

# COUNTY COUNCIL

**WEDNESDAY, 28 FEBRUARY 2024**

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

**Councillors (In Person):**

S.M. Allen	J.M. Charles	P. Cooper	D.M. Cundy
G. Davies	H.L. Davies	K. Davies	M. Donoghue
A. Evans	H.A.L. Evans	L.D. Evans	W.T. Evans
T.M. Higgins	J.K. Howell	P.M. Hughes	P. Hughes-Griffiths
J.D. James	M. James	R. James	D. Jones
A. Lenny	M.J.A. Lewis	N. Lewis	A. Leyshon
K. Madge	D. Nicholas	M. Palfreman	B.D.J. Phillips
D. Price	E. Rees	H.B. Shepardson	E. Skinner
R. Sparks	E.G. Thomas	M. Thomas	J. Tremlett
A. Vaughan Owen	F. Walters		

**Councillors (Virtually):**

L.R. Bowen	K.V. Broom	M.D. Cranham	S.A. Curry
A. Davies	C.A. Davies	W.R.A. Davies	T.A.J. Davies
B. Davies	L. Davies	LI.M. Davies	S.L. Davies
T. Davies	N. Evans	R.E. Evans	S. Godfrey-Coles
J.P. Hart	G.H. John	A.C. Jones	G.R. Jones
A.G. Morgan	D. Owen	S.L. Rees	E.M.J.G. Schiavone
D. Thomas	P.T. Warlow	D.E. Williams	J. Williams

**Also Present (In Person):**

W. Walters, Chief Executive;  
P.R. Thomas, Assistant Chief Executive (People Management & Performance);  
J. Morgan, Director of Community Services;  
C. Moore, Director of Corporate Services;  
G. Morgans, Director of Education & Children's Services;  
A. Williams, Director of Place and Infrastructure;  
R. Griffiths, Head of Place and Sustainability;  
L.R. Jones, Head of Administration and Law;  
G. Morgan, Head of Democratic Services;  
R. Hemingway, Head of Financial Services;  
C. Higginson, Media Manager;  
A. Eynon, Principal Translator;  
J. Owen, Democratic Services Officer.

**Also Present (Virtually):**

A. Edwards, Electoral & Civil Registration Services Manager;  
E. Jones, Licensing Lead;  
D. Hall-Jones, Member Support Officer;  
R. Morris, Members Support Officer;  
M. Runeckles, Members Support Officer.

**Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen, SA31 1JP and remotely: 10:00am - 1:10pm**

(Note:

- At 12:50pm the Council's attention was drawn to Council Procedure Rule (CPR) 9 – Duration of Meeting and, as the meeting would have been underway for three hours at 1:10pm, it was resolved to suspend standing orders, in accordance with CPR 23.1, to enable the remaining business on the agenda to be considered.
- Prior to the consideration of Agenda 8.4, the Chair changed the order of business to allow the Public Question - Agenda Item 10.2 to proceed, followed by the remaining public questions 10.3 and 10.1 returning to Agenda Item 8.4 followed by the subsequent remainder of business as stated on the agenda. For ease, these minutes will follow the agenda as published.

## 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B. W. Jones, D. C. Evans, A. D. Harries, H. Jones, C. Davies, J. Seaward and G.B. Thomas.

## 2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS.

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Minute Number</b>	<b>Nature of Interest</b>
A Vaughan-Owen	8.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26	Wife is a primary school head teacher
LI.M. Davies	8.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26	Husband teaches as a head of Music
N. Evans	8.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26	Daughter works for the library service
R. Evans	8.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26	Daughter works for the library service
M.D. Cranham	8.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26	Son works in the Education sector of the Authority
G. Morgan	8.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26	Tenant at Delta Lakes
T. Higgins	8.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26	Niece works in the library service
J. P. Hart	8.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26	Family members work in the Education department of the Authority
F. Walters	8.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26	Family members are teachers
D. Nicholas	8.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26	Daughter works in the Planning Department
L.R. Bowen	8.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26	Wife works within the translation unit in the Authority
C.A. Jones	8.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26	Daughter-in-law works in Social Services
D. Cundy	8.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26	Relatives work for the Council
E. Skinner	8.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26	Niece works for the Authority
R. Sparks	8.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26	Has a business in the leisure industry and has dispensation to speak but not vote

L. Roberts	8.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26	Daughter works in Health and Social Care within the Authority
M. Palfreman	8.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26	Runs a Social Care Consultancy Business – Has dispensation to speak but not vote
B. Davies	8.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26	Wife works for Social Care
T.A.J. Davies	8.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26	Sister-in-Law works for the Authority
P.M. Hughes	8.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26	Daughter works in the Authority
A. Davies	8.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26	Wife is a Teacher in the Authority
J. Lewis	8.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26	Neice works in the Education department
R. James	8.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26	Partner works in Library Services within the Authority
K. Madge	8.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26	Daughter works in Social Care within the Authority
E. Rees	8.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26	Brother works in the Authority
S. Godfrey-Coles	8.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26	Partner is Head of Children Services in the Authority
J. P. Hart	8.4 – Licensing Act 2003 Review of Licensing Policy and Cumulative Impact Assessments	Is a personal License Holder and manages a licensed premises.
C. A. Jones	8.4 – Licensing Act 2003 Review of Licensing Policy and Cumulative Impact Assessments	Is a personal License Holder for a licensed premises
P.M. Hughes	8.4 – Licensing Act 2003 Review of Licensing Policy and Cumulative Impact Assessments	Is a personal License Holder for a licensed premises
L.D. Evans	9.1 – Cabinet Minutes, 15 <sup>th</sup> January 2024	Daughter is a Teacher within the Authority
N. Lewis	10.2 – Public Question by Dr Anthony Laxton	Works for Ynni Sir Gâr

### **3. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

- The Chair announced that she had attended the Actif Carmarthenshire Sports Awards which took place in Y Ffwrness Theatre, Llanelli on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024. An expression of thanks was extended to the Actif Team for their efforts in making the day a great success. It was pleasing to reward the progress of young athletes in the County. In addition, the money raised during the evening was donated to the Chairs Charities - Tŷ Bryngwyn Hospice, St Paul's Family Centre and Llanelli First Responder.
- The Chair announced that Year 6 pupils at Ysgol Pen Rhos, Llanelli, helped to raise awareness of bowel cancer and bowel cancer screening in their community as part of a collaboration between Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB), Public Health Wales and the Moondance Cancer Initiative. Ysgol Pen Rhos are the first primary school in Wales to welcome the project into their classrooms.

