

COUNTY FORUM MEETING NOTE

DATE: Thursday 12th October 2017
TIME: 6.30 pm – 8.30 pm
VENUE: Buckley Town Council, Council Offices, Mold Road, Buckley,
Flintshire, CH7 2JB

PART ONE

ATTENDANCE

1. Introductions & Apologies

1.1. Present

Flintshire County Council:

- | | |
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| • Chief Executive | Colin Everett |
| • Chief Officer – Governance | Gareth Owens |
| • Chief Officer – Organisational Design | Neal Cockerton |
| • Leader of Flintshire County Council | Aaron Shotton |
| • Anti-Social Behavioural Co-ordinator | Gerwyn Davies |
| • Policy & Performance Support Officer | Sam Perry - Minutes |

Town & Community Councils:

- Bagillt Community Council
- Broughton and Bretton Community Council
- Buckley Town Council
- Cilcain Community Council
- Connah's Quay Town Council
- Flint Town Council
- Gwernaffield Community Council
- Gwernymynydd Community Council
- Hawarden Community Council
- Leeswood Community Council
- Mold Town Council
- Mostyn Community Council
- Northop Community Council
- Saltney Town Council

Other Representatives:

- Bryan Grew - One Voice Wales

1.2. Apologies

Flintshire County Council:

- | | |
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| • Chief Officer – Organisational Design | Ian Bancroft |
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- Chief Officer – Streetscene & Transportation
- Chief Officer – Planning & Environment

Stephen O Jones
Andrew Farrow

Town & Community Councils:

- Caerwys Town Council
- Holywell Town Council

Gareth Owens thanked Buckley Town Council for hosting the meeting and providing the venue.

Cllr. Dave Ellis, the Deputy Mayor for Buckley Town Council opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending before handing over to Martin Wright, Clerk for Buckley Town Council. Martin went through the general housekeeping and fire evacuation procedures for the building and chaired the meeting.

The minutes of the last meeting held on 28th February 2017 were agreed as a true and accurate record of events. There were no matters arising.

PART TWO

COUNCIL TOPICS

2. Public Spaces Protection Order / Dog Control Order

Gerwyn Davies provided an overview of the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) that was adopted by Cabinet on 26th September 2017, and will come into effect on 20th October 2017. Key points include:

- Flintshire County Council have agreed to implement a Public Space Protection Order with regards to Dog Fouling and Control following strong support for the proposed conditions.
- As of the 20th October 2017, a PSPO in relation to dog control will take effect across Flintshire and will replace the out of date Dog Control Order. This will create a more comprehensive and consistent approach when dealing with issues such as dog fouling, keeping dogs on leads, and excluding dogs from specified areas.
- This order excludes dogs from equipped children's play areas, the playing areas of marked sports pitches and formal recreation areas and School grounds.
- Under the PSPO, dogs will be required to be kept on leads within cemeteries and dog owners will be required to remove any dog waste and put their dog on a lead when directed to do so by an authorised officer.
- The PSPO will be in place for a period of three years.
- Fixed Penalty Notices will be issued to any persons found guilty of breaching the order.
- Signs are currently being produced and will be erected shortly.

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- Information has been sent out to all of the Town and Community Council Clerks and information is also available on the Council's website to include maps of affected areas.

Questions & Answers:

What land will this apply to?

The requirement to clean up after your dog will apply to all public places in Flintshire.

Does this apply to land that is not owned by Flintshire County Council?

Flintshire County Council has consulted with all Community Councils and Schools within the county for permission to be granted for enforcement of the final PSPO to take place on land that they control.

Enforcement will not take place on private land but may in the future if there are sufficient complaints and following consultation with the relevant land owner.

Are Rights of Way Covered?

Yes, Public Rights of Way qualify as land which is open and to which the public are entitled or permitted to have access.

How much are the fixed penalty notices?

Fixed Penalty Notices of £75 can be issued to any persons found guilty of breaching the order.

Who will enforce the PSPO and have we got enough people to police the Order?

The enforcement of the orders will be carried out by any person authorised by Flintshire County Council, including contracted enforcement companies. Unsure of the exact numbers of authorised officers, this will fall within another Chief Officer's remit once implemented. Will make enquires and report back.

Is the pink spray used to highlight dog waste been a part of the Order?

There have been various campaigns on the run up to the Order coming into effect and this has been one of them.

Will the order make it an offence to disregard bags of dog waste?

Unsure. Gerwyn Davies to make enquiries and report back to Town and Community Councils.

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Actions:

Circulate a link to the relevant page of the Council's website to Town and Community Councils.

[Sam Perry to action]

Determine if the Order makes it an offence to disregard bags of dog waste and report back to Town and Community Councils.

