Report from Flintshire/Wrexham Area Committee Meeting of One Voice Wales held on 8th March at Gwersyllt Community Resource Centre

The number of members who attended this meeting were lower than usual, this was probably due to the forthcoming elections in May. The following items were discussed:

1. Town and Community Councils shared matters which were affecting their councils at present;
   * Many of the represented councils are taking over assets from Local Authorities, with the majority feeling confident and well equipped to carry out their new responsibilities (village halls, conversions of telephone boxes and public toilets and new youth services).
   * Local Authority Youth Service provision had not been taken up by any of the councils provided due to the poor provision previously received, lack of activities and engagement with the young people who attend and the costs quoted for this provision. Alternative providers and ideas were being followed (it was agreed that at the next meeting a Play Provision representative would be invited to attend the meeting to give a presentation (if this was not possible a representative from the Planning Department would be invited as members were concerned about the LDP and possible large scale developments)).
   * All but two (eight councils represented) said advised that they were updating or newly adopting Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Risk Assessments. The Chairperson, and representative from OVW, questioned why these important documents were not already in place and why had these inconsistencies had not been highlighted in previous internal and external audits. Some of the members noted their councils had experienced problems with Councillors and Clerks which had caused bad feeling, tasks not being completed and an inability to work together.
2. Good practice was shared:

* Dementia Friendly Communities had been achieved by two of those attending.
* Several communities had installed defibrillators.
* Some councils had improved 'image' by having a greater presence within their community.

1. Members who had attended a meeting of the Partnership Council with Mark Drakeford, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government, noted the change in approach in working with Town and Community Councils, Unitary Authorities and the Police. It was felt there was a more proactive theme, with the role of Town and Community Councils being clearer and recognition of the responsibilities of the aforementioned currently and future, which will inevitably increase. The review of the current boundaries will definitely place more weight to community clustering, which we (occ) need to be aware of and understand (decreasing community councils by clustering - hence the support of remuneration for community councillors as responsibilities increase).
2. The training programme for March 2017 was given to attendees - Clerk has the list.
3. Members requested that One Voice Wales responded to Dr Paterson's letter regarding the bus service in Glyn Ceiriog as her letter did not address any of the concerns highlighted in the initial letter sent to her from OVW.

Next Meeting 7th June at Gwersyllt Community Resource Centre 7pm (Cllr Coles and Clerk to attend).