### **4. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE LEADER, CABINET MEMBERS AND THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

There were no announcements made.

### **5. TO APPROVE AND SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETINGS HELD ON THE 24TH JANUARY 2024**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of Council held on the 24<sup>th</sup> January, 2024 be signed as a correct record.

### **6. THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (DEMOCRACY) (WALES) ACT 2013 ("THE ACT")-COMMUNITY REVIEW**

The Council received a report, presented by the Cabinet Member for Workforce and Organisation. Council was reminded that at its meeting on 9 February 2023, the commencement of a Community Review to examine existing Town and Community governance arrangements and make Final Recommendations for any appropriate change was approved. This review concluded on 11 October 2023. Recommendations approved will come into force with the next set of Town and Community Council elections scheduled for May 2027.

As part of this review, it was identified that there were anomalies with community boundaries which were highlighted in the relevant maps appended at Appendix A of the report.

Permission was granted at the Full Council meeting on 11 October 2023 to carry out a review under Section 25 of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013. The initial six-week consultation commenced on 12 October 2023 and was completed on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2023. Responses were appended to the report at Appendix B.

Council was asked to adopt the Draft Recommendations for the purposes of the Community Review and to support the Draft Recommendations being published for consultation purposes for a period of 6 weeks. It was highlighted that the dates for the consultation would commence on 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024 through to 11<sup>th</sup> April 2024 and not the dates as cited within the report.

## **RESOLVED THAT**

**6.1 That the proposals set out in Appendix C be adopted by the Council as Draft Recommendations for the purposes of the Review for:**

- a) Llangydeyrn Community Council and Llanelli Rural Council**
- b) Llangydeyrn Community Council and Trimsaran Community Council**
- c) Llangydeyrn Community Council and Pontyberem Community Council**

**6.2 That the Draft Recommendations be published for consultation purposes for a period of 6 weeks;**

**6.3 That the results of the consultation together with proposed Final Recommendations be reported to Full Council on 12 June.**

## **7. RECRUITMENT TO THE POST OF HEAD OF LAW, GOVERNANCE AND CIVIL SERVICES (AND MONITORING OFFICER).**

The Council received a report, presented by the Cabinet Member for Workforce and Organisation on the Recruitment to the Post of Head of Law, Governance and Civil Services (and Monitoring Officer), which provided detailed information on the post, the Monitoring Officer role, the Temporary Acting up arrangements and the proposed timetable.

Council was informed that the current Head of Administration & Law, (including the role of Monitoring Officer) would be leaving the Council with effect from 1st June 2024. Therefore, the Council would need to designate an Interim Monitoring Officer to discharge this statutory role until the conclusion of the appointments process and the new Head of Law, Governance and Civil Services was in post.

It was reported that discussions had taken place between the Chief Executive, Corporate Management Team colleagues and Cabinet members, to consider the way forward for the service, with a view to ensuring that this important post was fit for the future, as well as helping to deliver savings to the Authority.

With a view to reduce the number of direct reports to the Chief Executive, it was proposed that the Electoral and Registration Service would report to the Head of Law, Governance and Civil Services (and Monitoring Officer). The advantages of this would include maximising the synergies of services as well as helping reduce the number of direct reports to the Chief Executive, and creating a more manageable, balanced, and equitable portfolio. These amended duties were reflected in the revised job profile appended to the report.

Council noted that the recruitment to the post of Head of Law, Governance and Civil Services (and Monitoring Officer) was unlikely to be in completed prior to the

departure of the current incumbent, therefore interim arrangements would be required by way of undertaking an internal expressions of interest exercise to seek applications from legally qualified individuals who obtain a practicing certificate and relevant experience.

**RESOLVED:**

**7.1 that the Job Profile and Person Specification appended to the report be approved.**

**7.2 that the proposed interim arrangements be approved and implemented, following an expressions of interest exercise to be operational until such time as the new Head of Law, Governance and Civil Services (and Monitoring Officer) takes up their position.**

**7.3 to note that, once the appointments Committee 'B' has been convened to appoint a new Head of Law, Governance and Civil Services, that a further report be brought back to a future meeting of County Council to note the appointment, and for County Council to designate the new appointee as the Council's Monitoring Officer pursuant to Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.**

**8. TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CABINET IN RESPECT OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:-**

**8.1. REVENUE BUDGET STRATEGY 2024/25 TO 2026/27**

(NOTE: Councillors A Vaughan Owen, Ll.M. Davies, N. Evans, R. Evans, M.D. Cranham, G. Morgan, T. Higgins, J.P. Hart, F. Walters, D. Nicholas, L.R. Bowen, C.A. Jones, D. Cundy, E. Skinner, R. Sparks, L. Roberts. M. Palfreman, B. Davies, T.A.J. Davies, P.M. Hughes, A. Davies, J. Lewis, R. James, K. Madge, E. Rees and S. Godfrey-Coles had earlier declared an interest in this item remained in the meeting and took part in the discussion and voting thereon).

Council was informed that the Cabinet, at its meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024 (Minute 6 Refers) had considered the Revenue Budget Strategy 2024/25 – 2026/27 and made a number of recommendations, as detailed within the report of the Director of Corporate Services, for Council's consideration.

The report summarised the latest budgetary position, providing an update on the budget validation, spending pressures, the Welsh Government final settlement and the responses from the budget consultation.

In presenting the report, the Cabinet Member for Resources stated that adopting the proposals detailed in the report would allow the Council to provide a fair and balanced budget, which responded to the views fed back from the consultation process. However, he felt it was incumbent upon him to highlight the inherent risks within the strategy in addition to

the uncertainties over future pay awards and inflation which must be accepted as a normal part budget setting.