[Gerwyn Davies to action]

3. Community Asset Transfer

Neal Cockerton provided a brief update on the process of Community Asset Transfers (CAT's) and learning from the experience. Key points include:

- Flintshire are now in the third year of Community Asset Transfers therefore, everyone should be familiar with the process.
- There are a number of well-established CAT's.
- There are 19 stage 2 transfers to date.
- The period of a CAT is 27 years.
- Flintshire has allocated money from capital resources over the next two years to support CAT's.

Questions & Answers:

What happens after the 27 years?

The asset will transfer back to the Council if the community organisation running the facility no longer wishes to renew the agreement.

What happens when groups have died off and the interest is lost?

This is discussed/picked up as part of the application process. Flintshire takes a long term view to help create resilient communities whereby the risk of this occurring is reduced, however, we also accept that in some cases this may happen and in such cases the asset will return to the County Council for it to determine, with the local Community what would be the best and most cost effective solution.

Is Flintshire County Council still open to alternative suggestions around play area provision? This was discussed at the forum last year but no further information has been sent out.

Yes. The Council is open to any creative, alternative solutions going forward. The Council is more than happy to meet representatives from interested Town and Community Councils to explore alternative solutions. Match funding provision remains available.

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Is there an up to date list of assets that can be transferred?

Yes, this information is now available on the Council's website.

How long does it take to complete a transfer?

It used to take between 7 and 12 months based on the original CAT process that was in place however, this process has been slightly streamlined and it should take between 3 to 6 months to complete a Community Asset Transfer using the current process. This can vary however, depending upon how quickly a community wants to engage/complete the transfer.

Will each of the Transfers this year receive an equal share of the money available to support CAT's?

No, the funding available to support a CAT is dependent upon the asset that is being transferred.

Has Mold Daniel Owen Centre been transferred?

Yes, this has been transferred on a lease not a CAT.

Actions:

There were no actions relating to this Agenda item.

4. Community Review Guidance and Boundary Commission Consultation on Community Reviews

Gareth Owens provided an overview of the Community Review Guidance and the Boundary Commission consultation. Key points include:

- The Guidance document has been published by the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales. A copy has been circulated to Town and Community Council Clerks.
- The document has been produced to assist and support greater consistency in the manner in which community reviews are conducted by principal Councils.
- The document outlines the statutory processes that should be followed, reflects best practice developed by Councils over time and, the considerations a Council may wish to consider in the course of conducting such a review.
- The Commission is required to conduct electoral reviews in principal Councils every ten years.
- Flintshire County Council carried out a review in 2013 therefore, as a principal Council, the next review is not due until 2023/24.
- Reviews can be held at the discretion of the Minister.
- A comprehensive review of the Community and Town Council sector has been commissioned. There are no set timeframes around the review however, the review is likely to take around a year to complete.

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- Boundary Commission consultation is due to close on 21st December 2017.
- Town and Community Councils were requested to review the Guidance document if not already done so, and to respond to the consultation.

Questions & Answers:

As part of the last review there was a suggestion around merging Gwernymynydd, Nannerch and Gwernaffield into one area. Are they looking to combine areas again as part of this review?

Unsure as yet whether they intend to merge areas together as part of this review. However, as the merger of adjoining communities in order to achieve electoral equality is regularly a concern for Town and Community Councils Gareth Owen requested Town and Community Councils to raise as part of their consultation response.

As part of the last review Mold Town Council made proposals to incorporate the properties at Blackbrook into Mold from Halkyn, are you able to confirm what has happened with this?

Gareth Owens confirmed that these proposals were accepted and sent to the Boundary Commission but was unsure of the year in which these changes would take effect. Gareth Owen to review and report back.

Actions:

Review the Guidance document and respond to the consultation.

[All Town and Community Councils to action]

Confirm whether the proposals put forward by Mold Town Council were accepted and provide them with an update around the current position.

[Gareth Owens to action]

5. Local Government Reform

Colin Everett gave an overview of the Welsh Government plans for Local Government Reform including the future role of Town and Community Councils. Key points raised include:

- Consultation was specifically on the reform of elections and the consultation period has now closed.
- Flintshire County Council have submitted a response, a copy of their response has been circulated to Town and Community Councils for information.
- There has been commitment for a significant review to be undertaken from Welsh Government.
- There is still the option to merge voluntarily.
- The timetable for the review is not yet known. As soon as this is made available it will be shared with Town and Community Councils.

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- National work ongoing on furthering regionalism as the alternative to local government reorganisation
- Pending review on the role and value of Town and Community Councils.
- There will be a need to work together when the review comes out.

Questions & Answers:

There were no questions raised for this Agenda item.

Actions:

Share a copy of the review timetable with Town and Community Councils when the timetable is made available.

