

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RADNORSHIRE HELD AT COMMITTEE
ROOM A - COUNTY HALL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS, POWYS ON
WEDNESDAY, 13 JANUARY 2016**

PRESENT: County Councillor T. Turner, Chairman

County Councillors G R Banks, J H Brunt, K W Curry, W J Evans, D O Evans, H Lewis, MC Mackenzie, P J Medicott, W J T Powell, GD Price, K F Tampin, T Turner and G I S Williams

1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	RS1-2016
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Apologies for absence were accepted from Councillors J. Gibson-Watt and E.M. Jones.

2.	MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING	RS2-2016
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The Chairman was authorised to sign the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on Wednesday 11th November 2015 as a correct record. During discussion particular reference was made to:

- a. **Aveling Roller and Living Van (reg EP3339)** – members would welcome confirmation in relation to whether the owners of Gore Quarry would commit to the arrangement with the Council for storing and maintaining the roller and living van at the quarry site under a shared ownership agreement. The matter of confirming the position had been outstanding for some time. Contact would be made with the quarry owners to seek to confirm the position
- b. **Fraud Prevention** – a vacant position had recently been filled, the team now comprised of two members of staff

3.	CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS	RS3-2016
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The Chairman reported on

- a. **Christmas Lunch** – those members who attended were thanked for joining the Chairman at the Golf Club for a Christmas lunch
- b. **Citizenship** – having conducted two citizenship ceremonies since the last meeting

4.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	RS4-2016
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There were no declarations of interest from members in relation to items to be discussed on the agenda.

5.	REPORTS FROM AND QUESTIONS TO CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDERS	RS5-2016
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Members welcomed the opportunity to receive reports from, and to put questions to, Cabinet Portfolio Holders. During discussion particular reference was made to:

- a. **2016/17 Revenue Settlement** – the average Welsh provisional revenue budget settlement would deliver a 1.4% reduction. The provisional Powys settlement was a 4.1% reduction. Unlike in previous years there would be no protection via. a floor allocation
- b. **Rural Stability Grant** – the WLGA had supported the proposal to request additional funding for rural authorities via. a Rural Stability Grant. The level at which the grant would operate and whether the Welsh Government would accept proposals had not been determined

- c. **3 Year Budgeting** – without additional funding to recognise rurality, some of the more difficult options contained within the 3 year plan, would have to be taken forward. If additional support is forthcoming from WG, it will give the Council the opportunity to back off on some of these challenging proposals but also to tackle some of the emerging pressures such as the Living Wage and Welsh Language Act
- d. **Budget Setting** – authorities would be required to adhere against the budget setting timetable despite the Welsh Government having yet to confirm final settlements
- e. **Delegated Schools Budget** – there are particular pressures that would need to be met to meet employment/staffing costs, particularly around the Living Wage. The Welsh Government had not sent an instruction to authorities to protect the ‘education’ budget above that of others areas (with the exception of adult social care). The Portfolio Holder remains sympathetic but without additional funding would not be in a position to protect the budget at any level above other services
- f. **Adult Social Care** – the service in the south of the County had been brought back in-house. Savings achieved through the previous exercise to look to externalise would be used to support in-house delivery. Public engagement exercises had ranked the provision of domiciliary care as a very high priority. Unlike in previous years the Welsh Government had not provided instruction to authorities to protect the Adult Social Care or Education budgets, but the Portfolio Holder remains sympathetic to the situation around school delegated budgets and also the difficulties in ASC caused by the Dom Care Service in the South having to be delivered ‘in house’, and will be looking to make some provision in the budget proposals accordingly
- g. **Mid and West Wales Fire Authority** – the budget for the area comprises of contributions from each of the six local authority areas. The contribution asked for from Powys is significantly in excess of the provision included within the Welsh Government settlement, and representations are therefore being made to the M & WW FRS in this respect
- h. **Income** – Over £1.7m had been included in the budget for income generation, but it had become apparent from a recent meeting of the Income & Cost Improvement Board, that some of this may not actually be achievable. As a result the Portfolio Holder had removed £200k from the plan, and challenge events were due to take place around the remaining £1.557m to make sure that this is achievable. The Portfolio Holder was content to share any further information that Members may require
- i. **In-Year Balanced Budgets** – the Portfolio Holder had stressed the importance of the Council achieving a balanced budget at the end of the financial year. Any savings not achieved by services would be carried forward to the following year and separately identified in the monthly financial report in order to keep track of them and make sure they are delivered
- j. **Capital Budget** – there would be moves to better align the capital budget very closely with the revenue settlement. There would be some additional spends that would, over time, support revenue savings, but each capital bid must have a sound business case i.e. funding the switching of streetlights to full LED compliance for all lights which could save the £300k per year revenue savings required for that area, without switching off any more lights
- k. **County Farm Estate** – policy dictates that 10% of capital receipts are made available to the service for re-investment. However a backlog of urgent works had built up and therefore Cabinet had agreed to provide additional capital funding, from receipts received, of up to £500k.
- l. **3rd Party Spend** - there was currently some difficulty around the 15/16 targets for 3rd party spend, which needs to be clarified to ascertain the true position. For 16/17 onwards 3rd party spend savings will count towards service overall spending targets and not be held as separate targets.
- m. The Portfolio Holder confirmed that he would advise members once final settlement information was known.

