

**Minutes of the Meeting of THRIVING COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE
held at the ZOOM. on Monday, 1 November 2021**

PRESENT; Councillor Marc Davies (Chairman), Councillors Euros Davies (Vice-Chair), John Adams-Lewis, Clive Davies, Gareth Davies, Gethin Davies, Ifan Davies, Meirion Davies, Rhodri Davies, Steve Davies, Gwyn James, Lyndon Lloyd MBE, Dai Mason and John Roberts

Also in attendance: Councillors

Officers in attendance:

(10.00 am - 12.17 pm)

1 Apologies

Councillor Keith Evans apologised for his inability to attend the meeting as on other Council Business. Councillor Elizabeth Evans apologised for her inability to attend the meeting.

**2 Disclosures of personal interest (including whipping declarations)
Members are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and prejudicial interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Members Code of Conduct. In addition, Members must declare any prohibited party whip which the Member has been given in relation to the meeting as per the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.**

There were no disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests (including whipping declarations) from Committee Members.

3 Active Travel Network Mapping (ATNM) Review

Chris Wilson and Gari Jones attended the meeting to advise the Committee of the arrangements for the preparation of Active Travel Network Maps (ATNM). They informed the Committee of the increasing Local Highway Authority network of Active Travel routes and infrastructure to the Highways Asset Management Plan (HAMP), which they advised is likely to have additional resource implications for ongoing maintenance.

Members will be aware that under the provisions of the Act, the Welsh Government appointed three Ceredigion settlements as 'Designated Localities' for active travel; namely; Aberystwyth, Cardigan and Lampeter.

The outcome of the active travel scheme monitoring is reported to the Welsh Government on an annual basis and published on the Council's Website.

Officers advised the Committee that development and construction of most active travel infrastructure schemes is almost exclusively funded from

applications to access Welsh Government Capital Grants, mainly Active Travel Fund and to a lesser extent safe routes in Communities. mainly Active Travel Fund and to a lesser extent safe routes in Communities. Officers advised that it is a condition of Welsh Government grant funding that schemes must be designed and constructed in accordance with the WG Active Travel Design Guidance. In reply to a question, Officers confirmed that Welsh Government do not provide ring-fenced revenue funding assistance towards the maintenance and upkeep of new infrastructure, and it is a condition of accepting capital grant funding that the Authority becomes responsible for any future maintenance costs which clearly carries implications for service budgets.

New routes predominantly for leisure/recreation purposes and routes outside of the three designated settlements and immediate active travel catchment area are likely to be unsuccessful and fail to attract funding. This caused concern amongst Committee Members as Ceredigion has many rural villages and Towns.

In response to a question, Officers confirmed that Landowners play a large part in this process and if their consent is not provided then the Active Travel Scheme cannot proceed. Their cooperation is therefore crucial.

Members asked many questions relating to their area of interest which were answered in turn by Officers. The Chairman asked if land dedication letters could be posted to landowners of the Rhiwgoch, Aberaeron scheme once again to which an Officer replied 'yes'. The Chairman asked for this to be recorded in the minutes.

Following a request from a Committee Member, assurance was given that officers would contact Carms officers to ask them if they had any intention of improving the A484/B4333 between Newcastle Emlyn and Carmarthen.

Following a lengthy discussion, Members were asked to consider the following recommendation:

- Committee is requested to recommend that Cabinet endorse the ATNM Review and future expansion of the Highway network and Asset management responsibilities in connection with Active Travel provision.

Members agreed to recommend that Cabinet endorse the ATNM Review and future expansion of the Highway network and Asset management responsibilities in connection with Active Travel provision.

Councillor Dafydd Edwards, Cabinet Member, apologised for arriving at the meeting late due to attending another Council meeting. The Chairman thanked the Officers for the information.

4 Net-Zero Action Plan - Progress Update

Councillor Alun Williams, Cabinet Member, attended the meeting to provide a progress update as to the actions set out within the Net Zero Action Plan. Bethan Lloyd Davies and Lyndon Griffiths were present to answer any questions arising from Members.

All service areas saw emission reductions during 2020/2021, when compared to previous financial years. A total equating to a cumulative 28.77% reduction against a 15% target from 2017/2018 to 2020/2021. It was reported that the most notable reduction was in relation to business mileage (travel undertaken by Staff in their own vehicles), which was reduced by 71.96% when compared to the previous financial year. The Authority spent £1,322,919 less on energy and fuel in 2020/2021 than in 2019/2020.

