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County Council 7 March 2024

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL HELD AT COUNTY HALL AND ON ZOOM ON THURSDAY, 7 MARCH 2024

PRESENT

County Councillor B Baynham (Chair)

County Councillors D Bebb, G Breeze, J Berriman, J Brignell-Thorp, J Charlton, R Church, T Colbert, S Cox, A W Davies, A Davies, B Davies, B Davies, S C Davies, M J Dorrance, D Edwards, J Ewing, L George, J Gibson-Watt, C Hall, I Harrison, K Healy, H Hulme, P James, A Jones, E A Jones, E Jones, G D Jones, G E Jones, J R Jones, A Kennerley, C Kenyon-Wade, P Lewington, K Lewis, P E Lewis, W Lloyd, Chloe Masefield, I McIntosh, S McNicholas, DW Meredith, C Johnson-Wood, G Mitchell, G Morgan, WD Powell, G Preston, G Pugh, J Pugh, G W Ratcliffe, L Rijnenberg, L Roberts, P Roberts, C Robinson, E Roderick, D Selby, D A Thomas, R G Thomas, E Vaughan, C Walsh, A Williams, D H Williams, J M Williams and S L Williams

1.	MINUTES
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The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of the meetings held on 7th December 2023, 24th January 2024 and 25th January 2024 as correct records subject to the inclusion of Councillor Chloe Masefield in the list of members present on 7th December.

2.	APOLOGIES
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Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors B Breeze, L Brighthouse, R Devlin, A Jenner, G Morgan and J Wilkinson.

3.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
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County Councillor Sandra Davies declared an interest in item 13 Notice of Motion - Seeking a technical evaluation of undergrounding power cables from energy parks.

County Councillors Angela Davies, Jeremy Pugh, Gwynfor Thomas, James Gibson-Watt, Aled Davies, Pete Lewington, Bryan Davies, Ian Harrison, Gareth D Jones, Jake Berriman, Karl Lewis and Arwel Jones declared interests in item 14 Notice of Motion - School Holidays.

County Councillors Ed Jones, Bryn Davies, Danny Bebb, William Lloyd, Angela Davies, Gareth E Jones, Gwynfor Thomas, David Thomas, William Powell, Aled Davies, Peter Lewis, Edwin Roderick, Pete Lewington, Arwel Jones, Bryan Davies, Ian Harrison, Gareth D Jones, Kelly Healy, Glyn Preston, Jake Berriman, Les George, Karl Lewis, Adam Kennerley, Elwyn Vaughan, Gareth Pugh and Adrian Jones declared interests in Item 16 Notice of Motion – Sustainable Farms.

4.	CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS
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The Chair expressed her sympathy for the family of Ieuan Williams who had passed away. Mr Williams had been a County Councillor representing Brecon from 1986 to 1996.

She reported that she had taken part in a tree planting ceremony in Newtown to commemorate the coronation and at a St David's Day event in Cardiff.

5.	LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS
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The Leader noted that a series of consultation events on Sustainable Powys were underway. He welcomed the £1.8 million investment in Theatr Brycheiniog and noted that work was beginning on a multi-agency hub in Brecon which would enable Neuadd Brycheiniog to be vacated. He also welcomed the designation of Presteigne and Norton as the first area in Wales to be designated an international dark sky community. The Leader advised that preparations were continuing for the Urdd Eisteddfod in Meifod when 90,000 visitors were expected. He also advised that engagement events were being organised for the Marches Forward Partnership.

6.	PUBLIC QUESTIONS
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6.1. Question to the Cabinet Member for a Greener Powys from Richard Miles

6.2. Question to the Cabinet Member for a Greener Powys from Bob Jones

6.3. Question to the Cabinet Member for a Greener Powys from Alan Austin

6.4. Question to the Cabinet Member for a Greener Powys from James Prothero

7.	COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION FOR 2024/25
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8.	REVENUE VIREMENTS
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9.	NEW WAYS OF WORKING AND COUNCIL MEETINGS – MEMBER SURVEY 2023
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10.	SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE FOR MEMBERS
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11.	PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2024/25
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12.	APPOINTMENTS TO WORKING GROUPS AND OUTSIDE BODIES
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13.	NOTICE OF MOTION - SEEKING A TECHNICAL EVALUATION OF UNDERGROUNDING POWER CABLES FROM ENERGY PARKS
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14.	NOTICE OF MOTION - SCHOOL HOLIDAYS
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Council considered a motion proposed by County Councillor Gareth D Jones and seconded by County Councillor Gwynfor Thomas calling on the Council to lobby Welsh Government in response to proposals to shorten summer holidays, highlighting the impact that it would have on the Royal Welsh Show.

By 52 votes to 1 with 2 abstentions it was

RESOLVED

To lobby Welsh Government in response to the proposals to shorten school summer holidays. Counties throughout Wales should retain their ability to change term-time arrangements to ensure the Royal Welsh Show continues to fall within the school holidays.

Furthermore, the Council wishes Welsh Government to know that there are economic, social, and logistical reasons why the RWS should not be held during term time and the Council calls on Welsh Government to consider this impact when assessing the evidence – for and against – for altering the current term-time arrangements to shorten the summer holidays.

15.	NOTICE OF MOTION - IMPACTS OF THE WAR IN GAZA
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This motion was withdrawn.

16.	NOTICE OF MOTION - SUSTAINABLE FARMING SCHEME
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Declarations of interest were made by County Councillors Ed Jones, Bryn Davies, Danny Bebb, William Lloyd, Angela Davies, Gareth E Jones, Gwynfor Thomas, David Thomas, William Powell, Aled Davies, Peter Lewis, Edwin Roderick, Pete Lewington, Arwel Jones, Bryan Davies, Ian Harrison, Gareth D Jones, Graham Breeze, Kelly Healy, Glyn Preston, Jake Berriman, Les George, Karl Lewis, Adam Kennerley, Elwyn Vaughan, Gareth Pugh and Adrian Jones.

Council considered a motion proposed by County Councillor Lucy Roberts and seconded by County Councillor Geoff Morgan calling on the Welsh Government to renew its engagement with farming unions on the Sustainable Farming Scheme.

By 28 votes to 1 with 4 abstentions it was

RESOLVED that Powys County Council considers the current situation to be untenable and asks the Welsh Government to renew engagement with the farming unions, before reapproaching the agricultural sector, once serious amendments have been made to the Sustainable Farming Scheme.

17.	VOTING RESULTS
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County Councillor B Baynham (Chair)