

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE MONTGOMERYSHIRE HELD AT COUNCIL  
CHAMBER - NEUADD MALDWYN, WELSHPOOL,  
POWYS ON WEDNESDAY, 8 MARCH 2017**

**PRESENT:** County Councillor K M Roberts-Jones

County Councillors D Bailey, G J Bowker, G Breeze, L V Corfield, E R Davies, V E Evans, P Harris, D C Jones, M J Jones, Eldrydd M Jones, D R Jones, J R Jones, W T Jones, F H Jump, R H Mills, G Morgan, P C Pritchard, R G Thomas, G P Vaughan and J M Williams.

<b>1.</b>	<b>APOLOGIES</b>	<b>MS12-2017</b>
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Apologies for absence were accepted from M.C. Alexander, R.G. Brown, A.W. Davies, R.I. George, S.M. Hayes, G.M. Jones, P. Lewis, D.J. Mayor, J.G. Shearer and W.B. Thomas.

<b>2.</b>	<b>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</b>	<b>MS13-2017</b>
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The Chairman was authorised to sign the minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2017 as a correct record subject to amending the reference in minute 6 g. to replace the title 'Mental Health Champion' with 'Dementia Champion' to correct the mistake.

<b>3.</b>	<b>CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</b>	<b>MS14-2017</b>
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The Chairman reported on:

- a. **Welshpool Day Centre (Ann Holloway Centre)** – members for Welshpool Town would leave during the meeting to attend a re-naming ceremony at Welshpool Day Centre. The centre would be renamed the Ann Holloway Centre to recognise ex-County Councillor Ann Holloway
- b. **Llanidloes Leisure Centre** – having attended to open a refurbished fitness suite
- c. **Centenary Birthday Celebrations** – having attended two centenary birthday celebrations

<b>4.</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>	<b>MS15-2017</b>
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There were no declarations of interest made in relation to items on the agenda.

<b>5.</b>	<b>POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER (DYFED- POWYS POLICE FORCE AREA) - 10.15 - 10.45</b>	<b>MS16-2017</b>
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Members welcomed Dafydd Llewellyn – Police and Crime Commissioner (Dyfed-Powys) and Suzanne Lloyd – Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant to the meeting for the following two items of business. During discussion particular reference was made to:

- a. **Commissioner (Background)** – the Commissioner has strong ties to Powys and in particular Montgomeryshire. The Commissioner had joined the Force in 2001 and been elected to the Commissioner position in May 2016
- b. **Rural Policing** – the Commissioner recognises that rural policing and its needs are very different to those in urban areas (distance being a particular issue)
- c. **Community Engagement/Input** – the Commissioner had determined that community engagement and local input would be very important and he had included it as a theme running through the Police and Crime Plan. As an example of how communities could shape functions the Commissioner reminded members that Welshpool Town Council had raised the issue of anti-social behaviour and how important it was for the area which had resulted in the introduction of a drinking ban in the town centre. Where there are local events the police would welcome information in order to consider attending etc. It would be important for members to advise on ways of engaging locally. Members would welcome being invited to input in this regard
- d. **Police Stations** - there are no small station closure programmes being progressed, however, operations and openings would always be reviewed in order to make best use of resource. There's a £15 million estates programme which includes co-location considerations. The Commissioner would not want sites open for the sake of opening. The public can use an increasing number of means to report on crime and to link with officers to discuss matters i.e. use of internet technologies, social media, skype. In some areas recent rota changes had resulted in stations being unmanned at times when the previously had been. This was not a reduction in service because the police could still be accessed
- e. **Annual Budget** – the Commissioner works within an annual budget of in the region of £100 m
- f. **Commissioner (Responsibilities)** – the Commissioner is responsible for setting the police and crime plan, management of the estate and holding the Chief Constable to account
- g. **Chief Constable (Responsibilities)** – the Chief Constable is appointed by the Police and Crime Commissioner and is responsible for all operational matters and for delivering on the police and crime plan. Mark Collins is relatively new to post. Darren Davies had recently been appointed to the position of Deputy Chief Constable
- h. **Management Structure** – the structure of the Force at its highest level is relatively new. There's a very positive feel to the team
- i. **Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (Dyfed Powys-Police Inspection)** – the most recent HMIC inspection identified the Force as being in need of improvement. The Commissioner would look to address all those areas identified for improvement and raise practices so during his term others look to Dyfed-Powys as an exemplar and leading Force
- j. **Transparency** – there are regular (fortnightly and quarterly) meetings which the Commissioner attends and are open to the public. Very few public attend despite meetings be promoted and attendance encouraged. Minutes from meetings are put in the public domain. The Commissioner would welcome the Council and Councillors help in publicising meetings
- k. **Home Office Funding Formula Review**– the Force receives 50% of its funding direct from the Home Office and there will be a funding review. Welsh Forces had been lobbying hard with regard to the need to retain levels of current funding. Any change to the formula for distributing funding would be likely to have a significant impact on operations in Wales
- l. **Precept** – there had been some concerns expressed with regard to the recent increase in precept. The Commissioner reported that the previous