A number of risks were identified as a consequence of the unresolved funding of both teachers' and firefighters' pensions, the delivery risk of investments into Children's Services and the delivery risk of the budget reductions across all areas of council services.

In addition, it was emphasised that this budget was possibly one of the most difficult in this Council's history and voiced his concern that it was a very challenging time with Local Authorities being put in the impossible position of trying to deliver frontline services whilst continuing to put up with cuts from central government. There was a duty on all Councillors over the next few months to make the case about the importance of local government and public services generally and the need for additional investment because what we have at the moment was just not sustainable.

It was emphasised that, in setting the budget, work was endured to try and protect front line services whilst trying to keep any Council Tax increase to a minimum and whilst 7.5% was higher than desired it was much better than some other Local Authorities who were facing double digit rises in council tax with some facing bankruptcy.

The Cabinet Member expressed his sincere thanks to all who took part in the consultation or responded to the surveys. Also, for the commitment and engagement of fellow councillors who participated in the budget seminars in such a positive spirit, despite the huge challenges ahead. The budget proposals were also examined in detail by the Scrutiny Committees.

It was reported that in general, those who took part in the consultation process appreciated that difficult choices need to be made. Based on those results, the Cabinet agreed to make a number of adjustments to next year's budget, with a total value of £1.95m. These were in response to the feedback from both public and Councillors who took part in the consultation process. Within this figure was included provision to defer several proposals, including:

- £1m of the reduction applied to schools budgets.
- to defer more than £400k of savings to highways and flood defence budgets, recognising concern from councillors
- defer the proposed reductions of £100,000 each to Youth support services and music services in schools, and over £200,000 to funding for public conveniences, pending asset transfer option consultation.

It was highlighted that the small additional sum from the Welsh Government was insufficient to respond to the consultation as outlined in the report. Therefore, it was proposed to take £1m from the RSG reserve

to provide some additional time for schools to deliver the changes necessary in the best way possible according to individual circumstances.

The Cabinet Member for Resources confirmed that, should all the proposals outlined in the report be implemented, the Council could provide a Budget Strategy which:-

- responds to the consultation;
- ensures, as far as possible, that service levels and standards are maintained;
- recognises that the people of Carmarthenshire are finding it hard in the current climate and so ensures that core services are protected; and
- as far as possible, prepares the Authority for the uncertainties that may lie ahead.

References were made to the seriousness of the situation that the Authority was faced with and to the fact that the Council and officers were trying to do the very best for the residents of Carmarthenshire during a very challenging period.

Members thanked officers and the Cabinet Member for Resources for their work on the budget over the past few months.

A number of statements were made in response to the proposals of the revenue budget strategy and raised their acknowledgement in regard to the challenges and difficulties in setting this year's budget, balancing it with the current financial climate whilst maintaining quality services for the Carmarthenshire residents and visitors.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- 8.1.1 that the Budget Strategy for 2024/25, which includes the amendments at paragraph 4.1.5, be approved;**
- 8.1.2 to approve the Band D Council Tax for 2024/25 of £1,602.80 (an increase of 7.5%);**
- 8.1.3 to approve the removal of specific savings proposals as identified in paragraph 3.2.7;**



- 8.1.4 to approve the use of £3m from the RSG reserve, being £2m to support temporary costs of commissioned residential children's placements and £1m to support the delegated schools budget, as outlined in paragraph 5.2.3;**
- 8.1.5 to approve the Medium-Term Financial Plan which will form the basis of future years' planning;**
- 8.1.6 that authority be delegated to the Director of Corporate Services, in consultation with the Chief Executive, Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources, to make any amendments necessary as a consequence of the WG final settlement due on 27th February 2024.**

## **8.2. FIVE YEAR CAPITAL PROGRAMME (COUNCIL FUND) 2024/25 TO 2028/29**

The Council considered a report which brought together the latest proposals for the five-year capital programme 2024/25 to 2028/29, taking account of the consultation exercise undertaken and the revenue implications arising from the programme.

The Cabinet Member for Resources in presenting the report stated that the proposed gross expenditure on the capital programme for 2024/25 was £86.930m with the projected funding being £50.374m from the County Council's own resources through the application of borrowing, reserves, direct revenue financing, capital receipts and general capital grant, with the balance of £36.556m coming from external sources.

The new capital programme would be fully funded over the five years, however, it was proposed to under commit some of the available funding to give flexibility across the programme to cover any unexpected additional costs. The Authority's capital strategy, required by the prudential code for capital finance in Local Authorities, had been updated and sets out the long-term context in which capital expenditure and investment decisions are made. It gave due consideration to both risk and reward and impact on the achievement of priority outcomes. The capital strategy covered expenditure on both Council Fund and HRA capital and was included as Appendix C to the report.

It was highlighted that the new programme would see £193m of investment over the next five years, £61m of which was for continued commitment for improving school buildings, £12m toward Disability Facilities Grant to help transform the quality of life for many people in their own homes, £34m for Regeneration projects to boost economic activity, £16m to complete the City Deal backed Pentre Awel project which included a new leisure centre for Llanelli, £43m to improve local economic highways infrastructure and Recycling Infrastructure, £21m for critical digital IT hardware and infrastructure.

It was acknowledged that despite the difficulties of the current economic environment, the proposed capital programme committed a significant

investment over the next five years. It aimed to optimise the funding opportunities and maximise the funding from potential external sources. A combination of existing and new schemes in line with the Council's corporate vision would develop the local economy, create jobs, and enhance the quality of life for Carmarthenshire citizens and visitors, while safeguarding our resources for future generations.

Furthermore, it was reported that £15.5m was successfully obtained in Levelling Up funding for Llanelli Town Centre which would be match funded with an investment of £2.5m from resources and that work would commence with the UK Government to agree a viable project.

