

Minutes of the Meeting of CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL
held remotely via video-conference on
Thursday, 17th June, 2021

PRESENT: Councillor Paul Hinge (Chairman), Councillors John Adams-Lewis, Ellen ap Gwynn, Bryan Davies, Ceredig Davies, Clive Davies, Euros Davies, Gareth Davies, Gethin Davies, Ifan Davies (Vice-Chair), Marc Davies, Meirion Davies, Odwyn Davies, Peter Davies, Rhodri Davies, Steve Davies, Dafydd Edwards, Endaf Edwards, Elaine Evans, Elizabeth Evans, Keith Evans, Rhodri Evans, Catherine Hughes, 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

(10.00 am - 1.25 pm)

Procedure

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

1 Apologies

- a) Councillors Alun Lloyd Jones apologised for his inability to attend the meeting due to being on other Council duties;
- b) Councillor Lloyd Edwards, Hag Harris and Gwyn James apologised for their inability to attend the meeting.
- c) Barry Rees apologised for his inability to attend the meeting due to being on other Council duties.

2 Disclosure of personal / prejudicial interests

- a) Councillors Bryan Davies, Ifan Davies, Marc Davies, Meirion Davies, Rhodri Evans, Catherine Hughes, Maldwyn Lewis, Dai Mason and Dan Potter declared a personal and prejudicial interest in relation to minute 6 below, and left the meeting during this item.

3 Personal matters

- a) Councillor Paul Hinge congratulated Josh Hathaway, Iestyn Thomas and Ioan Lewis of Aberystwyth Rugby Club who played for the Scarlets under 18 rugby team yesterday;
- b) Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn congratulated the Wales Football team on their performance last night, noting that Rhys Norrington-Davies from Talybont is a member of the squad;
- c) Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn extended her congratulations to Osian Jones, Ysgol Ciliau Parc, winner of the under 12 competition to create a new football chant to support the Wales football team;
- d) Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn extended her best wishes to Kay Davies, Democratic Services Officer on her retirement;
- e) Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn congratulated Councillor Alun Williams on his appointment as Mayor of Aberystwyth;
- f) Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn congratulated Councillor Catherine Hughes on her appointment as Chair of Tregaron Community Council;
- g) Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn congratulated Meinir Mathias for winning the People's Prize with the Royal Cambrian Academy;

- h) Councillor Rhodri Evans extended his congratulations to Ann Jones on being elected National Chair of the Women's Institute;
- i) Councillor Euros Davies extended his best wishes to Rose Florence who recently celebrated her 103rd birthday;
- j) Councillor Catherine Hughes congratulated the Carer's Unit on a very successful Carer's Week;
- k) Councillor Catherine Hughes congratulated Ceredigion pupils on their prizes at a very successful Eisteddfod T, held from Llangrannog recently. Congratulations were also extended to the Urdd for a successful week of competition;
- l) Councillor Lyndon Lloyd extended his best wishes to former Councillor, Mr Huw Davies, on serving Beulah Community Council for 42 years.

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 stated that the Delta variant is causing concern in Wales and throughout the UK and that the number of cases are rising. Nine new cases were recorded in Ceredigion during the last week, which is equivalent to 12.4 per hundred thousand. The rate for the whole of Wales is equivalent to 22.5 per hundred thousand, and it is unlikely that restrictions will be eased before July, and reminded everyone of the need to follow current regulations. It was noted however that the number of cases have not increased significantly in Ceredigion following half-term as compared to other areas.

The vaccine programme continuing effectively with 67% having received their first dose, and 40.4% taking up their second dose in Ceredigion. All those over the age of 18 have now received an invitation to go for their vaccination, and that there is an opportunity for those who may have missed their initial appointment to still go for their vaccine at walk-in sessions. The JCVI are currently looking at evidence regarding how to apply the vaccination to Secondary School age pupils, but no decision has been made yet.

She noted that Pupils have received their centre determined grades, following the assessments, and that pupils will have an opportunity to appeal these grades in the coming weeks. She congratulated pupils and thanked staff, noting that the results would be published as usual during August.

There have been increased visits to Care Homes via the pods and outdoors and it is hoped that indoor visits will be able to commence soon.

Safe Zones have been successful on the whole in what was a busy half term. Staff have listened to the public, and the Safe Zones have adapted where possible.

