



Neuadd y Sir / County Hall, Llandrindod, Powys, LD1 5LG

QUESTIONS AT ANY TIME TO CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

Question From:	County Councillor Gareth Ratcliffe
Subject:	National business over local business - is this good use of the Powys Pound?
Question To:	County Councillor Graham Breeze Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Engagement & Regulatory Services

Question:

Following an email sent from PCC rewards to staff last week I've been approached with concerns that Powys County Council is not practising what it preaches to its residents and businesses in the county.

Last week your email said "Get cycling this half term with up to 10% off at Halfords, Cotswold Outdoor, Decathlon and more".

This is quite ironic we feel, here is why:

- Halfords have no branches in Powys. They're a car parts supermarket, not a cycling specialist, although they've done very well by all accounts in the last 12 months out of the cycling boom as people have been encouraged to shop online. They are at least a UK company who presumably pay some tax in the UK - they made £75million in profit in 2018 on the back of over £1 billion in sales, so perhaps aren't the business most in need of publicity from PCC.
- Decathlon don't have a single branch anywhere in Wales, let alone in Powys. They're a French company, employing 87,000 people around the world, but presumably none of these in Powys. They had revenue of over \$12 billion in 2017 so again, probably not doing desperately badly.
- Costwold do at least have one branch in Powys, in Brecon, so at least pay some rates and employ a few local people. However they're owned by a private equity firm based in Paris (which has assets of over 13 billion euros) and I wonder how much tax they pay in the UK, let alone Wales?

In contrast there are at least a dozen or so independently owned and run specialist bike shops in Powys, all of whom employ local people or are owner-run self-employed businesses. There are also several independent outdoor equipment suppliers. As far as I'm aware PCC have not contacted any of these businesses about running similar promotions for PCC staff.

Why does PCC see fit to spend time and money promoting these large, often tax-avoiding corporations, when independent local businesses can give better service, and supply the same products (or, in many cases, better quality alternatives at comparable costs) via a more environmentally-friendly business model?

Lets make the Powys pound you talk about mean something!!!!

I strongly encourage you to use Powys based businesses where possible!