Other areas were highlighted:-

- More than £20m of funding was included in the programme for the replacement of aging and more polluting vehicles.
- £14m is towards new vehicles for the roll-out of kerb-side sorting and recycling.
- To improve recycling infrastructure, it was proposed to make available a £10m loan facility to CWM environmental to develop and improve recycling provision at Nantycaws.
- £4.2m over the next five years will be needed for developing and improving digital infrastructure and was, therefore, proposed for inclusion in the programme.
- Support for Zone 1 of the Pentre Awel development in Llanelli continued. This unique project aimed to create hundreds of jobs and transform the landscape and economy of south Llanelli, Carmarthenshire, and the wider West Wales region.
- £1.4m was included for the redevelopment of Oriel Myrddin. This would bring the total package of investment on this important project to £3.5m.
- The report included a rolling programme of investment amounting to go over £45m. in a variety of services. However, the Cabinet Member for Resources stated that it was disappointing to note that the Welsh Government made no provision for Highway Maintenance grant funding in the Local Government settlement, therefore an allocation £2m had been made from Council resources in order to improve the road conditions.

Councils' attention was drawn to one change. As part of the provision settlement from the Welsh Government received in December, capital funding was originally going to be reduced by £19,000 compared to 2023-24 Funding. However, following the final settlement received on 28th February 2024, an updated Appendix A had been published, which showed that supported Capital funding from the Welsh Government was going to be maintained at £11,989,000 for next year.

This meant that there would be an additional £19,000 unallocated budget received annually for the next five years.

A number of statements were made in response to the proposals of the capital programme and expressed their appreciation in terms of the ongoing projects and provided their concerns in relation to the future challenges faced by the current financial climate and concerns regarding future budgets.

**RESOLVED:**

- 8.2.1 The five-year Capital Programme and funding as detailed in Appendix A, with 2024/25 being a hard budget and 2025/26 to 2028/29 soft/indicative budgets be approved.**
- 8.2.2 That the programme be reviewed, as is usual, if anticipated external or county council funding does not materialise.**
- 8.2.3 That the Capital Strategy in Appendix C be approved.**
- 8.2.4 That Cabinet/County Council delegates to the Director of Corporate Services, in consultation with the Chief Executive, Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources, to make any amendments necessary as a consequence of the WG final settlement due on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2024.**

**8.3. TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY AND STRATEGY 2024-25**

Council was informed that the Cabinet, at its meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2024 (minute 8 refers) had considered the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy 2024/25.

The report had been produced in accordance with the requirements of the revised CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management 2017, whereby the Council had previously agreed to maintain a Treasury Management Policy detailing the policies and objectives of the Authority's treasury management activities. It was noted that it was also a requirement that the Council approved a Treasury Management Strategy annually before the start of the financial year to which it related. In addition, under the Local Government Act 2003, the Council was required to approve the Treasury Management Indicators for the coming year.

**RESOLVED:**

- 8.3.1 that the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy for 2024-25 and the recommendations contained therein be approved;**
- 8.3.2 that the Treasury Management Indicators, Prudential Indicators, Minimum Revenue Provision Statement, the Investment Strategy and recommendations therein be approved.**

## **8.4. LICENSING ACT 2003 REVIEW OF LICENSING POLICY AND CUMULATIVE IMPACT ASSESSMENTS**

[NOTE: Councillors J.P. Hart, C.A. Jones and P.M Hughes having earlier declared an interest in this item, left the meeting during the deliberation and voting thereof.]

Council was informed that the Cabinet, at its meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2024 (minute 11 refers) had considered a report detailing the review of the Authority's Licensing Policy and Cumulative Impact Assessments (CIA). Legislation required the licensing policy to be reviewed every five years and the CIAs every three years, to ensure that they were still appropriate.

The Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability, in presenting the report explained that during the recent review of Station Road, Llanelli and Lammas St, Carmarthen, Officers had consulted on the potential to include other areas in the Cumulative Impact Areas namely Nott Square, King Street and Queen St, Carmarthen. This was done following a request from Carmarthen Town Council and others as a response to the increased level of complaints they had received.

The report detailed strong evidence that had been gathered from a consultation on comments that have been received from the stakeholders.

Cabinet after noting the advantages and disadvantages and considering the 3 options, as stated in the reported recommended that Council select option 3 – 'Adopt a new CIA for Nott Square, King Street, Queen Street, Carmarthen and retain the existing assessments within the updated Policy, to include an 'exceptions' policy as per current Statement of Licensing Policy.'

### **RESOLVED that**

**8.4.1 option three, as detailed in the Executive Summary, be selected as the most appropriate policy option for the Cumulative Impact Assessments to best promote the licensing objectives within Carmarthenshire;**

**8.4.2 the Statement of Licensing Policy that reflects the chosen option be approved.**

## **9. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON THE:**

### **9.1. 15TH JANUARY 2024**

[NOTE: Councillor L.D. Evans had earlier declared an interest in this item remained in the meeting and took part in the discussion and voting thereof).

**RESOLVED that the report of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2024 be received.**

## 9.2. 29TH JANUARY 2024

**RESOLVED** that the report of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 29<sup>th</sup> January, 2024 be received.

## 10. PUBLIC QUESTIONS:-

### 10.1. MR DAVID JENKINS TO COUNCILLOR ALED VAUGHAN OWEN - CABINET MEMBER CLIMATE CHANGE, DECARBONISATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

'A recent meeting in Ferryside organised by local members to respond to January's flooding seemed to establish that:-

Bad actors may have contributed to flooding risk or otherwise failed to maintain assets- A history of engineering and maintenance lapses contributed to the flooding

- No clear plans are in place for responding to a flood incident
- No plans exist for after care of people impacted by flooding
- Despite long standing awareness of risks associated with climate change and biodiversity loss there is no strategic plan for mitigating increased risks
- There is a lack of coordination between agencies responsible for local resilience.

So, what actions does the council plan to take to alleviate the impact of floods on the residents of Carmarthenshire?'