Commissioner had decided, because of the level of reserve, to cut the level of precept by 5%. The impact of reducing the rate had been significant on the reserve. It's good practice and recommended to keep levels of reserve within a range. The impact of cutting for one year been that there had been an impact for the second year because that funding had been removed from the base budget. In order to bring the budget back to a level where the reserve was healthier the current Commissioner had raised the level by 6.9% for the average Band D property. This raise in precept still left the average contribution for a Band D property in Wales at the lowest level of the four Forces operating. If the 5% reduction had not been introduced and the impact not carried over the requirement to meet the same level of increase in revenue for this year would have been a 1.55% increase as opposed to the 6.9% increase

- m. **Fleet Maintenance (Llandrinod Wells Site)** – the Commissioner would welcome details of plans to provide a fleet maintenance site in Llandrinod and would consider whether the police could enter into an agreement to use the facility
- n. **Co-location / Transformation** – the Commissioner is very supportive of change in terms of working with other blue light services to make best use of funding and resource
- o. **Visibility** – a number of members referred to the perceived loss of service and reduction in visibility of officers patrolling in areas. The Commissioner reminded members that there had been a shift and officer time was taken up in responding to newer forms of crime i.e. web based crime, however, visibility and ensuring that communities feel safe and supported remains a priority. Technologies which are used might impact on visibility but are very effective i.e. CCTV. In recognition of the value of CCTV the Commissioner had agreed a £2 million investment programme
- p. **Prevention** – prevention and early identification to reduce instances of crime remain very important. In order to support prevention activities the Force engages with schools via. its liaison officers (the Force has 11 school liaison officers)
- q. **Police Community Support Officers** – of the forty three forces in England and Wales just five committed to retain levels of PCSOs (four of the five being in Wales). The Welsh Government recognise the importance of the PCSO role to Wales and provide funding. The hours of duty for PCSOs are usually from 8 until 10. Powers of PCSOs are determined locally by the Force Superintendent. It was agreed that it would be helpful for there to be consistency across each Welsh Force area. Having attended the meeting the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Sustainability and Human Resources (John Powell) would report back to the service on this matter
- r. **Windfarm Developments (Garreg Llwyd Hill and Tirgwynt)** – the Commissioner reported that the contribution from the developers to meet policing costs had been appropriate and would cover costs incurred. Any funds received in excess of costs would support local projects
- s. **Road Traffic Accidents** – the Commissioner would report back on arrangements for road closures in the event of RTAs. A member queried whether arrangements were different in England
- t. **Newtown** – a member expressing concern about policing in Newtown and in particular visibility and support during the Christmas and New Year festive period agree to refer matters direct for consideration
- u. **Back Office Functions** – the Commissioner reported that he recognised the value in back office support in terms of functions that would release resource to provide direct support to the public. There had been some criticism of the

- Commissioner because he had identified £500k to support back office functions, however, the Commissioner is confident that it's right to operate this way
- v. **Wales Force** – following a question from a member regarding his view in terms of operating as one Wales Force the Commissioner was of the view that the move to one force could be positive, however, powers would need to be devolved from central government
  - w. **Llanfair Caereinion Police Station** – the Commissioner would report back to the local member in relation to the position with the site which had closed

<b>6.</b>	<b>COMMUNITY POLICING (10.45 - 11.15)</b>	<b>MS17-2017</b>
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During an update and discussion particular reference was made to:

- a. **Neighbourhood Policing** - the way in which neighbourhood policing is undertaken has had to change in response to new areas of criminal activity. Neighbourhood watch would be re-launched alongside other campaigns where there's criminal activity i.e. on-line and internet safety, abuse (children, women, the elderly) etc.
- b. **Engagement** – County Councillors know their communities and could play a very important role in supporting the police in engaging. The way in which the police engage is under review and members input would be very welcome. Current methods include engagement with youth and community groups and through a very active school campaign. Members would welcome returning questionnaires and providing input to the force regarding local matters including their views on how best to engage
- c. **Alerts** – communities are able to register for local alerts

