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Radnorshire 13th September 2017

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RADNORSHIRE HELD AT COMMITTEE ROOM A - COUNTY HALL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS, POWYS ON WEDNESDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER 2017

PRESENT: County Councillor B Baynham – Chairman

County Councillors K W Curry, J Evans, D O Evans, L Fitzpatrick, E M Jones, H Lewis, MC Mackenzie, R Powell, GD Price, P Roberts, M Weale, A Williams, J Williams and G I S Williams

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were accepted from Councillors J Gibson-Watt and C Mills.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chairman was authorised to sign the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on Wednesday 2nd August 2017. During discussion and update particular reference was made in relation to:

- a. **Workshops** – a confidential brief had been provided for members and could be issued on request by the clerk. The headline figures being that the Council has 170 workshop sites and occupancy is typically around 90%. Members welcomed the update and requested a more detailed discussion at the next meeting when the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration would be attending for an update and question and answer slot
- b. **Llandrindod Town** – it was felt by members that very visible areas of Llandrindod could be improved (prominent buildings and areas visible on entry to the town). The local member for Llandrindod north (Councillor Gary Price) reported that the matter had been discussed by the town council and links had been made with the Welsh Government. The Authority had issued Section 215 notices to relevant building owners which would remind them of their duty to maintain the sites they own. The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Planning (Councillor Weale) reported that he recognised the wider impact of the condition of properties and had been discussing the condition and use of the auto-palace with the owner
- c. **Elan Valley Works (Nantmel)** – members were shown pictures of the Nantmel works site and it was noted that there had been an event held yesterday when the borer had broken through the surface. There had been works at Bleddfa and there would be future works at Knighton as part of a programme to refurbish connections to the network from the Elan Valley dam. Severn Trent Water had engaged well with communities

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman reported on the following:

- a. **Garden Awards** – members were encouraged to stay after the meeting for the annual garden award presentations
- b. **Waste Awareness Training** – members were welcome to attend waste awareness training which would be held in the afternoon
- c. **Knighton Hospital** – the Chairman had attended the opening of a new family suite which had been funded by the friends of the hospital. The suite would be available for the families of those receiving palliative care
- d. **Queen's Baton Relay** – there had been an event held at Rhayader town. Members expressed concern regarding the absence of media coverage. The event was very significant and the baton was being taken around the UK as part of a ceremony to support the pending Commonwealth games. Members and the Portfolio Holder agreed that the Council's communications department could not have done any more to help publicise and promote. There had been twitter feeds, website updates etc. The Portfolio Holder would review actions taken. It was felt by members that media coverage in general for Powys events was poor. The Authority has no control over what is reported, however, good links are important. There are a number of high profile events staged in Powys and publicity is important. It was agreed to write to media organisations to remind them of the importance of good media coverage for Powys events. Members and residents could help in publicising and promoting events using social media

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from members in respect of items to be discussed on the agenda.

5. RADNORSHIRE ROLLER (AVELING EP3339) AND LIVING VAN (10.10 - 10.20)
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It was agreed to discuss the matter in more depth at the next meeting.

6. POLICING IN RADNORSHIRE (10.20 - 11.00)

Members welcomed Inspector Brian Jones, Dyfed-Powys Police to the meeting for this item of business. During update and discussion particular reference was made to:

- a. **Inspector Jones** – the inspector informed members that he was from a farming family, had worked and lived locally for years and was very aware of the ways of rural life. This local knowledge would help in understanding issues. Inspector Jones is the partnership link within the force
- b. **Local Links** – Inspector Andrew Pitt would shortly be taking over from Brian as the Radnorshire link for members. Andrew views linking with members as important
- c. **Police and Crime Delivery Plan 2017 – 2021** – priorities for the police are set out in the police and crime delivery plan. The plan places a greater emphasis on engaging with communities. Links with members and Radnorshire to consider local issues would be valuable
- d. **Recruitment** – recruitment had been an issue and there had been a review of positions and the structure. The current position being that there's a full complement of staff in positions for the Dyfed-Powys area