### **Response by Councillor Aled Vaughan Owen – Cabinet Member For Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability:-**

Thank you very much Mr Jenkins for your very important question and timely. Before answering, I would like, on behalf of the Authority, to sympathise with all the residents of the County who have faced a very difficult time over the last few months with flooding and severe weather and also to thank the communities who have pulled together to overcome challenging situations. I would also like to thank the Officers of Carmarthenshire County Council who assisted during that period. Including Councillor Carys Jones in Llansteffan for her tireless work during the floods and also to Councillors Crish Davies and Lewis Davies who have arranged a meeting in Ferryside to discuss the situation there. In fact, there is huge gratitude for your leadership and for organising conversations in the Community. I was not at the meeting in Ferryside to hear the comments, but I can refer to some of the points you have identified as part of the answer.

As I have said on many occasions here in the chamber, humanity is at a critical juncture in its history, mounting evidence from across the world point to us being at the eleventh hour in the fight against the climate and nature breakdown, and the decisions we take or fail to take will have consequences now and for future generations. That is why I feel honoured to be part of this Council who have unanimously voted in favour of declaring two emergencies and demanded that this administration puts climate and nature at the centre of the decisions we take.

Climate Breakdown is not something that is happening to other people in some distant country, here in Wales we are witnessing first hand examples of extreme weather events, particularly flooding, as communities grapples with sea level changes and erratic weather patterns and aging infrastructure that was never designed to deal with what we now are experiencing. Mitigating the worst effects of Climate Breakdown must be a priority, that is why I am proud of our plans on decarbonisation across all departments of this Council, but it is now necessary to start adapting our communities to the climate change that is locked in and quickly hurtling towards us.

Flooding is a complex matter requiring the need for stakeholders at all levels to be proactively involved in preparations, response and recovery. The types of flooding are varied and complex from fluvial, pluvial, tidal and so many more variances. Across Carmarthenshire there are around 12,000 addresses at risk of some kind of flooding.

Strategically, Welsh Government set the direction, objectives and prioritise both capital and revenue funding in response to flood risk, while Natural Resources Wales have the oversight, the general supervision and communication of flood and coastal erosion risk management in Wales. They manage flooding from all main rivers, reservoirs and the sea and manage risk with regards their coastal protection works as a coastal erosion risk management authority.

As a Local Authority we are the lead local flood authority managing flooding from ordinary water courses surface water, groundwater, coastal protection works with also responsibility for highway drainage as the highway Authority. Welsh government then manage the trunk road through the highways drainage on the national trunk. Dwr Cymru have responsibility for managing flooding from their water systems and their sewerage systems. There are a myriad of partners that have key infrastructure and land in different areas of the country. In terms of these stakeholders, there are no statutory duties upon them. Carmarthenshire County Council are in fact the Chair of the West Wales Flood Risk Management Group.

Timely and accurate information is a vital component in managing the operational response to unfolding weather events. The weather in the UK is subject to a very complex and dynamic set of variables, and forecasts are developed to provide the best possible understanding of likely weather conditions. It is, however, important to acknowledge that these are only forecast and actual weather conditions can differ from those expected.

The County Council works closely with a number of agencies to share information and coordinate responses.

The Authority will usually be warned of severe weather impacts in advance by:

- National Flood Forecasting Centre.
- Met Office Civil Contingencies Advisor.
- Natural Resources Wales Flood Warnings.
- Met Office weather alerts (Yellow/Amber/Red Warnings)
- Roadside weather monitoring sites and alert systems within Carmarthenshire and the surrounding area.

Carmarthenshire County Council provides information to our partner agencies and weather forecasters from a series of weather stations strategically placed around the County to provide the best possible representation of local weather conditions. There are currently 13 such dedicated weather stations which provide a wide range of weather data throughout the year including information on road surface temperature, air temperature, humidity, wind and rainfall data plus real-time up to date camera images.

Carmarthenshire County Council have further expectations under the Civil Contingencies Act for preparedness and response to emergencies such as flooding. We are a key partners on the Dyfed Powys Local Resilience Forum, made up of blue light partners such as Dyfed Powys Police, Hywel Dda, Mid and West Wales Fire Authority, Ambulance Service, Natural Resources Wales, Power Distribution Companies and others. This Forum is vital for responding to significant emergencies and ensuring limited resources as co-ordinated appropriately to prepare, mitigate and to respond to what could be life threatening situations. Despite not being a blue light Service, Carmarthenshire County Council are vital partners at this level and provide invaluable expertise and are responsible for a multitude of well-rehearsed plans and procedures for all kinds of scenarios.

One of which is working with nearly 50 community buildings that would become emergency rest centres if called upon. Each one has designated emergency management plans and procedures and well-trained staff to co-ordinate.

The local resilience forum has a designated Risk Register with useful links and templates for understanding the risk faced by a household, a business or a community and opportunities to create your own bespoke plan

We have recently passed our Local Flood Risk Management Strategy which sets the strategic level direction for managing flood risk in the county. This document has been thoroughly scrutinised by colleagues from across the chamber on the Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee and will be consulted upon over the coming weeks. I am happy to share with you the links. In addition to this, we will be working within the 7 river basin catchment areas identified in the strategy to co-develop local flood action plans.

A week today, all members of this chamber will be offered training seminar on Local Flood Risk Management and I am confident that members will engage with the work to enable them to become local champions in co-developing the community level plans with all stakeholders. Given the financial pressures facing public sector community-led flood action plans empower local residents to become active participants in mitigating flood risks, promoting resilience, and safeguarding their communities against the impacts of flooding.

So, I hope that gives you an understanding of the work that is involved in flood risks and gives you confidence that there are indeed a whole raft of plans and procedures in place when it comes to preparing, responding for flood incidents or other extreme weather scenarios.

However, that is not to say that more cannot be done. We will continue to work with other partners, lobby for appropriate funding and stress the importance of adapting our communities, mitigating risks and of course support communities at highest risk to become actively involved in co-designing plans to build resilience and the ability to bounce back.

#### **Supplementary Question by Mr David Jenkins:**

Do you think that Local Resilience Forums are as about as useful as a fish to a bicycle in the recent events in Ferryside? Because there weren't much in evidence, but I do welcome the notion of community led Committees that is locally based Committees that can do something. And I would be interested to find out how much resources are likely to be put towards developing those Community based resources, that hopefully would be useful in future events, of which, many are promised.

