

COUNTY COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, 7 DECEMBER 2022

PRESENT: Councillor R.E. Evans (Chair)

Councillors (In Person):

P. Cooper	D.M. Cundy	C.A. Davies	B. Davies
L. Davies	L.D. Evans	N. Evans	S. Godfrey-Coles
T.M. Higgins	P.M. Hughes	J.D. James	R. James
J.P. Jenkins	G.H. John	D. Jones	H. Jones
A. Lenny	A. Leyshon	K. Madge	D. Nicholas
M. Palfreman	D. Price	E. Rees	E. Skinner
D. Thomas	G.B. Thomas	M. Thomas	J. Tremlett
F. Walters			

Councillors (Virtually):

S.M. Allen	L.R. Bowen	K.V. Broom	J.M. Charles
S.A. Curry	A. Davies	W.R.A. Davies	T.A.J. Davies
G. Davies	H.L. Davies	K. Davies	L.M. Davies
S.L. Davies	T. Davies	M. Donoghue	A. Evans
D.C. Evans	H.A.L. Evans	W.T. Evans	A.D. Harries
J.P. Hart	J.K. Howell	P. Hughes-Griffiths	M. James
B.W. Jones	A.C. Jones	G.R. Jones	M.J.A. Lewis
N. Lewis	A.G. Morgan	D. Owen	B.D.J. Phillips
S.L. Rees	B.A.L. Roberts	E.M.J.G. Schiavone	J. Seward
R. Sparks	E.G. Thomas	A. Vaughan Owen	P.T. Warlow
D.E. Williams			

Also Present (In Person):

W. Walters, Chief Executive
C. Moore, Director of Corporate Services
J. Morgan, Director of Community Services
G. Morgans, Director of Education and Children's Services
A. Williams, Director of Place and Infrastructure
P.R. Thomas, Assistant Chief Executive (People Management & Performance)
L.R. Jones, Head of Administration and Law
R. Griffiths, Head of Place and Sustainability
I.R. Llewelyn, Forward Planning Manager
G. Morgan, Head of Democratic Services
L. Jenkins, Cabinet Support Officer
S. Rees, Simultaneous Translator
M.S. Davies, Democratic Services Officer
J. Owens, Democratic Services Officer (minute taker)

Also Present (Virtually):

K. Thomas, Democratic Services Officer

Chamber - County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP and remotely - 10.00 - 11.11 am

[Note: The Chair, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 2(3) reconfigured the order of business on the agenda to enable Agenda Item 10 to be considered earlier in the meeting].

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M. Cranham, H.B. Shepardson and J. Williams.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

Councillor	Minute Item(s)	Nature of Interest
M. James	5 - Annual Monitoring Report 2021/22 Adopted Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan	Councillor James' workplace location is named within the report.
M. James	6 - Revised Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan 2018 – 2033 Draft Second Deposit	Councillor James' workplace location is noted as a strategic point within the report.

3. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair provided an update on recent activities and events where he and his consort had represented the Council, which included:

- A visit hosted by the Council for the Young Farmers Club.
- The unveiling of the Carmarthen Archives facility.

The Cabinet Member for Resources, in accordance with part 2 (2)(c) of the Council's Corporate Procedure Rules, made an announcement on the severe financial pressures facing the Council, and other Welsh Local Authorities, arising from the current economic situation brought about by a number of factors, including the potential 300% increase in energy costs, rampant inflation and pay awards.

The Cabinet Member reported that further information would be available on 14 December 2022 following publication of the Welsh Government Draft Revenue Support Grant settlement, following which the formal budget consultation process would commence. It was emphasised that the Council's main source of funding was provided by the Welsh Government, which in turn was reliant upon the block grant allocated by Westminster. Accordingly, only 20% of the Council's income was generated from council tax. An assurance was provided to the Council that potential efficiencies were being explored in all areas of the Council, including services, capital schemes, school budgets, fees and charges, leaving vacancies unfilled and utilisation of the Council's reserves. In light of the cost of living crisis, the Council would endeavour to keep any council tax increases to a minimum.

4. TO APPROVE AND SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE 9TH NOVEMBER 2022

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Council held on the 9th November, 2022 be signed as a correct record.

5. ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2021/22 ADOPTED CARMARTHENSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

[NOTE: Cllr. M. James had earlier declared an interest in this item and remained in the meeting during the deliberation of the report and voting thereof.]

The Council considered the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) 2021/22 on the Adopted Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan prepared in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Local Development Plan (LDP) Regulations 2005.

The report concluded that positive progress had been made in implementing many of the adopted Plan's policies and objectives, however some elements and components had not delivered as intended and these had been compounded by the Covid-19 Pandemic and the associated restrictions.

It was noted that in accordance with the Council's statutory duty, the AMR had been submitted to the Welsh Government and published on the Council's website by 31st October 2022.

It was reported that an informal consultation process would undertaken to afford interested parties the opportunity to comment on the key issues raised. Whilst not a statutory requirement, the consultation would provide an important opportunity for views to be submitted and, where appropriate, for those views to contribute to the content of subsequent AMR's. The content of the AMR along with that of the previous documents would also be used to inform the preparation of the Revised LDP 2018 – 2033 and its associated evidence base.

RESOLVED that:

- 5.1 The Annual Monitoring Report for the adopted Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan (LDP) be approved.**
 - 5.2 The findings and evidence contained within the Annual Monitoring Report be utilised to inform evidence gathering in the preparation of the revised LDP 2018 -2033.**
 - 5.3 Officers be authorised to make typographical or factual amendments as necessary to improve the clarity and accuracy of the Annual Monitoring Report.**
- 6. TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CABINET IN RESPECT OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM:**
- 6.1. REVISED CARMARTHENSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2018 - 2033 DRAFT SECOND DEPOSIT**

[NOTE: Cllr. M. James had earlier declared an interest in this item and remained in the meeting during the deliberation of the report and voting thereof].

Further to Minute 7 of the Cabinet meeting held 14th November 2022, the Council considered a report setting out the Draft Second Deposit Revised Local Development Plan (LDP) which identified the Council's land use Vision, Strategic Objectives and Strategic Growth requirements for the County through to 2033. The LDP included a detailed and comprehensive set of policies and provisions, including site specific allocations for housing and employment use, as well as environmental and other spatial considerations. It was recognised that a series of factors had impacted upon the progress and content of the Plan including, but not limited to, phosphate levels in protected rivers and the Covid-19 pandemic.

Approval was sought for the publication of the LDP and supporting documents as part of a formal public consultation for a minimum statutory period of 6 weeks commencing in January 2023. Thereafter, it would be subject to public examination by a Welsh Government appointed Planning Inspector with a view to its formal adoption in 2024.

In response to a concern raised in respect of the length of the LDP it was clarified that the report format was prescribed by Welsh Government, and therefore it was necessary for the Council to comply with that format in preparing the documentation.

Reference was made to the recent Census results in respect of population growth and the decline in the number of Welsh Language speakers and clarity was sought on how these would be addressed within the LDP. It was highlighted that the LDP, together with its supporting information, were emerging documents which would develop through to the point of publication. This reflected the availability of some pieces of evidence and timelines associated with the LDP's preparation to ensure that the most current information was included at the point of publication. An assurance was provided that the LDP, as a holistic document, was integrated with a range of other key Plans and Strategies within the Authority.

The Forward Planning Manager provided an overview of the engagement methodology and consultation process adopted whereby the LDP was presented by way of written representations which would be supplemented with digital illustrations and maps to encourage interaction. In response to a query, the Forward Planning Manager reported that the consultation process would provide an appropriate mechanism to address concerns or inconsistencies in respect of the site allocations and how they were portrayed within the LDP.

Tribute was paid to the late Councillor Mair Stephens during her term of office as Chair of the Cross Party Panel. The Cabinet Member for Rural Affairs and Planning Policy, in response to comments made, clarified that local residents were prioritised for affordable housing and should be encouraged by Members to register for affordable and/or social housing, as appropriate.

The Forward Planning Manner clarified to Members that the LDP sought to re-energise town centres in terms of their vitality and viability, with the retail function being supported by other complementary services to increase footfall and vibrancy.

RESOLVED that the following recommendations of the Cabinet be adopted:

- 6.1 To approve the content of the Draft Second Deposit Revised Local Development Plan 2018 – 2033 (and supporting documents) for formal public consultation.**
 - 6.2 To approve the rolling forward of the Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance in relation to the Burry Inlet and the Caeau Mynydd Mawr Special Area of Conservation for adoption concurrent with the Revised LDP.**
 - 6.3 To note the Draft Briefing Note on the emerging Economic and Housing Growth Report and agree the recommended revised Growth Option.**
 - 6.4 To grant officers delegated authority to make any typographical or factual amendments as necessary in order to enhance clarity of meaning.**
- 7. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON THE FOLLOWING DATES:**

7.1. 31ST OCTOBER, 2022

RESOLVED that the report of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 31st October, 2022 be received.

7.2. 14TH NOVEMBER, 2022

RESOLVED that the report of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 14th November, 2022 be received.

8. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

9. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS (NONE RECEIVED)

The Chair advised that an urgent question had been submitted in accordance with Corporate Procedure Rule CPR 11.4b.

QUESTION BY COUNCILLOR ROB JAMES TO COUNCILLOR GLYNOG DAVIES, CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND WELSH LANGUAGE

“Can the Cabinet Member for Education provide an update to the rise of scarlet fever cases in our schools in the last week?”

Response by Councillor Glynog Davies – Cabinet Member for Education and Welsh Language:-

“Thank you very much Chair and thanks Rob for the question, this very timely question and extremely important question of course. To be honest, if there wasn't a question I did intend to ask permission from the Chair to say a word about this. The Scarlett fever came to my attention first of all when I heard that there were many children in the local school in Brynaman suffering from Scarlet fever. This was a big concern for me as the Chair of Governors and also to the staff in the school. Over the last few weeks two dozen children in the school have suffered. Two of the children have had to have treatment in hospital and one is still in the Heath in Cardiff. Scarlet Fever, or Scarletina as it's called, it's a very very serious disease, it's very infectious and it is caused by a bacteria, the group A streptococcus bacteria, we are very familiar with the term 'Strep A'. It's spread very easily, direct contact with the person who is suffering from it or through the air, you know droplets in the air, you know coughing or sneezing – the disease is then spread. And of course, remember it can also be spread from using the same equipment or utensils as other people. The symptoms of scarlet fever is a rash that feels like sandpaper to touch; other symptoms include a high temperature, a flushed face and a red swollen tongue - you might have heard of 'strawberry tongue'. Once diagnosed the treatment is quite simple and usually involves a course of penicillin antibiotics. Now one worry that's been drawn to my attention I was speaking to a man, my son, who is a GP and there is shortage currently of antibiotics. Right, we have now cases in Carmarthenshire, I know that 5 schools that have been infected to varying degrees and some, as mentioned, have had to have hospital treatment. There are cases in many other counties, and we are working very closely with Public Health Wales. We are working with them and responding immediately to these cases. On Monday morning, our Headteachers were briefed on this very important matter, and we have shared an information letter provided by Public Health Wales about the symptoms and also how to respond. It's very important that we do raise awareness about this; the staff in our schools are aware of this, and they are keeping an eye on the situation, looking out for children with a high temperature or have a sore throat or a rash. The message is to keep the individual who is suffering away from school for 24hrs after the start of the antibiotic treatment, it's very important. Schools have to follow these guidelines which they have received, and we are working very closely with our schools. If there are two or more cases in the same setting within the school within a 10-day period the school would have to notify the health protection team for further guidance, they are available for them. And remember as well, what we did during the pandemic of course, we were very careful, we washed our hands regularly, so do this again. You know, don't cough or sneeze openly; remember the slogan 'catch it, bin it, kill it', you know that is so important. This can, of course, prevent the spread of infection. A letter has been prepared by the Officers and has been sent to parents and carers; you know if they are concerned about anything the clear message is to contact your GP immediately and we will do everything in the education department to help as well. Public Health Wales are monitoring the situation very carefully so thank you once again for the question”.

Supplementary Question by Councillor Rob James:

“Do you believe there will be a case, where there is a high number of 'STREP A' cases in our school that we will engage with our Governing Body to see if we can increase our cleaning, as you say it's a very infectious disease and cleanliness is obviously an important factor, so I'll be interested to hear your input into that.”

Response by Councillor Glynog Davies – Cabinet Member for Education and Welsh Language:

“Yes a very very important point indeed Rob. We are monitoring the situation. That is what I can tell you at the moment and we are working closely with Public Health Wales. We are accepting guidance from them as to what we should be doing. If it becomes that severe then we might have to take a similar action as to what we did during the COVID pandemic. Currently that is not happening, but as I said we are listening, we are talking daily to Public Health Wales, and we are listening to them and receiving their guidance and we will obey whatever they tell us. Diolch Rob.”

10. PRESENTATION OF A PETITION

The Chair welcomed to the meeting Ms M. Ballard who had been invited to present to, and address the Council on the following petition relating to Road Safety in Black Lion Road, Cross Hands as follows:

“We, the undersigned, residents of Black Lion Road, want speed-calming measures installed along our road to ensure that the speed limit of 30mph is respected by drivers. We also want the dangerous staggered junction to be changed as a matter of urgency; this is a road hazard and a safeguarding issue”.

Ms Ballard outlined to the Council the rationale for the petition which had received 130 signatures reflecting the concerns of the community on road safety within Black Lion Road, Cross Hands.

The Cabinet Board Member for Transport, Waste and Infrastructure Services advised that the issues raised in the petition would be investigated by the department and a report would then be presented to a future meeting of the Council’s Cabinet.

Following the presentation, Ms Ballard formally handed the petition to the Council.

RESOLVED that in accordance with Corporate Procedure Rule 10.14 the petition be referred to the Cabinet for consideration.

11. MINUTES FOR INFORMATION (AVAILABLE TO VIEW ON THE WEBSITE)

The Chair stated that the minutes outlined on the agenda under 11.1 – 11.11 were available for information on the Council website.

CHAIR

DATE