

Minutes of the Meeting of CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

held Hybrid - Neuadd Cyngor Ceredigion, Penmorfa, Aberaeron / remotely via video conference on Monday, 13 March 2023

PRESENT; Councillor Rhodri Evans (Chair) Councillors Euros Davies, Ifan Davies, Endaf Edwards, Elaine Evans, Geraint Wyn Hughes, Hugh R M Hughes, Ann Bowen Morgan, Ceris Jones and Carl Worrall

Also in attendance: Councillors Bryan Davies, Leader of the Council, Clive Davies and Matthew Vaux (Cabinet Members) together with Councillor Gareth Lloyd

Officers in attendance: Mr James Starbuck, Statutory Director, Mr Geraint Edwards, Corporate Lead Officer, People and Organisation, Mr Russell Hughes-Pickering, Economy & Regenerations, Mr Adria Cross, Project Officer, Mr Harry Dimmack, Governance Officer, Mr Duncan Hall, Corporate Lead Officer, Finance and Procurement, Miss Lowri Edwards, Corporate Lead Officer, Democratic Services, Mr Llyr Hughes, Corporate Manager, Housing Services, Dr Sarah Groves-Phillips, Corporate Manager, Forward Planning, Mrs Dwynwen Jones- Scrutiny Support Officer, Mrs Nia Jones, Corporate Manager- Democratic Services and Mrs Dana Jones, Democratic and Services Officer

(10:00am-12:40pm)

1 Apologies

Councillor Eryl Evans and Caryl Roberts apologised for their inability to attend the meeting.

Councillor Paul Hinges apologised for his inability to attend the meeting as he was on other Council duties.

2 Disclosures of personal/prejudicial interest

Councillor Euros Davies, Endaf Edwards, Geraint Hughes and Cerys Jones declared a personal interest in item 5 on the agenda.

3 Community Housing Scheme Proposal

Consideration was given to the Community Housing Scheme Proposal. It was reported that Affordable Housing in Ceredigion was a key priority of the Corporate Strategy, the Wellbeing Plan, the Housing Strategy and the Local Development Plan and the Council deploys significant resources in creating and managing affordable housing.

Members were requested to consider the Community Housing Scheme Proposal. 'Community Housing' seeks to support people to meet their affordable housing needs in their local communities by creating a pathway to home ownership. The Council made a commitment to support such a scheme in March 2022.

During discussions, it was suggested that Officers consider the following points:

- That the Council undertake their own formal structural survey on the subject property, to assess its condition, prior to a formal offer,
- That any formal offer to lend by the Council was conditional on any works identified in the Council's survey. Works should then be undertaken within a given amount of time – suggest possibly six months,
- The report (attachment A of the agenda papers) stated that 'the Council loan can be for a period no longer than the period of the associated mortgage' - consideration of the repayment of the loan needs to be given to those with no mortgage so that repayment was made either upon first sale or transfer of the property.

Following questions from the floor, it was AGREED to recommend that Cabinet APPROVE the Community Housing Scheme, subject to consideration of the following:

- (i) alternative options in relation to the Commuted sums secured under section 106 agreements, this could include upfront commuted sum payment to help support delivery of affordable housing in the County, and
- (ii) including Councillor involvement in the Task and Finish Group membership.

4 To provide an update on Hybrid Working

A Hybrid Working Strategy and Interim Hybrid Policy was agreed in July 2022, to be trailed for 12 months. The strategy sets out the vision and associated approaches that would be taken to ensure Ceredigion County Council had a workforce with the skills and ability to be working in a way that was fit for our organisation's future, in workspaces that meet its needs. The Interim Hybrid Working Policy had been developed to provide detailed information around what hybrid working means for the Council. It supports employees and their managers in implementing hybrid working by providing practical advice and information, enabling employees to work from the office or home effectively, productively and safely.

The Hybrid Working Strategy and Interim Hybrid Working Policy were heavily influenced and informed by ongoing engagement with staff and managers. Continued engagement had shown significant support for developing the way staff work and how service were delivered. Feedback has shown that staff were more productive and digital ways of working had enhanced access to services for many customers.

As part of the trial, desk and meeting room usage had been monitored and data collected had helped inform changes within these areas.

A short presentation of the type of data being collected was presented. From the data, it's also becoming clearer that there would be significant opportunities to provide new public facing services or accommodate other uses at Canolfan Rheidol in Aberystwyth and Penmorfa and County Hall in

Aberaeron. There may be opportunities to rationalise and use other Council properties in different ways as well.

As an example of the opportunities, the Council and Hywel Dda had agreed that part of the ground floor at Canolfan Rheidol be used to provide physiotherapy outpatient services. This would be on a temporary basis whilst the hybrid trial period continues, and the Council considers the best longer term alternative use of space in its offices.

An engagement survey seeking views from the public on the potential reuse of the buildings had recently ended. This along with discussions with stakeholders would help inform options for the future use of offices at the end of the trial.

It was AGREED to note the current position.

5 Report on the Amended Code of Conduct of Local Government Employees, Declarations of Interest Form and Declaration of Hospitality Form

It was reported that a review had been taken upon the following:-

- Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees ('the Code')
- Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees ('the Code')
- Officer Declaration of Interests form
- Officer Declaration of Hospitality & Gifts Form

In reviewing these documents a small Scale DPIA was prepared. The documents had been approved by Leadership Group, and also circulated to relevant Trade Unions for their views.

All the changes were presented to Members. Following questions from the floor, it was AGREED to recommend to Cabinet to APPROVE:-

- (i) the Code of Conduct of Local Government Employees;
- (ii) the Declarations of Interest Form; and
- (iii) the Declarations of Hospitality Form

6 To confirm minutes of the previous meeting and to consider any matters arising from those Minutes.

It was agreed to confirm the minutes of the meeting of the previous meeting as a true record.

7 Forward work Programme

It was AGREED to note the Forward Work Programme as presented subject to noting that an update report on Hybrid Working be presented at the 19 October 2023 meeting. The Chair stated that if any Member wished to place an item on the Forward Work Programme to contact him or the Scrutiny Support Officer.

Confirmed at the Meeting of the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 12 June 2023

Chairman:_____

Date:_____