#### **Response by Councillor Aled Vaughan Owen – Cabinet Member For Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability:-**

Thank you for your question. As I said, society is facing huge challenges when it comes to the climate emergency and also financial pressure with regards to the Westminster Government whilst making a mess up in looking after funding but we have to take steps here in Wales to secure our communities and involve them in the way we organise relevant plans.



Communities possess intimate knowledge about their area's geography, waterways, and historical flooding patterns. This information is invaluable for understanding flood risks and devising effective mitigation strategies. And because each community's flood vulnerabilities and needs are unique, Community-led plans allow for the development of tailored solutions that address specific local challenges and priorities.

We as a lead local flood authority are now undertaking an investigation into the flooding over the Christmas period, which is an ideal time to discuss the potential for community involvement and how that is best supported. When the investigation will conclude, the findings will be shared with all stakeholders.

Only last night, we had a community flood event held in Kidwelly which saw a number of organisations present confirming a strong willingness to collaborate.

As you have witnessed here today, this Authority, like so many others are having to make such difficult financial decisions, but we are blessed with dedicated and conscientious staff working tirelessly to deliver essential services to our residents.

As I mentioned our Local Flood Risk Management Strategy sets out our commitment to co-develop local flood plans which will start over the coming months. It would be great to have local councillors as part of these events, supporting the conversations and identifying the unique roles communities can help in shaping resilience to flooding and other emergencies.

We are constantly looking for funding opportunities to grow the team and this will continue into the next financial year, but we have just committed to further capacity through a coastal adaptation officer that will have a focus on community engagement. As our capital works programme grows, we will be integrating community engagement and community resilience into the plans. Clearly, moving forward the challenges of flood management will not be able to focus on only hard infrastructure but will need to look at nature-based solutions and often in different parts of the catchment. We hope these can be examples of good practice and demonstration opportunities to showcase how we can achieve multiple benefits for communities at risk, health, tourism, climate and nature.

Over the last few months Carmarthenshire County, through the shared prosperity fund have helped fund over 8 million of Climate related projects. It is clear that communities and organisations such as your own at Carmarthen Together recognise the need to mitigate and adapt to climate breakdown. Your shop Sero at Carmarthen may be an excellent location for a flood fair of some kind where visitors could see examples of household level interventions possible.

We are excited to be working with Coleg Sir Gar's Green 24 project that aims to upskill society on the skills that are needed in a very different future. One of their aims is to redevelop and adapt an existing building on a flood plain at Gelli Aur to showcase how current building stock can be adapted to a world where flooding happens more often.

I would be thrilled to talk to any group that would like to engage with us on community resilience and adaptation.

We need to remember that the journey towards resilience and sustainability is not one that we undertake alone. It is a collective effort, woven with the threads of collaboration, innovation, and community spirit. As a Local Authority, we stand committed to leading the charge, but it is in the strength of our united voice and actions that we will forge a future where our communities thrive amidst the challenges of climate breakdown. So together, I hope we can embrace the opportunity to safeguard our planet, empower our people, and build a legacy of resilience for generations to come.

## **10.2. DR ANTHONY LAXTON TO COUNCILLOR ANN DAVIES - CABINET MEMBER FOR RURAL AFFAIRS, COMMUNITY COHESION & PLANNING POLICY**

[Note:

- Councillor Linda Evans, Cabinet Member for Homes responded on behalf of Councillor Ann Davies, Cabinet Member for Rural Affairs, Community Cohesion and Planning Policy as she had to leave the meeting prior to this item;
- Councillor N. Lewis had earlier declared an interest in this item remained in the meeting.

'In the light of declaring a climate emergency in 2019 and the Future Generations Act, would the Council consider reviewing their approach to planning permission for solar panels and other energy saving initiatives in areas of conservation? It seems there can even be a conflict with installing these on quite ordinary buildings with Welsh slate roofs if the building is pre-1919. Conservation should adopt a wider definition in this case - not only focused on the historic conservation of buildings but on the long-term conservation of our communities and our environment by allowing greater freedoms.'

### **Response by Councillor Linda Evans, Cabinet Member for Homes:-**

Thank you for the question. Apologies that Councillor Ann Davies is not here, she is in another meeting. As Carmarthenshire County Council was the first Authority in Wales to declare a climate change emergency and published its net-zero plan. It takes its responsibilities and in this regard very seriously. It has an ongoing commitment to a transition towards a low carbon economy in order to safeguard the future of communities and future generations. It is the only Local Authority in Wales which has a training and information centre dedicated to the sustainability of pre-1919 buildings and ensuring that they meet the needs of future generations.

Delivering regular training courses on repair, maintenance and energy efficiency in all buildings in the core part of this programme.

Across Wales we have roughly 500,000 pre-1919 buildings which makes up one third of our housing stock. Of these, 189,000 at 13% are in the conservation area and there are 30,000 listed structures, including homes, churches, bridges and milestones. Research has proven that protecting historic buildings and environmental brings significant economic, social culture and environmental benefit to a place and often drawing business and visitors into the area. The Local Authority recognises that conservation areas and listed buildings play an important role in the health and sustainability of our communities and therefore assessment of any development such as instalment of solar panels is always considered on a case-by-case studies basing accordingly to the development and developed proposals. In many cases, planning consent is not required for the installation of solar panels on roofs, for example on domestic dwellings inside or outside the conservation area, as long as certain conditions are met. Where planning permission is required, planning assessment are set within national legislation framework, such as, the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 1995, Planning Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 and Planning Policy Wales and a judgement on a broad range of issues is made in the assessment process, including the long term sustainability of our communities and their ability to meet the needs of future generations. In all cases, I would recommend that any application applicant speaks through the planning officers and contacts Canolfan Tywi for advice. This centre is an excellent resource within our County. I hope that it answers your question, if you do have a second question which you are allowed to give a second question, I'm sure the Officer, Rhodri would respond on behalf of Councillor Ann Davies.