5 b. Councillor Avril York, Cabinet Portfolio Holder: Regeneration and Planning

- a. **Local Development Plan Working Group** – officers continue to meet bi-weekly regarding the LDP. The Portfolio Holder praised the work of the LDP Working Group in relation to the activity which they had undertaken to support the development of the plan
- b. **Development Control** – issues had been recognised and would continue to be addressed via. a planning improvement plan. Appointments had been made to key positions. Arrangements for recruiting to vacant positions would continue. The team is relatively young and enthusiastic. The general planning officer role includes enforcement, however, at times external contractors could be used
- c. **Enforcement** – enforcement remains an issue, it was suggested to promote where actions to redress have been taken to help with deterring
- d. **Retrospective Planning Applications** – it was felt by members that the cost of having to submit retrospective applications for planning permissions should be significantly more than if an application had been made prior to works. Increased costs may help to deter such practices
- e. **Planning (Wales) Act 2015** - the Authority would need to meet obligations as set out in the Act. The Portfolio Holder would provide an update in relation to the Act and detail in relation to how the Authority would respond to requirements
- f. **Processing Planning Applications** – under the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 there are requirements to be met in terms of processing applications within a given time. Processing outside of the timescale could mean that the Authority would have to pay back fees
- g. **Performance v Resource** – following a request from a member the Portfolio Holder agreed to provide historic staffing information (details from the previous two years up to the present day) and performance information for the same period so that members could compare one against the other. Moving forward the Portfolio Holder is confident that there would be improvements to the development/planning function
- h. **Regeneration** – there continues to be a focus on working with businesses to identify barriers to business development and address issues. The Regeneration Partnership Programme includes four strands: Jobs and Growth, Growing Existing Businesses, Growing New Businesses and Increasing Visitor Numbers
- i. **Powys Business Awards** – local success continues to be recognised at the Council's Annual Business Award Ceremony
- j. **Working with the Welsh Government** – officers continue to work with the Welsh Government to identify the best way to support regeneration activities specific to Powys. Branding 'Powys' had been identified as an issue
- k. **Growing Mid Wales** – officers are working with colleagues from Ceredigion to look to develop a Mid Wales approach to promoting areas and embark on joint ventures. Chiring meetings and admin support provided by each authority are rotated yearly
- l. **Business Units/Workshops** – units/workshops are generating income for the Council which would be used to support business activity. Where there are business needs officers would work to help secure appropriate sites for development etc.
- m. **Economic Development Strategy Workshop** – towards the end of 2015 officers had provided views on where initiatives could have an impact. Further work would be undertaken to move forward on potential areas of improvement/activity. Member input would be important and there would be a member development session later in the year to focus on the strategy
- n. **Local Facilities** – members raised issues in relation to the attractiveness of Powys in terms of it being a place of choice to live and work from. It was felt that factors including school closures, poor school performance, gaps in medical provision etc. would have a detrimental impact on anyone wanting to move to Powys or operate a business from the area. The Strategic Director: People reported that matters are recognised and that a recent appointment had been made to a joint Health and Authority position, the postholder would look to identify staffing gaps in order to recruit to needed positions via. a workforce strategy
- o. **Bank Closures** – there had been a number of recent bank closures. Members requested an update in relation to any actions taken by the Authority to challenge closure decisions. It was noted that in areas where there were closure proposals

challenging banks in relation to what they would provide after closure had proven positive in terms of retaining some banking services

