

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Monday, 19 October 2020

PRESENT: Councillor E. Dole (Chair);

Councillors:

C.A. Campbell, G. Davies, H.A.L. Evans, L.D. Evans, P.M. Hughes, P. Hughes-Griffiths, D.M. Jenkins and J. Tremlett;

Also in attendance:

Councillors D.M. Cundy and R. James;

The following Officers were in attendance:

W. Walters, Chief Executive;

C. Moore, Director of Corporate Services;

G. Morgans, Director of Education & Children's Services;

R. Mullen, Director of Environment;

L.R. Jones, Head of Administration and Law;

P.R. Thomas, Assistant Chief Executive (People Management & Performance);

N. Daniel, Head of I.C.T. and Corporate Policy;

G. Jones, Digital Infrastructure Project Manager;

E. Bryer, Democratic Services Officer;

R.M. Lloyd, Democratic Services Officer;

J. Corner, Technical Officer;

L. Jenkins, Executive Board Support Officer;

S. Rees, Simultaneous Translator;

M.S. Davies, Democratic Services Officer.

Virtual Meeting: 10.00 am - 11.00 am

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Cllr L.M. Stephens.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal interest.

3. MINUTES - 5TH OCTOBER 2020

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Board held on the 5th October, 2020 be signed as a correct record.

4. DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT, SWANSEA BAY CITY DEAL

The Executive Board considered the proposed Business Case, and subsequent investment, for the Swansea Bay City Deal Digital Infrastructure Project for which Carmarthenshire County Council was the designated lead Authority. The Project would deliver the essential underlying Infrastructure required to support and underpin the region's broader Digital Strategy and help to ensure that the region was equipped with future-proofed Digital Infrastructure that will provide the transformative foundations for City Deal interventions and wider regional growth.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL

4.1 that the proposed Business Case and subsequent investment in Digital Infrastructure across the Swansea Bay City Region be approved;

4.2 that the project SRO (Senior Responsible Owner) be granted delegated powers to make minor amendments to the business case as necessary to obtain approval at local, regional, and national governance.

5. DEVELOPMENT FUND APPLICATION

The Executive Board considered a report detailing an application submitted by the Communities Department to the Council's Development Fund for financial assistance for £75,465 to improve parking infrastructure across the Millennium Coastal Park (MCP) and Pembrey Country Park.

The report provided an update on the Development Fund that identified the sum of £235k as being immediately available for allocation for new schemes, This sum would rise to £1.5m in 2021/22 and £1.68m in 2022/23 when future repayments to the fund were made. These values were dependent on the sale of the Grillo site in 2021/22 to reimburse the Development Fund.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

5.1 to approve funding in the sum of £75,465 to improve parking infrastructure across the Millennium Coastal Park and Pembrey Country Park, generating increased income;

5.2 that the repayment for the above scheme be over four years;

5.3 that the repayments will commence in 2021/22.

6. NATIONAL BOTANIC GARDEN OF WALES.

With reference to minute 11 of the meeting of the Executive Board held on the 27th November 2017 consideration was given to a report detailing a request from the National Botanic Garden of Wales, accompanied with a Five Year Business Plan progress review, for a longer term loan repayment model and a sufficient extension on the current loan and lease agreements which ended on the 31st March 2020 to allow them to raise funds and develop a longer term sustainable financial plan. It was noted that the approach for the extension of the loan would necessitate a more detailed liaison with Welsh Government to allow a resolution to be sought between Welsh Government, the Council and the Garden to find a sustainable solution to repay the loan.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

6.1 that the Authority's interest free loan to the Garden be extended for a further 18 months from 1st April 2020 to 30th September 2021;

6.2 to allow the Garden continued occupation of three of the four farmhouses on a tenancy basis for a further 18 months to 30th September 2021.

7. IMPACT OF COVID19 ON CARMARTHENSHIRE

The Executive Board had been circulated with a report detailing the Community Impact Assessment of the Covid-19 pandemic and the Council's response over the last six months. It was considered that individuals and communities would need to recover from the following four interlinked categories of impact:

- Community;

- Economy;
- Infrastructure and Environment;
- Health and Welfare.

The nature of the impacts, and whether, and at what level, action needed to be taken, would depend in large part on the nature, scale and severity of the emergency itself. This assessment should inform the reset and re-prioritisation of resources and services. Officers were also thanked for the clarity of the report.

Members paid tribute to the exceptional way in which staff of both the authority and external partners, including health and social care workers and teaching staff, had responded to the impact of the pandemic and the Leader referred to the remarkable community response and spirit throughout Carmarthenshire.

Reference was made to the increase in on-line shopping and interest in rural properties and it was considered that these were areas which the Council would need to look closely at in terms of the effects on local businesses and possible community displacement.

It was noted that an urgent meeting of the Tackling Poverty Panel would be held within the next few days to consider the impact of the pandemic on the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in Carmarthenshire which was a concern.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received and that the short, medium and long term implications be noted.

8. NOTICE OF MOTION REFERRED FROM COUNCIL (8TH JULY 2020) AMMAN VALLEY RAILWAY LINE

The Executive Board considered, within the wider context of national policy, regional transport policy and current developments, the Notice of Motion in respect of the Amman Valley Railway supported by Council at its meeting on the 8th July 2020.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

8.1 to confirm support for the development of a modern passenger railway system for Carmarthenshire;

8.2 to confirm that the Amman Valley is included in the list of schemes put forward for inclusion in the wider Metro work;

8.3 to request an update report on the progress with the Metro project and workstreams and governance.

9. ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT BY REASONS OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE CHAIR DECIDES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY PURSUANT TO SECTION 100B(4)(B) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1972

The Chair advised that there were no items of urgent business.

CHAIR

DATE