

COUNTY COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, 13 NOVEMBER 2019

PRESENT: Councillor K. Madge (Chair)

Councillors:

F. Akhtar	S.M. Allen	L.R. Bowen	K.V. Broom
C.A. Campbell	J.M. Charles	D.M. Cundy	W.R.A. Davies
T.A.J. Davies	G. Davies	H.L. Davies	I.W. Davies
J.A. Davies	K.Davies	S.L. Davies	E. Dole
J.S. Edmunds	D.C. Evans	H.A.L. Evans	L.D. Evans
R.E. Evans	W.T. Evans	A.L. Fox	S.J.G. Gilasbey
P. Hughes-Griffiths	A.D. Harries	J.K. Howell	P.M. Hughes
A. James	J.D. James	D.M. Jenkins	J.P. Jenkins
G.H. John	B.W. Jones	D. Jones	G.R. Jones
H.I. Jones	A. Lenny	M.J.A. Lewis	K. Lloyd
A.S.J. McPherson	E. Morgan	A.G. Morgan	B.D.J. Phillips
D. Price	J.G. Prosser	B.A.L. Roberts	H.B. Shepardson
A.D.T. Speake	L.M. Stephens	B. Thomas	D. Thomas
E.G. Thomas	G. Thomas	J. Tremlett	A.Vaughan Owen
D.T. Williams	J.E. Williams		

Also Present:

W. Walters, Chief Executive
J. Morgan, Director of Community Services
C. Moore, Director of Corporate Services
Mrs R. Mullen, Director of Environment
G. Morgans, Director of Education & Children's Services
L.R. Jones, Head of Administration and Law
P.R. Thomas, Assistant Chief Executive (People Management & Performance)
L. Quelch, Head of Planning
J. Jones, Head of Regeneration
D. Hockenhull, Marketing and Media Manager
I.R. Llewelyn, Forward Planning Manager
K. Thomas, Democratic Services Officer

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP. - 10.00 am - 12.00 pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S. Curry, A. Davies, P. Edwards, T. Higgins, R. James, C. Jones, T.J.J. Jones, S. Matthews, S. Najmi, D. Nicholas, S. Phillips, E. Schiavone, G. Thomas and E. Williams

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS.

Councillor	Minute Number	Nature of Interest
J.A. Davies	8.2 – Carmarthenshire Rights of Way Plan (ROWIP)	Has a Right of Way traversing his property
Arwel Davies	8.2 – Carmarthenshire Rights of Way Plan (ROWIP)	Has a Right of Way traversing his property
A James	8.2 – Carmarthenshire Rights of Way Plan (ROWIP)	Has a Right of Way traversing his property
K. Broom	8.2 – Carmarthenshire Rights of Way Plan (ROWIP)	Has a Right of Way traversing his property
D. Phillips	8.2 – Carmarthenshire Rights of Way Plan (ROWIP)	Has a Right of Way traversing his property

3. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

- The Chair expressed his condolences to the family of the late former County Councillor Gareth Jones who had represented the Carmarthen Town North Ward and held the position of Executive Board Member for Education in the previous administration.

Tributes were paid to Mr Jones by Cllr Emlyn Dole, Leader of the Council and Councillor Glynog Davies, Executive Board Member for Education and Children.

All members stood in silent tribute in memory of Mr Jones.

- The Executive Board Member for Education and Children referred to the death of the wife of Mr John Phillips, a former Director of Education and Chief Executive of the predecessor Dyfed County Council, and expressed his condolences to the family.
- The Chair referred to the following personal matters:-
 - He welcomed Councillors Dorian Williams and Colin Evans to the meeting following their recent hospitalisation,
 - His forthcoming participation in the traditional Walrus Dip on Boxing Day at Cefn Sidan and requesting members to sponsor him in support of his chosen charity to raise funds for the food banks at Ammanford, Carmarthen and Llandeilo. To date, his charity had donated £1200 to the food banks,
 - He extended his appreciation to all who had supported his Charity Italian Evening which had raised nearly £500 for the food banks,

