

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD AT COUNCIL CHAMBER -  
COUNTY HALL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS, POWYS ON TUESDAY, 7 NOVEMBER  
2017**

**PRESENT**

County Councillor M R Harris (Chair)

County Councillors A W Davies, MC Alexander, P Davies, L Fitzpatrick, S M Hayes,  
R Powell, M Weale and J Wilkinson

In attendance: County Councillors B Davies, M Dorrance, E Durrant, K Laurie-Parry, E  
Vaughan and G Williams

<b>1. APOLOGIES</b>
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Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor James Evans.

<b>2. MINUTES</b>
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The Leader was authorised to sign the minutes of the last meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup>  
October 2017 as a correct record.

<b>3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>
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The Leader and Deputy Leader advised that they had both participated in the  
WLGA Council meeting when the Joint Council for Wales resolution on local  
government pay had been passed.

<b>4. WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN 2017 - 2020</b>
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The Portfolio Holder for Education and the Welsh Language presented the draft  
Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) for 2017-2020 setting out the  
outcomes and objectives of the plan. She explained that the plan sought to  
address the current inequality to access to Welsh language education in the  
county by replicating the successful Ysgol Dafydd Llwyd model. The WESP  
included proposals for an all through Category 2A school in the north of the  
county, additional Welsh medium places in the Ystradgynlais area, the  
development of Welsh medium provision in the Llanidloes area and the  
establishment of Welsh medium provision in the Gwernyfed catchment.

County Councillor Elwyn Vaughan spoke in support of the WESP.

<b>RESOLVED</b>	<b>Reason for Decision:</b>
<b>To approve the authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017 – 2020 for submission to Welsh Government.</b>	<b>To meet the statutory requirement to prepare a new Welsh in Education Strategic Plan every three years.</b>

<b>5.</b>	<b>21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS PROGRAMME - CAPITAL INVESTMENT BAND B (2019 - 2024)</b>
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Cabinet considered the Strategic Outline Programme for £113.92m of capital investment in schools as part of the second wave of Welsh Government's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme (known as Band B), 2019 – 2024. The Director of Education confirmed that business plans would be drawn up for each project looking at the demographics of communities, location, size and types of schools and that there would be engagement with local members and communities. Cabinet welcomed the substantial investment in the education infrastructure in the county and thanked the officers involved in drawing up the programme.

<b>RESOLVED:</b>	<b>Reason for Decision:</b>
<p><b>1. To approve the Strategic Outline Programme for Band B (2017 – 2020) as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.</b></p> <p><b>2. To continue to explore the potential and implications of the two funding streams – capital and revenue – in partnership with Welsh Government and to bring another report to Cabinet with final costs.</b></p>	<p><b>To :</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>improve the condition of our educational assets;</b></li> <li>- <b>reduce of surplus capacity and inefficiency in the system;</b></li> <li>- <b>expand schools in areas of increased demand for educational services; and</b></li> <li>- <b>provide sufficient places to address growth in demand for Welsh medium education</b></li> </ul>

<b>6.</b>	<b>PLANS FOR POWYS SCHOOLS POLICY (DRAFT) - VISION 2025</b>
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Cabinet considered a new policy for the development and organisation of schools in Powys to replace the current Schools Organisation Policy 2015 and to reflect the proposed changes to the Welsh Government's Schools Organisation Code 2013. The Welsh Government recently consulted upon revisions to the Code which included proposals to strengthen the presumption against closure of rural schools.

The new 'Plans for Powys Schools Policy – Vision 2025' was aligned with the revised Code and included a framework which enabled schools to strengthen school-to-school collaboration and to establish new models of governance, in order to achieve improved outcomes and opportunities for pupils, families whilst also generating potential efficiencies.

The Portfolio Holder for Education explained that an activity led review would be carried out which help establish the costs of delivering the service to ensure that it was sustainable.

<b>RESOLVED:</b>	<b>Reason for Decision:</b>
<b>To approve the Plans for Powys Schools Policy – Vision 2025 for</b>	<b>To receive the views of stakeholders on the proposed policy.</b>

<b>consultation.</b>	
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<b>7. POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAMME</b>
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Welsh Government was committed to providing 20,000 new affordable homes in Wales and had made capital resources available, with the Council securing £7.2m in social housing grant to build new affordable homes.

Cabinet considered proposals for the Housing Service:

- to develop a phased five year programme for the development of new council rent homes and the development of low cost home ownership homes;
- to create a project board to develop a Powys specific housing development framework within the next 12 months; and
- to procure individual housing development schemes as pilot schemes whilst the framework is being developed.

Cabinet welcomed the proposals to build new council houses in Powys.

