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6 July 2023

Dear Sir / Madam

I write to inform you that a MEETING of CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL will be held at NEUADD CYNGOR CEREDIGION, PENMORFA, ABERAERON AND REMOTELY VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE **on Thursday, 13 July 2023 at 10.00 am** for the transaction of the following business:

- 1. Apologies**
- 2. Disclosure of personal / prejudicial interests**
- 3. Personal matters**
- 4. To confirm the Minutes of the Meetings of the Council held on 15 June 2023 and the Special Meeting of Council held on 20 June 2023 (Pages 5 - 12)**
- 5. To consider the following motion submitted under Rule 10.1 of the Council's Rules of Procedure (Pages 13 - 16)**

Proposer: Councillor Catrin M S Davies

Seconder: Councillor Rhodri Davies

Council notes:

We know that poor digital connectivity remains a serious problem in many rural areas across Ceredigion and that access to and use of online services reflects other inequalities in society; and that this can cause economic underperformance and lead to further rural poverty in our county. Poor connectivity can lead to the loss of economic opportunities not to mention its impact on the education of our children and young people.

Alternative network operator, Broadway Partners had been aspiring to deploy their own gigabit-capable Fibre-to-the-Premises network across the north of Ceredigion after engaging with local communities for over 2 years. It could have revolutionised the lives of many of our residents and would improve economic growth across the county.

5 projects were outlined and approved for Broadway Partners - in the north of Ceredigion, but recently BDUK (Building Digital UK) has delayed funding for 2 of the projects (namely Ysgubor y Coed and Pontarfynach), stating that these areas would now likely to fall within the scope of the Wales-wide procurement exercise, which is being conducted by BDUK. This effectively destroyed the Broadway partners' plan.

Broadway Partners called in the administrators at the end of May 2023. The administrators are currently looking for buyers to take over part or all of the business and they hope to close the process by end of July 2023. But securing a buyer does not guarantee that the proposed infrastructure projects will continue to be built in Melindwr and Ceulan and Maesmawr wards.

The UK Government's current funding model makes it difficult for alternative network providers to fill the connectivity gap in rural areas. Nevertheless, it would be appropriate for the UK Government to intervene to support these communities, and in particular to help find a company that can take over the plans that have been left unfinished and to include the original areas of Ysgubor y Coed and Pontarfynach. These communities have already waited far too long for adequate broadband connectivity. Every effort must be made to ensure that the plans are not delayed further.

Therefore, the Council is:

- a) Asking BDUK to urgently look at providing fast connectivity to the areas of Ceulan and Maesmawr, and Melindwr - that connectivity that was promised two years ago.
- b) Asking the UK Government, and the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, to intervene to support the communities that have been affected by the collapse of Broadway PartnerS, and in particular to help find a company that can take over the plans that have been left unfinished and to include the original areas of Ysgubor y Coed and Pontarfynach.
- c) Noting that Welsh Government recognises that digital connectivity is as important as digital inclusion (it is difficult to have one without the other) We ask what are they doing to support the rural areas of Ceredigion that have been affected by the collapse of the Broadway Partners company?
- d) Requesting details from the UK Government, and the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, regarding their procurement

process for the Gigabit Project in Wales, specifically areas of Ceredigion that are still digitally underprivileged, and also for a definite timetable for bringing fast connectivity to the whole county.

6. **To consider the report of the Corporate Lead Officer: Legal and Governance upon amendments to the Constitution and Constitution Guide (Pages 17 - 296)**
7. **To consider the report of the Corporate Lead Officer: Legal and Governance upon the Recruitment of Independent Members to the Ethics and Standards Committee (Pages 297 - 306)**
8. **To consider the report of the Corporate Lead Officer: Democratic Services upon the appointment of Councillor Keith Henson to the Four Rivers for LIFE project (Pages 307 - 308)**
9. **To consider the Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 2022-23 (Pages 309 - 326)**
10. **To consider the Ethics and Standards Committee annual report 2022-23 (Pages 327 - 368)**
11. **To consider the Governance and Audit Committee annual report 2022-23 (Pages 369 - 386)**

Members are reminded to sign the Attendance Register.

A Translation Service will be provided at this meeting and those present are welcome to speak in Welsh or English at the meeting.

Yours faithfully



Miss Lowri Edwards
Corporate Lead Officer: Democratic Services

To: Chairman and Members of Council