

Notice of Motion to Ceredigion County Council's meeting on Thursday, 24th October, 2024.

Chancellor urged to put local council funding back on a firm foundation

Cyngor Sir Ceredigion congratulates the Rt Hon Rachel Reeves MP on becoming the first woman to be appointed as Chancellor of the Exchequer in the UK Government.

We can empathise with her on taking on this challenging role as local councils who've had to cope with a disproportionate share of spending cuts during 14 years of ruthless Conservative Govt austerity. Cyngor Sir Ceredigion alone, due to chronic government under-funding, is now £70m worse off, in real terms, than we were a decade ago.

This is an extremely worrying time for all councils and their staff, with many now teetering on the brink of financial disaster. UNISON general secretary Christina McAnea has warned that "countless essential services and very many vital jobs are at risk, with terrible consequences for communities across Britain."

We urge the Chancellor in her forthcoming autumn budget to put local government funding back on a sustainable foundation, by drawing on the £10b available due to the Bank of England's decision to slow down the pace of its quantitative tightening programme.

Urgent extra revenue funding (via the Barnett Formula for Wales) is needed for such essential services as:

Social Care – for a population which includes an increasing percentage of older people who need residential and community care.

Children's Services – facing unprecedented demand and critical financial pressures.

Schools – struggling, or failing, to live within allocated budgets, resulting in impact on staffing levels and curriculum delivery.

Highways – deteriorating following a decade's year-on-year cuts in maintenance budgets, as evidenced by the increasing number of potholes on our roads.

Culture and Leisure – the lack of funding is endangering our museum collections and public libraries by losing our heritage.

We further urge the Chancellor to provide for inflationary pressures on local government budgets, and to ensure that pay settlements which are set centrally should be fully funded by central government.

Proposed: Cllr Gareth Davies

Seconded: Cllr Caryl Roberts