- The Chair provided an update on activities and events where he had represented the Council, which included:-
 - Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council's Civic Service,
 - the Muslim Council of Wales celebrating 20 years of Devolution in Wales,
 - Hywel Dda University Local Health Board's Conference on "Occupational Therapy; Value and Impact from Cradle to Grave" attended by Her Royal Highness, the Princess Royal,
 - The Annual Priory for Wales of the most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem Priory Visitation Service to Dyfed at St David's Cathedral
 - Annual Remembrance Sunday Services in Llanelli, Carmarthen and Five Roads
 - A ceremony, attended by the Vice Chair of Council, presided over by the Lord Lieutenant of Dyfed where Mr Michael Clive Norman of Llanybydder was awarded the MBE.
- The Chair reminded the Council of the aims of the White Ribbon Campaign and urged members to sign the ribbon to make the promise to "Never commit, excuse or remain silent about male violence against Women".
- Councillor Emlyn Dole informed the Committee of the involvement of Mr Aled Walters from Carmarthenshire in South Africa winning the recent Rugby World Cup and suggested a letter be sent to him recognising that achievement.

The Chair endorsed the above sentiment and suggested a similar letter be sent to the Welsh Rugby Team on achieving fourth place in the tournament.

- Councillor P. Hughes Griffiths, Executive Board Members for Culture Sport and Tourism, informed the Council of the recent achievements of the Council's Media and Marketing Team at the CIPR Pride Awards (The Welsh PR and Communications Industry):

Gold Award - in the 'Business and Corporate Communications Campaign' Category for the Council's development and launch of the Mini Executive Board Campaign to help explain the priorities of the Executive Board's "Moving Forward in Carmarthenshire Plan" and encouraging younger people to take an interest in local democracy;

A finalist in the 'Arts, Culture or Sport Campaign' category for the promotion and communication of the Tour of Britain Grand Depart in September 2018

The Chair presented the Gold Award to D. Hockenhill, Media and Marketing Manager, and Laura Morris Senior Press Officer

- Councillor Edward Thomas informed the Council of the recent awards/recognitions for schools/businesses within the county:-
 - Ysgol Gynradd Llandeilo for achieving the Silver: Rights Aware Award from UNICEF, being the only school in Carmarthenshire to achieve the award for embedding the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into its policies, practice and ethos
 - The Welsh National Wedding Awards to:-

The Plough Inn – regional Winners in the nest boutique Wedding Venue;
 Huw Rees Bridal – regional winner Bridal Retailer of the year;
 Dyfed Menswear – National and Regional winner in the Menswear Section.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that congratulatory letters be sent to Mr Aled Walters and the Welsh National Rugby Team on their achievements in the recent Rugby World Cup.

4. TO APPROVE AND SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE 9TH OCTOBER, 2019

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 9th October, 2019 be signed as a correct record subject to minute 7.1 – Notice of Motion by Councillor Rob James being amended to note that Councillor John Jenkins had left the Council Chamber during its consideration.

5. PRESENTATION - LEARNING DISABILITIES CHARTER

The Chair welcomed to the meeting Sharon Frewin, the Council's Senior Manager for Community Inclusion, together with Sarah Phillips, Simon Rice and Angie Edwards from Carmarthenshire People First who had been invited to make a presentation to Council on the Learning Disabilities Charter which the Council was being requested to sign up to.

The Council viewed a short video on the Learning Disabilities Charter that aimed to help improve the lives for people with learning disabilities and asking people/organisations to:-

- Help them to do the things they want to do;
- Give them more choice;
- Listen to them;
- Treat them as adults;
- Give them dignity and respect;
- Keep their information private;

Council was afforded the opportunity of asking questions on the presentation and noted that should it agree to sign up to the Charter's aims and objectives a large copy of the Charter had been placed in the Foyer area for members to sign

The Chair thanked the representatives for the video presentation and in attending the meeting.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Council sign up to the West Wales Learning Disability Charter

6. PUBLIC QUESTION:-

6.1. QUESTION BY MISS C. SYLVAN TO COUNCILLOR MAIR STEPHENS - DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL.

As Miss Sylvan was unable to attend the meeting of the Council that day, the Chair read out the following question

“I last came here 10 months ago to ask the Full Council about how they are tackling the climate and ecological emergency. I am very proud that the Council have declared a climate emergency in February, that you are working on becoming carbon zero council by 2030 and that you are committed to divest pensions from fossil fuels in 2 years’ time. But, I fear that there are environmentally harmful things continuing to happen in Carmarthenshire that do not match with what is being said by my council. I’m 12 years old now, and I’m lucky enough to live a relatively green life that my parents have created. But how can this become the norm for all young people in Carmarthenshire? I want to ask councillors who work on planning issues, what they are doing in actual terms to prevent non ecological building and developments, to avoid the clearance of green spaces (like cutting down trees on Jackson Lane), to create new green spaces and planting trees, to improve public transport, avoid construction of more roads for cars and promote ideas such as One Planet Developments?”