<b>RESOLVED</b>	<b>Reason for Decision:</b>
<b>1. Approve the Housing Service develop a phased five year programme for the development of new council homes for rent and homes for low cost home ownership.</b>	<b>1. A development programme will assist the Council in meeting identified housing need across Powys and ensure the appropriate allocation of resources by the Council and its partners. It is also an essential component in developing a housing development framework.</b>
<b>2. Approve the creation of a project board in accordance with paragraph 3.6 of the report to oversee the development of a Powys specific housing development framework which is based on the “Lots of Values and geographic areas” as referenced in the attached report within 12 months.</b>	<b>2. Project Board will ensure that all relevant services are involved in the framework enable a number of local contractors ranging in size and scale to be considered as development partners rather than a large single development partner and will ensure that the programme developed meets the Councils strategic priorities</b>
<b>3. To approve the Housing Service procure by competitive tender individual housing development schemes as pilot schemes.</b>	<b>3. Ensuring that the opportunities for housing capital investment are taken while the programme and framework are being developed.</b>
<b>4. The Planned Delivery Plan is noted.</b>	<b>4. To provide information about new and potential social housing</b>

	<b>development in Powys and the levels of investment.</b>
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<b>8. WELSH HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS PROGRAMME</b>
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The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Countryside Services advised that the service aimed to maintain and improve its housing stock to at least Welsh Housing Quality Standards. Delays to letting some contracts meant that the deadline to meet WHQS standards needed to be extended.

<b>RESOLVED:</b>	<b>Reason for Decision:</b>
<b>That Cabinet approves the extension of the WHQS deadline until December 2018.</b>	<b>To:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mitigate the impact of procurement delays</b></li> <li>• <b>Maintain leadership ambition to meet WHQS standard early</b></li> <li>• <b>Minimise the impact to residents awaiting essential improvements</b></li> </ul>

<b>9. EVALUATION OF THE SYRIAN VULNERABLE PERSONS RELOCATION SCHEME IN POWYS</b>
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Cabinet received the evaluation report on the resettlement of 12 Syrian families in Ystradgynlais and Newtown noting that overall the scheme was viewed as a success by delivery partners, community groups and the families themselves. The review had highlighted some weaknesses relating to communication and English language support that the service would address. Members spoke in support of the scheme paying tribute to the communities in Ystradgynlais and Newtown and the local members for making the Syrian families welcome. Cabinet also considered the resettlement of a further 6 families in Llandrindod Wells.

County Councillor Emily Durrant spoke in favour of extending the scheme and urged the Cabinet to work with Hay, Brecon and Talgarth Sanctuary for Refugees to resettle further vulnerable Syrian families in that part of the county.

<b>RESOLVED</b>	<b>Reason for Decision:</b>
<b>1. That Cabinet note the progress made to date on the resettlement of the Syrian families in Ystradgynlais and Newtown.</b>	<b>1. To bring to members attention the relative success of the resettlement scheme in Powys.</b>
<b>2. That Cabinet agrees to extend the number of families resettled to Powys from 12 to 18, and that the further 6 families are resettled in Llandrindod Wells.</b>	<b>2. To demonstrate the council's commitment to providing humanitarian relief to Syrian refugees</b>

**10. DEVELOPMENT OF ACCOMMODATION FOR GYPSIES & TRAVELLERS**

Cabinet received a progress report on the development of additional accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers. Four new pitches had been developed at the Kings Meadow site near Brecon, the Leighton Arches site in Welshpool was being extended and planning consent had been obtained for the site in Machynlleth and the council were currently in negotiation with the owner for the purchase of the site. The Leader suggested that the Cabinet visit the site when they were in Machynlleth.

<b>RESOLVED</b>	<b>Reason for Decision:</b>
<b>That Cabinet notes the content of the report.</b>	<b>N/A</b>

**11. FINANCIAL OVERVIEW AND FORECAST AS AT 30TH SEPTEMBER 2017 AND DEFICIT RECOVERY PLAN**

Cabinet considered the budget outturn report for the period ended 30 September and the options contained in the deficit recovery plan to reduce the level of the projected deficit.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance reported that the financial position had deteriorated since the last meeting and that the delivery of savings had slowed down. If not addressed this would not only increase the deficit at the year end but impact on the base revenue budget going forward. He drew Cabinet's attention to the email sent on behalf of the Audit Committee calling for Portfolio Holders to take responsibility for spending within their departments and immediately identify savings. The Portfolio Holder for Finance advised Portfolio Holders to work with their Heads of service to focus on delivering savings and delaying filling vacancies.

The Acting Chief Executive advised that the Management Team had looked in detail at the deficit recovery plan. Budget managers would be encouraged to limit expenditure and take a balanced approach to filling vacancies.

