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## **Minutes of the Meeting of CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL held at Neuadd y Cyngor, Penmorfa, Aberaeron and remotely via video-conferencing on Thursday, 15th June, 2023**

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

(10.00am - 11.20am)

### **Procedure**

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

#### **1 Apologies**

Councillors Endaf Edwards, Paul Hinge, Caryl Roberts and Mark Strong apologised for their inability to attend the meeting.

#### **2 Disclosure of personal / prejudicial interests**

- a) Councillors Bryan Davies, Catrin M S Davies, Euros Davies, Ifan Davies, Meirion Davies, Eryl Evans, Gwyn Wigley Evans, Rhodri Evans, Wyn Evans, Gareth Lloyd, Ceris Jones, John Roberts and Wyn Thomas declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item 5 but noted that they've been granted dispensation to speak and vote 5 by the Ethics and Standards Committee.
- b) Councillor Marc Davies declared a personal interest in relation to item 5.

#### **3 Personal matters**

- a) Councillor Bryan Davies expressed his condolences to the family of former Cabinet minister and Welsh Labour MP Lord John Morris of Aberavon who had connections with Capel Bangor and Llandysul, who passed away recently. This was reiterated by Councillor Keith Evans;
- b) Councillor Maldwyn Lewis congratulated all those that had taken part in the Urdd National Eisteddfod, winning 152 medals. This was reiterated by Councillor Gareth Lloyd;
- c) Councillor Maldwyn Lewis congratulated all the Young Farmers' Clubs that took part in the Young Farmers' Rally. This was re-iterated by Councillors Ifan Davies, Gareth Lloyd and Wyn Evans. Councillor Gareth Lloyd also expressed his best wishes to all the individuals that will be going on to represent Ceredigion at the Royal Welsh Show, and Tregaron Young Farmers' Club, the overall winners;
- d) Councillor Maldwyn Lewis noted that it had been his honour to attend an event at the Llangrannog Urdd camp for the refugees, and conveyed the thanks of all the refugees to the County and to the those that have provided them with a home;
- e) Councillor Ifan Davies, congratulated Gerwyn Evans and Jason Hockenhull on representing the Welsh team in fly fishing at the end of May;

- f) Councillor Catrin M S Davies congratulated Professor Dame Elan Closs Stephens on her recent appointment as Acting Chair of the BBC Board;
- g) Councillor Euros Davies congratulated Rose Florence on celebrating her 105th birthday;
- h) Councillor Wyn Evans congratulated Emrys Jones on winning the carpentry competition in the under 16 years of age category;
- i) Councillor Rhodri Evans congratulated Llanddewi Brefi Community Council on winning a Cynnal y Cardi award, thanking the Cynnal y Cardi and Cavo team on all their hard work. This was reiterated by Councillor Clive Davies;
- j) Councillor Maldwyn Lewis thanked Councillor Geraint Hughes for this contribution to the Council during the past year and wished him well in his new role. This was reiterated by Councillor Elizabeth Evans who noted his contribution working across the Council and the expertise that he brought to Estates and the Council Farms;
- k) Councillor Elizabeth Evans congratulated Kyle Rowlands on winning UK Barber of the year. This was re-iterated by Councillor Sian Maehrlein;
- l) Councillor Gareth Lloyd congratulated Claire and Ianto Lloyd on being crowned national boxing champions, and Claire Lloyd on winning both the piano and the harp competitions at the Urdd National Eisteddfod;
- m) Councillor Gareth Lloyd congratulated the Tregaron School team on winning the Urdd 5 a side football National competition;
- n) Councillor Gareth Lloyd congratulated Councillor Wyn Evans on being awarded a Fellowship with the Council for Awards of Agricultural Societies;
- o) Councillor Gwyn Wigley Evans congratulated Ali Wright of Needle Rock on winning the Federation of Small Businesses Micro-Business of the year for Wales and becoming finalist in the UK;
- p) Councillor Ann Bowen Morgan congratulated Ifan Meredith, Osian Roberts and Angharad Massow on winning a scholarship by Lampeter Town Council and University of Wales Trinity St David, Lampeter University in memory of Mr Hag Harris, and Amy Louise and Deiniol Morgan for a good effort.

