

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RADNORSHIRE HELD AT RHAYADER LEISURE CENTRE ON WEDNESDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 2016

PRESENT: County Councillor Peter Medicott, Chairman

County Councillors G R Banks, K W Curry, W J Evans, D O Evans, J Gibson-Watt, E M Jones, H Lewis, MC Mackenzie, P J Medicott, K F Tampin and G I S Williams

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors J H Brunt, W J T Powell, GD Price and T Turner.

1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	RS56-2016
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Apologies for absence were accepted from Management Team and Councillors J.H. Brunt, W.J.T. Powell, G.D. Price, T. Turner and A. York (Councillor York had been down to attend for a Portfolio Holder update but, unfortunately, had not been able to attend having recently returned from hospital). Members wished Councillor York all the best for a speedy recovery.

2.	MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING	RS57-2016
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The Chairman was authorised to sign the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on Wednesday 7th September 2016 as a correct record. During discussion and having referred to the action log particular reference was made to:

- a. **Radnor Roller (Aveling Roller EP3339 and Living Van)** – Graham Eales, Principal Legal Assistant and David Micah, Commercial Property Manager would be the lead officers in relation to considering future arrangements for the storing and maintaining of the roller and living van. An initial contact from a vintage group had suggested that operating a Trust arrangement where enthusiasts could sign up to agreeing to contribute to arrangements might be the best option. It is not clear what Tarmac would contribute financially to an arrangement. In the light of the position and the importance of the matter to the shire it was agreed that Councillor Kelvyn Curry should act on behalf of members to move matters on
- b. **Customer Services (Automated Call Management)** – the Head of Business Services, Mark Evans had provided information which evidenced that automated call handing was very good and that 72% of all calls made to the Council got to where they needed to get to quickly (there are in the region of 65,000 calls per year). The automated system had delivered a saving of in the region of 8-9 full time equivalent staff. Where users experience difficulties there's an option to speak direct to an operative
- c. **Cabinet Attendance** – the Leader had confirmed that Cabinet members would prioritise attendance at shire meetings and that non-attendance would be by exception

3.	CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS	RS58-2016
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The Chairman reported on:

- a. **Citizenship** – having officiated at one citizenship ceremony
- b. **Chairman of Council's Luncheon** – having attended a lunch hosted by the Chairman of Council at Caerberis Manor
- c. **Councillor Ann Holloway** - having attended the funeral of Councillor Ann Holloway. Ann had been a County Councillor since the Council came into being in 1996 and a member of the shadow authority the year before

4.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	RS59-2016
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There were no declarations received in relation to matters to be discussed on the agenda.

5.	HOUSING (PROCESSING QUERIES)	RS60-2016
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Members welcomed Julie Harding, Resources Team Leader to the meeting to provide an update in relation to how the Authority manages housing contacts (repairs and maintenance and general contacts) via. its 'Housing One' telephone number. During discussion particular reference was made to:

- a. **Resource** – there are 5.16 full time equivalent (fte) first contact officers who handle enquiries and heating calls and 6.5 fte repairs co-ordinators who handle repairs calls. The unit can operate with just three operatives but in those cases emergencies would be prioritised. At peak times waiting times are longer as members would expect
- b. **Performance** – in line with industry standards the unit aim to answer 88% of all calls within 41 seconds. From April – October 2016 first contact officers answered 970 calls per week, the average speed of answer being 89 seconds. During the same period repair co-ordinators answered 7214 calls from tenants, the average speed of answer being 22 seconds. There's a facility for callers to leave messages should they opt to. At the moment there are no monitoring arrangements in terms of monitoring when call backs to messages left are made
- c. **Welsh Calls** – it's recognised that there's a need to improve provision in terms of providing a Welsh service
- d. **Voice Recognition** – members expressed concern regarding the voice recognition service used by customer services and how it often does not put members through to those they want to make contact with. Julie would report the concerns back to the Customer Services Manager
- e. **Further Developments** – as with all services there are reviews in an attempt to identify areas for improvement, it is likely that self-serving would introduced and that arrangements for managing repair contacts would be transferred when the Authority moves to operating a Joint Venture Company. Members were advised that Kier had been identified as the preferred bidder and that the Authority was looking to finalise a specification before issuing an award of contract
- f. **On Hold Messaging** – there are options regarding messages or music that could be used whilst callers are placed 'on hold'. It would be usual for any changes to be discussed at the Tenants Forum

Members thanked Julie for attending and would welcome a copy of the presentation.

6.	REPORTS FROM AND QUESTIONS TO CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDERS	RS61-2016
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Members welcomed the opportunity to receive reports from, and to put questions to, Cabinet Portfolio Holders.

6.1 Councillor Avril York – Cabinet Portfolio Holder, Regeneration, Planning and ICT

Members were advised that Councillor York had provided a regeneration paper by e-mail but had, due to ill health and having recently returned from hospital, been unable to attend today's meeting

6.2 Councillor Stephen Hayes, Cabinet Portfolio Holder: Adult Social Care

During discussion particular reference was made to:

- a. **Council Seminars** – the Portfolio Holder had held a number of Council Seminars and would continue to engage with members regarding arrangements for delivering and reviewing adult social care
- b. **Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014** – the Council and Health Board continue to work closely to deliver on requirements under the Act. The Act requires the Health Authority and County Council to work closer together. Powys had been at an advanced stage of joint working given previous attempts to collaborate on projects across the region
- c. **Joint Partnership Board** – unlike previous governance arrangements introduced to drive joint working between the Council and Health Authority the Joint Partnership Board (which had been tasked with moving forward on joint matters) had delegated powers. The Board has oversight of activities and functions which span both organisations and could look to remove any barriers/blockages
- d. **Integrated Service Team (Ystradgynlais)** – a pilot arrangement which had seen a flagship joint Council/Health team operating in the Ystradgynlais area under one manager would be evaluated shortly. The focus had been on supporting more independent living
- e. **Contributions towards Care Costs** – the Welsh Government had capped personal contributions towards care costs (regardless of the costs of care and how much money a resident might have) to a maximum of £60 per week. Residents receiving residential care are required to pay for their care if they have an estate or funds above a threshold. The Welsh Government would be looking to extend the amount that residents could hold before having to contribute towards care costs. The impact on Local Authority care budgets of meeting increasing costs would be significant. The Welsh Local Government Association and The Association of Directors of Social Services (Wales) continue to make representations to the Welsh Government regarding capped charges
- f. **Budget Position** – the Adult Social Care budget remains volatile and Council had agreed in February to including saving targets for the current and future years. In the light of the position Cabinet had agreed to a review of day care which included the operation of day care sites. The budget for 2016/17 had been set by Council at a standstill position i.e. there had been no increase in budget and Council had agreed 5% cuts to the budgets for

the financial years 2017/18 and 2018/19. The overspend for 2016/17 would be likely to be in the region of £4-5 million

- g. **Consultant (Review of the Spend/Budget)** – in an effort to unpick the spend and identify areas where savings could be considered the Authority had employed a consultant to scrutinise the budget e.g. there may be some instances where the Authority provides funding direct to residents via. Direct Payments and those payments sometimes remain unspent. A consultancy which had been working with Cardiff Council to review its residential care had also supported Powys with reviewing its arrangements (the BUPA contract)
- h. **Ministerial Visits** – the Portfolio Holder confirmed that the Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport had visited Llandrindod Hospital and areas of Brecon to view facilities and care programmes. Councillor Gwilym Williams reported that Mark Drakeford, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government had also visited the area
- i. **Meeting the Need** – the Portfolio Holder confirmed that a range of arrangements are operating throughout Powys to meet areas of need. The focus had been on delivering services that are safe and secure and in meeting statutory obligations.
- j. **Domiciliary Care** – a member referred to a tendering process undertaken some years ago (when the current portfolio holder had not held the position) which had seen tenders for domiciliary care being awarded to larger companies because smaller providers had been unable to compete. The Portfolio Holder reminded members that the lack of competition in Powys had been a significant factor when seeking to tender for a wide range of services. The Portfolio Holder reassured members that contracts are very closely monitored. Residents with concerns about services should be encouraged to complain or raise their concerns
- k. **Day Centres** – as a result of the poor budget position and the Council agreeing in February of this year that there should be saving targets for adult social care the Authority was consulting with regard to the operation of its day centres. Members were reminded that as the current estate stands there's inequality of provision across the county. A member queried whether the information provided in relation to the operation of the current estate and in particular in relation to the finances could be relied upon. Day centres support approximately 420 residents but also allow for their carers to receive respite. It is accepted and well recognised that centres are valued by those who are supported. Day centre provision fits less well with the direction of travel in line with the Social Services and Well-being Act. Members were urged to respond to the consultation and to urge communities and residents to input. It could be that the views received might present options for further review
- l. **Family and Community Support** – members felt that there should be more of a focus on helping to build family and community support in order to meet the needs of the elderly. As an example the local member for Rhayader reported that a luncheon club held at the leisure centre today had been attended by 46 elderly residents who had been able to enjoy a meal and the company
- m. **Carers** – where members are aware of carers who are facing hardship or difficulties in undertaking their duties because of situations imposed on them by the Council they should be urged to contact the Council to discuss the issues with a view to resolving them quickly

Members thanked the Portfolio Holder for his update.

7.	REPORTS FROM AND QUESTIONS TO MEMBER SERVING ON OUTSIDE BODIES	RS62-2016
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Members welcomed the opportunity to receive reports from, and to put questions to, members serving on outside bodies. During discussion particular reference was made to:

- a. **Brecknock and Radnorshire Sports Partnership** – the Chairman of Council (Councillor Keith Tampin) was pleased to report that Severn Trent Water had agreed to sponsor an award at the award annual ceremony
- b. **Winter Fair** – it was noted that the Winter Fair at the Royal Welsh Showground was looming
- c. **Police and Crime Commissioner** – at a recent meeting of the Board independent membership and the appointment of the new Chief Constable had been confirmed
- d. **Brecon Beacons National Park** – a member reported that income from contributions attached to planning requirements to support community activities had not been recovered. The matter is a significant issue for the parks
- e. **Mid Wales Fire and Rescue Service** – members were informed that fire crews had been trained in the use of defibrillators and fire engines now carry the equipment so if calls are made for emergency support a fire engine, as opposed to an ambulance, could arrive

8.	CORRESPONDENCE	RS63-2016
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There were no items of correspondence, however, during discussion particular reference was made to:

- a. **Bring Site (Llandegley)** – up until the Council establishes a site in Llandrindod Wells the bring site at Llandegley should still be used by residents. The Council pay for use of the facility, residents don't have to and there are issues regarding establishing the Llandrindod facility due to drainage arrangements
- b. **Superfast Cymru** – members would welcome an update in relation to the roll out because in some areas there are rumours that the programme had stopped and would not be re-started
- c. **Venue for Today's Meeting** – the local member for Rhayader reminded members that today's meeting had been held at the leisure centre in order that members could view a new fitness suite which had recently opened. The suite had cost in the region of £190k and was part of a package of investment by Freedom Leisure which also included spends at the Brecon and Welshpool facilities
- d.

9.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	RS64-2016
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The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 11th January 2017.

Radnorshire 16th November 2016

The Chairman would book Christmas lunch for those members that would want to attend. If numbers were low the booking would be cancelled.

**County Councillor Peter Medicott
Chairman**