

COUNTY COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, 10 OCTOBER 2018

PRESENT: Councillor J.M. Charles (Chair)

Councillors:

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

Also Present:

M. James, Chief Executive
J. Morgan, Director of Community Services
C. Moore, Director of Corporate Services
W. Walters, Director of Regeneration & Policy
P.R. Thomas, Assistant Chief Executive (People Management & Performance)
L.R. Jones, Head of Administration and Law
S. Pilliner, Head of Transportation & Highways
A. Morgan, Head of Education Services
L. Quelch, Head of Planning
R James, Performance Planning & Business Officer
S. Sauro, Performance, Analysis & Systems Manager
K. Thomas, Democratic Services Officer

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen - 10.00 am - 12.00 pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors F. Akhtar, H.A.L. Evans, A. Fox, C.J. Harris, P.M. Hughes, C. Jones, T.J. Jones, M.J.A. Lewis, S. Najmi and D. Nicholas.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS.

Councillor	Minute Number	Nature of Interest
------------	---------------	--------------------

A.D.T. Speake	8.1 – Annual Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services on the performance of Social Care Services in Carmarthenshire 2017/18	Page 33 – Looked after Children – in discussion with officers from Carmarthenshire County Council and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
K. Madge	8.1 – Annual Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services on the performance of Social Care Services in Carmarthenshire 2017/18	Daughter works in social care
B.A.L. Roberts	8.1 – Annual Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services on the performance of Social Care Services in Carmarthenshire 2017/18	Son-in-Law is a social worker

3. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

- The Chair Welcomed Councillor Karen Davies to her first meeting of Council following her election in the by-election for the Saron Ward,
- The Chair expressed his best wishes to Councillor Hazel Evans who had recently undergone surgery
- The Chair extended congratulations to:
 - Councillors L. Evans and G. Thomas, together with the families of other councillors, in completing the Cardiff Half Marathon;
 - Dewi Griffiths from Llanfynydd on being the fastest Welshman to complete the Cardiff Half Marathon;
 - Adam Price A.M. from Llanegwad on being elected the new National Leader of Plaid Cymru
- The Chair provided an update on the activities and events where he had represented the Council, those included:
 - Llansteffan School – to unveil a stained glass window;
 - Nantgaredig Community Band- Celebrating its 20th Anniversary;
 - The Friends of Loud Applause Rising Stars;
 - Welsh Baton Twirling Championships –Kidwelly;
 - Capel Saron Llanarthe – Celebrating 150 years;
 - Young Farmers event – to mark the retirement of county organiser Eirios Thomas.
- The Chair commented on the fact the 10th October was World Mental Health Day, which was observed every year, with the overall objective of

raising mental health issues around the world and mobilising efforts in support of mental health.

- The Leader of the Council referred to the recent tragic event at St John Lloyd Catholic School in Llanelli and apprised the Council on the support it had provided to all affected by the event. It was also working closely with the Police in its investigations.

4. TO APPROVE AND SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE 12TH SEPTEMBER, 2018.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 12th September, 2018 be signed as a correct record subject to the declaration of interest by Councillor T.A.J. Davies in minute 2 being amended to read Councillor B.D.J. Philips.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED).

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

6. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS:-

6.1. QUESTION BY COUNCILLOR TINA HIGGINS TO COUNCILLOR HAZEL EVANS, EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT

The Chair advised that as Councillor Hazel Evans- Executive Board Member for Environment, was absent from the meeting Councillor Higgins would be provided with a written response to her question.

6.2. QUESTION BY COUNCILLOR BETSAN JONES TO COUNCILLOR GLYNOG DAVIES, EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND CHILDREN

“A year ago schools and other providers of education and training in Wales were recognised by Estyn for their excellence at an awards evening. Staff at these organisations received a certificate and congratulations from Meilyr Rowlands, the Chief Inspector and Kirsty Williams, Cabinet Secretary for Education.

Six awards went to Carmarthenshire schools – more than from any other individual county council.

They were:

Bryngwyn School, Heol Goffa School, Ysgol Glan-y-Môr, Ysgol Gynradd Bynea, Ysgol Gynradd Parcyrhun and Ysgol Gynradd Saron.

Can we expect schools from this county to be recognised at this year’s ceremony?”

Response by Councillor Glynog Davies, Executive Board Member for Education and Children:-