#### **Supplementary Question by Mr David Jenkins:**

Happily, I am aware of quite a lot of what the Council has done and is doing in order to promote insulation and in particular other actions would help towards climate change. The declaration of a climate emergency and the Future Generations Act by the Welsh Assembly Government did give us all an opportunity to resent the way we approach planning and there is a chance here to both maximise the climate and environmental benefit at a time of cost crises of budgetary crises that we're all facing. So, I'm much reassured to hear that you're doing what you can. This rolls into non protected buildings as well, we need to see more solar panels on new developments and on non protected buildings, we need to see better insulation also on these buildings. I am sad to see some still going up. Thank you.

#### **Response by Councillor Linda Evans, Cabinet Member for Homes:-**

In response to your point about solar panels for new proprieties, as a Council we've been investing in new Council properties and therefore are all new social housing within Carmarthenshire today will be built with solar panels. Obviously, if it's possible to do so and we are also doing a retrofit programme for undertaking works on our existing homes as well, within

our Council properties. I want to ensure you that the Council are doing what we can with our own homes and buildings like this (County Hall).

**10.3. MS TARA-JANE SUTCLIFFE TO COUNCILLOR EDWARD THOMAS - CABINET MEMBER TRANSPORT, WASTE AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES**

‘In 2021 the Council secured £16.7m of Levelling Up funding from the UK Government for the Towy Valley Cycle Path. This had a requirement for all funds to be spent by 31st March 2024, or exceptionally by 31st March 2025. Further to which, and given delays to date, presumably the Council has scenario planned for the event that it does not meet the extended deadline. What forecast costs would fall to the Council should work be incomplete at 31st March 2025, and how has this been budgeted for?’

**Response by Councillor Edward Thomas – Cabinet Member For Transport, Waste and Infrastructure Services:-**

Thank you for your question.

As you may already know part of the Tywi Valley Cycle Path is already open, the pathway linking Carmarthen Museum in Abergwili with Bwlch Bach to Fronun, and on to Whitemill opened a while ago. As we will expect from the completed path, it offers cyclists and walkers beautiful scenery including views of the Bishops Palace gardens. It provides a safe and traffic-free way for people to cycle and see the County.

Now, your question falls into three parts, ‘will the funds be spent by the original deadline?’, ‘have we extended the deadline for expenditure?’, and ‘what could happen if we don’t meet a revised deadline?’.

So, to cover the first two questions, will the funds be spent by the original deadline and have we extended the deadline for expenditure? As I mentioned earlier some of the path is already open and work remains ongoing, we’re currently working on a section within Nantgaredig. However, the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) Inquiry held in November is yet to provide a determination. In order to expedite the situation, we have written to the Minister for Climate Change to emphasise the need for early ministerial decision so that in the event the CPO is approved, the Council can progress to the next phase of acquiring the order land, ensuring scheme delivery at the earliest opportunity. Bearing this in mind, under the terms of the funding a project adjustment request was made in July last year, following which we were granted a formal extension allowing the funds from the Levelling Up fund to be available until the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2025. In effect an extension of one year.

So, what will happen if we don’t meet a revised deadline? Well, we remain confident that even in the event that construction works cannot continue fully until later in the year, by tendering multiple construction packages to run concurrently, we will fully deliver against the Levelling Up Grant within the deadline. As part of the grant award, we were required to provide match funding for the project which amounts to £1.864m, this funding has already been committed to the project.

This element of County Council funding is not subject to time restrictions and any overrun beyond 31st March 2025 can therefore be accommodated.

The Tywi Valley Cycle Path is an important project for Carmarthenshire and for tourism across West Wales, it has many benefits – there are environmental benefits through encouraging people to travel by bike or on foot for local and longer distance journeys, providing more opportunities for active travel as well as contributing to local and national carbon reduction and air quality targets.

There are benefits in terms of links to key employment, education, leisure, health, cultural and retail sites across the beautiful Tywi Valley and will provide opportunities for business development, growth and agricultural diversification through enhanced visitor spend in the area.

The path will also offer significant benefits for the county with the potential to generate around £4.4million a year for the local economy, creating jobs in local businesses through enhanced visitor attraction and spend.

As I said, this is an important project for us, and we are confident in its delivery and our ability to complete the work required to access the funding awarded to us within the specified deadline.

**Supplementary Question by Mrs Tara-Jane Sutcliffe:**

Thank you very much, I appreciate your time on this. However, it doesn't entirely answer my question – have you or have you not contingency planned that the project over runs March 31<sup>st</sup> next year? If so, how much, because if it is a £16.7 million project plus the £1.8 million, that is an awful lot of millions, a very expensive project, is there a risk that it could over run such that the liabilities would be more than the £1.8 million that is already assigned?

**Response by Councillor Edward Thomas – Cabinet Member For Transport, Waste and Infrastructure Services:-**

I think I have already stated we are confident that we will complete the project and that we have got the funds to overrun.

**11. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS:-**

**11.1. QUESTION BY COUNCILLOR ROB JAMES TO COUNCILLOR ALUN LENNY - CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES**

“In view of the council's commitment in January 2023 to re-examine its relationship with Barclays bank, could the Cabinet Member outline what progress has been made with the re-examination - outlining the terms of the existing contract with Barclays, whether alternative banks have been approached and what is the view of this administration on allegations of continued greenwashing within Barclays?”

## **Response by Councillor Alun Lenny, Cabinet Member for Resources**

Since this matter was placed before Council, the Authority has undertaken significant work in researching the options for its banking service for the future. Officers have engaged with a specialist banking independent adviser to seek the latest market information in respect of current banking organisations and services provided. They have also engaged directly with Barclays in respect of its ethical, sustainable and governance policies or ESG seeking information on the future direction of that organisation. Officers have now drawn together a report on the options which I am due to discuss with the Director over the next couple of weeks in which we will conclude the most appropriate way forward. I would remind Members of the importance for the County Council of a strong, sustainable, resilient banking organisation that processes millions of transactions annually for the County Council to ensure cash flow moves to and from residents, contractors and businesses in an efficient and effective manner. The County Council currently operate in 128 bank accounts and turnover of investments alone is in region of £1.8 billion.

