

COUNTY COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, 10 MARCH 2021

PRESENT: Councillor I.W. Davies (Chair)

Councillors:

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

Also Present:

W. Walters, Chief Executive
J. Morgan, Director of Community Services
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)
G. Morgan, Democratic Services Manager
A. Wood, People Services Manager
E. Jones, Licensing Lead
E. Evans, Principal Democratic Services Officer
M. Evans Thomas, Principal Democratic Services Officer
S. Rees, Simultaneous Translator
J. Corner, Technical Officer
J. Hawker, Digital Support Officer
C.J. Warwick, Digital Support Engineer
E. Bryer, Democratic Services Officer
M.S. Davies, Democratic Services Officer

Virtual Meeting:10.00 am - 12.55 pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P. M. Edwards, A.L. Fox, A. James, T.J. Jones and A.G. Morgan.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

Councillor	Minute Number	Nature of Interest
S.J.G. Gilasbey	6 - Pay Policy Statement 2021/22	Family member works for Education Department;
S.J.G. Gilasbey	7- Review of Statement of Licensing Policy (Licensing Act 2003)	Secretary to Kidwelly RFC;
S.J.G. Gilasbey	8 – Executive Board Minutes 22 nd February 2021 [Minutes 3,7 and 8 thereof]	Minutes 3 - appertains to 2 schools within ward; Minute 7 – no reference to particular nature of interest]; Minute 8 – Family member is a tenant;
K. Lloyd	6 - Pay Policy Statement 2021/22	Family members participate in Carmarthenshire's Shared Lives Scheme and are carers;
K. Lloyd	9 - Notice of Motion Submitted by Councillor Rob James	Has shares in Carmarthenshire Energy Ltd.;
T.A.J. Davies	6 - Pay Policy Statement 2021/22	Sister in law is a Head of Service with the Council;
K. Madge	6 - Pay Policy Statement 2021/22	Daughter works for Social Care;
R. James	6 - Pay Policy Statement 2021/22	Partner works for Llanelli Library;
T.M. Higgins	6 - Pay Policy Statement 2021/22	Niece works for Library service;
E. Dole	6 - Pay Policy Statement 2021/22	Son works for the Council;
D.M. Cundy	6 - Pay Policy Statement 2021/22	Relative works for the Council;
C.A. Davies	6 - Pay Policy Statement 2021/22	Sister works for the Education Department;
S.L. Davies	8 – Executive Board Minutes 22 nd February 2021 [Minute 8 thereof]	Family member owns a property which they rent out;
P.M. Hughes	6 - Pay Policy Statement 2021/22	Family member works for the Council;
D. Nicholas	6 - Pay Policy Statement 2021/22	Daughter works for Council's Planning Section;
D.C. Evans	6 - Pay Policy Statement 2021/22	Wife works for the Council;
R.E. Evans	6 - Pay Policy Statement 2021/22	Daughter works for Library service;
J.S. Edmunds	6 - Pay Policy Statement 2021/22	Two family members work for the Council;
L.R. Bowen	6 - Pay Policy Statement 2021/22	Wife works for the Council's Translation Section;

G.R. Jones	6 - Pay Policy Statement 2021/22	Wife works for the Education Department;
J.D. James	8 – Executive Board Minutes 22 nd February 2021 [Minute 9 thereof]	Specific nature of interest not specified;
B.A.L. Roberts	6 - Pay Policy Statement 2021/22	Son in law works for the Council;
G.H. John	6 - Pay Policy Statement 2021/22	Daughter works for the Housing Division.

3. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The Chair reminded Members that donations were still welcome for the walking challenge he was currently undertaking to raise funds for his two chosen charities namely Prostate Cancer UK and St. Peters Church, Llanybydder. To date he had walked 44 miles and a few donations had already been received with the promise of further donations from Councillors and some town councils. He added that he had also placed items for sale in aid of the charities on the buy and sell forum on the Council's intranet and thanked everyone for their support;
- Councillor Gary Jones referred to the recent re-opening of the Llangennech railway line and paid tribute to all who had been involved in the initial response to the accident and the subsequent reconstruction of the line. In particular he thanked the two train drivers whose quick action in uncoupling the wagons had saved the village and surrounding area from a greater disaster adding that possibly this could be recognised in some way by the Council;
- Councillor Tyssul Evans paid tribute to the actions of the local fire service following a recent house fire in Ffoslas. He also thanked Jonathan Willis and Jonathan Morgan of the Council's Communities Department for ensuring that the family were given temporary accommodation and Cllrs Linda Evans and Kim Broom for their assistance;
- The Leader referred to the fact that it would shortly be a year since the country entered its first lock-down due to the Covid 19 pandemic and he reflected on the excellent response by staff, council partners, and the public over that period to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all. He added that in due course there would be a review of the way the pandemic had, and was being, dealt with and that evidence would be presented along with assessments of decisions taken. An assurance was given that the Council was working as hard as ever to ensure the safety of communities in Carmarthenshire. In terms of the reopening of schools he emphasised that whilst this would be an important step in the recovery process everyone should adhere to guidance issued. He also spoke of the successful roll-out of the vaccination programme in Wales and thanked everyone involved in ensuring it remained on track including staff on the front-line, the teams who ensured that the mass vaccination centres were ready and operational in a very short time. He also thanked the GP practices who had paid a key part in the roll-out of the programme;