- e. **Crime Rates** – there's an annual seasonal crime peak in July where there are usually increases in thefts in order to fund substance misuse
- f. **Rural Crime/Theft** – there are designated rural operations which focus on rural crime i.e. theft of livestock and machinery. There are good links between the force and the Authority's Trading Standards department
- g. **Designated Operations** – there are a number of focused police operations which are identified by operation name
- h. **Boy Racing** – members were informed that the police had been successful in removing three driving licences from local boy racers within the last 12 months
- i. **101** – calling 101 works well and can link residents with named contacts quickly. Calling 101 also allows for more detailed information regarding officer movements to be provided i.e. if officers are on leave and not expected in that information can be helpful to callers
- j. **Local Input** – information and intelligence provided by members and the public is very valuable
- k. **Intelligence Gathering/Arrests** – the police often rely on having to use intelligence gathered over a period of time before they are able to act and arrest. It can sometimes seem as if the police are not acting quickly, however, more often than not they are working on gathering information to support making arrests
- l. **Cyber Crime** – there are changing patterns to crime. A significant amount of crime is carried out using the internet and is not visible. Monitoring of internet based crime is a matter for HQ in London

Members thanked Inspector Jones for his update and agreed that links with the shire and police are important.

7. SEVERN TRENT WATER - PAYMENT SCHEMES (11.00 - 11.15)
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Katie Wood, Customer Relations, Severn Trent Water attended the meeting for this item of business. During discussion and update particular reference was made to:

- a. **Payment Schemes** – there are a number of payment schemes and funds to support those in financial hardship who are finding it difficult to meet water costs
- b. **Engagement** – Severn Trent view engagement with communities as very important
- c. **Water Meters** – there are around 3 million dwellings connected to Severn Trent water and around a third of those have water meters fitted. Meters had proven positive in terms of residents paying for what they actually use as opposed to being charged on fixed rates regardless of use. Meter installation is free and removal can be arranged, however, it could take up to 24mths for the removal to take place
- d. **Rateable Value** – water supply costs are based on the rateable value of dwellings. The value was set a number of years ago and can be challenged (there's an application process for re-assessment)
- e. **Dolly (Community Information Van)** – in an attempt to advise communities of the support available through Severn Trent to help with payment management a van loaded with information named Dolly could visit communities upon request. Katie would encourage members to contact her with details of local events so that she could arrange visits
- f. **Public Conveniences** – a member queried the operation of public conveniences and whether there would be benefits from operating meters at sites

Members thanked Katie for attending.

8.	REPORTS FROM AND QUESTIONS TO CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDERS (11.15 - 12.15)
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Members welcomed the opportunity to receive reports from, and to put questions to, Cabinet Portfolio Holders.

Councillor Liam Fitzpatrick – Cabinet Portfolio Holder: Highways

- a. **Savings / Budget Cuts** – the services with the portfolio are very visible to the public. There had been cuts in recent years which had removed 53.4% to the operating budget
- b. **Depots** – there are two depots in Radnorshire (Penybont and Llangammarch). The Portfolio Holder would welcome members meeting with operatives and in viewing operations. Members would be welcome to approach the depot with a view to taking part in activities i.e. waste collections
- c. **Income Generation** – there's potential to provide services in order to bring in income
- d. **Apprentice Schemes** – nine apprentice positions had been offered
- e. **Car Parking** – members were urged to respond to the car parking report proposal which would be considered by Cabinet in October. Views from members to help shape options for consideration would be very important. Income from car parking charges supports the provision of public transport. Members would welcome pre-scrutiny consideration of proposals for car parking prior to a Cabinet decision or discussion. The Portfolio Holder agreed to discuss scrutiny arrangements with the Democratic Services Manager (Wyn Richards)
- f. **Scrutiny Function** – during discussion members agreed the importance of pre-scrutiny input especially in relation to matters being considered by Cabinet for determination
- g. **Grass Cutting** – Cabinet would be considering options including providing the service in-house
- h. **Traffic Regulation Orders** – Cabinet would lift the moratorium on TROs in respect of speeding traffic and traffic calming measures. The moratorium had been in place since 2008
- i. **Engaging with Members and their Communities** – the portfolio holder would welcome engagement and input from communities regarding ideas and opportunities for their areas

Councillor James Evans – Cabinet Portfolio Holder: HR, Communications and ICT

- a. **Radnorshire Young Farmers Club** – the last time the Portfolio Holder attended a Radnorshire committee meeting had been as a young farmer which was years ago
- b. **Recruitment and Retention** – there are recognised recruitment and retention issues that would be addressed. There would be a period of targeted recruitment to look to appoint to vacant positions. Members welcomed targeting and for the area of recruitment and retention to be recognised. There are wider considerations that would extend across the Council in terms of making Powys a

place that people would want to live and work in i.e. sports, leisure facilities, supporting local businesses