Therefore, a resilient organisation that transaction, a timely and efficient manner is vital to the Authority to ensure an effective service delivery, as is the importance also of the ESG principles of that organisation.

Thank you.

## **11.2. QUESTION BY COUNCILLOR ROB JAMES TO COUNCILLOR DARREN PRICE - LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

"Llanelli Chamber of Trade and Commerce has announced their campaign to have Llanelli be recognised as a city. The campaign has received a mixed response with the likes of Sir Douglas Perkins, co-founder of Specsavers, Nia Griffith MP and Llanelli Town and Rural Councils backing the proposal, yet some have raised concerns. Will you commit to Carmarthenshire County Council running a public consultation, in partnership with the Chamber of Trade, to assess the public appetite for submitting a city status bid?"

## **Response by Councillor Darren Price, Leader of the Council**

Thank you for the question. As you may be aware, I have previously publicly called on the Llanelli Chambe of Trade and Commerce to hold a full public consultation with the people who are Llanelli, before proceeding with any formal bid for a city status. The importance of that public consultation for me is absolutely fundamental. Indeed, I believe it is a duty on all politicians and businesses to listen to the views of the people before going any further on this. In my view, the only way to do that fairly, is to appoint an independent organisation to hold a formal public consultation, independent of anybody or any Council. Indeed, on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2024, I provided the chamber with a list of possible organisations who could undertake that work on their behalf now I notice that you said in your questionnaire that the town and rural councils back the city status bid, however my understanding is that it is only the Town Council that has

declared its support for the bid, whereas the rural councillors simply agreed to send a representative to the bid launch at the end of March.

I understand that you seconded the motion at the Town Council in support of the bid, if I am totally honest, I believe that move was a little premature without consulting the public.

First, there are, of course, a number of unknowns presently. There will therefore be a need, in my view for those proposing the change set out in detail prior to the public consultation, the proposed boundary of the city, for example, any benefits that they perceive, along with any costs. These details can then be subject to that important public scrutiny and debate.

Unfortunately, and I have noticed, there are some early comments from one or two of those supporting the bid which don't seem to be based in reality. So, for example, I've heard some suggest that changing the town's status to city would bring about a fully-fledged A&E in Llanelli, which clearly isn't the case. We know that Health Boards decide on service delivery models based on population factors and ease of access locally. For example, we know that the preferred sites for the new hospital within Hywel Dda and in St Clears or Whitland.

We also note the most recent critical care investment in South Wales, the Grange hospital in Gwent has been sited close to the town of Cwmbran as opposed to the city of Newport. So, the case for city status needs to be based on facts and not fiction.

From my perspective, Plaid Cymru's focus is centred fully on trying to attract inward investment into Llanelli. It is only by creating jobs and wealth that we will turn around and Llanelli's fortunes, and that's why we're focussed on delivering the multi-million pound Pentre Awel development, for example, which will create hundreds of jobs in the town. Similarly, we all need to be focussed on trying to improve the town centre.

Practical improvements, such as the need for a redevelopment of the YMCA building, as mentioned by Councillor Alun Lenny earlier and the redevelopment of Market Street North at a start. These, and the successful £15m levelling up bids are all designed to try and breath new life into the town centre but there is clearly so much more to do.

The Town Centre as we know has been decimated as a result of out of town shopping, clustering and online shopping. We are, of course, now having to react to that reality, and we all need to think about practical ways in which that can be done. Changing the town status, in my opinion, will not significantly alter that.

So, in concluding, I reiterate, my call on the Chamber to consult with the public but only appoint an independent organisation to lead on that process.

Thank you

## **Supplementary Question by Councillor Rob James**

I am glad the Leader has brought up the issue about the town shopping and in the public statement he notes that it was the Labour administration's choice for the Trostre to be built, has created the problem that we have in town centre, so would he accept that if it wasn't for myself and others around me, the campaign to actually stop the re-expansion of Trostre, that we were seeing be proposed by your administration, would actually see a far larger transfer and even weakening of the town centre.

## **Response by Councillor Darren Price, Leader of the Council**

Yes, absolutely share your concerns about any future development in Trostre and we certainly don't want to see any development which brings about further extraction from the town centre and there have been recent discussions at Cabinet level which have confirmed that position and as far as I'm concerned, Trostre is saturated in terms of retail and clearly the strategic error, in my view, in hindsight, decades ago in terms of establishing Trostre and the scales we saw under the Labour administration and in the noughties has created a situation where the town centre is really struggling. It's not alone, out of town shopping centres across Wales, but that is certainly a factor for the town centre. As I mentioned, there are a number of practical investments that we have made, and we will continue to make over the next few years to try and turn that situation around. But it is certainly not a situation that we would want to be starting from.

Returning to the point of the original question in terms of the city status, the evidence that I have seen, which is based on ONS data going back 20 odd years which looks at economic performance both in terms of creating jobs, GVA and investments, there is no evidence, empirical or academic which suggests that a change of status delivers benefits in those areas. So, cities and towns over a 20-year period, towns that are bid for city status and have succeeded and towns that have bid for city status and have failed. Those four distinct areas all show similar economic outcomes in terms jobs, GVA and investment, and so it's on that basis, I think it's important that we ask the people of Llanelli what they want to do. If there's a gut instinct, that they feel they want to become a city for other reasons, clearly there would be a duty on us to support that. But I think we'd have an honest and factual debate in terms of merits of the other case. Thank you.

## **12. TO ELECT THE VICE CHAIR OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOLLOWING A VACANCY MID TERM**

**RESOLVED that Councillor Fiona Hughes be appointed Vice-Chair of the Health and Social Services Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the 2023-24 municipal year.**



**13. TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES:-**

**13.1 RESOLVED** that the nomination of Councillor Nysia Evans to take the Labour Group's vacant seat on the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee be approved.

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

The Chair stated that the minutes outlined on the agenda under 14.1 – 14.7 were available for information on the Council website.

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CHAIR

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DATE