

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD AT BY TEAMS ON TUESDAY,  
15 SEPTEMBER 2020**

**PRESENT**

County Councillor M R Harris (Chair)

County Councillors MC Alexander, G Breeze, A W Davies, P Davies, J Evans,  
H Hulme and R Powell

In attendance: County Councillors P Roberts and J Williams

<b>1. APOLOGIES</b>
---------------------

There were no apologies for absence.

<b>2. MINUTES</b>
-------------------

The Leader was authorised to sign the minutes of the meetings held on 21<sup>st</sup> July and 28<sup>th</sup> July as correct records.

<b>3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>
------------------------------------

County Councillors Phyl Davies and James Evans declared personal and prejudicial interests in item 4 Home to School/College Transport Policy.

<b>4. HOME TO SCHOOL/COLLEGE TRANSPORT POLICY</b>
---

County Councillor Phyl Davies left the meeting having declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item.

Cabinet considered responses to the consultation carried out on the home to school/college transport policy with a view to introducing a new policy from July 2021. Taking into consideration the responses received, it was proposed to proceed with the proposal that elected Members no longer consider transport appeals and with the proposal relating to providing transport to Welsh-medium provision, but not to proceed with the proposal to remove the practice of reimbursing 16-19 aged learners who travel out of county to study. The £75,000 saving that this would have generated would not now be achieved.

With regard to the proposals in the draft policy to continue to provide transport to the nearest suitable school or catchment school, it was proposed that changes to catchment areas for schools should be agreed as part of local authorities' admission arrangements, and not as part of developing a Home to School/College Transport Policy. This would be taken forward as the new School Admissions Policy for admissions in September 2021 was developed and consulted upon.

The Chair of the Learning and Skills Scrutiny Committee welcomed that Cabinet had listened to the views expressed in the consultation with regard to removing

the practice of reimbursing post 16 learners who travelled out of county for their studies. The Cabinet noted the recommendations from the Learning and Skills Scrutiny Committee and the Equality Impact Assessment.

**RESOLVED to approve the revised Home to School/College Transport Policy as attached in Appendix B of the report for implementation from July 2021, and note the specific changes identifies in section 3.1 of the report.**

County Councillors Phyl Davies and James Evans returned to the meeting.

<b>5.</b>	<b>WEPCO SPECIAL PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT FOR NEW SCHOOLS FUNDED BY REVENUE (MIM)</b>
-----------	--

Cabinet was asked to give approval to enter into a Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) with Welsh Education Partnership Co (WEPCo). Entering SPA would give the Council the opportunity to deliver a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme education and community facilities project via The Mutual Investment Model revenue funding stream. It did not commit the Council to using the MIM but gave another option for funding improvements to the school estate.

**RESOLVED**

- 1. To approve the Strategic Partnering Agreement with Welsh Education Partnership Co (WEPCo) to facilitate the delivery of education and community facilities.**
- 2. To approve the appointment of the Chief executive as Programme SRO as 'Participant Representative' to sit on the Strategic Partnering Board.**
- 3. To give delegated authority is given to Chief Executive in consultation with the monitoring officer, to agree the final terms of the SPA and make any necessary minor amendments to it, should these be required.**

<b>6.</b>	<b>CONSULTATION DECISION FOR LONG TERM EMPTY PROPERTY PREMIUM INCREASE</b>
-----------	--

Cabinet was asked to approve a consultation exercise to seek views on a potential Council Tax premium increase on long-term empty homes. The Housing Service agreed that there was a need to bring long-term empty homes back into use. The Portfolio Holder accepted that there needed to be a degree of flexibility so that local young people were not priced out of the market and he agreed that the farming unions should be amongst the organisations that were consulted.

**RESOLVED to carry out a consultation process to seek views of taxpayers and stakeholders to inform a potential premium increase of long-term empty homes.**

<b>7. HIGHWAYS CAPITAL SCHEMES</b>
------------------------------------

Cabinet considered amendments to the Highways capital programme. County Councillor Rachel Powell thanked the highways staff who had assisted when roads in her ward had been flooded and the Leader also thanked the staff involved in the clean-up operation following flooding in Ystradgynlais.