The Chair advised that in accordance with the Council’s Procedure Rules, a written response by the Deputy Leader would be sent to Miss Sylvan.

7. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS:-

7.1. QUESTION BY COUNCILLOR DERYK CUNDY TO COUNCILLOR MAIR STEPHENS - DEPUTY LEADER

“We are always praising our staff but rarely have a way of showing that appreciation of the hard work that they do.

It is easy for us to forget that while we are enjoying the after-glow of Christmas, spending time and making memories with our families and taking that well-earned break, that others may not be as fortunate.

So this Christmas because of its proximity to the weekend, could we give people who are not required to perform front line cover, the option to take the Friday off as holiday or time off in lieu or flexi time so that we help to even up the work life balance for them and to share in the joy and relaxation that we often take for granted ourselves”.

Response by Councillor Mair Stephens, Deputy Leader of the Council:-

Thank you Deryk for your question. My first observation is what you're suggesting is exactly what we do in practice, by allowing flexibility in relation to leave, including time off in lieu where it is accrued.

You may be aware, we have a comprehensive range of employment policies that provide us with the flexibilities to support staff in relation to leave.

Previously, when the Authority closed the offices over the Christmas/New Year period that required staff to take annual leave, the feedback was from a high number of staff that they would prefer to take leave when they chose to, and not when it was imposed. Additionally, there are services that we provide which wouldn't be eligible. However, this arrangement has happened for many years now, and the primary consideration was that the public function of our services need to be accessible to our stakeholders.

As such, I can confirm that we have been able to accommodate requests from our staff for flexible leave during the Christmas period, without any issues whatsoever, and to run our services without any disruption from that pragmatic perspective.

This brings me to the issue that you raise in relation to thanking staff for their hard work.

You may, or may not, be aware the engage work-stream as part of the People Strategy Group decided to look at how we recognise and show appreciation to staff for their hard work. This was based on the findings of the IIP Re-Accreditation 2018 report which highlighted the Recognising & Rewarding High Performance indicator as an area for development despite quantifiable progress since 2017.

During the summer, a questionnaire was created and sent out to staff; this was by e-mail for office-based staff, whilst for front line staff (whom perhaps were keen to be included, but did not have e-mail access as part of their job), the group went out to the Communities conference, kitchens in schools and to depots all across the county.

Overwhelmingly, staff responded that what they wanted as recognition was a simple thank you or acknowledgement for their work, with financial incentives only suggested by 13% of the respondents.

As a result of their findings, the engage work-stream proposed to the People Strategy Group on the 24th October this year, that they trial a 'Culture of Gratitude' in order to promote appreciation of staff from their managers in the way that staff have indicated is valuable to them (i.e. a thank you, a recognition in private or indeed in a small group setting). This trial has been targeted in School Catering and in Leisure Centres and will include different groups receiving different formats of delivery (i.e. posters vs bitesize learning and possibly supplementary material) to establish which is the most effective delivery format. An evaluation will be taken at the end of the trial. If successful, this action to improve our 'Culture of Gratitude' will be rolled out to the whole authority as part of a wider conversation culture being monitored and promoted by coaching and mentoring.

As the group said saying thank you costs nothing but gives everything.

So, thank you Deryk for your question and I trust my answer was sufficient.

There was no supplementary question.

8. TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD IN RESPECT OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS

8.1. CARMARTHEN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID)

The Council was informed that the Executive Board, at its meeting held on the 21st October, 2019 (minute 9 refers) considered a report on the establishment of a Carmarthen Business Improvement District (BID) which had received overwhelming support from businesses within the proposed district area. If implemented, the BID would, through a business levy, raise approximately £165k per annum or £847k over the five year term to be invested in projects and services to benefit businesses in Carmarthen focussing on four areas of activity to include improving business profitability, the profile of the town, parking experience and the look of the town.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the following recommendations of the Executive Board be accepted:-

“that the Council:-

Supports the ‘Carmarthen BID Company’ to enable it to hold a formal ballot on whether or not the town’s rateable businesses wish to operate the Carmarthen Business Improvement District (BID) for an initial term of 5 years.

Agrees its position in respect of support for the principle of the BID and voting in respect of its 15 affected rateable properties within the BID zone (estimated annual levy charge of £20,061 plus inflation at 2% pa).

