

Minutes of the Meeting of CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL
held remotely via video-conference on
Thursday, 25th November, 2021

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

(2.00pm - 3.10pm)

Procedure

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

1 Apologies

Councillor Bryan Davies, Rhodri Davies, Elaine Evans, Hag Harris, Maldwyn Lewis, Rowland Rees-Evans and Mark Strong apologised for their inability to attend the meeting.

Councillor Alun Williams apologised for this inability to attend the meeting due to being on other Council duties.

Councillor Rhodri Evans apologised that he would be joining the meeting late.

2 Disclosure of personal / prejudicial interests

There were no declarations of personal or prejudicial interest.

3 Personal matters

- a) Councillor Ray Quant paid tribute to all involved in the campaign to reverse the decision to downgrade the life-boat at New Quay, noting that following review an All-weather lifeboat will now be available at New Quay. Councillor Dan Potter who is also the coxswain of New Quay life-boat noted the importance of this location, and thanked the lifeboat crew and flank stations that supported them in this campaign, and the important work keeping up the highest tradition of the RNLI, saving lives at sea. Councillor Elizabeth Evans also highlighted that following a Motion to Council, and the unanimous support of the Members there was a definite gear change by the RNLI, which demonstrates the effectiveness of bringing such motions to Council; Councillor Euros Davies congratulated the Ceredigion Young Farmers' Clubs on a successful Eisteddfod at the Pavilion in Pontrhydfendigaid and to all those who won in the various categories to include Llanwennog who won first prize, Pontsian, second and Troedyrour who came third. Twm Ebbsworth won the Crown and Ianto Jones who won the Chair at the Eisteddfod. Twm Ebbsworth went on to come second for the Crown throughout Wales, and Ianto Jones won the Chair for the whole of Wales;
- b) Councillor Euros Davies congratulated Eluned Jones on winning the

- Crown and Martha Evans on winning the Chair at the Carmarthenshire Young Farmers' club Eisteddfod;
- c) Councillor Euros Davies congratulated the Young Farmers' Club on a successful 'Field Day', which was won by Llangwryfon Young Farmers' Club, and gave his best wishes to all those who will be progressing to the next round at the Winter Fair;
 - d) Councillor Euros Davies congratulated Dai Thomas of Llanwnnen on winning the best bullock competition at the Winter Fair in England, and to all others who were successful;
 - e) Councillor Meirion Davies congratulated Llangwryfon Young Farmers Club on winning at the Field Day for the 7th year in succession which was held at Trawscoed Farm in his Ward;
 - f) Councillor Lyndon Lloyd MBE congratulated Eluned Jones on her 102nd birthday;
 - g) Councillor John Adams-Lewis noted that the roadworks at Ystad Brynhafod are now complete due to a Welsh Government scheme, and thanked Officers for their support;
 - h) Eifion Evans, Chief Executive wished Caroline Lewis, Corporate Director well on her retirement and thanked her for all her work over the past 15 years, especially her contribution over the past 12 months in driving forward the Through Age and Wellbeing Strategy. Thanks were re-iterated by Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn;
 - i) Councillor Elizabeth Evans wished Amanda Roberts, Corporate Manager for Internal Audit well on her retirement and thanked her for all her work over the past 36 years supporting and instilling confidence to the Audit Committee. Thanks were re-iterated by Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn;
 - j) Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn congratulated Elgan Evans from Talybont on winning with the Welsh Black cattle and rare breeds at the Winter Fair in England.

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 the total infection cases for Ceredigion is 6,330. Cases are higher now than at the beginning of the outbreak, however they are beginning to fall.

The current weekly infection rate for Ceredigion is at 266.9 per hundred thousand with a 12.6% positivity rate, compared to the whole of Wales which is at 499.9 with a 19% positivity rate. At a local level, during the period 14 to 20 November the infection rate is at 450.6 per hundred thousand in Cardigan and Aberporth, with 40 cases; 270.6 cases per hundred thousand in Beulah, Troed-yr-aur and Llandysul with 20 case; 502.1 cases per hundred thousand in New Quay and Penbryn with 33 cases; 157.7 cases per hundred thousand in Lampeter and Llanfihangel Ystrad with 13 cases; 338.2 cases per hundred thousand in Aberaeron and Llanrhystud with 24 cases; 147.2 cases per hundred thousand in Rheidol, Ystwyth and Caron with 17 cases; 328.7 cases per hundred thousand in Aberystwyth South with 22 cases; 113.2 cases per hundred thousand in Aberystwyth North with 10 cases; and 210.6 cases per hundred thousand in Borth and Bontgoch with 15 cases. All were reminded that we still need to be careful.