It was reported that the Authority has received two Grants, which will be used to investigate increasing the Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure within the County.

Ceredigion already procures 'green' electricity via the corporate electricity contract.

There is further scope to look at procurement of 'green' gas, as well as liquid fuels (e.g. LPG or biodiesel), although there is little benefit in regard to the carbon accounting figures, it could be considered best practise to ensure that the utilities come from 'green' sustainable sources.

A land asset review undertaken by the Welsh Government Energy Service has looked at various sites for renewables, these are mostly subject to significant grid constraints. It has however highlighted that there is going to be a need to ensure that renewable installations are adequately sized and that locations are chosen dependant on their ability to use the energy generated on site.

Canolfan Rheidol car park has been identified as a potential location for solar Canopies and this is currently being investigated. Renewables are also routinely being introduced as part of building refurbishment works and also the 21st Century Schools programme. As part of the programme, when building new schools, the Authority will work towards decarbonisation and net-zero buildings. A new extension at Llwyn yr Eos School, has the potential to become the Council's first net-zero building. Ground source heating and solar panels have been installed as part of the scheme and it is hoped that this will set a benchmark for future building works undertaken by the authority in future. Officer stated that they are currently working to calculate the entire carbon footprint which will be available in time for the next update.

There were many questions from Members which were answered in turn by the Cabinet Member and Officers.

Committee Members agreed to note the progress in relation to actions set out within the Net-Zero Action Plan. The Chairman thanked Officers and the Cabinet Member for presenting the information.

5 Report on the current position of the Sewerage Treatment Works (STW) programme

Councillor Rhodri Evans, Cabinet Member, attended to provide information in relation to the current position of the Sewerage Treatment Works (STW) Programme as outlined in the report. Lyndon Griffiths, Cari Barker and Andrew Ginn were also present to answer any questions received from Members.

It was reported that to date three Dwr Cymru Welsh Water has adopted STW's, namely; Tan y Groes, Bettws Bledrws and Blaencelyn, and four STW applications submitted are awaiting further communication. Olmarch, Pontrhydygroes, Abermagwr and Bronant. There are a further eight applications pending for future submission which are, Capel Dewi, Coed y Bryn, Cwmcou, Llandyfriog, Sarnau, Swyddfynnon, Ysbyty Ystwyth and Brynhoffnant. Another six sites have issues that require resolution which are Blaennaerch (easement issues), Blaenporth (Illegal connection), Lledrod (land issue – Barcud), Llwynygroes 1 (confirmation on land requirement), and Rhydowen (land issue), Glan Ifor, Glanrhyd requires a design of a purpose built pumping station. It is intended to undertake this work through design and build contract. Bro Tygwydd, Llandygydd, site upgrade design has been completed and the scheme has been tendered with a consultation with affected residents planned to take place during November. The Officer then reported that works have not been completed in relation to Tregroes (land acquisition), Llangwryfon (access issue), Cilcennin (land acquisition), Llwynygroes 2, Pentregat (unable to find suitable watercourse).

Members asked many questions relating to those areas. Concern was raised with regard to some residents having to pay Business Rates which is a considerably higher amount. Members agreed that this issue needs to be resolved as a matter of urgency. Officers agreed and confirmed that work is in progress with ongoing communication with Dwr Cymru Welsh Water in regards to those cases.

Councillor Rhodri Evans thanked the Officers for the hard work undertaken in every attempt to resolve these issues.

The Chairman also thanked the Officers and the Cabinet Member for the information presented.

Members were asked to note the report contents.

6 To confirm the Minutes of the previous Meeting and to consider any matters arising from those Minutes

It was agreed to confirm the minutes of the 1 October 2021 as a true record and there were no matters arising therefrom.

7 To consider the Overview and Scrutiny Forward Work Programme

Members agreed to note the Forward Work Plan as presented, subject to inviting an Officer from Dwr Cymru Welsh Water to a future meeting.

It was noted that an agenda item relating to Refuse Collection would be considered at the 20th January 2022 Committee meeting. Lisa Evans asked Members to contact her if there are any specific issues they wish to discuss at that meeting.

It was agreed to include Flooding/Rivers as a future item for consideration however, no date arranged.

Confirmed at the Meeting of the Thriving Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 8 November 2021

Chairman: _____

Date: _____