Thank you to Councillor Betsan Jones for the question. It's a very timely question because Estyn will be hosting their ceremony for 2017/18 and to recognise our excellence in education and training that will be taking place this Friday and, as you said Betsan, last year was an excellent year, with six schools in Carmarthenshire being recognised for their hard work and, notice as well, the high standard of leadership that are in schools. We're expecting this now in schools, we also need a clear vision and, also, a commitment to improvement. That is what's going to raise the standards in our schools, and that's why these schools were recognised. This is what's needed in every school in order for us to improve the standards of education and having an excellence review following an inspection. Thirty Four schools were recognised and six of them were from Carmarthenshire and that's high praise for us as a county. We're talking here of excellence, so what is this excellence? Estyn will be inviting schools and other providers who received excellence in three specific inspection areas. That is what puts them in this status of excellence. They have had excellence in three areas of inspection or more during the 2017/18 academic year, and, this Friday, I have the pleasure in saying there will be four representatives from Carmarthenshire, once again four schools representing Carmarthenshire in this event. It would not be appropriate for me to announce today who those schools are who are being recognised but, the Director of Education and myself have congratulated the schools on their success and that of course keeps the high standard that there are four schools being recognised nationally once again. It's not a small matter of ensuring excellence, and it's appropriate for us to respect and pay our respect to our heads who work extremely hard, and their staff for the excellent work that they do in their schools. They commit themselves to the children and young people and they ensure there are excellent opportunities for those who are receiving education. Can I also thank the governors of schools, and the parents, and many of you here are governors yourselves and possibly parents as well. So, thank you for the support. Can I also thank all the staff of the Council especially, the Education Department for their untiring support to our schools. I'd like to refer to our School Improvement Team who work as part of the ERW region. They go to our schools to challenge but also to support and to ensure the best is available to each learner. With the co-operation of the head teachers, yourselves and every other governor, we will ensure that every school in Carmarthenshire is an excellent school. That is what I'd like to see that each school in Carmarthenshire is an excellent school and these awards recognise that we are on the right track. Thank you very much.

6.3. QUESTION BY COUNCILLOR DORIAN WILLIAMS TO COUNCILLOR LINDA EVANS, EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER FOR HOUSING

"The affordable Homes Delivery Plan established by this administration in 2016 set a very clear and ambitious target of delivering more than 1,000 additional homes over the next five years. What progress has been achieved to date?"

Response by Councillor Linda Evans, Executive Board Member for Housing:-

Thank you Councillor Williams for your question. It's a very relevant question and gives me an opportunity to highlight the excellent work that has been done, and will continue to be done as far as in increasing the number of affordable homes in the County.

Back in 2016 an ambitious target was set by this administration to provide over 1,000 additional affordable homes by 2021. By now, we are two years into this programme and, as well as being on the right track to achieve the target. I am very pleased to say that we are confident that the number of new homes will be considerably higher than what we intended at the start. I am confident we can provide more choice by increasing the number of options for renting homes and homes to sell across the County. So far, we have provided almost 550 extra affordable homes in the county and that's by buying houses in the private sector, bringing empty properties back into use and managing additional private rent homes for landlords, new homes by working with the housing associations and affordable homes as part of larger developments. Over the next three years our intention is to provide 700 more houses by using these approaches. I'm sure that you have noticed that these figures do not include our plans to build new homes but I can assure you that these developments are going ahead. The builders will be on the Garreglywd site in Pembrey over the next few months/ weeks and the development in Dylan, at the Bryn will follow before Christmas. These developments will provide almost 50 new council homes to rent. I'm sure that some of you, as members have heard recently about the intention to slacken the HRA rules. This means that we will possibly be able to borrow more money to build more council homes and officers at the moment are developing an ambitious programme to ensure we can take advantage of this and, before long, I will be announcing the details of that programme to you in the Council. Members are aware that we have also set a new homes company, Cartrefi Croeso. Five Hundred houses will be provided over the next five years and the company has already prepared plans on seven locations including developments in rural areas. The company will find a range of options, which will be suitable for the needs of the area. An example is houses which will be affordable to buy in rural areas to help local people to stay local. It's obvious that we therefore are taking great steps in order to meet the needs regarding affordable homes across the county. There are plans also to support our intention with the regeneration of Llanelli Town Centre, Ammanford and Carmarthen. Also rural developments and areas such as Station Road in Llanelli where the change of tenancy is required. All of these things will have a significant impact. They will not only help people to live in affordable homes, which are much needed, but they will also have a wider impact on the health of people and their well-being and give opportunity for employment. We have invested £25m in the last two years and we want to invest much more in the next few years. Even though what we have done in a short period of time has been a great success, we can see that we are not just sitting around. We will continue to be innovative and work hard to provide as many affordable homes as possible, and in those areas where they are needed by ensuring that what's provided is right for the area. Can I take the opportunity to thank all the staff from different departments in the Council who work alongside one another to ensure we reach where we have got to. My thanks go to you all. Our affordable homes plan to me is like a book. It's a book full of exciting stories. We designed the cover of this book two years ago. The cover was quite colourful with many houses. It's a book containing an exciting story. I've only given you the first episodes of that book, there is many more episodes to come in this story and I look forward to giving you another chapter in the near future. Thank you".

Councillor Williams asked the following supplementary question:-

“Based on the figures that you referred to in your response. From remembering when we travel through Carmarthenshire, we can see so many empty properties, some of them which have been empty for many years, and they are in a bad state of repair as a result of the continuous waiting over time. So can I therefore ask, and I’m referring to the figure that was mentioned, the figure of 550 affordable housing that have now been brought back into use, how many of them were empty properties for many years?”

