

**Minutes of the Meeting of COUNCIL
held remotely via video-conference on
Thursday, 27th January, 2022**

PRESENT: Councillor Paul Hinge (Chairman), Councillors Gareth Davies, John Adams-Lewis, Ellen ap Gwynn, Bryan Davies, Ceredig Davies, Clive Davies, Euros Davies, Gethin Davies, Ifan Davies (Vice-Chair), Marc Davies, Meirion Davies, Odwyn Davies, Rhodri Davies, Dafydd Edwards, Endaf Edwards, Lloyd Edwards, Elaine Evans, Elizabeth Evans, Keith Evans, Rhodri Evans, Hag Harris, Catherine Hughes, Gwyn James, Alun Lloyd Jones, Matthew Woolfall Jones, Maldwyn Lewis, Gareth Lloyd, Lyndon Lloyd MBE, Dai Mason, Catrin Miles, Dan Potter, Ray Quant MBE, Rowland Rees-Evans, John Roberts, Mark Strong, Lynford Thomas, Wyn Thomas, Alun Williams and Ivor Williams

(10.00am - 11.54am)

Procedure

The Chairman of the Council, Councillor Paul Hinge welcomed all to the meeting and confirmed that the meeting was being webcasted.

The Council observed a minutes' silence in remembrance of the International Holocaust Memorial Day.

1 Apologies

Councillor Elizabeth Evans apologised for her inability to attend the meeting due to being on other Council duties;
Councillors Gareth Davies, Peter Davies MBE and Mark Strong apologised for their inability to attend the meeting.

2 Disclosure of personal / prejudicial interests

There were no declarations of personal or prejudicial interest.

3 Personal matters

- a) Councillor Rhodri Evans congratulated Mr Gwynne Davies on being elected Honorary Director of the Sheep Section of the Royal Welsh Agricultural Show;
- b) Councillor Lyndon Lloyd noted his appreciation to Mrs Mary Jones who gave 36 years of excellent service to Dyfed and to Ceredigion County Council, working in the front-line in Social Services;
- c) Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn extended her condolences to Councillor Euros Davies on the loss of his father;
- d) Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn extended her condolences to Non Davies on the loss of her father;
- e) Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn extended her condolences to Helen Harries on the loss of her husband;
- f) Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn noted that this has been a very difficult time for Councillor Gareth Davies after losing his son. He has asked Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn to express his thanks for all the support received. A fund was set up in memory of Daniel, which has raised £18,000 for Papyrus, a charity which provides support to prevent suicide among young people;

- g) Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn noted that Councillor Mark Strong is still in hospital, however he is improving and greatly appreciates all the messages of support received;
- h) Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn extended a welcome to James Starbuck, Corporate Director to his first Council meeting;
- i) Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn congratulated Nicola Davies on her appointment as Chairman of the Royal Welsh Agricultural Show;
- j) Councillor Euros Davies thanked Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn for her kind words, and the messages of sympathy received.

4 A verbal update by the Leader of the Council in relation to COVID-19

Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn gave a verbal update in relation to COVID-19 in Ceredigion. She noted that there has been an additional 33 reported cases of infections reported today in Ceredigion, contributing to a total of 10,580 cases since the start of the pandemic. The current rate has reduced to 209.1 per hundred thousand with a positivity rate of 21.7%. However, only PCR tests are currently being reported daily as not all LFT test now require a follow up PCR test, and internal data would suggest that the figures are twice that reported.

Cases are especially prevalent among primary school age children, , which places pressure on schools, however I believe that all schools in Ceredigion are currently operational.

Three of the Council's care homes are categorised red due to COVID-19 cases among staff, and the situation at Bronglais Hospital has improved and the two wards affected have now been re-opened. On Monday there were 112 patients in hospital across the whole of the Hywel Dda University Health Board area, however none of these were in intensive care.

The Council operated Leisure Centres and Swimming Pools will all be open from Monday, with COVID restrictions in place including the wearing of masks when moving around, and contact sports restricted to outdoors. Members of the public will need to book in advance and asked to pay by card.

Libraries will also recommence, access to computers by prior reservation, for a period of up to one hour. Members of the public will also be able to browse the books whilst wearing a mask, and the Archives will be open by appointment. The Museum and Shop have re-opened on Thursday, Friday and Saturdays between 11am and 4pm.

The current regulations will apply in Schools until half-term, and reviewed prior to returning after half term. The January examinations were held successfully, and the Welsh Minister stated that the Summer examinations will proceed as usual, with discussion continuing regarding this.

Staffing of Waste Services has returned to its full capacity and the problems experienced at the beginning of the month have been overcome and the service resumed to normal.

5 To confirm the Minutes of the Meetings of the Council held on 9 December 2021

It was **RESOLVED** to confirm as a true record the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 9th December 2021, subject to an amendment confirming that Councillor Euros Davies was not present at the commencement of the meeting, however he did join the meeting later.

6 Report of the Corporate Lead Officer for Finance and Procurement upon the requirement to adopt a Council Tax Reduction Scheme by 31 January 2022

Councillor Gareth Lloyd, Cabinet Member for Finance and Procurement Services and Public Protection presented the report noting that, in accordance with the Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulation 2013 it is a requirement for local authorities to consider whether to revise or replace their existing scheme on an annual basis, and to consult with any person it considers are likely to have an interest in the operation of its scheme where any revisions are proposed.

Members asked whether information could be provided as to the percentages of eligible persons that claim the discretionary allowance, and asked whether the scheme could be extended to include additional categories. It was noted that the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny would be the most appropriate forum to review this data.

Following a vote, it was **RESOLVED** to:

1. note the making of the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2022;
2. adopt the provisions of the Prescribed Requirement Regulations (2013) as the Council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2022/23, subject to the local discretions that the Council is able to exercise as set out below:
 - (i) continue to apply a 100% disregard beyond the statutory £10 disregard for War Disablement Pensions, War Widows' Pensions and War Widowers' Pensions, for both pensioners and working age claimants;
 - (ii) that no increase in the extended payment periods for pensioners and working age claimants be applied from the standard four weeks currently contained within the Prescribed Scheme;
 - (iii) that no increase in the backdate period for pensioners and working age claimants be applied from the standard 3 months contained within the Prescribed Scheme.

7 Report of the Corporate Lead Officer for Democratic Services upon Members of the Committee of the Council for the remainder of the 2021-2022 Municipal Year

Councillor Ray Quant, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Legal and Governance, People and Organisation and Democratic Services, presented the report noting that following the resignation of Councillor Lloyd Edwards from the Liberal Democrats Political Group, he is now representing his Ward

as an Un-grouped Independent Member. With the agreement of the Leader of the Liberal Democrats Political Group, it is proposed that Councillor Lloyd Edwards retains membership of the three Committees, and that by default, the Liberal Democrats would lose a seat on each of these Committees:

- Licensing Committee
- Democratic Services Committee
- Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

It was noted for accuracy that in Appendix A the Ethics and Standards Committee has appointed Caroline White as Chairman, and John Weston as Vice-Chairman and appointed two new members namely Caryl Davies and Alan Davies in place of Hywel Wyn Jones and Rif Winfield.

Following a vote, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the appointment of Members of the Council to the Committees for the remainder of the 2021-2022 Municipal Year, subject to the amendments noted.

8 Report of the Corporate Lead Officer for Democratic Services upon the Number of Councillors on each Committee from May 2022

Councillor Ray Quant, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Legal and Governance, People and Organisation and Democratic Services, presented the report noting that the number of Councillors will reduce from 42 to 38 from May 2022, however the workload the remain the same, if not increase during this time. As a result, a Cross Party Task and Focus Group was established and Chaired by Councillor Ceredig Davies to review membership of the Council's committees.

It was noted that the Senior Salaries position would remain at 17, and that due to the number of positions exceeding the allowance, the Chair of Democratic Services Committee and the Chair of the Language Committee have not been remunerated. Members asked that this be reviewed during the new administration in light of the Governance and Audit Committee being Chaired by a Lay Member from May 2022. Members also referred to the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee which could be reviewed during the new administration.

Following a vote, it was **RESOLVED** in accordance with the recommendation of the Task and Finish Groups to approve the following, effective from 5th May 2022:

- a) To reduce the membership of the Licensing Committee (both the Statutory and non-Statutory Committee) from 15 to 11;
- b) To reduce the membership of the Development Control Committee from 21 to 15;
- c) To reduce the membership of the four thematic Overview and Scrutiny Committees from 17 to 13;
- d) To amend the Council's Constitution accordingly; and
- e) That all other committees will remain as present.

9 Report of the Corporate Lead Officer for Democratic Services upon Elected Member Role Descriptors

Councillor Ray Quant, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Legal and Governance, People and Organisation and Democratic Services, presented the report noting that the Council adopted the first generic WLGA Role Descriptors in 2012. These role descriptors have now been reviewed and updated by the WLGA, and reflect changes to legislation.

The revised role descriptors were considered by the Democratic Services Committee at its meeting on 15th October 2021 and recommended for approval by Council.

Following a vote, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the revised set of generic Member Role Descriptors as per Appendix B of the report.

10 Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services with Feedback from the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Catherine Hughes noted that this a historic report which describes how Ceredigion County Council Social Services has performed during 2019–2020 in the context of major operational changes in the operating environment. Due to the outbreak of COVID in March 2020 the Welsh Government extended the timeframe for the completion of the report in order to deliver essential services, which is reflected in this report. The report was completed by Donna Pritchard, Acting Director of Social Services at that time, and she thanked everyone for their hard work and diligence during this time.

Councillor Alun Williams noted that the current situation across Wales is very difficult with a lack of funding, lack of staff and an increasing demand on an already stretched system. The report outlines the breadth of care provided, and will be the last report presented during this administration. The Service's work is currently being transferred to a through age, prevention focussed service, using the signs of safety model which is slowly bringing benefits. He thanked Officers for their work in pursuing the transformation diligently and maintaining services so well in very difficult times.

Councillor Bryan Davies, Chairman of the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee acknowledged the impact of COVID-19 on the data, noting that the report had been welcomed by the Committee.

The Statutory Director of Social Services presented the report identifying key highlights including the National Safeguarding Week, the Adverse Childhood Experiences programme of work and very positive inspections and feedback by CIW which were well received,

Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn thanked Officers and all staff for all their work over the past two very demanding years.

The content of the report was noted by Council.

Confirmed at the Meeting of the Council held on 3 March 2022

CHAIRMAN: _____