5 c. Councillor Stephen Hayes, Cabinet Portfolio Holder: Adult Social Care

- a. **Domiciliary Care** – efforts to stabilise the service and reduce the use of agency workers in the south are working well. Following a request the Portfolio Holder agreed to provide missed call/visit information to shire members
- b. **Consultation / Change** – there would be a period of information gathering/engagement prior to moving to formal consultation on options in relation to potential changes to day activities, learning disabilities, residential care and fair and affordable care. In the light of the Welsh Government elections it is likely that the pre-consultation period would be up until May with the formal consultation following after the election. The Portfolio Holder and Strategic Director urged current providers to take part in the information gathering exercise and formal consultation to help shape the outcome. Members would be invited to input at a future member development seminar session
- c. **Residential Care (BUPA Contract)** – a break clause allows for an extension to the contract for providing residential care, officers are engaging regarding an extension to allow time for a fuller review of need and provision
- d. **Head of Adult Social Care** – members agreed to write to thank Joy Garfitt for her contributions during her time as Head of Adult Social Care. The vacant position had been reviewed following Joy's decision to leave to take up a position with the Health Authority. Two positions had been created, one to maintain the delivery of current services (Head of Operations) and the other to look to review services and to drive forward with change (Head of Transformation)
- e. **Contract Monitoring** – care teams would be reviewing the delivery of services under contract to ensure that they are being delivered to specification and within budget
- f. **Integration with the Health Board** – both organisations have re-affirmed their commitment to look to integrate and are looking to accelerate processes. There's scope and opportunity to focus on older people for joint working ventures
- g. **Delayed Transfers of Care (DTOCs)** – having expressed concern about delayed transfers of care members were re-assured to learn that there are very thorough monitoring arrangements in place between the Health Board and Council to identify and look to resolve issues. In the majority of cases people remain in hospital longer than is necessary whilst family members look to determine their preference for care after discharge. In most cases confirming care packages and support needs don't impact on length of stay
- h. **Glan Irfon (Builth Wells)** – the operation of the shared care and health site at Glan Irfon, Builth Wells continues to be recognised as a success. Activities are monitored by a multi-agency monitoring group and the Welsh Government had reviewed the operation of the site and praised its functions. There's opportunity to look to develop a similar site elsewhere in Powys

6.	REPORTS FROM AND QUESTIONS TO MEMBERS SERVING ON OUTSIDE BODIES	RS6-2016
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It was reported that:

- a. **Police and Crime Commissioner's Board** – representatives had not attended the December meeting because of a clash with the shire Christmas lunch
- b. **Brecon Beacons National Park** – staffing levels and other actions would be taken to reduce spends in the light of the budget position, closing Tourist Information Centres would be considered. Income generation had been identified as an issue
- c. **Powys Byways User Group (PBug)** – the group continues to meet to consider matters in relation to maintaining the byway network

To consider a request to appoint to a vacant shire position on SACRE

Members were informed that the Powys SACRE (the association which considers school inspection reports for church schools) had expressed concern about there being a vacancy for a Radnorshire member on the group. Members were unable to appoint to the position.

7.	CORRESPONDENCE	RS7-2016
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Members were informed that Judith Adele, a Radnorshire resident had recently competed in the European Horse Agility Liberty Championship 2015 and came fourth overall. The Chairman agreed to write on behalf of the shire to congratulate Judith on her achievement.

8.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	RS8-2016
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The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 16th March 2016 and not 18th as stated on the agenda.

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR TOM TURNER
CHAIRMAN**