- The Leader referred to the fact that businesses in Llanelli had voted overwhelmingly to continue the Ymlaen Llanelli Business Improvement District [BID] for a further 5 years and the Council looked forward to continuing to work with the BID team in arranging events as successful as those held over the previous 5 years which contributed to a vibrant town centre;
- The Leader endorsed the sentiments expressed earlier by Cllr. Gary Jones in regard to the reopening of the railway at Llangennech.

4. RE-APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBER OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Leader presented a report recommending the re-appointment of Mrs Mary Dodd as a co-opted member of the Standards Committee following the expiration of her current term of office on the 14th April 2021. Mrs Dodd was one of the most experienced co-opted members of the Standards Committee and currently served as its vice-chair. Two of the more experienced members of the Committee were due to retire in December 2021 making the retention of Mrs Dodd's expertise particularly important.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that Mrs Mary Dodd be appointed for a further 4-year term of office as a co-opted member of the Standards Committee from 14th April 2021.

5. SETTING THE COUNCIL TAX FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2021/22

The Executive Board Member for Resources presented a report setting out the financial details relevant to the setting of the Council Tax for the 2021/2022 financial year together with the Council Tax amounts in respect of the different Council Tax Valuation Bands, as applicable to each of the individual Community and Town Council areas.

It was noted that the recommendations contained within the report brought together the authority's budget requirement and the precepts for the Police Authority and the Town and Community Councils into the consolidated Council Tax amounts in respect of the individual Council Tax Valuation bands.

RESOLVED, in order for the Council to comply with legislative requirements, that the report and recommendations of the Director of Corporate Services on the setting of the Council Tax for the financial year 2021/22 be adopted.

6. PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2021/22

[NOTE:

1. Councillors L.R. Bowen, D.M. Cundy, T.A.J. Davies, C.A. Davies, E. Dole, D.C. Evans, J.S. Edmunds, R. Evans, S.J.G. Gilasbey, T.M. Higgins, P.M. Hughes, G. John, G.R. Jones, R. James, K. Lloyd, K. Madge, D. Nicholas and B.A.L. Roberts had earlier declared interests in this item and, apart from Cllrs. K. Lloyd, T.A.J. Davies and G. John, left the meeting;
2. All officers in attendance were deemed to have a personal interest in this item and left the meeting prior to its consideration with the exception of the Assistant Chief Executive (People Management and Performance) and Lead Business Partner (HR) who remained in the meeting to respond to any

questions arising on the report and officers who were facilitating the webcasting of the meeting.].

The Deputy Leader presented the report which outlined that, under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 all Local Authorities were required to prepare a Pay Policy Statement which must be agreed and published by 1st April every year. The Statement required the approval of full Council and had to set out the Authority's policies for the financial year relating to the remuneration of its Chief Officers, its lowest paid employees and the relationship between the remuneration of its Chief Officers and its employees who were not Chief Officers.

The politically balanced Pay Policy Advisory Panel had had input into the formulation of the Pay Policy Statement and its recommendations had been incorporated into final document for approval by County Council.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Pay Policy Statement 2021/22 be approved in compliance with Section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011.

7. TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD IN RESPECT OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM:-

7.1. REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY (LICENSING ACT 2003)

[NOTE: Councillor S.J.G. Gilasbey had earlier declared an interest in this item but remained in the meeting].

The Executive Board Member for Public Protection informed Council that the Executive Board, at its meeting held on the 1st March, 2021 (minute 5 thereof refers) had considered a report on the review of the Statement of Licensing Policy. The current Licensing Policy had been adopted by the Authority in January 2019 following a consultation regarding the adoption of a Cumulative Impact Assessment in respect of Lammas Street, Carmarthen. Legislation currently required the Licensing Policy to be reviewed at least every five years to ensure that it reflected feedback from the local community that the statutory objectives were being met. A full review had last been undertaken in 2015.

The Licensing Section had reviewed the policy document, in conjunction with the Council's legal department, in light of the responses from an extensive consultation exercise, revised government guidance, amendments to the Licensing Act and recent case law.

The Licensing division was thanked for its work in undertaking the review.

RESOLVED that the following recommendations of the Executive Board be adopted

7.1.1 "that the amended Statement of Licensing Policy be approved";

7.1.2 "that the existing Cumulative Impact Assessment be retained for Station Road, Llanelli and Lammas Street, Carmarthen, as detailed in Section 10 of the policy."

8. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD HELD ON THE 22ND FEBRUARY 2021

[NOTE: Councillors S.L. Davies and S.J.G. Gilasbey had earlier declared interests in this item but remained in the meeting. Cllr. H.A.L. Evans reiterated the declarations she had made as detailed in the Executive Board minutes but remained in the meeting as the issues were not discussed].

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report of the meeting of the Executive Board held on the 22nd February 2021 be received.

9. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING NOTICE OF MOTION:-

9.1. NOTICE OF MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR ROB JAMES

[NOTE: Councillor K. Lloyd had earlier declared an interest in this item but remained in the meeting].

Council considered the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Rob James:-

“Two years ago, Carmarthenshire Council unanimously passed a motion declaring a climate emergency and supported this authority becoming a net zero carbon authority in the next nine years. We feel every effort is not being made to ensure that as an authority we meet this target and note these serious concerns that are echoed by the residents of Carmarthenshire.

This Council:

- Concerned at the slowness in our authority in addressing the climate emergency is having a devastating impact on communities.
- Believes that unless significant resources are dedicated towards investing in electric or non-fossil fuel vehicles for our fleet, including recycling vehicles, retrofitting our buildings, a large scale tree planting scheme across Carmarthenshire, and local energy generating, we will not meet our target. The Council's capital project does not go far enough to meet this challenge currently.
- Fears that continuing to develop on green fields harms the environment and poses a great threat to communities from flooding.
- Notes that Carmarthenshire Council, despite public demand and political pressure, remains the only local authority in Wales not to collect glass on the kerbside to support our recycling efforts.
- Welcomes the news that Dyfed Pension Fund have agreed to move 24% of its share holdings into “reduced fossil fuel free” funds, yet believes they must go further as soon as possible.”

The Motion was duly seconded.

The proposer and seconder of the Motion were afforded the opportunity of speaking in support thereof and outlined the reasons for its submission, as set out in the Motion.

A number of statements were made both in support of and against the Motion and following a vote it was

RESOLVED that the Motion be not supported.

10. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

11. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS:-

11.1. QUESTION BY COUNCILLOR EDWARD THOMAS TO COUNCILLOR HAZEL EVANS, EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT

“The Welsh Government recently announced funding of £55m for active travel, which I understand is designed to encourage local authorities to be ambitious and encourage cycling and walk to work routes. Do you think that Carmarthenshire plan for a cycle path between Llandeilo and Carmarthen is both ambitious and innovative to qualify for this pot of money or will the Deputy Minister of Transport and Local AS Lee Waters throw another spoke in the wheel?”

Response by Councillor Hazel Evans, Executive Board Member for Environment:-

“The Tywi Valley Cycle Path is a great opportunity to showcase the best of Carmarthenshire. The project is ambitious and will bring great economical, environmental and social benefits to the area. From an economic perspective studies have shown it would deliver between £800k to £2.4m per annum to the area generating between 17 and 47 jobs at a time of great need for the tourism sector. From an active travel perspective the path links 5 communities, not including Carmarthen and Llandeilo, to each other along the Towy Valley, as well as to employment, hospitals, education and the retail sector. It will provide communities and visitors with a safe and attractive alternative to the A4 trunk road which has a high number of personal injury accidents. A review of available casualty data for the Towy Valley study area shows that 17 accidents were recorded along the A40 in the 5 years prior to 2018 – this included 2 fatal collisions. From an environment perspective the path would provide a huge opportunity for people to travel sustainably whilst enjoying the benefit of our great county. The walking and cycling paths travel through an area with an abundance of biodiversity. I appreciate the need to decarbonise, the need to promote active travel, the need to improve the wellbeing of our nation and the need to exploit opportunities arising from the visitor economy as society comes out of the covid pandemic. The Deputy Minister has encouraged authorities to be ambitious. He stressed in a meeting last week that if a section of, for example a disused railway line provided it linked communities, it could qualify for grant funding. We have active travel masterplans for each of our major towns and settlements. We also include the Towy Valley path which is an outstanding project that will help our communities recover from the catastrophic effects of the last 12 months and deliver benefits for all including help. We have submitted a grant bid again this year via the Local Transport Fund Grant Programme to support our work to deliver the path. We can only hope that the Deputy Minister will support our ambition to see this project delivered for our communities, provide a first class attraction for tourists and deliver on the potential annual economic benefits to the county, particularly the tourism and hospitality sectors that have been so badly hit during the last 12 months. Our ambition is to see this path completed.”

12. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES

In accordance with Corporate Procedure Rule CPR 2(2)(n) the following nomination had been received from the Labour Group and it was:

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the nomination of Councillor D.M. Cundy to replace Councillor P.M. Edwards as one of the Labour Group's representatives on the Planning Committee be approved.

13. MINUTES FOR INFORMATION

The Chair stated that the minutes outlined on the agenda 13.1 were available for information on the Council website.

CHAIR

DATE