#### **4 Minutes of the Meetings of the Council held on 20 April 2023 and the Annual Meeting of Council held on 19 May 2023**

It was **RESOLVED** to confirm as a true record the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 20 April 2023.

##### **Matters arising**

It was noted that a letter was sent to the Welsh Government in relation to rural public transport following the Motion to Council. Discussions are ongoing with Welsh Government; however no formal response has been received to date. Information will be distributed to Members once a formal response has been received.

It was **RESOLVED** to confirm as a true record the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Council held on 19 May 2023.

##### **Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

**5 Notice of Motion submitted under Rule 10.1 of the Council's Rules of Procedure:**

**Proposer:** Councillor Wyn Evans

**Seconded:** Councillor Gareth Lloyd

*Council notes:*

*"This council requests that Welsh Government uses the opportunity presented by the revamped Bovine TB eradication strategy to establish its effectiveness in respect of animal welfare (both wildlife and livestock), public health and costs.*

*Persistently high infection levels, its impact on both animal welfare and public health combined with an ever increasing cost to the public purse suggests that existing measures are not fit for purpose.*

We ask Welsh Government to note and take action on the following points:-

*Bovine TB is a communicable disease that should be addressed holistically as both a wildlife and farmed animal welfare issue, using a comprehensive suite of measures, guided by the best scientific advice available.*

*The requirement to frequently test cattle raises stress to livestock and presents a high risk of injury and fatalities for those involved in conducting tests for Bovine TB.*

*The continuous failure to address Bovine TB triggers significant levels of mental health issues among farming families and persons in associated roles.*

*Disease outbreaks on holdings need to be dealt with sensitively with effective and simplified communication.*

*The new publicly appointed Programme Board and Technical Advisory Group should have a balanced representation including all impacted stakeholders."*

Councillor Wyn Evans noted that the Welsh Government's inability to take a holistic view of the situation is a grave mistake, and that we will be dealing with this disease for decades to come. He noted that it's a strain on farmers' mental health due to the emotional ties with animals and the potential for loss of income and the need for additional resources as the farmer cannot take their animals to market. He noted that the Welsh Government document is disappointing, and that the issues need to be considered in terms of wildlife as well as vaccinations. The cull in England has seen a considerable decline in cases, and that there needs to be a scientific solution rather than a political one, with effective and simplified communication being vitally important.

Councillor Gareth Lloyd noted that a Notice of Motion was presented to Council on 24 March 2016 on this subject; however there has been more

paperwork and bureaucracy introduced during this time. In 2012, over 9,200 cattle were culled in Wales. In 2022, this figure was 9,500. In Ceredigion, 600 cattle were culled in 2012, with 450 cattle culled in Ceredigion in 2022. The majority of these were healthy cattle, due to an insufficient testing and inconclusive results. This disease must be eradicated in order to ensure healthy animals and wildlife. In 2021, over £30 million was spent by the Welsh Government on their TB programme.

Councillor Bryan Davies noted that he agreed with what had been said, noting the civil conditions attached when there are multiple positive results on a farm and the challenges to be removed from these measures. He also noted that charities such as Tir Dewi, DPJ and Nerth Dy Ben have also demonstrated a connection between cases of TB and mental health. He also referred to accidents that have occurred during testing, calves close to full-term being aborted and seeing calves kicking in the cow's womb after the cow has been culled. He noted that there are plenty of examples of alternative methods, and that it is a matter of controlling nature not eradicating it completely. It affects the economy, and pressure needs to be placed on the Welsh Government to look at alternative models.

Councillor Meirion Davies noted that there haven't been any clear developments, and that tests often return negative after the animal has been culled. Compensation is extremely expensive however this does not take into consideration the pride associated with developing a herd over many years. The cows can get nasty during testing, and accidents including deaths have happened.

Councillor Ifan Davies noted that Welsh Government were refusing to accept scientific evidence, taking a political approach whilst overturning their views on plastic grass in a matter of days. He noted that he has several sets of badgers on his farm, which he takes care of in order to ensure that they remain clear from TB and that healthy wildlife and farm animals can live side-by-side

Councillor Keith Evans noted the cost to individual's mental health and to the agricultural sector. He asked that Plaid Cymru, who have a cooperation agreement with the Labour Party in Wales put pressure on the relevant authorities.