Funding from Wales Government has contributed towards the additional costs associated with COVID-19, which will continue until September, and we've appointed additional staff as Visitor Assistants in our towns. Business grants from Wales Government are available both from 'Business Wales' and

via Ceredigion County Council for those businesses that have been unable to re-open.

Libraries have re-opened to the public by appointment, and it's still possible to arrange click and collect.

Some of our Leisure Centres including Lampeter and Aberaeron have re-opened. Leisure Services in the Aberystwyth area are available at Penglais Sports Hall whilst maintenance work is undertaken at the Plascrug Leisure Centre. Maintenance work is also being undertaken at Lampeter Swimming Pool. It was noted that the Aberaeron Swimming pool is also open along with the Llandysul Leisure Centre

It was also noted that monthly meetings would be held to provide Members with COVID-19 updates.

- 5 To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 14.05.2021**
It was **RESOLVED** to confirm as a true record the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 14th May 2021.

- 6 Update on the following motion submitted on 10 December 2020 under Rule 10.1 of the Council's Rules of Procedure**

Proposer: Cllr. Mark Strong

Seconder: Cllr. Ellen ap Gwynn

Council notes that:

Ceredigion County Council calls on the Welsh Government to:

- 1. add a new clause to the Planning Act so that it is compulsory to make a planning application before obtaining the right to convert a residential home into a holiday home or a holiday let*
- 2. adapt the policy framework to allow for maximum thresholds to be set with regard to the number of holiday homes in a given area*
- 3. make it compulsory for second-home owners to ask for planning permission before turning a second home into a holiday business or an AirBnB business.*

Councillor Mark Strong gave an outline of the circumstances which led to the Notice of Motion, confirming that the recommendation has been considered and commended by the Thriving Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Language Committee, placing particular focus on unfair competition, and the need for young people in our communities to be able to buy a home.

Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn noted that it is a pleasure to second this Motion, and thanked the staff for the full report on the situation presented to both Committees. She noted that the Language Committee were fully in support of this Motion.

Councillor Euros Davies noted that the Thriving Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee also voted in support of the recommendations.

Councillor Dafydd Edwards proposed an improvement on the Motion, to include the insertion of 'on a community basis' at the end of the 2nd point of the motion; and to insert 'and retrospectively' at the end of the 3rd point of the motion. This was seconded by Councillor Rowland Rees-Evans. However, following discussion, both withdrew the proposal of improvement to the Motion.

The Council considered a recommendation by the Thriving Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee that 100% increase is levied on Council Tax of holiday homes in the county.

Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn asked that Officers present a report on the implications of setting a 100% tax on such properties, and defer a full discussion on this until such a report is received. She also recommended that a fund is set up to assist local young people to purchase homes.

Councillor Ceredig Davies noted that Council had previously agreed that any additional funding received from the Council Tax premium on holiday homes would be spent in those communities, therefore any amendment to the policy would need to be considered by Council. It should not be retrospective.

Councillor Gareth Davies stated that the planning should come first.

Councillor Elizabeth Evans noted that the levy stands and a report should also consider a breakdown of private renting in Ceredigion.

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

1. Agree the motion as stated:
2. note the recommendations made by the Thriving Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Language Committee; and
3. that Officers prepare a report for consideration by Council regarding the Thriving Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee's recommendation that a 100% increase is levied on the council tax of holiday homes in the County.

7 Report of the Corporate Lead Officer: Finance and Procurement on the Revised Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy for 2021/22

Councillor Gareth Lloyd, Cabinet Member for Finance and Procurement Services and Public Protection Services, presented the report noting that Officers have recently undertaken a further review in relation to adopting the Asset Life Method for charging the Minimum Revenue Provision.

The information had been considered by the Governance and Audit Committee on 3rd June 2021, and the Committee agreed to support the proposed Revised Policy subject to periodic reviews. Audit Wales, who attended the Committee, also agreed to this amendment.

Following a vote, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the Revised Minimum Revenue Provision Policy for 2021/22 as set out in Appendix A of the report.

8 Report of Corporate Lead Officer, Economy and Regeneration on the Net Zero Action Plan

Councillor Alun Williams, Cabinet Member for Porth Cynnal and Chair of the Carbon Management and Climate Change Group presented the report noting that on 20 June 2019, the Council committed to making Ceredigion a net zero carbon Local Authority by 2030 and to develop a clear plan for a route towards being net zero within 12 months.