Response by Councillor Linda Evans – Executive Board Member for Housing:-

I can announce today, and I have a pleasure in announcing this. Before I do that actually, can I just tell you how many empty properties have come back into use. The process of getting an empty property back into use is quite a process in itself. The easiest way is to buy homes to make them affordable and buy homes which are suitable for the area. But the process of dealing with an empty property can be a long process because many things are associated with it, legal issues etc. But the good news is that we have excellent officers in this department and in 2018/19 we have brought back 184 empty properties, last year it was 174 and if you compare that with ten years ago, 2010, when we brought 59 empty properties back into use. So the department and the work is working very well and we will be continuing to do that, and continuing to ensure that empty properties are brought back into use because we are all aware that having an empty house in a village or a street is not pleasant to look at and it’s not good for the environment either. So building new homes, we are doing that, but ensuring that empty properties, which can be brought back into use are done and the council can help people to do that. So if you know of people who have empty properties, please approach them and encourage them to contact the Council. It is possible to get a financial loan to bring them back into use. Thank you.

7. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING NOTICES OF MOTION:-

7.1. NOTICE OF MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR ROB JAMES

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

“We call on Council to promote the campaign to eradicate period poverty in Carmarthenshire”.

The Motion was duly seconded.

The proposer and seconder of the Motion were afforded the opportunity of speaking in support thereof and proceeded to outline 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 Notice of Motion be supported.

7.2. NOTICE OF MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR EDWARD THOMAS

Council considered the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Edward Thomas:

“The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) is an intergovernmental body which aims to gain political and social leaders’ support for the need for Holocaust remembrance, education and research. The IHRA was first instigated by the former Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson, in 1998. His aim was to establish an international organisation that would expand Holocaust education worldwide and to hold an international forum of governments interested in discussing Holocaust education. The Forum, which took place in January 2000, was attended by the representatives of 46 governments.

The Declaration of the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust was the outcome of the Forum’s discussions and is the foundation of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. It seeks to recognise the magnitude of impact that the Holocaust had and contains pledges to strengthen efforts to promote remembrance, education and research

The IHRA definition is supported by the major representative bodies of the Jewish Community, including the Board of Deputies of British Jews, the Jewish Leadership Council and the European Jewish Congress along with a number of local authorities throughout the UK

I therefore propose that Carmarthenshire County Council:

- 1 adopts the Stockholm Declaration on Anti-Semitism:

“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.” and

- 2 pledges to strengthen efforts to promote Holocaust remembrance through education and research”.

The Motion was duly seconded.

The proposer and seconder of the Motion were afforded the opportunity of speaking in support thereof and proceeded to outline 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 Notice of Motion be supported.

(NOTE: At the conclusion of this item Council stood for a minutes' silence in memory of the recent tragic incident at St John Lloyd Catholic School, Llanelli)

8. TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD IN RESPECT OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS

8.1. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STATUTORY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES ON THE PERFORMANCE OF SOCIAL CARE SERVICES IN CARMARTHENSHIRE 2017/18

(NOTE: Councillors K. Madge, B.A.L. Roberts and A.D.T. Speake had earlier declared interests in this item)

Council was informed that the Executive Board, at its meeting held on the 30th July, 2018 (Minute 6 refers) had considered the Statutory Report of the Council's Director of Social Services on the Performance of Social Care Services in Carmarthenshire for 2017/18 and recommended its approval.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the following recommendation of the Executive Board be accepted:

“That the Draft Annual Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services on the Performance of Social Care Services in Carmarthenshire for 2017/18 be approved”

8.2. DRAFT - CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2017/18

Council was informed that the Executive Board, at its meeting held on the 24th September, 2018 (Minute 6 refers) had considered the Draft Carmarthenshire County Council's Annual Report for 2017/18.

The Council was informed that whilst the initial Draft Report had been considered through its political process via the Executive Board and Scrutiny Committees in June/July 2018, it did not include awaited data on the All Wales Results and some of the National Survey results, which were not available until September 2018. That information had subsequently been received, and incorporated, within the report presented to Council for its consideration.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the following recommendation of the Executive Board be accepted:

“that the Draft Carmarthenshire County Council Annual Report for 2017/18 be approved”.

8.3. ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2017/18 ADOPTED CARMARTHENSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Council was informed that the Executive Board, at its meeting held on the 24th September, 2018 (Minute 8 refers) had considered the Annual Monitoring Report 2017/18 on the Adopted Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan required to be submitted to the Welsh Government by the 31st October, 2018

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the following recommendations of the Executive Board be accepted:

“that Council receives and accepts the contents of the third Annual Monitoring Report for the Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan, as required for submission to the Welsh Government by the 31st October, 2018;

That Council grants officers delegated authority to make typographical or factual amendments, as necessary, to improve the clarity and accuracy of the AMR”.

9. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD HELD ON THE 24TH SEPTEMBER, 2018

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report of the meeting of the meeting of the Executive Board held on the 24th September, 2018 be received.

CHAIR

DATE