Councillor Rhodri Evans noted that 12 years ago he had a herd of 100 cattle and that he lost 75 of them following one test. They were culled on the close whilst carrying calves. Now, if you get one inconclusive test, everything stops, and you cannot sell any. It is important that there is collaboration within agriculture in order to eradicate TB.

Councillor Wyn Evans proposed that there was recorded. This was seconded 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 and that the vote would be for the Notice of Motion, as presented.

*For:* Councillors Bryan Davies, Catrin M S Davies, Clive Davies, Euros Davies, Gareth Davies, Gethin Davies, Ifan Davies, Meirion Davies, Rhodri Davies, Amanda Edwards, Elaine Evans, Elizabeth Evans, Eryl Evans, Gwyn Wigley Evans, Keith Evans, Rhodri Evans, Wyn Evans, Hughes, Chris James, Ceris Jones, Maldwyn Lewis, Gareth Lloyd, Sian Maehrlein, Ann Bowen Morgan, John Roberts, Wyn Thomas, Matthew Vaux, Alun Williams (28);

*Against:* None (0);

*Abstain:* Councillor Carl Worrall (1).

Following a recorded vote, it was **RESOLVED** to agree the Motion as presented.

**6 Report by the Statutory Social Services Director 2020-2021 and 2021-2022**

Councillor Alun Williams, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Through Age Wellbeing presented the report to Council noting that it is a statutory duty to present the reports, requiring oversight by Scrutiny and now the Council. The reports were completed by Sian Howys, the previous Statutory Social Services Director, which describes how the Social Services Department has performed during the two years and will be use by the Care Inspectorate Wales to help inform their independent evaluation of Ceredigion and their inspections work. He noted that Covid features strongly in the report and that it has also contributed to the delay in bringing these reports forward, however these reports would now bring everything fully up to date and it is anticipated that there would not be any further delays.

Councillor Ceris Jones, Vice-Chair of the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted that the Committee considered the report during its meeting held on 13 April 2023, noting that they received the report for information and thanked officers for their hard work and commitment during this time.

Audrey Somerton Edwards, the Statutory Social Services Director noted that the reports outline the activity, performance, expenditure and general wellbeing of the service during what had been an extremely turbulent and active time. She noted that the report for this year would be on time, reflecting work across the Through Age Wellbeing model.

Councillor Maldwyn Lewis asked that the appreciation by the Council is relayed to the team, noting that the reports are comprehensive and very detailed.

The Council noted the content of the Statutory Social Services Director's Report 2020-2021 and 2021-2022.

**7 Report by the Corporate Director upon a Local Authority Representative on the Governing Body of Aberaeron Community Primary School**

Councillor Wyn Thomas, Cabinet Member for Schools, Lifelong Learning and Skills presented the report to Council noting that Councillor Marc Davies had been nominated as Local Authority representative on the Aberaeron Community Primary School.

Following a vote, the Council **RESOLVED** to confirm the nomination of Councillor Marc Davies as Local Authority representative on the Governing Body of Aberaeron Community Primary School.

**8 Report by the Corporate Lead Officer: Democratic Services upon the appointment of interim Corporate Lead Officer: Porth Cymorth Cynnar**

Councillor Bryan Davies, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Democratic Services, Policy, Performance and People and Organisation presented the report to Council noting that following the secondment of Elen James as the Corporate Lead Officer: Lifelong Learning (Chief Education Officer), expressions of interest were sought in relation to her substantive role as Corporate Lead Officer: Porth Cymorth Cynnar, on an interim basis.

Interviews were held on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2023 and following consideration and a vote, the Committee resolved to appoint Mr Gregory Jones.

The Council noted the appointment of Mr Gregory Jones as interim Corporate Lead Officer: Porth Cymorth Cynnar for a maximum of 2 years, from 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2023, or as soon as possible thereafter, on a salary of £75,165 (the first incremental point on the Corporate Lead officer A1 pay scale).

**Confirmed at the Meeting of the Council held on 13 July 2023**

**CHAIRMAN:** \_\_\_\_\_