[Colin Everett / Sam Perry to action]

6. Council Plan and the Well-being Strategy for Flintshire

Colin Everett provided a brief update around the Council Plan. Key points included:

- Cabinet have recently adopted the Council Plan 2017 – 2023 and the Plan has been published on the Council's website. A copy of the Council Plan and link to the relevant webpage has been circulated to Town and Community Council Clerks.
- The Council Plan replaces the old Improvement Plan for the Council and sets out the Council's six priorities and detailed sub-priorities for action. The Priorities have been streamlined and reset and the Council is clearer of the impacts that the Council wants to make and how it will go about achieving them. The six priorities are as follows;
 - Ambitious Council
 - Learning Council
 - Green Council
 - Connected Council
 - Serving Council
 - Supportive Council
- The Council Plan contains genuine statements of intent for the Council.
- Colin Everett prompted Town and Community Councils to view the Council Plan if not already done so.

Colin Everett provided a brief update around the new Well-being Strategy for Flintshire. Key points included:

- The Well-Being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 is a new piece of challenging legislation promoted by the Welsh Government.
- Ground-breaking legislation which aims to improve further the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales now and for the longer-term.
- The Act is underpinned by seven 'well-being' goals:

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- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language
- A globally responsible Wales
- Public sector partners need to work together to achieve these goals.
- The first step required of public sector partners under this Act was to make a deep analysis of the conditions of 'well-being' in the communities they serve by using all available data. The Assessment of Well-being for Flintshire has been completed and was published earlier this year.
- The second step is to agree a 'Local Well Being Plan' for collective action.
- Flintshire PSB have formally adopted five PSB themes. These are; Well-being and Independent Living, Community Safety, Resilient Communities, Economy and Environment.
- Work is under way to develop a draft Plan for Flintshire and this will be out for consultation shortly.
- Plan to be endorsed by the PSB and all of the individual organisations before publication in early May 2018.

Questions & Answers:

There were no questions raised for this Agenda item.

Actions:

Circulate a copy of the draft Well-being Plan along with a link to the on-line survey to Town and Community Councils as soon as the consultation process is due to commence.

[Sam Perry to action]

7. National and Local Budget Positions

Colin Everett provided a brief update on the latest position and intelligence with regards to the national and local budget position:

- The Council received its provisional settlement on Tuesday, 10th October 2017.
- Provisional forecast puts Flintshire in a worse position than originally anticipated. The forecast for the future is bleak.
- The Council had pressed for a cash flat settlement and additional investment in social care and education. A reduction of 0.9% poses a real threat to the continuity of frontline services which we have fought successfully to protect in recent years.

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- For three consecutive years, Flintshire County Council, as a low-funded council per head under the funding formula, has set out why councils in this position are particularly exposed to the ongoing impacts of austerity.
- Flintshire had forecast a funding gap for the Council of £11.7M. The gap has now increased by £1.6M, with no national support for key services, as a result of this settlement.
- The Council will need to do a lot of thinking over the next coming months to address the funding gap and balance the budget – There will be challenging times ahead with difficult decisions that will need to be made.
- The Council continues to find innovative ways of saving money and is proposing £3M of service efficiencies for next year.
- Flintshire's recent track record in key services such as education, social care, housing, anti-poverty and environment show that we do deliver on what we say we will do however, difficult decisions will have to be made in the coming months.
- A recent national report identified Flintshire as the most improved Council over last 12 months. A significant achievement, given the financial pressures we are facing.
- A number of Public Engagement events have been arranged around the budget and will take place this month. Information has been sent to Town and Community Councils.
- Colin Everett requested people register to attend one of these events.

Questions & Answers:

Information around the Engagement Events has been sent to the Clerk of each Town and Community Council but are these events promoted elsewhere?

Yes, Information is available on the Council's website. These events are also promoted via various networks and working groups, information around these events is included in the News bulletin and regular tweets are sent out to help promote them.

Will the third sector be effected as a result of the current financial position?

To date, Flintshire have not asked the third sector to take a cut, they have been seen as an extension of provision. There has been strong commitment from Flintshire around financial support for third sector.

Actions:

Town and Community Councils to register to attend one of the Public Engagement Events that have been arranged.

[Town and Community Councils to action]

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8. Review of the County Forum and Charter

Colin Everett proposed having a joint review of the County Forum and Charter and suggested that a small Task and Finish Group be set up to undertake this review. All Town and Community Councils present supported the review taking place and endorsed a Task and Finish Group be set up to undertake this review.

Bryan Grew, (Mold Town Council) and Martin Wright (Buckley Town Council) informed the Forum that they were part of the original Task and Finish Group and expressed their interest in being part of the small Task and Finish Group to undertake this review. Other expressions of interest came from Alun Evans (Cilcain Community Council), Klaus Armstrong-Braun (Broughton and Bretton Community Council) and Cherry Evans (Saltney Town Council).