<b>7.</b>	<b>REPORTS FROM AND QUESTIONS TO CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDERS (11.15 - 12.15)</b>	<b>MS18-2017</b>
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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. **Councillor Wynne Jones – Deputy Leader/Cabinet Portfolio Holder: Finance, Performance Management and Business Services**
  - i. **Budget** – the Council had set its budget, it would be for Cabinet to agree how to deliver services within what had been agreed. The work of Cabinet in this regard remains constant
  - ii. **Inflation** – it is looking more and more likely that the country will slip back into recession. Inflation and meeting those pressures are likely to put additional pressure on Council budgets
  - iii. **Adult Social Care Budget** – the budget remains volatile, however, indications are that during December and January a budget saving of in the region of £700k had been achieved
  - iv. **School Budgets** – the school budget is in crisis and action needs to be taken. The forecast deficit for the secondary sector as at the 2017/18 year end is £4.3 million. Cabinet have a particular concern with regard to the secondary sector and have requested that the service review this area in particular. A member expressed concern with regard to the way in which

funding is provided to schools via its Fair Funding Formula. The Portfolio Holder informed Members that the Cabinet had requested a fundamental review of the formula, but reminded members that the formula simply distributes the delegated funding allocated in the Councils budget, changing the formula will just allocate the same money in a different way, rather like 'moving the chairs on the deck of the titanic'. The current unsustainable schools organisation model would need £6 million injection of revenue funding now to make it sustainable (£6 million would equate to an additional 10% on Council Tax). That kind of funding is simply not available under current ongoing austerity

- v. **2019/2020 Budget Position** – Management Team had recently been instructed by Cabinet to review services and provide detail on areas for possible review in order to review spends against a forecasted £6.8 million deficit for 2019/20. The three year budget cycle allows for a more planned approach to reviewing areas of spend
  - vi. **Agile Working** - reducing the need for permanent office space to fit with better working practices continues. Considerations to achieve savings include unpaid leave for staff
  - vii. **Council Tax (2<sup>nd</sup> Home)** – with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 second homes or empty dwellings in Powys will attract a 50% Council Tax Premium (normal Council Tax plus 50%). The policy is aimed at reducing the number of 2<sup>nd</sup> homes and empty homes so that they are available to assist in the Powys housing demand. However, it is likely that although this will assist the policy direction, many owners will simply pay the extra premium, which it is estimated will bring in possibly over £500k of additional revenue which will be available to spend on housing in Powys
  - viii. **Invoice Processing** – the cost of paying large volumes of invoices is well recognised. The Council had been looking to reduce and remove costs by introducing the Purchase2Pay scheme. Removing the costs associated with invoicing for those four companies with the highest volume of invoices has already provided savings of £90k. The scheme will be rolled out over a period of time and we would like to pay 30% of purchase this way.
  - ix. **Business Functions (Income Generation)** – there are a number of business service functions that could become very important to the Council in terms of income generation i.e. Disclosure and Barring Service, Fraud and Payroll services etc. Members were informed that seven authority areas had bought in to use Powys for operating its DBS checking and the Welsh Government had been approached with regard to a pan-Wales agreement
  - x. **Strategic Overview Board** – the Portfolio Holder Chairs the Board which comprises of Cabinet. The Board reviews service performance and meets quarterly. The Chair had invited Scrutiny Chairs to attend and values the input they could provide
  - xi. **Non Domestic Rates** – there had been a national re-evaluation exercise and business rates would increase significantly. The Welsh Government had recognised the impact on Welsh businesses and introduced a scheme which Cabinet had recently adopted in order to support high street traders
- b. **Councillor John Powell, Cabinet Portfolio Holder: Environment, Sustainability and Human Resources**

**Environmental Health/Trading Standards:**

- i. **Licensing Act** – there had been a taxi fee review
- ii. **Immigration Act** – officers support delivering on requirements and obligations
- iii. **Smoking in Enclosed Places / Health and Safety** – officers are progressing a number of prosecutions
- iv. **Food Hygiene** – there had been a number of prosecutions. Officers support those who are subject to action with training etc. in order to comply with requirements. There are requirements to publish food standard ratings and actions are being taken against some operators for non-compliance. There had been two poisoning outbreaks with no serious impacts, however, around 50 illnesses had been reported
- v. **Infectious Diseases** – work continues to meet obligations
- vi. **Noise Nuisance** – there had been a recent case which had been settled out of court
- vii. **Animal Welfare / Teeth whitening Scams and Illegal Tobacco Sales** – there are on-going monitoring arrangements and actions being taken
- viii. **Air Quality Control (Newtown)** – the air quality had improved and emission controls had been lifted

### **Waste and Recycling**

- i. **Flytipping (General)** – actions would be taken and there's a three staged process. Officers would, hopefully, work with offenders in order to educate them in the first instance, however, the final stage of the process (after repeat tipping) would result in the issue of a fine or summons to court. The Council had recently issued 400 first stage letters to those who had offended and a register would be kept. The Portfolio Holder encouraged members and the public to report flytipping
- ii. **Welshpool Town Council (Flytipping)** – Welshpool Town Council had agreed that it would remove tipped waste soon after knowing about it. This stance could have increase tipping in the area. The approach taken by the Council had been to take actions against those who tip
- iii. **Trade Waste (Flytipping)** – seventeen fixed penalty notices had recently been issued. Traders are required to operate under a license agreement to dispose of waste
- iv. **Roadside Verges** – members expressed concern with regard to litter being left in verges. The Portfolio Holder agreed that signs would be considered and members with concerns were encouraged to contact the service direct for advice/support
- v. **Three Weekly Home Waste Collection Cycles** – three weekly home waste collection cycles had embedded and accepted. Landfill had reduced and recycling rate had increased. Income had also been received from materials recycled
- vi. **Four Day Collection Week** – a four day collection week would be introduced. The move would save in the region of £500k. There would be no staff reductions as a result. A member requested details in relation to where the savings would be achieved and expressed concern with regard to vehicles being left unattended and not operated for three days a week. There would be appropriate awareness raising for the public in relation to arrangements
- vii. **Cae Post** – Cae Post would cease to operate with effect from April 2017 when those functions would be undertaken by the Council

- viii. **Household Waste and Recycling Sites** – there had been a review of sites which would be considered by Cabinet. There are no current plans to review the site operating in Welshpool
- ix. **Community Recycling Sites** – there would be a review of the operation of sites against recycling in general in order to avoid duplication (household recycling collections may have had impact on some community sites)
- x. **Bulking Waste (Brecon/Abermule)** – an agreement with Potters to operate a site at Brecon had come to an end. The site is owned by the Council and would be run by the Council. There were no penalty clauses from ending the contract on either side. The Council would provide a bulking site in Abermule, funding had been provided by the Welsh Government to develop the site (£410k)
- xi. **Street Cleanliness** – Powys had achieved a very high rate of street cleanliness in Wales (cleanliness rates of 96.4%). Prior to actions taken to reduce spends i.e. staff reductions, rates had been around 95%
- xii. **CCTV** – members were informed that CCTV would be considered to prevent/catch flytippers in areas where there's persistent tipping

<b>8.</b>	<b>REPORTS FROM AND QUESTIONS TO MEMBERS SERVING ON OUTSIDE BODIES</b>	<b>MS19-2017</b>
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Members welcomed the opportunity to receive reports from, and to put questions to, members serving on outside bodies.

- a. **Shrewsbury to Aberystwyth Rail Liaison Committee** – members thanked Councillor Michael Williams for another very comprehensive written report which had been issued with the papers for today's meeting. Councillor Williams reported that Welshpool Town Council had been particularly active and supportive of discussion regarding rail links

<b>9.</b>	<b>ROAD SAFETY AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SCHEMES</b>	<b>MS20-2017</b>
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Members welcomed Chris Lloyd, Area Traffic Engineer to the meeting for this item of business.

- a. **Leighton Arches 40 mph buffer zone (B4381 Welshpool)** – members **RESOLVED** that the Traffic Regulation Order consultation procedure is initiated in accordance with The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996; and if no substantive objections are received the proposals be implemented

<b>10.</b>	<b>CORRESPONDENCE</b>	<b>MS21-2017</b>
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Members were informed that the Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations had welcomed input from the Shire with regard to the naming of a programme they were running which had the same title as the programme being run by the Shrewsbury and

Telford NHS Trust (Future Fit) and had agreed to change the name of the PAVO programme to avoid confusion.

<b>11.</b>	<b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b>	<b>MS22-2017</b>
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The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 5th July 2017.

The Chairman thanked members for their support during her chairmanship and wished those members who were retiring at the end of this Council and those who were standing for re-election all the very best.

**County Councillor**