It was noted that there are 2 COVID-19 cases at Bronglais Hospital, 29 at Glangwili Hospital, 5 at Prince Philip Hospital and 12 at Withybush Hospital and that it appears that the numbers are also falling in all the Hospitals in the Hywel Dda University Health Board area.

Three of the Council's care homes are categorised red due to COVID-19 cases among staff, and three are categorised amber, due to one member of staff testing positive.

An increase in cases was seen in schools following half term, however this is considerably lower now and we hope that it will continue to fall between now and the Christmas break.

The waste centres are now fully operational and click and collect arrangements are still in place at our libraries. This will be reviewed in the New Year.

Work is ongoing at Plascrug Leisure Centre, Cardigan Leisure Centre and Lampeter Swimming Pool. The work has taken longer than expected, and we apologise for any inconvenience because of this.

The NERS exercise programme under medical supervision which has been meeting online will start to meet face to face, and members of the public are advised to monitor the public road-map on the Council's website for updates on changes to services.

5 Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 21 October 2021

It was **RESOLVED** to confirm as a true record the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 21st October 2021.

6 Minutes of the Special Meetings of the Council held on 21 October 2021

It was **RESOLVED** to confirm as a true record the Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Council meeting held on 21st October 2021.

7 Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 update

Councillor Ray Quant, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member Legal and Governance, People and Organisation and Democratic Services introduced the updated Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2020/21 to the Council, noting that the draft Annual Governance Statement was approved by Council on 18 March 2021, and reviewed by the Governance and Audit Committee earlier today.

He noted that two minor amendments have been made to the 2020/21 Annual Governance Statement in reference to the 'Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021'. No amendments have been recommended by Audit Wales, however amendments have been made to reflect actions taken which have now been actioned and completed.

Following a vote, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** in accordance with the recommendation of the Council's Governance and Audit Committee, to approve the amended Annual Governance Statement 2020/2021

a) **ISA260 Report of Audit Wales on the 2020/21 Statement of Accounts**

The Chair welcomed Eleanor Ansell of Wales Audit to the meeting.

Eleanor Ansell presented the ISA260 Report in respect of the Council's Statement of Accounts for 2020/21, noting that the statutory deadlines had been relaxed by Welsh Government and that Ceredigion County Council would be meeting these revised deadlines.

She noted that there are no significant issues arising from the audit. They have also reviewed the harbour return, and there are no issues arising from this either. She thanked the staff for working with effectively with them and concluded that it was their intention to issue an unqualified audit opinion on this year's accounts.

b) **Comments from the Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee on the report**

Councillor Elizabeth Evans, the Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee, stated that the Audit Committee had considered the Statement of Accounts for 2020/21 in detail earlier in the day, and thanked the team noting that you cannot get a better outcome than this. She thanked Audit Wales for working with officers so constructively, noting that it had not been necessary to address any issues regarding Estates this year, and thanked the Service for addressing previous issues.

Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn congratulated everyone on an excellent report especially under such difficult circumstances.

c) **2020/21 Statement of Accounts**

Councillor Gareth Lloyd, Cabinet Portfolio Member for Finance and Procurement Services and Public Protection Services commended the Statement of Accounts and the ISA260 report, noting that in accordance with the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 that statements of accounts must be approved by Council by 30 November 2021.

He noted that the outturn is a break even position, the level of the General Fund of £6.1m and the level of Earmarked Reserves have remained unaltered, and that the Auditor General's intention is to issue an unqualified audit report on the Accounts. He thanked all the staff and Auditors for their hard work in delivering the clean Statement of Accounts whilst dealing with additional responsibilities.

Councillor Elizabeth Evans, noted the gratitude of small businesses for processing the £49million grants so quickly, without which several businesses would have failed.

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the Council's Statement of Accounts and the Ceredigion Harbour Authority Statement of Accounts for 2020/21.

Confirmed at the Meeting of the Council held on 9 December 2021

CHAIRMAN: