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WEDNESDAY, 4 OCTOBER 2023

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL

I HEREBY SUMMON YOU TO ATTEND THE **MULTI LOCATION MEETING OF CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL** WHICH WILL BE HELD IN THE **CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, CARMARTHEN, SA31 1JP AND REMOTELY AT 10.00 AM, ON WEDNESDAY, 11TH OCTOBER, 2023** FOR THE TRANSACTION OF THE BUSINESS OUTLINED ON THE ATTACHED AGENDA

Wendy Walters

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Democratic Officer:	Janine Owen
Telephone (direct line):	01267 224030
E-Mail:	JanineOwen@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

THE MEETING CAN BE VIEWED ON THE AUTHORITY'S WEBSITE VIA THE FOLLOWING LINK:-

<https://carmarthenshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

Wendy Walters Prif Weithredwr, *Chief Executive*,
Neuadd y Sir, Caerfyrddin. SA31 1JP
County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS.
3. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY)
4. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE LEADER, CABINET MEMBERS AND THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (IF ANY)
5. TO APPROVE AND SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE 13TH SEPTEMBER 2023 5 - 10
6. ESTYN INSPECTION OF CARMARTHENSHIRE'S LOCAL GOVERNMENT EDUCATION SERVICES 11 - 34
7. THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (DEMOCRACY) (WALES) ACT 2013 ("THE ACT")-COMMUNITY REVIEW 35 - 54
8. POLLING DISTRICT AND POLLING PLACES REVIEW 2023 55 - 64
9. TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CABINET IN RESPECT OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM:-
 - 9.1 ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATOR REPORT 2022-2023 65 - 80
10. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON THE 18TH SEPTEMBER 2023 81 - 86
11. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING NOTICE OF MOTION:-
 - 11.1 NOTICE OF MOTION PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR LINDA EVANS AND EDWARD THOMAS

"Council notes that the fflecsi Bwcabus service has been operating for 14 years providing a vital opportunity to travel by public transport in some of the most rural areas of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire.

Council expresses its disappointment with the Welsh Government announcement that the service will end on the 31st October 2023, which will be a significant blow to our rural communities.

Council is dismayed that Welsh Government secured replacement buses for these services as recently as July 2023.

Council recognises the unique challenges faced by rural communities in accessing public transport and reaffirms its commitment to work to improve public and community

transport services across the county.

Council calls on the Welsh Government to review its decision, to work with local authorities in West Wales, and provide funding in order to develop a sustainable public and community transport system which can support and connect our rural communities. In the meantime we call on Welsh Government to continue with the Flexi Bwcabus until an alternative service is in operation for our rural areas.”

12. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED).

13. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS:-

13.1 QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR RUSSELL SPARKS TO COUNCILLOR LINDA EVANS, DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOMES

“Could you please advise me of the progress being made towards decarbonising our housing stock in light of the climate emergency declaration of 2019 and this council’s commitment to a better future for our children. Specifically what are your major obstacles to achieving ‘net zero’ in relation to the council housing stock which will ultimately help reduce bills for residents given the ongoing cost of living crisis?”

13.2 QUESTION BY COUNCILLOR JOHN JAMES TO COUNCILLOR DARREN PRICE, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

“Artificial Intelligence is a transformative technology that is being used throughout the Private and Public Sectors nationally and globally and is playing an improving and progressive role. My question comes in two parts:

Firstly: What steps are Carmarthenshire County Council currently taking regarding Artificial Intelligence to ensure that this Council keeps up with key trends and developments and that it draws on the best practice other Local Authorities and Public Sector Organisations in the U.K. are implementing and innovating on.

Secondly: Looking to the future; how is this Council aiming to maximise the benefits of Artificial Intelligence so that viable opportunities and practices can be engaged, whilst also recognising, and dealing with the challenges this technology will undoubtedly raise as it progresses.”

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

14 .1 DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE - 7TH SEPTEMBER 2023

14 .2 PLANNING COMMITTEE - 14TH SEPTEMBER 2023

14 .3 STANDARDS COMMITTEE - 18TH SEPTEMBER 2023

14 .4 LICENSING COMMITTEE - 21ST SEPTEMBER 2023

14 .5 PLANNING COMMITTEE - 26TH SEPTEMBER 2023

COUNTY COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER 2023

PRESENT: Councillor B.A.L. Roberts (Chair) (In Person)

Councillors (In Person):

K.V. Broom	J.M. Charles	P. Cooper	C.A. Davies
G. Davies	H.L. Davies	K. Davies	L. Davies
LI.M. Davies	S.L. Davies	T. Davies	L.D. Evans
W.T. Evans	S. Godfrey-Coles	J.P. Hart	T.M. Higgins
J.K. Howell	P.M. Hughes	J.D. James	M. James
G.H. John	A.C. Jones	H. Jones	A. Lenny
M.J.A. Lewis	K. Madge	D. Nicholas	D. Owen
M. Palfreman	D. Price	H.B. Shepardson	E. Skinner
R. Sparks	E.G. Thomas	M. Thomas	J. Tremlett
F. Walters			

Councillors (Virtually):

L.R. Bowen	M.D. Cranham	S.A. Curry	A. Davies
W.R.A. Davies	C. Davies	M. Donoghue	A. Evans
D.C. Evans	H.A.L. Evans	N. Evans	A.D. Harries
P. Hughes-Griffiths	R. James	B.W. Jones	D. Jones
N. Lewis	A. Leyshon	A.G. Morgan	B.D.J. Phillips
E. Rees	S.L. Rees	E.M.J.G. Schiavone	J. Seward
D. Thomas	G.B. Thomas	A. Vaughan Owen	P.T. Warlow
D.E. Williams	J. 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 & Children's Services
P.R. Thomas, Assistant Chief Executive (People Management & Performance)
L.R. Jones, Head of Administration and Law
D.W. John, Head of Environmental Infrastructure
G. Morgan, Head of Democratic Services
C. Higginson, Media Manager
J. Owens, Democratic Services Officer
M. Runeckles, Members Support Officer

Also Present (Virtually):

L. Jenkins, Cabinet Support Officer
S. Rees, Simultaneous Translator
M. Evans Thomas, Principal Democratic Services Officer
R. Morris, Members Support Officer

Chamber - County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP and remotely - 10.00 - 11.32 am

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S.M. Allen, D.M. Cundy, B. Davies, T.A.J. Davies. R.E. Evans and G.R. Jones.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

Councillor	Minute Number	Nature of Interest
A. Davies	9.1 Notice of Motion Proposed by Councillors Edward Thomas and Hefin Jones – “Llandeilo Bypass”	Owns land in the area which could be impacted by the proposed bypass.

3. CHAIR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY)

- The Chair provided an overview of the array of events she and her consort had attended across the county since the last meeting, all of which had been interesting and informative.
- Councillor A. Lenny, on behalf of Councillors G.H. John, P. Hughes-Griffiths and himself, acknowledged and commended former consultant paediatrician Dr. Dewi Evans, a resident within the Carmarthen Town North and South ward, for his central role as a medical expert in securing the conviction of serial baby killer Lucy Letby.
- Councillor G. Davies congratulated Jac Morgan from Brynaman on being selected as one of the captains for the Welsh Men’s Rugby Team at the World Cup. Councillor G. Davies was delighted to note that two further Carmarthenshire residents, namely Gareth Davies and Gareth Thomas, had also been selected to represent Wales at the World Cup and conveyed his best wishes to the team at the forthcoming tournament. Councillor G. Davies was also proud to note that Hannah Jones, captain of the Welsh Womens Rugby Team was also from Brynamman, which he felt demonstrated the high calibre of individuals within the locality.
- Councillor J.K. Howell commended Owen Jones from Drefach Felindre who had finished within the top 25 competitors at the Ironman World Championships 2023 event in Finland, and as such had been invited to participate in the Ironman World Championships 2024 event, which would be held in New Zealand.
- Councillor M. James congratulated and conveyed her best wishes to five members of the Llandyfaelog Short Mat Bowls Club, namely Andrea Bennett, Janet Davies, Llinos Jones, Shan Rees and Carloline Stiles, who had been chosen to represent Wales in a National Competition in Melton Mowbery on the 7th and 8th October.

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

- Councillor H. Jones acknowledged the achievements of the Carmarthenshire Federation of Young Farmers Clubs at the Royal Welsh show 2023 in the following categories:

- Cooking competition- St Ishmaels Young Farmers Club
- Fancy Dress competition – Llandovery Young Farmers Club
- Cwmni'r Nant Award - Dafydd Evans of St Ishmaels Young Farmers Club
- Seven-a-Side Rugby - Carmarthen Young Farmers Club
- Junior Woodwork - Capel Iwan Young Farmers Club

- Councillor G.H. John congratulated Wynne Evans on being crowned Celebrity MasterChef champion and extended his appreciation to Mr Evans for being an ambassador for Carmarthenshire and Wales and the showcasing of local Welsh produce.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE LEADER, CABINET MEMBERS AND THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (IF ANY)

There were no announcements.

5. TO APPROVE AND SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE 12TH JULY 2023

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Council held on the 12th July, 2023 be signed as a correct record.

6. TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES:-

Council was advised that vacancies had arisen on a number of committees as a result of the revised membership of the Cabinet, whereby Councillor H.A.L. Evans would replace Councillor G.H. John as the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Leisure, Culture and Tourism. The Leader paid tribute to Councillor G.H. John for his sterling contribution to the work of the Cabinet during his term of office.

6.1 UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the nomination of Councillor G.H. John to replace Councillor H.A.L. Evans as one of the Plaid Cymru Group's representative on the Health and Social Services Scrutiny Committee be approved.

6.2 UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the nomination of Councillor G.H. John to replace Councillor H.A.L. Evans as one of the Plaid Cymru Group's representative on the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee be approved.

6.3 UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the nomination of Councillor R. Sparks to replace Councillor H.A.L. Evans as one of the Plaid Cymru Group's representative on the Democratic Services Committee be approved.

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

7. TO ELECT THE CHAIR OF THE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOLLOWING A VACANCY MID TERM

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that Councillor G.H. John be elected Chair of the Health and Social Services Scrutiny Committee.

8. TO RECEIVE THE REPORTS OF THE MEETINGS OF THE CABINET HELD ON THE:-

8.1. 3RD JULY 2023

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report of the meeting of Cabinet held on the 3rd July, 2023 be received.

8.2. 17TH JULY 2023

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report of the meeting of Cabinet held on the 17th July, 2023 be received.

9. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING NOTICES OF MOTION:-

9.1. NOTICE OF MOTION PROPOSED BY COUNCILLORS EDWARD THOMAS AND HEFIN JONES

[Note: Councillor A. Davies had earlier declared an interest in this item and left the meeting during the deliberation and voting thereof].

Council considered the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillors Edward Thomas and Hefin Jones:-

“Council notes that the WELTAG1 report on the Llandeilo bypass in 2018 categorially eliminated as impractical, the concept of diverting HGVs away from Llandeilo town centre, without a bypass.

Council further notes that the Deputy Minister for Transport recently announced his intention to potentially resurrect this option pending further investigations. This would undoubtedly see HGV operators seeking shortcut diversions through rural villages in neighbouring wards on unsuitable roads or incur extra cost and time because of distance travelled. The impact would be felt by business in Llandeilo town who rely on HGVs for inward and outward deliveries, and an access only approach would render such action as ineffective and unenforceable.

This Council calls on the Deputy Minister to reconsider his announced intention and to adhere to the findings of the 2018 report. Furthermore, this council requests that the Welsh Government promptly publishes the results of the WELTAG 2 consultation undertaken in November 2020 and makes good on the commitment made in 2016/17.”

The motion was duly seconded.

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

The proposers 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 in support of the Motion.

Following a vote, it was:

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Motion be supported and referred to the Cabinet.

9.2. NOTICE OF MOTION PROPOSED BY COUNCILLORS KEVIN MADGE AND ROB JAMES

Council considered the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillors Kevin Madge and Rob James:-

“Shadows Depression Support Group in Glanamau has made a significant difference to the population of the Amman and Gwendraeth Valleys over the last three years, providing a wide-ranging mental health service which impacts the wider community.

Shadow's funding was cut from the 5th of September which will affect the vulnerable people living in our communities they will be now more marginalised, and some will have their lives put at serious health risk due to this decision.

We are calling on Hywel Dda Health Board, Carmarthenshire County Council and GP Clusters to maintain the funding for these services or provide financial assistance to keep the services going until they receive grant funding this will help to maintain the mental health services provided for the Amman and Gwendraeth Valleys.”

The motion was duly seconded.

The proposers 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.

The following amendment to the motion was proposed by Councillor J. Tremlett and was duly seconded:

“Shadows Depression Support Group in Glanamau has made a positive impact on the population of the Amman and Gwendraeth Valleys over the last three years, providing a wide-ranging mental health service which impacts the wider community.

Council notes that Shadows' funding was terminated from the 5th September and there is widespread concern about the potential impact on its service users.

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

We call on Welsh Government, Hywel Dda University Health Board, the GP cluster and Carmarthenshire County Council to work with the Shadows Depression Support Group to try and find a sustainable funding solution in order to protect services in the Amman and Gwendraeth Valleys.

Council further calls on Hywel Dda University Health Board to ensure that there are sufficient mental health services available to residents across all of Carmarthenshire, in both the short and long-term.”

The Proposer and Seconder of the Amendment were afforded the opportunity of speaking in support thereof and outlined the reasons for its submission, as set out in the Amendment.

A number of statements were made in support of both the motion and the amendment.

Council was advised that if the Amendment was carried it would become the substantive motion.

Following votes it was

RESOLVED that the Motion, as amended, be supported and referred to the Cabinet.

10. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

11. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS (NONE RECEIVED)

The Chair advised that no member questions had been received.

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

The Chair stated that the minutes outlined on the agenda under 12.1 – 12.11 were available for information on the Council website.

CHAIR

DATE

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

COUNCIL

11TH OCTOBER 2023

ESTYN INSPECTION OF CARMARTHENSHIRE'S LOCAL GOVERNMENT EDUCATION SERVICES

Purpose: To enable Elected Members to consider the report and areas for development.

Recommendations / key decisions required:

- To review the current position.
- To be assured that arrangements are in place to address the recommendations and minor areas for improvement.

Reasons:

Following the publication of the inspection report, and in order to meet Estyn's expectations, the local authority should update its plans to address the recommendations and to take account of shortcomings identified through the inspection process. The local authority should update its plans within three months of publication of the inspection report.

Cabinet Decision Required NO

Council Decision Required NO

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:- Cllr. Glynog Davies

I am extremely proud of the commendable work of Carmarthenshire's Education Services and grateful for the efforts of all our staff, schools and pupils recognised in this thorough report by Estyn. In Carmarthenshire, our vision and strategic leadership are clear and distinct, so that we can provide the best possible education for our children and young people, and I look forward to pushing ahead and realising our plans. I would like to thank all the officers for their continuous work that has led to this positive outcome. My personal thanks to the Director for his prominent strategic leadership.

**Directorate: Education and
Children's Services**

**Name of Director:
Gareth Morgans**

Report Author: ESTYN

**Designations:
Director of Education
and Children's Services**

Tel Nos.

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EDGMorgans@sirgar.gov.uk**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

COUNCIL

11TH OCTOBER 2023

ESTYN INSPECTION OF CARMARTHENSHIRE'S LOCAL GOVERNMENT EDUCATION SERVICES

Background to Local Government Education Services Inspection (LGES)

Inspections of LGES are carried out under Section 38 of the Education Act 1997 which provides that His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales (HMCI) '**may, and, if requested to do so by the Secretary of State, shall, arrange for any local authority to be inspected**'.

Such an inspection '*shall consist of a review of the way in which the authority are performing any function which relates to the provision of education for (a) persons of compulsory school age (whether at school or otherwise) or (b) for persons of any age above or below that age who are registered as pupils at schools maintained by the authority.*'

Estyn's inspection of local authorities is informed by the [Guidance handbook for the inspection of LGES 2022 \(gov.wales\)](#). The handbook sets out the way in which Estyn conducts inspections of local government education services (LGES), which has changed significantly since our last core inspection in 2012.

Between the 10th and 14th of July 2023, Estyn inspected Carmarthenshire Council under its Local Government Education Services (LGES) framework.

The Local Government Education Services Inspection Framework

Inspection area 1– Outcomes	1.1 Standards and progress overall 1.2 Standards and progress of specific groups 1.3 Well-being and attitudes to learning.
Inspection area 2– Education Services	2.1 Support for school improvement 2.2 Support for vulnerable learners 2.3 Other education support services
Inspection area 3- Leadership and management	3.1 Quality and effectiveness of leaders and managers 3.2 Self-evaluation and improvement planning 3.3 Professional learning 3.4 Safeguarding arrangements 3.5 Use of resources

Inspectors evaluate and report on **all aspects of inspection areas 1 and 3** of the framework. **Inspection area 2** of the framework sets out the scope of education services that could be inspected during an inspection. As part of each inspection process, Estyn will form **a set of local inspection questions about education services**. Inspectors will evaluate services covered by these questions and report on each question separately within the report.

Under Inspection area 2, four local inspection questions were identified for Carmarthenshire, which were:

1. *How effective are school improvement processes in improving the quality of teaching and school leadership?*
2. *How well do the authority's arrangements for school modernisation and reorganisation ensure appropriate education provision for all children and young people, including pre-school and post-16 education?*
3. *How well do the local authority's education services promote positive behaviour and good attendance in its schools?*
4. *How successful is the local authority in ensuring that pupils' additional learning needs are identified early, and that suitable provision is in place to meet those needs.*

A preliminary visit took place on the 22nd and 23rd of June 2023, to conduct interviews with a range of stakeholders including headteacher representatives for primary, secondary and special schools; representatives of Chairs of Governors across primary, secondary and special schools; the regional education partnership, Partneriaeth; trade union representatives; diocese; the local health board, parents and officers from other Directorates of the Local Authority.

The core inspection consisted of data analysis from learner outcomes, school inspections and stakeholder questionnaires; scrutiny of evidence provided by the local authority including our self-evaluation report; and interviews with a range of Members and officers. Audit Wales inspected the Local Authority's use of resources under the inspection area of Leadership and Management.

During all core inspections, Estyn consider whether local government education services are **causing significant concern** and require follow-up activity. **Estyn judged that education services in Carmarthenshire do not fall into this category.**

The report was published on 27th of September 2023 and identified many strengths and notable features.

Three recommendations were made-

R1 Improve pupils' attendance in the authority's schools.

R2 Strengthen school improvement processes, particularly for secondary schools.

R3 Refine approaches to self-evaluation and improvement planning.

Work had already begun to address aspects of the recommendation prior to the inspection as they were already identified via self-evaluation and improvement planning processes.

The outcome of the inspection is detailed within the Estyn Inspection report appended to this document. It is Estyn's expectation that the inspection report is scrutinised in full by the Scrutiny Committee, so that the necessary support and challenge can be provided about the Directorate's plans for improvement.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :

Edymorgans

Signed:

Director of Education and Children's Services

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities NONE	Legal YES	Finance YES	ICT NONE	Risk Management Issues YES	Staffing Implications YES	Physical Assets YES
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Legal

Inspections of LGES are carried out under Section 38 of the Education Act 1997 which provides that His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales (HMCI) '**may, and, if requested to do so by the Secretary of State, shall, arrange for any local authority to be inspected**'. The Local Authority must respond to the report and address the recommendations.

Finance

Addressing some of the recommendations and minor area for improvement may require additional resource which will be reviewed by officers as part of our Action Plan and will be considered as part of the budget discussions for 2024/25 budget setting.

Risk Management Issues

With the current financial forecasts for 2024/25 and subsequent years there is a risk that reduced resources could hamper our ability to address the recommendations and sustain the high quality and sustainable service we have developed.

Staffing Implications

Implementing the recommendations may require us to expand the Local Authority Teams in order to secure the required improvements.

Physical Assets

On of the local questions was in relation to- **How well do the authority's school modernisation and re-organisation arrangements ensure appropriate education provision for all children and young people, including pre-school and post-16 education?**

Addressing current challenges within the sector will require significant capital investment to further develop and improve school assets.

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER AWARE?-		YES Cllr Glynog Davies is aware of Estyn's report and recommendations.
Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:		
THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW		
Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
A report on education services in Carmarthenshire County Council- Estyn	ESTYN REPORT	Adroddiad arolygiad - Cyngor Sir Gaerfyrddin 2023 (llyw.cymru) Inspection report - Carmarthenshire County Council 2023 (gov.wales)
Guidance handbook for the inspection of LGES 2022 (gov.wales)	ESTYN GUIDANCE	https://www.estyn.gov.wales/system/files/2022-08/Guidance%20handbook%20for%20the%20inspection%20of%20LGES%202022.pdf



Arolygiaeth Ei Fawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales



**A report on education services in
Carmarthenshire County Council**

**County Hall
Carmarthen
SA31 1JP**

Date of inspection: July 2023

by

**Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and
Training in Wales**

This report is also available in Welsh.

About Carmarthenshire County Council

Carmarthenshire County Council has a total population of around 187,900. The local authority maintains one nursery school, 94 primary schools, 12 secondary schools and one special school. The authority also maintains three pupil referral units. The Chief Executive began in post in June 2019 and the Director of Education and Children's Services was appointed in December 2016. The Leader of the Council has been in post since May 2022 and the Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services began in post in May 2017.

The local authority's last inspection was conducted in 2012. Carmarthenshire County Council is one of three local authorities that formed a new partnership, namely 'Partneriaeth', which supports schools, for example with the curriculum, after the ERW consortium came to an end.

In 2022-2023, the local authority's net education budget is around £184,708,000. The delegated school budget per pupil in 2022-23 is £4,958, which is below the Welsh average of £5,032.

Inspectors take account of a wide range of information about the local population when evaluating outcomes and the quality of education services. They consider this information alongside information about the national population. Some of the most useful information about children and young people in Carmarthenshire is noted below:

- Twenty-three point six per cent (23.6%) of pupils aged 5 to 15 are eligible for free school meals, which is similar to the Welsh average of 23.3%.
- Thirty-nine point five per cent (39.5%) of pupils aged 5 to 15 are fluent Welsh speakers, which is above the national average of 16%.
- Seven point five per cent (7.5%) of pupils aged 5 to 15 are from ethnic minority backgrounds, which is below the Welsh average of 12.6%
- A total of 165 children are looked after by the local authority
- Twenty-four point nine per cent (24.9%) of pupils aged 5 to 15 have additional learning needs
- Two point four per cent (2.4%) of pupils have English as an additional language

Summary

Carmarthenshire's education services are led robustly by senior leaders and elected members, who share a clear vision for education within the authority. This is supported by an open and positive culture and self-evaluation and improvement planning processes that are rigorous, on the whole. Through this, leaders have a positive effect on improving education provision and learners' outcomes in most of their areas of responsibility and are able to set a clear direction for further improvement in the future. In a very few areas, procedures for monitoring, evaluation and planning for improvement have not succeeded in addressing minor shortcomings, as identified in this report.

The authority has productive working relationships with schools and other providers. This contributes beneficially towards ensuring that new initiatives, changes in provision and sharing of ideas happen jointly, in partnership. The recent work to strengthen support in terms of supporting behaviour in schools, providing an additional ALN resource and establishing immersion resources for the Welsh language are good examples of how the authority is acting strategically to improve provision.

The authority has valuable and purposeful school improvement processes. These are based on a close working relationship between the authority and its schools, which has a positive effect in terms of providing suitable intervention for schools. Despite this, the impact of support for secondary schools varies and there is not a strong enough focus on ensuring the quality of the support and challenge provided for primary and secondary schools to reduce the variation in school improvement processes.

On the whole, arrangements for modernising and re-organising the authority's schools are robust. A strong element of this work is the close cooperation with a good range of external partners, which has a positive effect on the provision available to learners, for example when establishing a 'Vocational Village' in Llanelli. There are also purposeful arrangements in place to ensure that pupils with additional learning needs are identified at an early stage and that suitable provision is in place to meet those needs, in most cases.

During the last year, the authority has taken rapid steps to refine provision to support and improve behaviour within schools. There is a strong strategic direction for this work, with these recent changes beginning to have a positive effect on behaviour in schools. The authority shows a clear commitment to improving attendance and there has been strong progress in a minority of schools. However, the authority's attendance rates remain low and improvements across schools have been varied.

Over time, the inspection outcomes of schools in Carmarthenshire vary, although more recently, since 2022, the proportion requiring follow-up activity by Estyn has decreased. Two secondary schools and five primary schools have also been asked to present a good practice case study. Overall, evaluations of well-being have been consistently good in most inspections, with most pupils showing positive attitudes to learning.

Recommendations

- R1 Improve pupils' attendance in the authority's schools
- R2 Strengthen school improvement processes, particularly for secondary schools
- R3 Refine approaches to self-evaluation and improvement planning

What happens next

Following the publication of the inspection report, the local authority should update its plans to address the recommendations and to take account of shortcomings identified through the inspection process. The local authority should update its plans within three months of publication of the inspection report.

Main findings

Outcomes

We were unable to provide a full evaluation of outcomes. This is as a result of the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused the inspections of schools and most other education providers to be suspended since March 2020. It is also a result of the lack of data on outcomes that can be compared over time because the pandemic caused changes to the way that qualifications were awarded. This also affected most of the other data that we consider when making evaluations, such as school attendance, school exclusions and post-16 learner destinations, but we have recently begun to receive this type of data again.

Any evaluations that follow provide a context by reporting pre-pandemic outcomes or relate to more recent outcomes where the evidence base is valid and reliable.

On the whole and over time, the inspection outcomes of schools in Carmarthenshire vary. Between September 2017 and March 2020, we inspected 44 settings. This includes 38 primary schools, four secondary schools, one special school and one pupil referral unit. Of the primary schools, 16 were judged to be in need of follow-up activity, including statutory follow-up activity in three of those schools. One secondary school and one special school were judged to be in need of Estyn follow-up. One pupil referral unit was also judged to be in need of statutory follow-up. Following improvements, none of these providers is in need of follow-up.

Since February 2022, when we resumed school inspections following the pandemic, 38 settings have been inspected. This includes 27 primary schools, four secondary schools and 7 non-maintained nurseries. Overall, outcomes are positive and two secondary schools and five primary schools were asked to submit a good practice case study. However, one secondary school and two primary schools were judged to be in need of statutory follow-up. Three primary schools were judged to be in need of Estyn review.

Between 2017 and 2019, the performance of most secondary schools in Carmarthenshire was in line with, or better than, what is expected in key stage 4. The performance of a very few secondary schools was lower than expected. Pupils who are eligible for free school meals performed in line with the Welsh average.

Ensuring high levels of pupil and staff well-being is a priority for the authority. The judgment on well-being and attitudes to learning was good or better in many of the inspections in Carmarthenshire during the inspection cycle from September 2017 to

March 2020. Of the 44 schools inspected during this period, well-being and attitudes to learning were good or better in 35 of them, with the judgement being adequate in the remainder. In the inspections that have been conducted since Estyn resumed school inspections in 2022, judgements for well-being have been consistently good. In these inspections, most pupils felt safe at school and knew how to stay safe online. Pupil behaviour was a strong overall feature in these schools, with most pupils demonstrating positive attitudes to learning. This is also reflected in the pupil exclusion data. Over the three years up to 2021, the rate of exclusions for five days or fewer was consistently below the national rate, in addition to the rate of exclusions for more than five days. Over the same period, the rate of permanent exclusions was significantly lower than the national rate. However, the authority's attendance rates, including those of pupils who are eligible for free school meals, are below the national averages.

Schools, youth services, authority staff and external agencies work closely together to provide strong support to vulnerable pupils. This contributes well to reducing the number of pupils who are not educated in mainstream schools and ensures that nearly all pupils continue in education, training or employment after they leave school.

There are regular opportunities for pupils to contribute to corporate decisions. For example, a forum of secondary school pupils recently reviewed plans for cuts to the Council's expenditure. Pupils have also been influential as the authority reviews its post-16 provision. Opportunities for pupils to develop their leadership skills and influence decisions within the authority's schools is a strength.

Education services

How effective are school improvement processes in terms of improving the quality of teaching and school leadership?

Carmarthenshire local authority has a close working relationship with its schools. The school improvement service's education support advisers (ESAs) foster a positive and supportive relationship with the authority's schools. Following the COVID-19 pandemic and during the subsequent recovery period, the authority recognised the need to renew its understanding of the context of individual schools and help schools to re-establish their quality assurance processes. As a result, it conducts beneficial visits to support schools to collect evidence of teaching and learning as part of its school improvement programme. Valuable activities such as learning walks, scrutiny of work and seeking the pupil's voice are part of these processes. This information enables advisers to identify key issues and provide suitable intervention, as necessary.

Overall, the authority differentiates the help and support provided to schools appropriately, including for schools that cause concern. Over the past two years, officers have identified that a few primary schools need more intensive support. The authority uses appropriate processes and structures to discuss and broker beneficial support for these schools. Case management meetings are held regularly to discuss the issues that are causing concerns in schools. When appropriate and as part of this

process, the authority uses methods such as pre-warning notices to address urgent issues in schools. Currently, one secondary school and two primary schools are in need of statutory follow-up after an Estyn inspection.

School staff have access to a wide range of relevant professional learning through the local authority and the 'Partneriaeth' service. 'Partneriaeth' provides national leadership programmes, support for newly qualified teachers and professional learning for the Curriculum for Wales. Recently, the school improvement service adapted its professional learning offer in response to feedback from schools and the scrutiny committee's discussion about professional learning needs within the authority's schools. This led to a revised professional learning offer to respond more robustly to the practical needs of schools as they prepare for, and implement, the Curriculum for Wales. The School Improvement Team and the Education and Children's Services meets the professional learning needs of primary schools well. 'Partneriaeth' provides beneficial support to secondary schools through networking opportunities, for example through the subject networks for middle leaders where qualifications and the needs of specific subjects are discussed.

The authority provides beneficial opportunities for schools to share effective practice through networks, practice-sharing events and a valuable digital platform. Following the pandemic, the authority has prioritised re-establishing opportunities for schools to work together through peer work. This co-operation within clusters of schools is developing appropriately.

The authority identifies strengths and areas for improvement appropriately within primary schools. Overall, it provides good support to help them plan for improvement, including tailored support. Valuable co-operation and beneficial use of expertise within the ESA team helps the service to respond constructively to the needs of primary schools. Education support advisers also engage appropriately with secondary school leaders as part of their school improvement role. Information is collected about the priorities of school development plans, arrangements and processes. However, when considering secondary schools, officers do not evaluate or challenge information about strengths and areas for development incisively enough. Often, they do not consider specifically enough how improvement plans and support that they have designed jointly with these schools have an effect on improving teaching, learning and leadership. This means that the authority does not know its secondary schools as well. Throughout, there is not a strong enough focus on quality assuring the support and challenge provided to primary and secondary schools to reduce the variation in the services' school improvement processes.

The local authority provides a valuable range of help and support to governors, including a suitable professional learning programme and support through providing useful resources. In a few schools, this includes opportunities for governors to develop their understanding of self-evaluation processes by shadowing the visits of education support advisers.

How well do the authority's school modernisation and re-organisation arrangements ensure appropriate education provision for all children and young people, including pre-school and post-16 education?

The authority has a clear strategy for modernising and re-organising its schools, which is based on sound principles and objectives. The strategy reflects the authority's desire to create a range of high-quality schools, which meet the needs of their current and future learners. There is an appropriate link between the objectives of the school modernisation strategy, the council's well-being objectives and the education service's ten-year plan. This includes the vision to ensure that children and young people have the best possible start in life, as well as making their communities safe and prosperous. The authority has specific plans for providing community facilities to reduce the effects of poverty on the achievement of pupils and young people. For example, facilities have been provided as part of the scheme at Ysgol Rhys Pritchard, Llandovery, to promote good engagement with pupils, their families and the community.

The commitment of the authority's senior leaders, the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Members with responsibility for Education and Children's Services to realising the strategy is a positive feature. They work effectively with the school modernisation team and other stakeholders to review the strategy and ensure that it ties into, and responds to, the authority's current requirements. For example, they have adapted the strategy to support the Curriculum for Wales, the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2022-32, and have responded to challenges, such as recruiting school leaders in rural areas of the county.

The head of the school modernisation team, together with this colleagues, provides very beneficial leadership and support to officers and elected members on matters relating to the strategy. They hold a suitable range of workshops to update elected members on progress against the priorities in the modernisation strategy and inform them about current and future challenges. This prepares them well to make important decisions in relation to the strategy. The team makes good use of sources of information and data to identify priorities for the school modernisation programme and plan ahead as necessary. For example, they use the findings of building condition and capacity surveys, school population forecasts and area birth rates when drawing up plans. This ensures that they consider the demand for provision for three-year-olds and before- and after-school care when planning new buildings.

A strong element of the modernisation team's work is its close co-operation with a good range of external partners, school leaders and officers across the authority. Co-operation between the team and stakeholders enables them to respond promptly to new requests and priorities. For example, they have recently established temporary centres for pupils with additional learning needs to meet the growing demand for specialist services in primary schools. They have also worked successfully with secondary school leaders to improve the range of courses available for their pupils. A good example of this is the 'Vocational Village' that has been established in Llanelli.

Cameo: Vocational Village

The 'Vocational Village' was established in Llanelli to increase the number and range of vocational courses available to pupils in the area, including a dedicated construction skills centre. The alliance of Llanelli secondary schools includes the four current 11-16 learning settings, namely Bryngwyn, Coedcae, Glan y Môr and St John Lloyd, the 11-19 bilingual learning setting at Strade and Heol Goffa special school, along with post-16 provision at Coleg Sir Gâr. The concept of the 'Vocational Village' was developed in each of the learning institutions to enable pupils to further develop specialised vocational skills. The development provides the following facilities in particular:

- Bryngwyn – Construction Skills Education Centre
- St John Lloyd – a specialist catering training facility and small training restaurant
- Y Strade – a music technology facility
- Coedcae – a performing arts and media facility
- Glan y Môr – a caring and childcare facility

The local authority has used capital grants to invest significantly in a range of capital projects since they began the strategy around twenty years ago. During this period, the numbers of schools and pupil referral units has decreased from 150 to 111. This contributes towards one of the main objectives of the school modernisation and re-organisation strategy, namely to develop an efficient and sustainable school network. The strategy also places a firm emphasis on improving post-16 provision by investing in extensions or new schools. For example, a large-scale re-organisation project was undertaken in terms of secondary and post-16 education in the Dinefwr, Gwendraeth and Amman Valley areas by re-organising the learning settings of five secondary schools into three bilingual 11-19 learning centres.

Although the delivery of this programme has been delayed slightly due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the school modernisation team has ensured that consultations and key decision-making processes have continued, as well as construction. Overall, many of the authority's projects over the past five years have focused appropriately on renewing its complement of schools by erecting new buildings, with a very few proposals to consider re-organising education by area. However, delays in decision-making, including following formal consultations, have meant that the authority has not addressed its plans to re-organise and modernise education in full.

The school modernisation team is leading the way in beginning to respond to the ambitious priorities of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2022-32. Beneficial co-operation between the members of the Sustainable Communities strategic focus group and the Welsh language strategic focus group ensures that the authority identifies opportunities to improve provision for the Welsh language across their schools. For example, they have built a new Welsh language immersion centre in the Gwendraeth Valley area to support pupils who are new to the Welsh language, as well as producing statutory consultations to respond to requests from schools that wish to move along the language continuum by changing the language of provision. One of the strongest features of the school re-organisation strategy is its work to expand Welsh-medium provision in urban areas of the county. A notable example of this is the establishment of the dual stream provision at Ysgol Pen Rhos, Llanelli, to

provide opportunities for primary age pupils to access Welsh-medium education in their local area.

How well do the local authority's education services promote positive behaviour and good attendance in its schools?

The authority has a clear vision for providing behavioural support to schools, pupils and their families. This is based on ensuring equity for pupils, building positive relationships between staff and pupils, and understanding the reasons behind any challenging behaviour. This work has a strong strategic direction. A clear 'four stage' plan is used, which includes definite structures to scale the response to support pupils' behaviour. However, not all schools implement the vision in line with the authority's expectations.

During the last year, the authority has taken swift steps to refine provision to support and improve behaviour within schools. This includes appointing a well-being and support officer for each secondary school and ensuring that there is a specialist teacher and link assistant for each cluster of schools. These staff offer training to school staff and timely support when concerns arise. Overall, these steps to improve behaviour support have been well received by school leaders and have led to improving the schools' ability to respond to some of the challenges they have faced following the pandemic.

The authority evaluates the impact of its work in this area regularly and refines provision as required. This includes regular multi-agency strategy meetings where there is an opportunity to discuss any behavioural themes within schools or individuals that cause concern, and to decide on the most suitable intervention to use in each case.

The authority ensures the appropriate use of its resources to support pupils with profound emotional and behavioural needs. For example, it has modified provision to enable pupils to attend specialist centres to promote their emotional and behavioural skills on a part-time basis, while continuing to attend the home school for a time. This arrangement also facilitates the ability for pupils to return to their mainstream school successfully in due course. A quarter of pupils in key stage 3 who attend the specialist centres now do so under this arrangement.

Improving attendance is one of the new Cabinet's priorities. Although the authority has identified attendance as an important area that is in need of attention, improvements across schools have been varied. There has been strong progress in a minority of schools, although the authority's overall school attendance rates remain stubbornly low following the pandemic.

The authority has a clear procedure to support school leaders to analyse attendance rates. This helps them identify trends and areas for improvement in their schools. It has also developed a school attendance self-evaluation toolkit to support schools to reflect on their arrangements.

Education support advisers discuss attendance concerns during their regular meetings with senior school leaders. However, steps to address the issues are not always detailed enough and these steps are not always monitored closely enough.

Concerns about attendance and the improvement rates of specific schools are discussed at case management meetings. The authority continues to refine its processes and has introduced new arrangements recently to strengthen its work in this area. However, work to improve attendance is not always co-ordinated and procedures for raising concerns about attendance are not always clear. Although the authority has identified good practice within this area, to date, it has not shared these practices across its schools effectively enough.

How successful is the local authority in ensuring that pupils' additional learning needs are identified at an early stage and that suitable provision is in place to meet those needs?

Officers have a sound understanding of the specific needs of the children and young people of Carmarthenshire who have additional learning needs (ALN). They organise a range of suitable provision for them.

Officers are fully committed to the principles of the new legislation and are leading the process of transforming provision for ALN robustly. They have a clear vision that is based on exercises that place appropriate emphasis on the views of individuals. This ensures that provision gives suitable consideration to the aspirations and needs of pupils.

The authority places a suitable emphasis on ensuring that universal learning provision of a high standard is available to all of the authority's learners as a starting point. Officers work effectively with providers to identify pupils' needs at an early stage. This includes an effective strategy for the early years, where officers co-operate with other providers and services, such as health visitors, to respond to the needs that arise. The authority provides appropriate training for the early years workforce to empower them to support children to thrive in their own settings.

The authority provides a range of useful training for school staff, which contributes effectively to identifying pupils' needs at an early stage. This includes a range of remote training and screencasts on a wide range of ALN issues. These are supported by useful guidance documents, for example to assist school ALN co-ordinators to meet the requirements of the new legislation. The authority promotes co-operation among schools to help them implement the guidelines. They also hold a conference for ALN co-ordinators, which is a beneficial opportunity to share effective practices to support pupils. It also provides useful training for governors, which helps them to understand the school's role in supporting pupils with ALN.

The authority ensures that practitioners in settings and schools have the skills necessary to identify needs and receives referrals from specialists such as health service staff. It also provides a useful direct referral line through the authority's website to enable parents to express concern or seek support. Inclusion panels consider referrals and reviews appropriately and effective use is made of Family Liaison Officers to share findings with parents and explain what happens next. The authority offers provision for learners, together with information for their families, equally in Welsh and English.

Officers provide beneficial support for practitioners to ensure that appropriate pupils have a suitable one-page profile, which identifies the most effective methods to

support them. A digital platform is used increasingly effectively and consistently to create and maintain individual development plans (IDPs) for schools and the authority.

The authority maintains a suitable range of specialist provision in special units or schools, which meet the needs of pupils well. This includes special classes that are an integral part of the inclusive provision of the authority's schools. For example, pupils who attend Canolfan Elfed are integral members of the Queen Elizabeth High School family and share experiences alongside their peers in mainstream provision, where appropriate. Suitable arrangements are made for the very few pupils who need specialist provision outside the local authority. The authority provides beneficial support for pupils with ALN who also have English as an additional language, for example by investing in learning assistants who speak Ukrainian and Arabic. The authority provides beneficial opportunities for pupils with ALN to continue their post-16 education in schools and they co-operate increasingly effectively with further education institutions to respond to the aspirations of young people.

At a strategic level, senior officers plan the specialist provision appropriately. For example, recently, the authority has invested significantly in additional provision to support learners with ALN following an increase in the number of pupils with autistic spectrum disorders. Over a twelve-month period, they have increased the number of places available in specialist locations across a number of sites. However, over time, a very few pupils have had to wait for extended periods to gain full access to the specialist provision they need.

The authority has a robust dispute resolution process in place. This includes suitable roles for school staff, authority staff such as Family Liaison Officers and input from appropriate external bodies. As a result, very few appeals or requests for reconsideration arise within this area.

Leadership and management

Senior leaders have established and communicated a clear vision, together with sensible and appropriate strategic aims and objectives for its education services. The authority has competent leaders and there are robust procedures in place that enable them to realise their priorities appropriately. The Leader of the Council, the Cabinet Members for Education, the Chief Executive and the Director of Education and Children's Services have high expectations of officers, schools, other providers and partners. They gain the trust of these stakeholders and others through transparent communication, and provide a robust sense of direction for the authority.

The Chief Executive has been instrumental in establishing a very positive culture that permeates the authority's leadership and management structures. She encourages the entire workforce to act in an open and transparent manner, engendering a culture that creates opportunities for officers and members to hold discussions about difficult and complex issues in a positive, mature and professional manner.

The Leader of the Council has a clear understanding of the objectives and priorities needed to respond to local, regional and national challenges. The Cabinet Member

for Education and the Welsh Language also has a strong knowledge of his areas of responsibility. He provides a clear direction for education services and is passionate about improving education within the county. By working with elected members and the Council's Cabinet, they act purposefully to strengthen education provision, such as increasing the availability of ALN resources. However, in a very few cases, some of the authority's objectives, such as school modernisation, have not been achieved in a timely enough manner.

The Director of Education and Children's Services conveys his vision and intentions clearly and transparently to relevant groups and consults with them appropriately. He succeeds in expressing his vision for education services effectively and has created a culture of meaningful leadership amongst his team. He is a prominent strategic leader who drives the vision with energy and determination. For example, he recognises sensibly that it takes time to establish sustainable education services and has developed an action plan for the next decade, giving very robust consideration to the principles set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. These are also given good consideration in the Council's strategic plans. Over time, the comprehensive review of the work of the education services and children's services has led to a balanced sharing of roles and responsibilities across the service to respond to the needs of residents, providers and the need to deliver appropriate services.

The authority has effective oversight and scrutiny processes. The chair and members of the Education, Young People and Welsh Language Scrutiny Committee have a clear and mature understanding of the role of the committee and are supported effectively by the authority's officers and senior leaders. The chair of the scrutiny committee has a good overview of the service's priorities and appropriate knowledge of relevant education issues. Elected members play a leading role in monitoring the progress of the education service's strategic plan. A good training programme supports the scrutiny arrangements to promote committee members' understanding of their responsibilities and the issues that are in need of their attention. The scrutiny programme is organised purposefully, with flexible opportunities to add items for scrutiny as necessary, which enables them to make timely and informed decisions. Leaders and officers of the education service provide appropriate information which allows elected members to make informed decisions on complex issues. The quality and usefulness of the scrutiny reports have improved over time and they are now more concise, relevant and purposeful.

Leaders have a good understanding of the main strengths and areas for improvement in terms of their education services. This is as a result of self-evaluation processes that are, on the whole, rigorous and include a useful analysis of a wide range of information, alongside fairly robust progress-monitoring processes. The authority welcomes the views of stakeholders, such as headteachers, parents, children and young people and residents on a fairly regular basis to reinforce its understanding of people's views about the quality of its work and to tailor services for the future. There are obvious strengths in the way in which the authority welcomes the views of pupils and includes them in decisions.

The authority has clear and robust procedures for planning for improvement. Leaders develop improvement plans that use the information obtained from the self-evaluation arrangements and are based on sensible first-hand evidence. It includes prudent

consideration of relevant external reports and national aspirations, such as the aim to increase the number of Welsh speakers within the authority.

Leaders act meaningfully to ensure a clear alignment between corporate level improvement plans, such as the Corporate Strategic Plan (2022-2027), the Education Department Plan (2022-2032) to faculty plans, such as plans to develop the school curriculum and pupils' well-being. This is helping to promote a strong understanding among leaders and officers of their main aims and objectives for improvement. Officers, schools and other stakeholders are also clear about the authority's and the education service's key priorities.

Planning for this methodical improvement ensures clear successes in terms of strengthening provision and improving pupils' outcomes and well-being in several aspects. For example, the authority's work has recently been to strengthen its support in terms of supporting behaviour in schools, providing an additional ALN resource and establishing immersion resources for the Welsh language effectively. On the whole, plans focus relevantly on the main areas for improvement, but in some areas, such as improving attendance, the authority does not succeed in realising its plans in a timely enough manner. In a few areas, opportunities to set sufficiently incisive success criteria within plans are also missed, at times.

The authority has demonstrated its ability to respond quickly to challenging situations, such as its response to the challenges involved in providing services and support during the COVID-19 pandemic and during the subsequent recovery period. The decision to tailor and build on the work of the strategic groups established at that time is a robust example of how the authority has implemented its learning from that difficult experience.

Cameo: A collaborative method of discussing, challenging, monitoring and leading the work to meet the priorities of the Education Service

In order to respond to challenges during the pandemic, the authority established a number of groups to communicate and come to joint decisions with schools and other partners. This was a useful method for reaching agreed decisions and to ensure a clear flow of communication. The authority builds on these experiences by tailoring the groups and establishing a range of strategic groups. The strategic groups, which include members from the authority's leaders and officers, headteachers and other multi-agency representatives, are now a core part of discussing, challenging, monitoring and leading the work of meeting the education service's 8 main priorities. The groups are as follows:

Focus Group	Priority area / aim
Inclusion and Engagement	Ensure a proactive, inclusive education system
Teaching and Learning	Ensure excellent progress for all learners
Child Safeguarding	Ensure that all children and young people are happy, safe and thriving and overcome poverty
Well-being	Foster very good mental and physical health for all

Leadership	Ensure that ambitious leadership leads to excellent progress for all learners
Sustainable Communities	Deliver high standards of bilingual education in environments that focus on the increasingly modern and sustainable community
The Welsh Language	Ensure successful bilingual and multilingual development for all
Departmental Operations	Provide high quality support services that affect the efficiency of the education system

The authority is alert to the growing challenge that exists in terms of reducing the inequalities faced by children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Over recent years, the rate of pupils that are eligible for free school meals has increased significantly within the authority from 16.5% in 2019 to 23.9% in 2023, which is closer to the national rate. Leaders have recently established a corporate strategic plan to set their vision and plan across the authority's departments in terms of how to mitigate the effects of poverty. This includes identifying the contributions that the education service can make to this work. There are a number of beneficial activities that contribute towards reducing the effects of poverty, such as the toy appeal at Christmas. The strategic plan relating to poverty also includes a number of beneficial actions for the future, but it is currently too early to see the effect of this work.

There are robust arrangements in place to evaluate the effect of improvement plans that identify the extent to which the authority is meeting its objectives and how close it is to achieving its agreed aims. A good example of this is the quarterly performance reporting processes that use transparent information about performance. This is reported regularly to the scrutiny committee and, as a result, senior leaders and elected members are familiar with the rate of progress against priorities, and challenge and support as necessary. Senior leaders of the education service also meet regularly to discuss progress, taking into account information and evaluations from the strategic groups that are linked to the education department's main priorities. On a more practical level, leaders usually take appropriate remedial action when slippage is seen against improvement aims.

Leaders and managers have developed an effective and conscientious team of staff. They model and promote professional values and behaviours that contribute positively to effective co-operation between staff, schools and partners. The corporate learning development team has promoted valuable motivation and mentoring opportunities for education services officers.

The authority uses reasonable and sensible arrangements to manage staff performance and identify and develop their professional learning needs. These arrangements, namely 'Recognising and Growing Together', ensure a supportive atmosphere for staff to develop and learn professionally. Officers appreciate the support and challenge that the process offers, including the beneficial professional learning opportunities from which they can benefit. Development objectives for individuals focus appropriately on addressing the needs of the service, in addition to respecting the professional aspirations of officers. Together, the performance management approach and the appropriateness and effect of professional learning,

have a good influence on the ability of staff to perform appropriately in their role, motivate them and improve their performance.

There is a comprehensive corporate programme of beneficial online training for staff, which includes important and up-to-date issues, such as safeguarding. There are appropriate examples of officers taking advantage of useful professional learning to improve aspects of their work, such as managing staff and supporting change.

Safeguarding children and young people is a corporate priority. It is seen as everyone's responsibility. All centrally employed staff and elected members complete relevant safeguarding training. The corporate safeguarding policy sets out the local authority's arrangements for safeguarding children and the business plan addresses key priorities for improvement. The corporate safeguarding group includes representatives from different service areas and provides strong leadership. Elected members receive safeguarding reports and data and challenge them appropriately.

The school safeguarding and attendance team provides useful timely advice and high-quality training to schools. Officers are experienced and support schools exceptionally well with all safeguarding issues. They also provide beneficial pastoral support to designated safeguarding persons, when necessary. All schools have access to a social worker and a direct family engagement worker to receive additional advice and support on safeguarding issues. This is a strength in terms of the authority's arrangements. Officers monitor each school's safeguarding practices effectively through an annual audit. They respond comprehensively to each school's audit and challenge areas of concern. From this analysis, they also revise their support for schools and forward plan and tailor subsequent workforce training. However, the local authority does not currently collate data from its schools on issues such as allegations of bullying and, as a result, officers cannot analyse or address trends. Safeguarding officers work productively with different teams, for example the behaviour support team, to provide beneficial support to vulnerable pupils and their families. They also refer schools to other organisations when appropriate, including voluntary ones.

Funding for education is prioritised by the authority. Leaders have a good understanding of their financial situation within the education service and are aware of the financial challenges. The authority has funded situations that are beyond the control of schools, such as pay awards in full. The school budgets have been protected over the last four years, although they are required to make savings during the 2023/24 financial year. The prioritisation of education funding is reflected in the obvious capital investment made through the school modernisation strategy.

There is a structured approach to monitoring school budgets, including their use of grants. The authority encourages schools to plan financially in the medium term and they are given valuable support in terms of their management and financial planning. The authority uses its data to compare the operating costs of its schools and shares this information with headteachers. There is effective communication between schools and the authority through the School Budget Forum and the meetings are well attended. The Forum considers relevant issues, including setting the authority's annual budget and ongoing reviews of school finances and funding formulae. The authority has a range of service level agreements and most schools take advantage of these. Service level agreements and contracts are reviewed regularly.

Overall, school balances were in deficit by £2 million in 2019-20. School balances, as in other authorities, have increased significantly to £15.2 million at the end of 2021-22. However, there was a deficit in the financial balances of 21 of the authority's schools at the end of 2021-22. Although the authority has arrangements to accept plans from schools to recover the deficits, in many cases, there are no plans in place to respond to the deficit. Consequently, there are implications for the sustainability of school budgets.

Evidence base of the report

Before the inspection, inspectors:

- consulted the local authority on the local inspection questions to be used during the inspection, based on the authority's self-evaluation, strategic plans and relevant data held by Estyn
- analysed the outcomes from open questionnaires, including the views of learners, parents, school staff and governors, local authority staff, regional consortium staff, elected members and general public
- carried out a preliminary visit to the local authority to meet with a range of relevant partners to education services, such as learner representatives, headteachers and governors, and leaders from statutory and third sector agencies working with children and young people

During the inspection, inspectors:

- met with the leader of the council, elected members responsible for education services, elected members responsible for the scrutiny of education services, the chief executive, the director of education, other leaders and managers in education services, other relevant staff in the local authority, the managing director of the regional consortium for school improvement and other relevant staff from the regional consortium
- looked closely at the local authority's self-evaluation processes
- considered the local authority's strategic and operational plans for improvement
- scrutinised a variety of documents, including information on learner outcomes, information on the performance of schools and other education settings, including information from the regional consortium for school improvement, minutes from a range of meetings, reports presented to council or scrutiny, information relating to the safeguarding of learners and other information relevant to the local authority's education services held by Estyn

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- reviewed the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, standardise and ensure the quality of the inspection
- provided a draft copy of the report for the local authority to note any concerns with factual accuracy, and made amendments where necessary

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the local authority and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

The report was produced in accordance with Section 38 of the Education Act 1997, the Children Act 2004 and the Learning and Skills Act 2000.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of publication. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 (“the Act”)-Community Review

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT.

Council will recall that this Community Review was initiated as The Council has a duty under s22 of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 (“the Act”) to report every ten years on a community review having regard to the Local and Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales (LDBCW) timetable for conducting the reviews of principal areas’ electoral arrangements required by section 29 (1) of the Act.

The last electoral review was carried out by LDBCW was conducted in 2021 with consequential changes being introduced with the Local Government Elections in May 2022. The next round of electoral reviews carried out by LDBCW will commence in 2024 with any consequential changes being introduced with the Local Government Elections in May 2027.

At its meeting on 9 February 2023, Council approved the commencement of a Community Review to examine existing Town and Community governance arrangements and make Final Recommendations for any appropriate change.

The formal consultation period was published on the Council’s website, but a more targeted engagement was sent to:

All Town and Community Council
Local Members of Parliament
Local Members of the Senedd
All Ward Councillors

Representations were invited from Monday 13 March to Monday 24 April 2023. Twenty-four representations were received during the consultation period, and these have been reviewed and proposals for Draft Recommendations have been prepared. Annex 1 to the Report summarises the responses received and proposals for Draft Recommendations arising from these.

Also detailed in the Draft Recommendations are those recommendations put forward by the Electoral Registration Officer/Returning Officer.

Full Council considered and approved the Draft Recommendation at their meeting on 21 June 2023. The Draft Recommendations have been subject to a second consultation period, this second stage consultation involved the public and interested stakeholders being able to comment on the draft recommendations There was a total of 14 respondents to the second stage. Recommendations, with further detailed responses can be seen on the attached Appendix A.

Members are advised that detailed within Appendix A is those Town/Community Councils where we recommend status quo, this was as a result of a level of public support to maintain

the current arrangements for their Town/Community councils and or there was no evidence /comments submitted to show that any form of alteration was required.

As part of this review, it was identified that there were anomalies with community boundaries at (See Appendix B for relevant maps showing anomalies:

- a) Anomaly at community boundary between Llangyndeyrn Community Council and Trimsaran Community Council involving Nos. 7-15 and 58-60 Heol Waunhir.
- b) Anomaly at community boundary between Llangyndeyrn Community Council and Llanelli Rural Council involving No. 1, Erwau'r Garn, Carway.
- c) Anomaly at community boundary between Llangyndeyrn Community Council and Pontyberem Community Council involving one property: Brynceirios, Bancffosfelen, Llanelli.

This current review cannot address community boundaries and hence to address these anomalies we need to carry out a Section 25 of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 ("the Act"). If permission is granted to carry out a review under Section 25, it is our intention to commence this review immediately following the conclusion of this current review. We hope to conclude this review within a six-month window.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

NO

Public Consultation Responses-Appendix A
Relevant maps highlighting anomalies-
Appendix B

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: Amanda Edwards, Electoral Services and Civil Registration Manager

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
NONE	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

2. Legal

S22 (2) Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 provides that a principal council must have regard to LDBCW's timetable for conducting reviews of principal areas' electoral arrangements when determining when to conduct a community review.

Section 34 of the Act stipulates the mandatory consultees for a community review.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed Amanda Edwards, Electoral Services and Civil Registration Manager

(Please specify the outcomes of consultations undertaken where they arise against the following headings)

1. Scrutiny Committee request for pre-determination	Not applicable
If yes include the following information: -	
Scrutiny Committee	
Date the report was considered: -	
Scrutiny Committee Outcome/Recommendations: -	

2. Local Member(s)

N/A

3. Community / Town Council

N/A

4. Relevant Partners

N/A

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

N/A

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED	Include any observations here
YES	

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

THERE ARE NONE

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Public Consultation Responses		

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Carmarthenshire County Council

Community Review

Final Recommendations -this includes a summary of submissions received to the Initial and Draft Recommendations

Recommendation	Received by and summary of response	Draft Recommendation
1	<p>Llanfihangel-ar-arth Community Council- agreed at their meeting on 13th March 2023 to propose unwarding of their community council.</p> <p>A letter was received from the Community Council supporting the draft proposals.</p>	<p>Currently this community council has a North and a South Ward. Final recommendation is to unward the community council, retaining their membership of 12 members.</p>
2	<p>Manordeilo and Salem Community Council-agreed at their meeting on 8th March 2023 that they are satisfied with current arrangements. A subsequent email was received on 5 May 2023, which indicated that members at their meeting on 12 April 2023 agreed to the unwarding of their community council. A further letter of support for these proposals was received from the Community Council on 26 June 2023. A further letter of support was received from Councillor Fiona Walters for this proposal on 5 July 2023.</p>	<p>Currently this community council has a Cwmifor Ward and a Salem Ward. Final recommendation is to unward the community council, retaining their membership of 12 members.</p>
3	<p>Llangathen Community Council-agreed by all members to propose unwarding of their community council.</p>	<p>Currently this community council has a North and a South Ward. Final recommendation is to unward the community council, retaining their membership of 8 members.</p>
4	<p>Carmarthen Town Council-agreed by all members that they are satisfied with current arrangements.</p>	<p>Final recommendation is to retain status quo for Carmarthen Town Council.</p>
5	<p>Llangyndeyrn Community Council-agreed by members at their meeting on 3rd April 2023 to recommend the following:</p>	<p>Final recommendation is to propose: Pontyates ward- 5 Members Carway ward- 5 Members</p>

	<p>Pontyates Ward- decrease by one member, hence from 6 members to 5. Carway Ward- increase by two members, hence from 3 members to 5 Llangydeyrn Ward- retain the three members, hence no change. *This will provide an overall increase by one member. A further letter was received from the Community Council on 4 July supporting the Draft recommendations.</p> <p>Further communication was received from Councillor Meinir James supporting the Draft Recommendations.</p>	<p>Llangydeyrn ward – 3 Members</p> <p>Overall increase of one member.</p>
6	<p>Councillor Tyssul Evans, County Councillor for Llangydeyrn Electoral Ward. Cllr Evans suggested three scenarios, one of which is the proposal submitted by Llangydeyrn Community Council. Cllr Evans also suggested the movement of electors from one community ward to another, within Llangydeyrn Community Council on the basis that geographically they would sit better in the suggested community ward.</p> <p>A further letter was received from Councillor Tyssul Evans on 26 June stating he supports the draft proposals for Llangydeyrn Community Council.</p>	<p>Final recommendation is to propose:</p> <p>Pontyates ward- 5 Members Carway ward- 5 Members Llangydeyrn ward – 3 Members</p> <p>Overall increase of one member.</p> <p>Also recommend the moving Streets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Pontnewydd from Register BZ (Carway Ward) to Register CC (Pontyates Ward) ●Pontyates from Register BZ (Carway Ward) to Register CC (Pontyates Ward) ●Four Roads from Register CB (Llangydeyrn Ward) to Register CC (Pontyates Ward)
7	<p>Llanelli Town Council – It was agreed by Members at their meeting on 5th April 2023 to propose splitting the community wards of Bigyn and Glanymor into</p>	<p>This proposal has been considered as part of the Draft proposals; however, we believe that splitting the two community wards of Bigyn and</p>

	smaller wards i.e., Bigyn 1, Bigyn 2 and Glanymor 1 and Glanymor 2. No other proposals were put forward.	Glanymor into two will not offer any real benefit or positively contribute towards effective and convenient local governance, therefore this was not considered. This remains the same for the Final Recommendations and status quo will retain regarding Llanelli Town Council.
8	Councillor John Jenkins, County Councillor for Elli Electoral Ward-Cllr Jenkins stated his objection to the original proposal put forward by Llanelli Town Council as in recommendation 7.	
9	Councillor Louvain Roberts, County Councillor for Glanymor Electoral Ward-Cllr Roberts stated her objection to the original proposal put forward by Llanelli Town Council as in recommendation 7.	
10	Councillor Sean L. Rees, County Councillor for Glanymor Electoral Ward-Cllr Rees stated his objection to the original proposal put forward by Llanelli Town Council as in recommendation 7.	
11	Councillor Michael D. Cranham, County Councillor for Bigyn Electoral Ward-Cllr Cranham stated his objection to the original proposal put forward by Llanelli Town Council as in recommendation 7.	
12	St. Ishmael Community Council-at their council meeting on 4 th April, Members agreed that they did not wish to unward but to retain the three community wards, namely Ferryside, Llansaint and Picton.	Final recommendation is to retain status quo for St. Ishmael Community Council.
13	Gorslas Community Council- Members agreed at their March meeting that they were satisfied with current arrangements with their membership numbers, warding arrangements and the name of the Community Council.	Final recommendation is to retain status quo for Gorslas Community Council.

14	Llanddowror and Llanmiloe Community Council- Members agreed at their April meeting that they have no significant or strong objections to the unwarding of their community council.	Currently this community council has a North Ward and South Ward. Final recommendation is to unward Llanddowror and Llanmiloe Community Council, retaining a membership of ten members.
15	Cenarth Community Council- at their meeting on 6 th April, Members agreed that they are totally opposed to the unwarding of their community council on the grounds that there is no conflict between the interests of the wards, unwarding would lead to neglect of residents and not bring the community closer.	Final recommendation is to retain the status quo for Cenarth Community Council.
16	<p>Llanelli Rural Council- at their meeting on 19 April 2023, Members of the Council's Policy and Resources Committee after having carried out an exercise to forecast future electorate using the Local Development Plan 2018-2033, put forward a proposal to increase the membership of the Bynea ward from three to four members.</p> <p>Three emails were received from Councillor Jason Hart, Councillor Alex Evans and Councillor Sharen Davies. All three Councillor's support the increase of the Bynea Ward by one member but also propose that the Dafen Ward is decreased by one Member.</p> <p>The draft recommendations were considered by Llanelli Rural council and were fully supported.</p>	<p>Final recommendation is to propose an increase by one member to the Bynea Ward of Llanelli Rural Council, giving an increase from 3 to four members and an overall increase from 21 to 22 members.</p> <p>The proposal to decrease the Dafen Ward was considered, however the ratio of councillor: electors for this ward is consistent with other community ward ratios in Carmarthenshire. Therefore, this proposal has been rejected.</p>
17	Newcastle Emlyn Town Council- Members feel strongly that their current membership should be retained at 10 members.	Final recommendation is to retain the status quo for Newcastle Emlyn Town Council.
18	Llangeler Community Council- Members wish to retain status quo on current membership, warding arrangements and name of their community council	Final recommendation is to retain the status quo for Llangeler Community Council.

19	Llanllawddog Community Council- Members wish to retain current arrangements. A further letter was received by Llanllawddog Community Council on 11 July 2023 supporting the Draft Recommendations.	Final recommendation is to retain the status quo for Llanllawddog Community Council.
20	Cilymaenllwyd Community Council- Members agree to the unwarding of their community council.	Currently this community council has a North Ward and South Ward. Final recommendation is to unward Cilymaenllwyd Community Council, retaining a membership of nine members.
21	Llanfihangel Aberbythych Community Council- Members agree to the unwarding of their community council.	Currently this community council has a North Ward and South Ward. Final recommendation is to unward Llanfihangel Aberbythych Community Council, retaining a membership of eleven members.
22	Councillor Carys Jones, County Councillor for St. Clears and Llansteffan Electoral Ward. Cllr Jones wishes to see the retention of the Community Wards of Llansteffan and Llanybri on the grounds that they are different communities and Cllr Jones feels if the community council became unwarded then there is a risk of Llanybri issues would be become completely marginalized.	Final recommendation is to retain the status quo for Llansteffan and Llanybri Community Council.
23	Llansteffan and Llanybri Community Council- Members at their April meeting resolved to retain current arrangements and object to any proposal to unward their community council.	Final recommendation is to retain the status quo for Llansteffan and Llanybri Community Council.
24	Llandyfaelog Community Council- Members wish to see current arrangements continue. A further letter was received from Llandyfaelog Community Council supporting the Draft proposals.	Final recommendation is to retain the status quo for Llandyfaelog Community Council.

	Communication was also received from Cllr. Meirir James supporting the current arrangements for Llandyfaelog Community Council.	
25	<p>Electoral Registration Officer proposes that Cilycwm Community Council is unwarded. This proposal is put forward as she believes that the community council would still work effectively for all residents and that becoming unwarded will not devalue the strength of the Community Council.</p> <p>A letter was received from Cilycwm Community Council supporting the Draft proposals.</p>	Final recommendation is to unward Cilycwm Community Council, retaining their overall membership of 8.
26	Electoral Registration Officer proposes that Cynwyl Gaeo Community Council is unwarded. This proposal is put forward as she believes that the community council would still work effectively for all residents and that becoming unwarded will not devalue the strength of the Community Council.	Final recommendation is to unward Cynwyl Gaeo Community Council, retaining their overall membership of 10.
27	Electoral Registration Officer proposes that Llanboidy Community Council is unwarded. This proposal is put forward as she believes that the community council would still work effectively for all residents and that becoming unwarded will not devalue the strength of the Community Council.	Final recommendation is to unward Llanboidy Community Council, retaining their overall membership of 10.
28	Electoral Registration Officer proposes that Llanegwad Community Council is unwarded. This proposal is put forward as she believes that the community council would still work effectively for all residents and that becoming unwarded will not devalue the strength of the Community Council.	Final recommendation is to retain the status quo for Llanegwad Community Council, retaining their overall membership of 12.

	A letter was received in response to the draft recommendations stating that the Community Council do NOT wish to become unwarded community council as they wish to retain its local representation on the grounds that they cover a geographical area.	
29	Electoral Registration Officer proposes that Llangunnor Community Council is unwarded. This proposal is put forward as she believes that the community council would still work effectively for all residents and that becoming unwarded will not devalue the strength of the Community Council.	Final recommendation is to unward Llangunnor Community Council, retaining their overall membership of 13.
30	Electoral Registration Officer proposes that Llanybydder Community Council is unwarded. This proposal is put forward as she believes that the community council would still work effectively for all residents and that becoming unwarded will not devalue the strength of the Community Council.	Final recommendation is to unward Llanybydder Community Council, retaining their overall membership of 12.
31	Electoral Registration Officer proposes that St. Clears Community Council is unwarded. This proposal is put forward as she believes that the community council would still work effectively for all residents and that becoming unwarded will not devalue the strength of the Community Council.	Final recommendation is to unward St. Clears Community Council, retaining their overall membership of 13.

The Electoral Registration Officer received no formal proposals for change for the following Town/Community Councils and their Community Wards, therefore the Electoral Registration Officer recommends there is no change to the following Town/Community Councils current arrangements:

Abergwili

Henllanfallteg

Llanfihangel Rhos-y-Corn

Llansawel

Abernant

Kidwelly

Llanfynydd

Llanwinio

Ammanford	Laugharne Township	Llangadog	Llanwrda
Betws	Llanarthney	Llangain	Llanycrwys
Bronwydd	Llanddarog	Llangennech	Meidrim
Cwarter Bach	Llanddeusant	Llangynin	Myddfai
Cwmamman	Llandeilo	Llangynog	Newchurch and Merthyr
Cynwyl Elfed	Llandovery	Llanllwni	Pembrey & Burry Port
Dyffryn Cennen	Llandybie	Llannon	Pencarreg
Eglwyscummin	Llanedi	Llanpumsaint	Pendine
	Llanfair-ar-Bryn	Llansadwrn	Pontyberem
Talley	Trelech a'r Betws	Trimsaran	Whitland



Llangyndeyrn

Glyn

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SUBJECT

Polling District and Polling Places Review 2023

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT.

Under the Representation of the People Act 1983, the council has a duty to divide its area into polling districts and to designate a polling place for each district.

The following definitions may be helpful when reading the report:

- “Polling districts” are geographical electoral areas into which wards and constituencies may be sub-divided.
- “Polling places” are the buildings or areas designated by the council where electors in a polling district go to vote in person.
- “Polling stations” are the number of issuing desks in the building or area that is the designated polling place.

It is the responsibility of the relevant authority to designate a polling place for every polling district in the parliamentary constituency unless the size or other circumstances of the polling

district are such that the situation of the polling stations do not materially affect the convenience of electors.

The Returning Officer is responsible for ensuring that there are sufficient number of polling stations and allot the electors to those polling stations in such manner as she thinks the most convenient.

The Electoral Administration Act 2006, as amended, introduced a duty on all local authorities in Great Britain to review their polling districts and polling places at least once every five years.

Under section 18C of the Representation of the People Act 1983, the next compulsory review must be undertaken within a 16-month window between 1 October 2023 and 31 January 2025.

The intention of the legislation was reviews would be completed by the January before a UK parliamentary general election. However, since the repeal of the Fixed Term Parliaments Act 2011, there is no longer any certainty as to when the next general election will be.

The Dissolution and Calling of Parliament Act 2022 means:

- the UK Parliament can be dissolved by the King on request of the Prime Minister, at any time within the 5 years of the life of the Parliament
- the next general election must take place before Tuesday 28 January 2025, but it could happen at any point before then
- there is no longer a link between the timing of the compulsory polling district and places review falling in a 16-month period ending 3 months before a scheduled general election.

In addition, the Boundary Commission for Wales has undertaken a review of parliamentary constituency boundaries. The Commission has now published its final recommendations, and Orders for the new parliamentary constituency boundaries will be made by 1 November 2023.

Once the Orders for new parliamentary constituencies have been made, the new boundaries will be used for the next general election.

If a parliamentary by election is called in the meantime, it would be run on existing boundaries.

These issues mean it is important that the polling district and places review is carried out as early as possible, so that Carmarthenshire County Council has agreed polling districts and places to be used for the next parliamentary election as well as the scheduled local elections and/or Police and Crime 68 Commissioner elections in May 2024 and has a polling scheme in place which reflects the new constituencies.

Timing of the polling district and places review:

As highlighted above, it is important to complete the review as soon as possible, so the polling districts and places for future elections can be agreed in time for the next general election and scheduled elections.

Section 18C of the Representation of the People Act 1983 does not allow the review to commence before 1 October 2023.

It is recommended that the compulsory polling district and places review commences on Thursday 12 October 2023.

Although the review itself cannot commence earlier, there is a degree of preparatory work which can be undertaken prior to the review, as well as informal consultation.

It would be desirable for any changes in polling districts to be reflected in the electoral register published on 1 December 2023. However, due to capacity desirability for a 6-week consultation period and the council meeting timetable, it is unlikely that the review will be complete until January 2024.

This would mean that the electoral register would need to be republished to take account of any changes to polling districts.

This is the proposed timetable for the review:

Review of polling districts and places 2023	
Preparatory work	Started 24 July 2023
Resolution from Council providing for commencement of review	11 October 2023
Preliminary review-including informal consultation	July to 11 October 2023
Notice of Review published	12 October 2023
Council proposals published	12 October 2023
Commencement of formal consultation	12 October 2023
End of formal consultation	9 November 2023
Consider responses	By 17 November 2023
Publish Electoral Register	1 December 2023
Final Proposals to be taken to Pre-Cabinet	11 December 2023
Final Proposals approved by Full Council	17 January 2024
Re publish Register of Electors	1 February 2024
Scheduled elections on new polling districts, places and stations scheme	2 May 2024

It is recommended that the outline timetable for the review is approved.

Legal requirements

The process for a polling district and places review is set out in Schedule A1, Representation of the People Act 1983.

The Council must:

- publish a notice of the holding of a review.
- consult the (Acting) Returning Officer ((A)RO) for every parliamentary constituency which is wholly or partly in its area.
- publish all representations made by an (A)RO within 30 days of receipt by posting a copy of them at the local authority's office and in at least one conspicuous place in their area and, if the authority maintains a website, by placing a copy on the authority's website.

- seek representations from such persons as it thinks have particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability. Such persons must have an opportunity to make representations and to comment on the representations made by the (A)RO(s).

On completion of the review, the council must give reasons for its decisions and publish:

- all correspondence sent to an (A)RO in connection with the review.
- all correspondence sent to any person whom the authority thinks has particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability.
- all representations made by any person in connection with the review.
- the minutes of any meeting held by the council to consider any revision to the designation of polling districts or polling places within its area as a result of the review.
- details of the designation of polling districts and polling places within the local authority area as a result of the review.
- details of the places where the results of the review have been published.

Preparatory work

Even though the formal review cannot start until 2 October 2023, there is a range of preparatory activity which Electoral Services are already carrying out.

This includes:

- Reading the final proposals published by the Boundary Commission.
- Contacting Returning Officers and Elections Teams in neighbouring authorities which will be sharing our constituency.
- Liaising with electoral software suppliers about structuring the electoral register to accommodate boundary changes.
- Preparing data for the start of the review (electorate figures, turnout from previous elections, information about new housing developments in the next 5 years).
- Identifying organisations with a special interest/expertise in disabled access to consult

Preliminary review

Electoral Services will also carry out a preliminary review of the current polling districts and places in the county to assess their suitability.

This involves:

- Compiling details of current polling places with a summary of their suitability
- Checking the continued availability of polling places
- Reviewing feedback from stakeholders at previous elections
- Identifying potential alternative buildings where appropriate
- Ensuring that polling places can support the requirements of the Elections Act, for example with sufficient space to undertake Voter ID checks, and to accommodate equipment to assist disabled voters.
- Seeking advice and guidance from local disability groups and local authority experts around accessibility
- Preparing council proposals and drafting (A)RO comments, including explanations for “no changes”

Informal consultation

Electoral Services are also carrying out informal consultation with interested groups in preparation for the review.

This involves:

- Seeking the views of organisations with a special interest/expertise in disabled access
- Informal consultation with group leaders/local political parties
- Inviting comments from polling station inspectors

It will be important to do as much preparatory work as possible before the official commencement of the review, to ensure that it's early completion.

It is recommended that approval is granted to follow the review process described in this report.

Implementing parliamentary boundary changes

The Boundary Commission for Wales recently undertook a review of parliamentary constituency boundaries. They have published their final recommendations, and Orders for the new parliamentary constituency boundaries will be made by 1 November 2023.

Once the Orders for new parliamentary constituencies have been made, the new boundaries will be used for the next general election.

If a parliamentary by election is called in the meantime, it would be run on existing boundaries. This means the Register of Electors needs to be able to reflect both the existing and new constituencies.

Work can be done to prepare the register in the background before then, so that once the Order for the new parliamentary constituencies is made, the register can be re-arranged or adapted as necessary to give effect to the Order. This would allow any snap general election in November 2023 to be run on the new constituencies.

This can be achieved by creating future administrative areas within the Election Management system. The Electoral Services Manager, on behalf of the Electoral Registration Officer, will liaise with the software supplier to implement this. This work can be started once the final parliamentary constituency proposals are published.

It is recommended that the Electoral Registration Officer is authorised to take the necessary measures as soon as possible to give effect to parliamentary constituency changes, ensuring that the register reflects existing and new constituencies, until the boundaries are fully in force.

Implementing polling district changes

The polling district and places review may result in new polling districts being created or existing polling district boundaries being amended.

If the council makes any alterations to the polling districts in its area, the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) must amend the register of electors accordingly (Section 18A (5) Representation of the People Act 1983).

The changes to the register take effect on the date the ERO publishes a notice stating that the adaptations have been made.

Where polling districts have been created to support the implementation of boundary changes, the register will need to be constructed in a way that is capable of reflecting the existing and new boundaries. This is to ensure that any parliamentary by elections can be run on the existing boundaries, until the new boundaries come into force.

This can be achieved by making any parts of existing electoral areas that will be split when the new boundaries come into effect into separate polling districts.

Publishing the register to reflect existing and new boundaries will also help to enable current councillors and MPs to receive the parts of the register that they are entitled to, while allowing individuals to be supplied with the relevant parts of the register once they become a candidate for an election.

This may mean that, for administrative purposes, there are two versions of the polling scheme. Once the boundaries are in fully in force, any polling districts which have been split simply to allow elections to be run on either set of boundaries, can be re-merged.

It is recommended that the Electoral Registration Officer is authorised to take the necessary measures to give effect to any new or amended polling districts on completion of the polling district review, ensuring that the register reflects existing and new boundaries where appropriate, until the boundaries are fully in force.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

NO

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: **Amanda Edwards** Electoral Services and Civil Registration Manager

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
NONE	YES	YES	NONE	YES	NONE	NONE

Legal

The Electoral Administration Act 2006, as amended, introduced a duty on all local authorities in Great Britain to review their polling districts and polling places at least once every five years.

Under section 18C of the Representation of the People Act 1983, the next compulsory review must be undertaken within a 16-month window between 1 October 2023 and 31 January 2025.

2. Finance

The only costs expected as a result of conducting this review relate mainly to advertising and copying. These are not expected to be significant and will be absorbed from within existing budgets within Electoral Services.

Without pre-empting the outcome of the review, it might be that proposals come forward resulting in the removal or adding of polling places which could reduce/increase the costs to the authority associated with local elections moving forwards.

Risk Management Issues

The Council is required to designate polling districts and polling places to effectively conduct elections. By agreeing the recommendations in this report, the Council will be meeting its statutory duties.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: Amanda Edwards **Electoral Services and Civil Registration Manager**

(Please specify the outcomes of consultations undertaken where they arise against the following headings)

1. Scrutiny Committee request for pre-determination	Not applicable
If yes include the following information: -	
Scrutiny Committee	
Date the report was considered: -	
Scrutiny Committee Outcome/Recommendations: -	

2. Local Member(s)

N/A

3. Community / Town Council

N/A

4. Relevant Partners

N/A

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

N/A

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED	Include any observations here
YES	

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

THERE ARE NONE

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Terms of Reference		

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COUNCIL

11TH OCTOBER 2023

ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATOR REPORT 2022-2023

Cabinet recommendation:-

that the Annual Treasury Management and Prudential Indicator Report for 2022-23 be adopted.

Reasons:

To comply with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the Public Sector.

Cabinet Decision Required YES

Council Decision Required YES

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:- Cllr. A. Lenny

Directorate: Corporate Services

Name of Director: Chris Moore

Report Author: Anthony Parnell

Designations:

Director of Corporate Services

Treasury and Pension Investments Manager

Tel/ Email address:

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Tel: 01267 224180 E Mail: AParnell@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**COUNCIL
11TH OCTOBER 2023**

ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATOR REPORT 2022-2023

The Council adopted the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy and the five year capital programme for 2022-2023 on the 2nd March 2022. This Annual Report lists the activities that took place in 2022-2023 under the headings of:

Investments
Borrowing
Security, Liquidity and Yield
Treasury Management Prudential Indicators
Prudential Indicators
Leasing
Rescheduling

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: **C Moore** Director of Corporate Services

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	NONE	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

Within the requirements of the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy Report 2022-2023

3. Finance

The authority's investments during the year returned an average rate of 1.82%, exceeding the benchmark rates. Total investment balance at the year-end amounted to £148.50m.

£20m of new PWLB borrowing was taken during the year. Long term debt outstanding at the year-end amounted to £410.57m.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: **C Moore** Director of Corporate Services

1. Scrutiny Committee request for pre-determination		Yes
Scrutiny Committee	Corporate Policy and Resources Committee	
Date the report was considered:-	19/07/2023	
Scrutiny Committee Outcome/Recommendations:-		

2. Local Member(s) N/A

3. Community / Town Council N/A

4. Relevant Partners N/A

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations N/A

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER AWARE/CONSULTED	YES
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**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:
THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW**

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services - Code of Practice Revised 2017		County Hall, Carmarthen

ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATOR REPORT 2022-23

1. Introduction

The Treasury Management Policy and Strategy for 2022-23 was approved by Council on 2nd March 2022. Section B 1.1(2) stated that a year end annual report would be produced.

This report meets the requirements of both the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management, (the Code), and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities, (the Prudential Code) and outlines the Treasury Management activities in 2022-23 financial year.

2. Investments

One of the primary activities of the Treasury Management operation is the investment of surplus cash for which the Authority is responsible. As well as the Authority's own cash the County Council invests School Funds, Trust Funds and other Funds, with any interest derived from these investments being passed over to the relevant Fund.

All surplus money is invested daily with the approved counterparties either via brokers on the Money Markets or direct. The security of the investments is the main priority, appropriate liquidity should be maintained and returns on the investments a final consideration. It continues to be difficult to invest these funds as the market continues to be insecure and as a consequence appropriate counterparties are limited.

For 2022-23 investments to individual counterparties were limited to:

	Maximum to Lend £m
Upper Limit Any one British Bank and Building Society with a credit rating of at least F1, P-1 or A-1 short term or AA-, Aa3 or AA- long term	10
Middle Limit Any one British Bank and Building Society with a credit rating of at least F1, P-1 or A-1 short term	7
UK Banks Part Nationalised Included as investment counterparties, as long as they continue to have appropriate UK Government support	7
Any one Local Authority	5
Any one AAA Rated Money Market Fund	10
Debt Management Office*	125

The DMADF (DMO) limit was increased in April 2022 to £125m from £100m by the Director of Corporate Services under Emergency powers. The limits on Money Market Funds were also increased to £10m (each) from £5m.

The total investments at 1st April 2022 and 31st March 2023 are shown in the following table:

Investments	01.04.22				31.03.23			
	Call and notice	Fixed Term	Total		Call and notice	Fixed Term	Total	
	£m	£m	£m	%	£m	£m	£m	%
Banks and 100% Wholly Owned Subsidiaries	39.50	0.00	39.50	25	27.50	14.00	41.50	28
Building Societies	0.00	7.00	7.00	4	0.00	7.00	7.00	5
Money Market Funds	25.00	0.00	25.00	16	40.00	0.00	40.00	27
DMADF (DMO)	0.00	57.00	57.00	35	0.00	20.00	20.00	13
Local Authorities	0.00	32.00	32.00	20	0.00	40.00	40.00	27
TOTAL	64.50	96.00	160.50	100	81.50	67.00	148.50	100

The total investment figure of £148.50m at 31st March 2023 includes £33.45m Swansea Bay City Deal.

An analysis of the daily cash schedules indicates that the minimum balance lent over the twelve month period was £148.50m and the maximum balance lent was £251.02m. The average balance for the year was £206.41m.

The total investments made by the Council and repaid to the Council (the turnover) amounted to £1,853.00m. This averaged approximately £35.54m per week or £5.08m per day. A summary of the turnover is shown below:

	£m
Total Investments 1st April 2022	160.50
Investments made during the year	920.50
Sub Total	1081.00
Investments Repaid during the year	(932.50)
Total Investments 31st March 2023	148.50

The main aim of the Treasury Management Strategy is to manage the cash flows of the Council and the risks associated with this activity. Lending on the money market secures an optimum

rate of return, allows for diversification of investments and consequently reduction of risk, which is of paramount importance in today's financial markets.

For the period under review the average "90-day un compounded SONIA rate" was 1.81% whereas the actual rate the Council earned was 1.82%, an out performance of 0.01%.

This outperformance can be quantified as £50k additional interest earned compared to the average rate above.

The gross interest earned on investments for 2022-23 amounted to £3.614m, which was more than the estimated figure of £0.500m. The Bank of England Official rate was increased from 0.75% to 4.25% during 2022-23.

The income from investments is used by the Authority to reduce the net overall costs to the Council taxpayer.

3. Security, Liquidity and Yield (SLY)

Within the Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2022-23, the Council's investment priorities are:

- Security of Capital
- Liquidity and
- Yield

The Council aims to achieve the optimum return (yield) on investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity. In the current economic climate it is still considered appropriate to keep investments short term to cover cash flow requirements.

Attached at Appendix 1 is a list of the individual investments held as at the 31st March 2023 together with their credit ratings, historic risk of default and the risk weighting attached to each investment.

4. Borrowing

As Members are aware the Authority has a capital investment programme. For 2022-23 actual capital expenditure was £100.20m. This was financed from:

	£m
Borrowing	16.87
Grants and Contributions	71.04
Usable Capital Receipts Applied	0.96
Revenue and Reserves	11.33
Total	100.20

Under the Treasury Management Strategy it was resolved:

- To borrow to meet the funding requirements of the Authority, after allowing for capital grants, capital receipts and capital contributions, and to stay within the Prudential Indicators to ensure affordability, prudence and sustainability.
- To borrow when interest rates are at their most advantageous, after considering cash flow requirements.

The following loans were borrowed during 2022-23 to fund the capital programme:

Loan Reference	Amount (£m)	Interest Rate	Start Date	Period	Maturity Date
PWLB 548866	5.00	3.91%	12th September 2022	47yrs	28th September 2069
PWLB 548868	5.00	3.90%	12th September 2022	48yrs	28th September 2070
PWLB 548870	5.00	3.90%	12th September 2022	49yrs	28th September 2071
PWLB 548872	5.00	3.89%	12th September 2022	49yrs 10mths	31st July 2072
Total	20.00				

The total loans outstanding at 1st April 2022 and 31st March 2023 were:

Loans	Balance at 01.04.22 £m	Balance at 31.03.23 £m	Net Increase/ (Net Decrease) £m
Public Works Loan Board (PWLB)	387.61	397.61	10.00
Market Loan	3.00	3.00	0.00
Salix, Invest-to-Save, HILS & TCL	10.13	9.96	(0.17)
Total	400.74	410.57	9.83

The total external interest paid in 2022-23 amounted to £16.42m, which compares favourably with the budget of £19.39m. The savings have arisen due to under borrowing on the capital programme and borrowing at lower than anticipated interest rates.

5. Treasury Management Prudential Indicators

Under the requirements of the Prudential Code of Practice for Capital Finance in Local Authorities, the Council are required to set a number of treasury management prudential indicators for the year 2022-23. The indicators set and the performance against those indicators is shown below:

5.1 The estimated and actual interest exposure limits as at 31st March 2023 were:

	Estimate 31.03.23 £m			Actual 31.03.23 £m		
	Fixed Interest Rate	Variable Interest Rate	Total	Fixed Interest Rate	Variable Interest Rate	Total
Borrowed	472.00	3.00	475.00	407.57	3.00	410.57
Invested	(40.00)	(35.00)	(75.00)	(67.00)	(81.50)	(148.50)
Net	432.00	(32.00)	400.00	340.57	(78.50)	262.07
Proportion of Total Net Borrowing	108%	(8%)	100%	130%	(30%)	100%
Limit	125%	5%		125%	5%	

The Section 151 Officer reports that the authority exceeded this requirement in 2022-23 due to increased investments in Variable Interest Rate products such as Money Market Funds. This PI is currently under review and the Section 151 officer will update members in the Quarter 1 2023 report.

5.2 Maximum principal sums invested > 365 days

	2022-2023 Limit £m	2022-2023 Actual £m
Maximum principal sums invested > 365 days	10	NIL

5.3 Interest rate exposure limits

	2022-23 Limit £m	2022-23 Actual £m
Limits on fixed interest rates based on net debt	512.00	340.57
Limits on variable interest rates based on net debt	51.00	(78.50)

5.4 The upper and lower limits set for the maturity structure of borrowing along with the actual maturity structure as at 31st March 2023.

	Estimated Upper Limit 2022-2023 %	Estimated Lower Limit 2022-2023 %	Actual 31.03.23 %
Under 12 months	15	0	2.02
12 months to 2 years	15	0	2.79
2 years to 5 years	50	0	6.01
5 years to 10 years	50	0	8.39
10 years to 20 years	50	0	21.19
20 years to 30 years	50	0	21.68
30 years to 40 years	50	0	21.12
40 years and above	50	0	16.80
Total			100.00

Details of the above maturity structure are shown below:

Loan Maturities	PWLB Debt	Average Interest Rate	Market Loans/ Invest to Save/Salix/ HILS/TCL	Average Interest Rate	Total Debt Outstanding
	£m	%	£m	%	£m
Before 1st April 2024	8.00	6.69	0.29	0	8.29
1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025	11.16	5.13	0.29	0	11.45
1st April 2025 to 31st March 2028	23.82	4.13	0.87	0	24.69
1st April 2028 to 31st March 2033	30.83	4.18	3.62	0	34.45
1st April 2033 to 31st March 2043	82.10	4.31	4.90	0	87.00
1st April 2043 to 31st March 2053	89.00	4.16	0	0	89.00
1st April 2053 to 31st March 2063	83.70	4.84	3.00	4.72	86.70
After March 2063	69.00	2.77	0	0	69.00
Total as at 31.03.23	397.61		12.96		410.57

6. Prudential Indicators

6.1 Affordability

6.1.1 Actual and estimated ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream.

Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream		
	2022-2023 Estimate	2022-2023 Actual
	%	%
Non-HRA	3.95	3.27
HRA	30.90	29.70

The indicator shows the proportion of income taken up by capital financing costs.

6.2 Prudence

6.2.1 The Capital Financing Requirement (CFR).

	31.03.2023 Estimate £m	31.03.2023 Actual £m
Non-HRA	285	265
HRA	178	162
HRAS	69	69
Total	532	496

The Capital Financing Requirement reflects the underlying need to borrow for capital purposes.

6.2.2 Gross Borrowing against the Capital Finance Requirement indicator.

To ensure that borrowing levels are prudent over the medium term the Council's external borrowing must only be for a capital purpose. Gross borrowing must not exceed the CFR for 2022-23 plus the expected changes to the CFR over 2023-24 and 2024-25 but can in the short term due to cash flows. The table below highlights the Council's gross borrowing position against the CFR. The Council has complied with this prudential indicator.

£m	2022-2023 Estimate	2022-2023 Actual
Debt at 1 st April 2022	411	401
Expected Change in Debt	64	10
Gross debt at 31st March 2023	475	411
CFR	532	496
Under / (Over) borrowing	57	85

The Section 151 Officer reports that the authority had no difficulty meeting this requirement in 2022-23.

6.2.3 The Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary.

The Authorised Limit is the "Affordable Borrowing Limit" required by Section 3 of the Local Government Act 2003. The Council does not have the power to borrow above this level. The table below demonstrates that during 2022-23 the Council has maintained gross borrowing within its Authorised Limit.

The Operational Boundary is the expected borrowing position of the Council during the year. Periods where the actual position is either below or over the Boundary is acceptable subject to the Authorised Limit not being breached.

The actual financing costs as a proportion of net revenue stream identifies the trend in the cost of capital (borrowing and other long term obligation costs net of investment income) against the net revenue stream.

	2022-2023 £m
Authorised Limit	585.40
Gross borrowing	410.57
Operational Boundary	532.20
Average gross borrowing position	404.89
Financing costs as a proportion of net revenue stream	5.86%

7. Leasing

No finance leases were negotiated during the year.

8. Rescheduling

No rescheduling was undertaken during the year.

9. Conclusion

This report demonstrates compliance with the reporting requirements of the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice.

10. Recommendations

It is recommended that this report be received by Cabinet.

Totals			
Total	£148,500,000		
Calls & MMFs	£67,500,000	45%	
Fixed Deposits	£81,000,000	55%	
Specified	£0	0%	

Weighted Average			
Yield			3.75%
Maturity (Days)			
Total Portfolio	Total Portfolio		64.12
Long Term		Short Term	
AAA	-		1.00
AA	F1		79.42
A	F1		97.27
BBB	F2		0.00
CCC	C		0.00

Risk Factors			
< 1 year	£14,325		0.010%
1 - 2 years	£0		0.000%
2 - 3 years	£0		0.000%
3 - 4 years	£0		0.000%
4 - 5 years	£0		0.000%
Total Portfolio	£14,325		0.010%

Maturity Structure			
< 1 Week	£67,500,000		45%
< 1 Month	£25,000,000		17%
2 - 3 Months	£20,000,000		13%
3 - 6 Months	£17,000,000		11%
6 - 9 Months	£7,000,000		5%
9 - 12 Months	£12,000,000		8%
12 Months+	£0		0%
Total	£148,500,000		100%

SLY Model

Carmarthenshire County Council

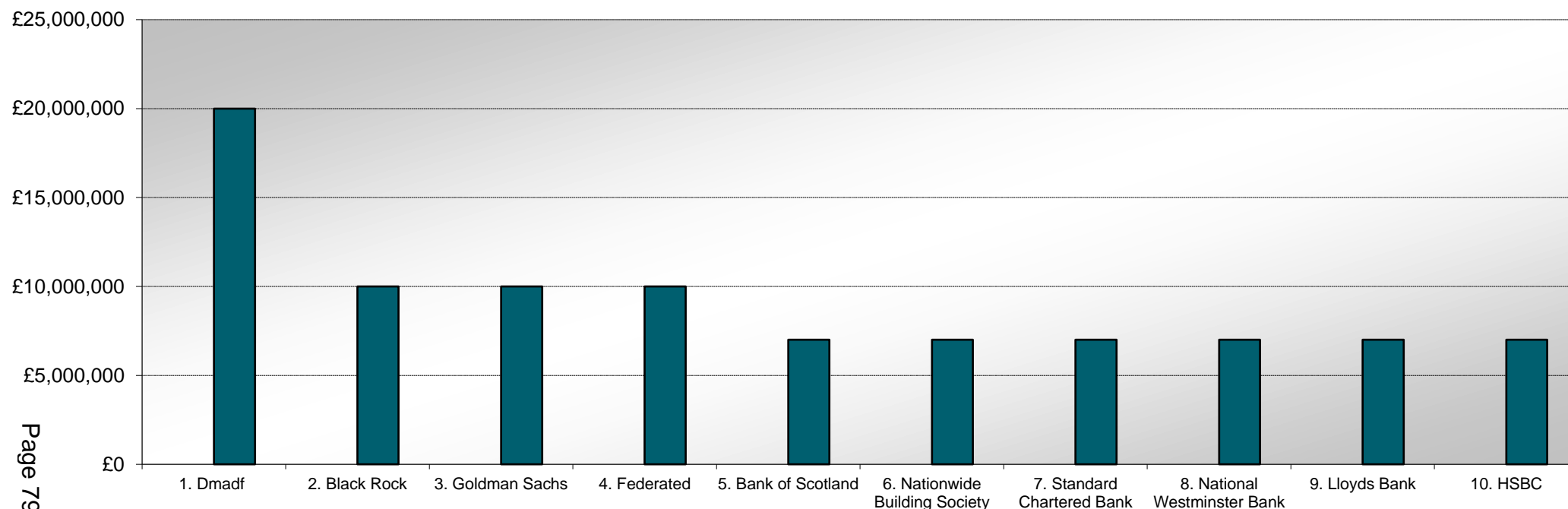
31/03/2023

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Top 10 Counterparty Holdings

Carmarthenshire County Council

Counterparty	Principal	% of Total Holding	WAM (Days)	WAYield	WADefault
1. Dmadf	£20,000,000	21.74%	26	4.02%	0.001%
2. Black Rock	£10,000,000	10.87%	1	3.99%	0.000%
3. Goldman Sachs	£10,000,000	10.87%	1	3.91%	0.000%
4. Federated	£10,000,000	10.87%	1	3.95%	0.000%
5. Bank of Scotland	£7,000,000	7.61%	1	3.92%	0.000%
6. Nationwide Building Society	£7,000,000	7.61%	210	3.58%	0.054%
7. Standard Chartered Bank	£7,000,000	7.61%	1	4.34%	0.000%
8. National Westminster Bank	£7,000,000	7.61%	362	4.55%	0.093%
9. Lloyds Bank	£7,000,000	7.61%	98	2.00%	0.025%
10. HSBC	£7,000,000	7.61%	1	4.08%	0.000%



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CABINET**MONDAY, 18 SEPTEMBER 2023****PRESENT:** Councillor D. Price (Chair)**Councillors (In Person):**

C.A. Davies	L.D. Evans	H.A.L. Evans	G. Davies
P.M. Hughes	A. Lenny	E.G. Thomas	J. Tremlett
A. Vaughan Owen			

Also in attendance as an observer (virtually):

Councillor D.M. Cundy;

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 & Children's Services;
 D.W. John, Head of Environmental Infrastructure;
 J. Jones, Head of Regeneration; Policy & Digital
 L.R. Jones, Head of Administration and Law;
 D. Hockenull, Marketing and Media Manager;
 L. Jenkins, Cabinet Support Officer;
 E. Evans, Principal Democratic Services Officer;
 M.S. Davies, Democratic Services Officer;

Also Present (Virtually):

R. Griffiths, Head of Place and Sustainability;
 J. G. Jones, Property Maintenance Manager;
 M. Runeckles, Members Support Officer.

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen and remotely: 10.00 am - 10.40 am**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal interests.

Councillor / Officer	Minute Number	Nature of Interest
Cllr. A. Davies	9 - Second Homes and Short-Term Holiday Lets;	Runs an Airbnb in second home as part of her farm business;
Cllr. H. Evans	9 - Second Homes and Short-Term Holiday Lets;	Family member has second home;
Cllr. L.D. Evans	9 - Second Homes and Short-Term Holiday Lets;	Family member has second home;

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

Cllr. P. Hughes	9 - Second Homes and Short-Term Holiday Lets;	Family member has second home;
W.S. Walters	14 - Covid-19 Impact on Contractors – Major Works;	Husband works for Contractor;

3. MINUTES - 17TH JULY 2023

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 17th July 2023 be signed as a correct record.

4. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE BY MEMBERS

The Chair advised that no questions on notice had been submitted by members.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

6. ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATOR REPORT 2022-2023

As part of the requirements of the revised CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management, the Cabinet considered the Council's Annual Treasury Management and Prudential Indicator Report for the 2022-23.

The Council adopted the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy and the five year capital programme for 2022-23 on the 2ND March 2022. The Annual report listed the activities that took place in 2022-23.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL that the Annual Treasury Management and Prudential Indicator Report for 2022-23 be adopted.

7. REVENUE BUDGET OUTLOOK

The Cabinet considered a report on the Council's Revenue Budget Outlook subsequent to the Council in March 2023 where its Medium-Term Financial Plan had been agreed based on estimates and known commitments at that time and formulated in the context of the Welsh Government financial settlement for 2023/24, including an indicative settlement for year 2 of the plan and estimates for other key inputs. At the time of the budget setting the risk of inflation had been noted, and in particular its impact on nationally agreed pay settlements, as well as the uplift in commissioned care costs, linked to increases in the foundation living wage. However, additional changes to the external environment which would have a significant bearing on the budget going forward most notably included:

- The headline rate of inflation is now clearly falling, though forward forecasts still remain highly uncertain;
- An unresolved position regarding the April 2023 NJC pay offer (details below), with the Employers offer already estimated at £3m above current budgeted figures;

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

- A risk of further dispute regarding the Teachers September 2023 offer (revised to 5% at the time of writing – details below);
- Reduced energy prices not only reducing our corporate costs, but they have also materially reduced the cost of the UK Government price cap mechanism, thus improving public finances.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

- 7.1 that the initial budget outlook be received;**
- 7.2 That the proposed approach to identifying the required savings be endorsed;**
- 7.3 that the proposed approach to the budget consultation be noted.**

8. DEVELOPMENT FUND APPLICATION

Cabinet considered a report providing an update on the latest position in relation to the Development Fund and seeking approval of a recent application in the sum of £175,000 to fund the electrification of additional pitches at Pembrey Country Park which would generate increased income. It was proposed that the repayment for the above scheme be over four years.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

- 8.1 that approval is given in the sum of £175,000 for the electrification of additional pitches at Pembrey Country Park Campsite, generating increased income;**
- 8.2 that the repayment for the above scheme be over four years;**
- 8.3 that the repayments commence in 2024/25.**

9. SECOND HOMES AND SHORT-TERM HOLIDAY LETS

[Note: Councillors A. Davies, H. Evans, L.D. Evans and P. Hughes having earlier declared personal interests in this item left the meeting during the consideration and voting thereof.]

Cabinet considered a report setting out a proposed way forward in relation to second homes and short-term holiday lets and the development of a planning policy approach. and will highlight the primary considerations and the potential mechanisms to control of the unrestricted change of use between the new use classes. In framing the way forward, the report sets out a series of steps as part of a staged approach to considering and implementing a new policy approach for second homes and short-term holiday lets within Carmarthenshire.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

- 9.1 to note the contents of this report and support the following actions;**
- 9.2 to adopt the identified staged approach in developing a policy led response;**

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

9.3 to endorse the further development of the evidence base as outlined in the report.

10. COUNTY COUNCIL RURAL ESTATE MATTERS

Further to minute 14 of Cabinet held on the 20th February 2023 consideration was given to a report seeking approval on two current matters relating to the Council's Rural Estate portfolio namely the planting of trees and woodland creation on Council land and the establishment of a Food Systems Development Project at Bremenda Isaf Farm, Llanarthney. The former would help meet the Council's carbon sequestration aims in relation to its Net Zero Carbon commitment and Nature Emergency aims whilst the latter would meet the Council's aims of local food production, supporting rural initiatives and enabling diversification on its Farm Estate for the purposes of ensuring future sustainability.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

10.1 to proceed with the planting of trees and woodland creation on Council land;

10.2 to proceed with the Food Systems Development Project at Bremenda Isaf Farm, Llanarthney.

11. TO NOTE THAT THE PLAID CYMRU GROUP HAS NOMINATED COUNCILLOR MEINIR JAMES TO REPLACE COUNCILLOR HAZEL EVANS ON THE LLESANT DELTA WELLBEING GOVERNANCE GROUP.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to note that the Plaid Cymru Group has nominated Councillor Meinir James to replace Councillor Hazel Evans on the Llesiant Delta Wellbeing Governance Group.

12. 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.

13. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED, pursuant to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007, that the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item as the report contained exempt information as defined in paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

14. COVID-19 IMPACT ON CONTRACTORS - MAJOR WORKS

[Note: The Chief Executive, Wendy S. Walters, having earlier declared a personal interest in this item left the meeting during the consideration and voting thereof.]

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

Following the application of the public interest test it was **RESOLVED**, pursuant to the Act referred to in minute no. 13 above, not to publicise the content of the report as it contained exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information) (Paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Act). The public interest test in respect of this report outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information contained therein as disclosure would adversely impact upon public finances by undermining the council's negotiating position in this and other similar transactions.

The Cabinet considered a report seeking a decision to amend contractual provisions in line with UK and Welsh Government Guidance for construction related works. The report detailed the financial implications, risks and legal implications for the various options available.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to adopt Option 2 as outlined in the report.

CHAIR

DATE

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

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