Agrees the principle of undertaking the BID levy collection as detailed in the Operational agreement on behalf of the Carmarthen bid Company, at no charge to the BID for the first 5 year term.

Approves the Statement of Baseline Services to the BID Company.

Nominates a member representative to sit on the BID Company Board.

Agrees to manage, at no fee, the BID ballot process on behalf of the Carmarthen BID Company.”

8.2. CARMARTHENSHIRE RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (ROWIP)

(NOTE: Councillors J.A. Davies, Arwel Davies, A. James. K. Broom and D. Phillips had earlier declared an interest in this item)

The Council was informed that the Executive Board, at its meeting held on the 21st October, 2019 (minute 11 refers) had considered the 'Carmarthenshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) 2019-2029, produced in accordance with Section 60 (3) of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act (2000) that placed an expectation on Welsh local authorities to undertake a statutory review of their published ROWIP not more than 10 years after its first publication. If adopted, the new plan would replace the initial ROWIP published in 2008 in respect of the period 2007-2017.

It was noted that if adopted, and in light of scarce financial resources, the Plan's delivery would be undertaken in partnership with other organisations and town and community councils, a number of whom had already signed up to the plan. Monitoring of that delivery would be undertaken by the Environmental and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Carmarthenshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) 2019-2029 be adopted.

8.3. WELSH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION DRAFT NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK 2020 - 2040

The Council was informed that the Executive Board, at its meeting held on the 21st October, 2019 (minute 12 refers) had considered the Welsh Government Consultation Draft National Development Framework (NDF) that set out the Government's strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, decarbonisation, developing resilient ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of communities.

References were made to issues impacting rural areas of the County, as identified within the Carmarthenshire Rural Plan and also for the role of the Welsh Language Commissioner to be strengthened by being afforded the same standing as other consultees on planning applications. It was therefore proposed the following additional representations be appended to the Council's response:

- That the Welsh Government be requested to meet with the Council to discuss the inclusion of the Carmarthenshire Rural Plan into the overall mix of future planning and implementation
- The role of the Welsh Language Commissioner being strengthened and afforded the same standing as other consultees on planning applications

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

8.3.1 That the following recommendations of the Executive Board be accepted:-

“the content of the consultation be noted;

To approve the consultation responses set out within the report for submission to the Welsh Government.”

8.3.2 That the following additional views be appended as addendums to the consultation response to be submitted to the Welsh Government

- 1. the Welsh Government be requested to meet with the Council to discuss the inclusion of the Carmarthenshire Rural Plan into the overall mix of future planning and implementation**
- 2. The role of the Welsh Language Commissioner be strengthened to being afforded the same standing as other consultees on planning applications.**

8.4. REVISED CARMARTHESHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2018 - 2033 DRAFT DEPOSIT

The Council was informed that the Executive Board, at its meeting held on the 21st October, 2019 (minute 13 refers) had considered the Revised Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan 2018-2033 Draft Deposit, produced in accordance with the Council resolution on the 10th January 2018 to formally commence the preparation of a revised (replacement) Local Development Plan.

Council was advised that if it were to approve the plan for consultation, it was anticipated that would commence towards the end of December 2019. Any representations received to that consultation, along with the Draft Deposit LDP, would then be reported back to the Council for consideration prior to submission to the Welsh Government in August 2020 for an Examination in Public and formal adoption by December 2021.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the following recommendations of the Executive Board be accepted:-

“to consider and approve the content of the Draft Deposit Revised Local Development Plan 2018-2033 (and supporting documents) for formal public consultation;

To grant officers delegated authority to make non-substantive typographical, cartographical and/or factual amendments as necessary to improve the clarity and accuracy of the Draft Preferred Strategy;

To approve the Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance in relation to the Burry Inlet and the Caeau Mynydd Mawr Special Area of Conservation for consultation concurrent with the Deposit LDP.”

9. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD HELD ON THE 21ST OCTOBER 2019

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report of the meeting of the Executive Board held on the 21st October, 2019 be received.

10. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES

10.1. TO NOTE THAT THE PLAID CYMRU GROUP HAS NOMINATED COUNCILLOR KAREN DAVIES TO REPLACE COUNCILLOR EMLYN SCHIAVONE ON THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

In accordance with Corporate Procedure Rule CPR 2(2)(n) and following the receipt of nominations from the relevant political group it was:

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to note that Councillor Karen Davies would replace Councillor Emlyn Schiavone on the Audit Committee;

CHAIR

DATE