<b>RESOLVED:</b>	<b>Reason for Decision:</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The contents of the report are noted by Cabinet; and</li> <li>2. Cabinet supports appropriate action by services to curtail or reduce the reported forecasted service deficits.</li> <li>3. The revenue virements in paragraph 7.3 of the report be approved.</li> <li>4. That the actions and options outlined in para 13.6 are implemented and explored further to reduce the projected deficit; and that the</li> </ol>	<b>To monitor the council's financial performance and ensure that spending remains within approved limits and that the 3% minimum general fund reserve is maintained.</b>

<p>improvements and further proposals are included in future monthly budget monitoring reports to Cabinet.</p>	
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<b>12. CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE FOR SEPTEMBER 2017</b>
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Cabinet was advised that the revised Capital Programme after accounting for approved virements was £101,309m, of which committed expenditure was £50.028m (49%) of the budget. The actual spend to the end of September was £24.0m.

<b>RESOLVED:</b>	<b>Reason for Decision:</b>
<p>1. The contents of the report are noted by Cabinet; and</p> <p>2. The Capital virements set out in Section 3 are approved, and those over £500k be submitted to full council for approval.</p>	<p>To outline the capital budget position as at 30th September. To ensure appropriate virements are carried out.</p>

<b>13. TREASURY MANAGEMENT QUARTER 2 REPORT</b>
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Cabinet considered the Treasury Management report for the second quarter of 2017.

<b>RESOLVED:</b>	<b>Reason for Decision:</b>
<p>That the Treasury Management Quarterly Report be received</p>	<p>To ensure Cabinet remains informed about current Treasury Management performance</p>

<b>14. CORRESPONDENCE</b>
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14.1. Joint Council for Wales

The Trade Union side has asked Cabinet to support a motion passed at the WLGA Joint Council for Wales supporting the NJC pay claim for 2018, submitted by UNISON, GMB and Unite on behalf of council and school workers and calling for an immediate end of public sector pay restraint. Cabinet was advised that allowance had been made for a 2% rise in the budget projections. The Leader and Deputy Leader advised that they had been present when the WLGA had voted on this and therefore abstained from voting.

**RESOLVED to support the Joint Council for Wales motion calling on the government to fund the NJC claim and the pay spine review.**

<b>15. DELEGATED DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE THE LAST MEETING</b>
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Cabinet received details of delegated decisions taken by portfolio holders since the last meeting.

<b>16. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME</b>
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Cabinet received the forward work programme.

The Leader advised that she was taking the next report as an urgent item in view of the need to submit the improvement plan for Children's Services.

<b>17. CHILDREN'S SERVICES IMPROVEMENT PLAN</b>
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Cabinet considered the draft improvement plan for Children's Services which was due to be considered by the Improvement Board later in the day.

The Interim Director of Social Services explained that the plan focused on the immediate actions that needed to be taken in response to the issues highlighted in the CSSIW inspection and the warning letter sent by the Minister. The Interim Director gave a commitment to delivering safe services to the children in Powys and advised that if the plan was delivered Council could be confident that there would be a far greater degree of safety for children and families. He acknowledged that the plan needed further work to the sections on corporate responsibility in relation to resourcing, HR and performance management.

The Acting Chief Executive gave Cabinet an assurance that Management Team accepted that this was a key corporate issue and was giving this matter its full attention. An improvement plan for corporate services supporting Children's Services was being developed to run alongside the improvement plan for Children's Services.

The Interim Director of Social Services gave a commitment to developing the longer term capacity of the service, recruiting staff and developing those staff in post with proper career progression.

**RESOLVED to approve the improvement plan for Children's Services subject to any amendments made by the improvement Board.**

<b>18. EXEMPT ITEMS</b>
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**RESOLVED to exclude the public for the following item of business on the grounds that there would be disclosure to them of exempt information under category 1 of The Local Authorities (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007).**

<b>19. YOUTH SERVICE REDESIGN</b>
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Cabinet considered a report on redesigning the Youth Service to deliver the £220k savings target for 2018/19. The proposal was meet the savings target through a mix of direct and contracted out services. The Portfolio Holder thanked the Scrutiny Working Group for their input into the report.

County Councillor Laurie-Parry spoke in support of the work carried out by the Youth Service.

<b>RESOLVED:</b>	<b>Reason for Decision:</b>
<b>To approve Option 1 as the approach to be pursued in managing and developing open access youth services in Powys</b>	<b>To strengthen and develop the approach to open access youth provision whilst also meeting the challenges as set out in the MTFS.</b>

**County Councillor M R Harris (Chair)**