The information had been considered by Thriving Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 26th May 2021, and by Cabinet on 15th June 2021. It was noted that Cabinet had approved the report subject to the removal of the reference to the Safe Zones potentially being made permanent, and the inclusion of fluvial flooding to the Corporate Risk Register. It was also noted that a representative from the Liberal Democrats Groups would be invited to attend the Carbon Management Group.

Following a vote, it was **RESOLVED** to endorse the Net Zero Action Plan and Actions set out within it.

9 Report of Corporate Lead Officer, Legal and Governance on the Strategy on Counter-Fraud, Corruption and Bribery

Councillor Ray Quant Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Legal and Governance, People and Organisation and Democratic Services presented the report noting that Ceredigion County Council has a duty to the public to safeguard money that should be used in the public interest, and to address the risk to fraud. To this purpose the Council has updated its strategy.

The information had been considered by the Governance and Audit Committee on 3rd June 2021, and Councillor Elizabeth Evans, Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee confirmed that they were assured that all is in place, and that the Committee endorsed the strategy for presentation to Council for final approval.

Following a vote, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the Council's updated Strategy on Counter-Fraud, Corruption and Bribery (to include Anti-Money Laundering).

10 Report of the Corporate Lead Officer: Legal and Governance on the size of Governance and Audit Committee

Councillor Ray Quant Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Legal and Governance, People and Organisation and Democratic Services presented the report noting that Section 116 of the 'Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 stipulates that one third of the Governance and Audit Committee must be lay Members, and that this provision will come into force on the 5th May 2022.

The information had been considered by the Governance and Audit Committee on 24th February 2021, and the Democratic Services Committee on 21st May 2021 who resolved to recommend to Council that from 6 May

2022, the future Committee compromise of 3 independent / lay members and 6 County Councillors.

Following a vote, it was **RESOLVED** that with effect from 5th May 2022, the Governance and Audit Committee shall comprise:

- 6 x County Council Members
- 3 x independent lay members

Total: 9.

11 Report of the Corporate Lead Officer: Legal and Governance on the recruitment of two independent Members and the appointment of Chair and Vice Chair to the Ethics and Standards Committee

Councillor Ray Quant Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Legal and Governance, People and Organisation and Democratic Services presented the report outlining the recruitment process, and asking the Council to approve the appointments.

Councillor Paul Hinge congratulating the new lay Members and the Chair and Vice-Chair.

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

1. approve the appointment of the following independent members of the Ethics and Standards Committee:
 - Caryl Davies;
 - Alan Daviesfrom 27th September 2021 to 26th September 2027
2. to approve the following nominations:
 - a) Caroline White: Chair (20th May 2021 – 30th July 2023)
 - b) John Weston: Vice-Chair (20th May 2021 – 30th July 2023).

12 Report of the Corporate Lead Officer: Policy, Performance and Public Protection in relation to the Armed Forces Covenant

The following item was chaired by Councillor Gareth Davies.

Councillor Paul Hinge, Member Champion for the Armed Forces presented the report noting that the Council has previously signed the 'Community Covenant Partnership' in 2013. This proposal serves to ask the Council to reaffirm the Council's commitment and it will also serve to refresh the Council's commitments into more appropriate measures, and to be formally acknowledged nationally.

Following a vote, it was **RESOLVED** that Ceredigion County Council sign the Armed Forces Covenant and publicly commemorate the 10th Anniversary of the Covenant in September / October 2021.

13 Ethics and Standards Committee Annual Report 2020/21

Mr Hywel Wyn Jones, Chair of the Ethics and Standards Committee presented the report noting that they have dealt with a number of applications for dispensation from County and Community Council in order

that they could participate in discussions there they have a prejudicial interest. He also noted their work in promoting an understanding of the standards that need to be adhered to in public life.

He noted also that he is pleased that during the 10 years that he has been a member of this committee, it has not been necessary to review any references from the Ombudsman or to consider any breach of the Codes of Standards, and congratulated Councillors for this.

He thanked the Officers for their work, and congratulated Caroline White on her appointment as Chair and John Weston as Vice-chair.

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

1. note the contents of the report, and to
2. consider the contents of the Annual Report from the Chairman of the Ethics and Standards Committee 2020/21 (Appendix A).

The Chairman thanked Mr Hywel Wyn Jones for his time on the Ethics and Standards Committee and for his period as Chairman.

Confirmed at the Meeting of the Council held on 23 September 2021

CHAIRMAN: _____