Aston Hall Lane area.

The Chair thanked Mr Everett for his attendance at the meeting.

## **POLICE MATTERS:**

### **(a) General Matters**

Councillor Kevin Jones referred to speeding vehicles in Level Road, Hawarden, citing an accident which had recently occurred there. He said this was a very dangerous location because of the narrowness of the lane at the top and the confusion caused by the 'no entry' sign with a two way system inside the restriction. The Clerk commented that the volume of traffic using Level Road would have increased due to provision of speed cushions along Wood Lane which encouraged drivers to divert along Level Road. The Clerk undertook to contact Flintshire County Council Highways Department with regard to this issue.

Councillor Small referred to traffic hazards at two locations on Mancot Lane, Mancot. Firstly at its junction with Cottage Lane where residents were parking on the bend and into the junction and also on the bend adjacent to the footpath link to Sandycroft CP School.

Councillor Amos expressed her annoyance that she had travelled to Connah's Quay for a meeting organised by the Police for 2pm only to be advised when she arrived that the meeting had been altered to 11am. Councillor Hardcastle said that he had attended the meeting and there were five Police Officers there which he found surprising given their reluctance to attend meetings of Town and Community Councils.

### **(b) Joint Consultation Meeting**

Councillor Judith Hough took Members through the report which she had produced and which had been circulated with the agenda detailing the main issues arising from the meeting. She said that there was unanimity amongst those attending that they were unhappy that the Police were no longer prepared to routinely attend meetings of Town and Community Councils. She said that Inspectors Jones and McKeown would not attend meetings unless they were invited to do so by the Clerk of the Community Council and that it was for a worthwhile reason.

The Chair thanked Councillor Hough for her report.

### **(c) Communication Strategy North Flintshire Neighbourhood Policing Team**

Members considered the Strategy, noting that it stated that the Inspector or the Neighbourhood Police Team/Support Sergeant would attend meetings of Town and Community Councils on a quarterly basis to discuss policing issues.

## **IT WAS RESOLVED:**

(a) to ascertain the Communication Strategy for the South Flintshire Neighbourhood Policing Team which covered Hawarden and Ewloe

(b) to invite Inspector McKeown of the North Flintshire Neighbourhood Policing Team to attend the next meeting of the Community Council in accordance with the undertaking given in the Communication Strategy.

**PROPOSED NORTH WALES TREATMENT PLANT:**

The Chair referred Members to a letter received from Connah's Quay Town Council requesting the Council's support to its opposition to the proposed North Wales Treatment Plant on Deeside.

Following a brief discussion IT WAS RESOLVED: that the Community Council would write to confirm its support for the opposition to the proposed Treatment Plant being led by Connah's Quay Town Council.

**PROPOSAL FOR LEGISLATION ON ORGAN TISSUE DONATION:**

The Chair referred Members to the Executive Summary attached to the agenda outlining the Welsh Assembly Government's White Paper on the proposals for a soft opt out system of posthumous organ and tissue donation in Wales.

IT WAS RESOLVED: unanimously to confirm the Community Council's support for the proposal.

**JOINT SERVICES COMMITTEE 19 JANUARY 2012:**

IT WAS RESOLVED: to receive the minutes of the meeting, a copy of which had been attached to the agenda.

**CLERK'S REPORT:**

The Clerk advised that the nomination packs in respect of the forthcoming May 2012 Town and Community Council Elections had been received and were available for Members to collect after the conclusion of the meeting. He thanked the Chair of Council for collecting them.

**MEMBERS' INFORMATION ITEMS:**

There were none.