Questions & Answers:

There were no questions raised for this Agenda item.

Actions:

Set up Small Task and Finish Group to undertake the review. Need to consider geographical spread of Task and Finish Group members to ensure membership from both smaller and larger Town and Community Councils. Email to go out to Town and Community Councils to ask for nominations next week.

[Sam Perry to action]

Interested Town and Community Councils to contact Sam.

[Town and Community Councils to action]

9. Town and Community Council Representation on the Flintshire Public Services (PSB) Board

Colin Everett provided a brief overview of the Flintshire Public Services Board (PSB) and provided an update around the request for Town and Community Council representation on the PSB and the expected role of the chosen representative. Key points included:

- Public Services Boards came into effect on 1st April 2016, as a result of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
- The Flintshire Public Services Board replaces the Flintshire Local Service Board.
- The Flintshire PSB is made up of senior leaders from a number of public and voluntary organisations. The Board has a membership made up of both statutory members (i.e. prescribed by law – Flintshire County Council, North

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Wales Fire & Rescue Services, Natural Resources Wales and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board).

- The four statutory members are the organisations under the Act that receive a vote however, Flintshire PSB members are treated equally and everyone receives a right to vote.
- Together these organisations are responsible for developing and managing the Well-being Plan for Flintshire.
- Seven nominations from Town and Community Councils have been received.
- Two representatives will be chosen so that there is cover arrangements in place.
- Given that several nominations have been received, a selection process will need to be followed and the PSB will be involved in this process.
- Information around the selection process to be circulated to nominees with a view to having representation in place for January's PSB meeting.
- The role and responsibilities of the chosen representative to include;
 - To become part of a collective team bringing local knowledge and expertise to help develop and shape the forward work programme for the PSB,
 - To speak with some knowledge of and interest in local communities,
 - To take views of the Town and Community Council network into the PSB,
 - To promote the work of the Public Services Board amongst Town and Community Councils and act as a link between them,
 - To advise on the most effective ways of engaging with the Town and Community Council network e.g. formal consultations,
 - To attend PSB meetings.
- Bryan Grew to continue to attend meetings until new representatives chosen.

Questions & Answers:

There were no questions raised for this Agenda item.

Actions:

Circulate details of the selection process to Town and Community Council nominees.
[Colin Everett / Sam Perry to action]

PART THREE

TOWN & COMMUNITY COUNCIL TOPICS

10. Developments at Theatr Clwyd – Northop Community Council

Colin Everett provided a brief overview around the developments at Theatr Clwyd. Key points included:

- Colin Everett sits on the Theatre Board and is very proud of the Theatr and its achievements.

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- County subsidy is quite low – the Council contribution is 730K against a turnover of £5m+. If any of this subsidy was removed the Theatr would not work
- The Council is committed to keeping the Theatr.
- There is a challenge around funding to help sustain the Theatr, currently exploring opportunities for funding via the Arts Council and other means.
- There are discussions being held around the possibility of rebuilding the Theatr which will be a major investment however, there needs to be commitment around further funding being made available thereafter.

Actions:

There were no actions relating to this Agenda item.

PART FOUR

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Community Transport

Penyffordd Community Council requested an update around the Community Transport Bus Service to see when it will be implemented. Colin Everett apologised for the delay, other operational issues have had to take a priority but work is underway.

Actions:

Provide both Penyffordd Community Council and Buckley Town Council with an update around the current position and timeframe for implementation.

[Stephen O'Jones to action]

County Forum Meetings

Buckley Town Council suggested that "Any Other Business" items should be excluded from future meetings and this was agreed by the Town and Community Councils in attendance.

Actions:

Exclude AOB section on future Agenda's.

[Sam Perry to action]

It was agreed that the Meeting Notes would be circulated to Town and Community Councils within 2 weeks following each meeting.

[Sam Perry to action]

Invite the ANOB Dark Skies Project to attend/present at a future County Forum meeting.

[Sam Perry to action]

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FUTURE MEETINGS

Volunteers to Host/Chair future meetings came from Saltney Town Council, Connah's Quay Town Council, Leeswood Community Council and Flint Town Council.

Date: Wednesday 28th February 2018
Time: 6.30pm – 8.30pm
Host/Chair: Saltney Town Council
Venue: Douglas Place Community Centre, Woodall Avenue, Saltney, CH4 8NB

Date: Tuesday 19th June 2018
Time: 6.30pm – 8.30pm
Host/Chair: Leeswood & Ponblyddyn Community Council
Venue: Leeswood Community Centre, King Street, Leeswood, CH7 4SB

Date: Thursday 4th October 2018
Time: 6.30pm – 8.30pm
Host/Chair: Connah's Quay Town Council
Venue: Town Council Offices, Quay Building, Fron Road, Connah's Quay, Flintshire, CH5 4PJ