**RESOLVED**

- 1. That the contents of this report are noted and the reduced capital funding for the Hamp is actioned as a virement with the decision about reprofiling the £2.6 million or reducing the overall programme made by EMT / Cabinet in September.**
- 2. The Capital requirement for Glasbury Bridge is included in the Capital Strategy.**

<b>8. MACHYNLLETH GYPSY AND TRAVELLER SITE</b>
--

Cabinet considered a virement in respect of the Machynlleth Gypsy and Traveller site. The scheme was included in the capital programme with an allocation of £0.87 million, comprising of £0.75 million from Welsh Government grant funding and £0.12 million supported borrowing. The project costs were now estimated at £1.326 million. It was proposed to fund the £0.456 million shortfall from the Homefinder Receipts Reserve.

**RESOLVED**

- 1. That the contents of the report are noted.**
- 2. That Cabinet approves the virement request for £0.456 million.**
- 3. That Cabinet approves in principle a virement of up to a further £0.75 million, should the value of grant award be less than anticipated.**

<b>9. COMMUNITY LIBRARY PARTNERSHIPS</b>
--

Cabinet considered a report proposing that the Powys Library Service support small libraries which the Council was looking to pass to communities for a period of 5 years. The Portfolio Holder for Young People and Culture expressed her appreciation for the communities who had expressed a willingness to work with the Council.

**RESOLVED that Powys County Council agrees to support community libraries with stock, ICT, relevant staffing and training for a period of 5 years, to allow them a period of stability in order to develop, fundraise and become sustainable**

**for the long term, enabling the library service to work towards achieving a lower cost of delivery.**

<b>10. POWYS RECOVERY PLANNING</b>
------------------------------------

Cabinet considered the Council's Strategic response and recovery plans to the pandemic. The Leader thanked staff for the way in which they had worked throughout the pandemic and noted that the Cabinet was still working to deliver the Council's vision.

**RESOLVED that Cabinet endorse the approach set out in section 3.1 of the report and the Draft Economic Recovery Strategy referenced in Section 3.2 (and available at appendix 2) covering both internal and external recovery and planning.**

<b>11. TREASURY MANAGEMENT REVIEW 2019/20</b>
---

Cabinet considered the Treasury Management report for 2019/20. The Treasury Management team was thanked for their important work in ensuring the Council's cashflow whilst £50m of government support was delivered to local businesses during the pandemic.

**RESOLVED that the Treasury Management Review Report is approved.**

<b>12. DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT</b>
--

Cabinet considered the Director of Social Services Annual Report. The Director explained that the report highlighted what had been achieved and was transparent on what was yet to be delivered. She noted that there was a full leadership team in place and she thanked colleagues, Cabinet, Scrutiny, CIW and Jack Straw and the Improvement and Assurance Board for their challenge and support. The Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and the Portfolio Holder for Young People and Culture paid tribute to the Director for her leadership.

<b>13. DELEGATED DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE THE LAST MEETING</b>
---

Cabinet noted delegated decisions taken by Portfolio Holders.

<b>14. EXEMPT ITEMS</b>
-------------------------

**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>15. VALUING CARE</b>
-------------------------

Cabinet was asked to approve a review of the care home fees paid by Powys County Council for older persons' residential and nursing care homes. It was proposed that a report would be brought back for Cabinet's consideration in the New Year with a view to introducing new fee rates in April.

**RESOLVED**

- 1. For Cabinet to provide agreement for officers to work with Rockhaven Healthcare Consulting to undertake a review of care home fees in Powys.**
- 2. For the Head of Commissioning in Social Services to return to Cabinet with proposals based upon the findings of the review for new fee rates, for Cabinet's agreement for implementation.**

<b>16. AUTOMOBILE PALACE</b>
------------------------------

Cabinet considered the confidential report. County Councillor Jon Williams spoke as the local member in support of the recommendation.

**RESOLVED to approve the recommendation.**

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