

**Minutes of the Special Meeting of Council
held at Neuadd Cyngor Ceredigion, Penmorfa, Aberaeron and remotely via
video conference on Thursday, 14th November, 2024**

PRESENT: Councillor Keith Evans (Chair), Councillors Shelley Childs, Bryan Davies, Catrin M S Davies, Clive Davies, Euros Davies, Gareth Davies, Gethin Davies, Ifan Davies, Marc Davies, Meirion Davies, Rhodri Davies, Amanda Edwards, Endaf Edwards, Elaine Evans, Elizabeth Evans, Eryl Evans, Gwyn Wigley Evans, Raymond Evans, Rhodri Evans, Wyn Evans, Keith Henson, Hugh R M Hughes, Chris James, Gwyn James, Maldwyn Lewis, Gareth Lloyd, Sian Maehrlein, Ann Bowen Morgan, Caryl Roberts, John Roberts, Mark Strong, Wyn Thomas, Matthew Vaux, Alun Williams and Carl Worrall

(2.00pm - 3.42pm)

Procedure

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

1 Apologies

Councillors Ceris Jones and Gareth Lewis apologised for their inability to attend the meeting.

2 Disclosure of personal / prejudicial interests

There were no disclosures of interest.

3 Chair Announcements

Councillor Keith Evans, Chair of the Council congratulated:

- a) Ceri Jones from Llanon on winning the Welsh Youth Hare and Hound Series Championship for 2024;
- b) Ella Williams from Llanon on winning the Welsh Schools Pistol Championship 2024;
- c) Llangwryfon Young Farmers Club on winning the Community Spirit National Award;
- d) Mike Davies, Highways Works Leader, Ceredigion County Council on being selected to represent Wales in the Vet 55 category in the British and Irish Masters Cross Country International; and
- e) Ceredigion Young Farmers Clubs on winning the Wales YFC Eisteddfod.

4 Report of the Corporate Lead Officer: Democratic Services upon a decision on whether to adopt the Single Transferable Vote (STV) system for Ceredigion County Council

Councillor Bryan Davies, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Democratic Services, Policy, Performance and People and Organisation presented the report to Council, providing an outline of the options, the procedure and the response to the public consultation in relation to whether or not to adopt a Single Transferable Vote system for Ceredigion County Council elections hereafter.

Members of the Council noted the following:

- That an amendment to the voting system would remain in place for 2 consecutive elections;
- The impact on rural areas, which would cover a large geographical area compared to urban wards;
- Concerns that larger wards with 3 – 6 Members may impact upon the local connection between Members and residents;
- The dilution of one-party domination, with greater consensus of politics and collaboration;
- That residents would approach the most effective, hard-working Members in the ward;
- That 67% of those that responded to the consultation were in favour of a Single Transferable Vote system, and 80% of the younger people denoting a desire for change;
- That the Single Transferable Vote system could reduce the number of un-contested seats;
- That Ceredigion County Council would have a different system to the remainder of Wales, as it had been dismissed by all other authorities in Wales, whilst other Members were of the view that this would identify Ceredigion as a pioneering authority;
- The additional, unknown cost of operating a Single Transferable Vote system, at a time when money is sparse;
- Uncertainty regarding potential ward boundaries, and dissatisfaction by many following the review of the Town and Community Councils;
- That the Single Transferable Vote is a fairer, more representative system, which provides an ability to choose between parties and candidates;
- That the current First Past the Post system means that the candidate with the majority of the votes is elected, as opposed to Members that came second and third in the result;
- That the differential to the result between the two systems would be minimal in Ceredigion, at circa 4%;
- That more candidates may consider putting their names forward in a multi-Member Ward system;
- That the First Past the Post system means that the electors' choice is negated when their first option has been eliminated, however the Single Transferable Vote system allows for greater representation of the residents' choice.

Councillor Keith Henson proposed a recorded vote on the matter. This was seconded by Councillor Alun Williams and agreed unanimously.

A recorded vote was taken as agreed and in accordance with Rule 14.5 of the Council Procedure Rules contained in the Council's Constitution upon the recommendation that the Council decides whether or not to adopt a Single Transferable Vote system for Ceredigion County Council elections hereafter.

For: Councillors Shelley Childs, Bryan Davies, Catrin M S Davies, Clive Davies, Gareth Davies, Endaf Edwards, Elaine Evans, Elizabeth Evans, Keith Henson, Hugh Hughes, Sian Maehrlein, Ann Bowen Morgan, Caryl Roberts, Mark Strong, Wyn Thomas, Matthew Vaux, Alun Williams and Carol Worrall (18)

Against: Councillors Euros Davies, Gethin Davies, Ifan Davies, Marc Davies, Meirion Davies, Rhodri Davies, Amanda Edwards, Eryl Evans, Gwyn Wigley Evans, Raymond Evans, Rhodri Evans, Wyn Evans, Gwyn James, Maldwyn Lewis, Gareth Lloyd, John Roberts and Keith Evans (17)

Abstain: (0)

Councillor Chris James left the meeting prior to the recorded vote.

In order to adopt the single transferable vote system, the number of Members who vote in favour must be at least two thirds of the number of seats on the Council, namely 26 out of 38.

As the threshold of 26 was not met, the recommendation did not pass. As such, the voting system will not change for the 2027 local government elections.

Confirmed at the Meeting of the Council held on 28 November 2024

CHAIRMAN: _____