- c. **Apprentice Schemes / Careers Fair** – there's a drive to operate more apprentice schemes. Last year's Powys Careers Fair was very popular, there would be a 2018 fair
- d. **Health and Safety** – there are four health and safety advisors and a secondment of a team member to the health board. There had been a review of towered housing in response to the Grenfell Tower incident. Dwellings meet safety standards
- e. **Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS)** – the system went live in April and allows for the local authority and health service to have joint use. The system allows for the sharing of patient information
- f. **E-mail** – the Authority's contract with the NHS for use of their e-mail system is nearing an end (it had been a five year contract). There are options to explore in terms of use of web-based systems
- g. **Mobile Phones** – the decision to provide members with mobile phones had been taken by the previous portfolio holder. The portfolio holder would be reviewing the position given that members had experienced issues with operating them. The review would include re-considering whether they were fit for purpose. A member queried the cost of the contract for mobile phones for members against the budget (£10k had been identified, the contract rate for all members being around £12,450k)
- h. **Skype** – using skype in order to modernise IT activity would continue to be explored. The telephone system had moved to being skype based. There are some teething problems and the position would be monitored
- i. **Events** – the Council supports a number of very significant and important events which are held in Powys each year. Events which are very important to the local economy
- j. **Staff Awards** - the Portfolio Holder reported that 70 applications had been received for the 2017 staff awards
- k. **Intranet** – the intranet would be re-vamped which would include providing intranet information bilingually in order to meet requirements (the intranet site needs to be bilingual by 2018 in order to comply with a Welsh Government standard)
- l. **Social Media** – the Council recognises the importance of social media and operates relevant accounts. There's a programme of social media staff training. Members could help in responding to matters raised via social media
- m. **Telephony** – customer service operatives managed 10,000 calls in-year and received 2000 e-mail service contacts
- n. **Income Generation** – opportunities to generate income from the selling of services would continue to be considered/identified
- o. **Complaints Procedure** – there would be a review of the complaints procedure. The Portfolio Holder is of the view that members could be more involved in terms of looking to resolve matters locally and before they become issues to complain about
- p. **Community Area Meetings** – Cabinet recognise the importance of good engagement with communities and would be reviewing how to work with town and community councils
- q. **Engagement Policy** – the Cabinet view engagement with the community, businesses and other service provider partners as important
- r. **Community Awards** – Cabinet would introduce a community award scheme in order to recognise those in the community who excel

- s. **Income Generation** – the Portfolio Holder would continue to explore options for generating income from services within his portfolio
- t. **Freedom of Information** – a member raised a matter in relation to the previous Portfolio Holder having removed publicising information provided under FOI to the internet. The member also expressed concern in relation to the operation of the unit in terms of the sharing of details of the requester to departments which he felt was not in-line with the spirit of FOI and was in breach of the legislation governing the processes to be followed. The Portfolio Holder would review the issues raised and discuss matters with the unit

9.	REPORTS FROM AND QUESTIONS TO MEMBERS SERVING ON OUTSIDE BODIES (12.15 - 12.30)
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Members welcomed the opportunity to receive reports from, and to put questions to, member serving on outside bodies.

Members appointed to the following positions:

Group	Shire Representative
Local Development Plan Working Group	Hywel Lewis and David Evans
Tenants Liaison Forum	Jonathan Williams
Llandrindod Areas Twinning Society	Pete Roberts
Brecon and Radnor Sports Partnership	Gary Price
Powys Community Endowment Fund	Michael Jones and Maureen MacKenzie
Powys Community Health Council	Peter Roberts and James Gibson-Watt
Powys Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education	Ang Williams
Sportslot Community Chest	Gary Price
Wyeside Board of Trustees	Maureen MacKenzie

10.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING
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It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday 15th November 2017 and would, if possible, be held at the Powys Archives and Information Unit, Ddole Road.

11.	GARDEN AWARDS (12.30 - 13.30)
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Members attended the annual garden awards ceremony. The standard of entries this year, again, had been very high.

**County Councillor B Baynham
Chairman**