

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD AT COUNTY HALL / ZOOM ON
TUESDAY, 11 OCTOBER 2022**

PRESENT

County Councillor J Gibson-Watt (Chair)

County Councillors J Berriman, S Cox, S Davies, M Dorrance, S McNicholas,
P Roberts, D Selby and D Thomas

In attendance: County Councillors A Davies, I McIntosh and E Vaughan.

1.	APOLOGIES
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Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor Richard Church.

2.	MINUTES
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The Leader was authorised to sign the minutes of the last meeting held on 27 September 2022 as a correct record.

3.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
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There were no declarations of interest reported.

4.	TRANSFORMING EDUCATION PROGRAMME - YSGOL BRO HYDDGEN CAPITAL PROJECT
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Cabinet was asked to approve the submission of a new Strategic Outline Case/Outline Business Case (SOC/OBC) to develop a new all-age school building for Ysgol Bro Hyddgen, Machynlleth. This replaced the previous version that was approved by Cabinet in September 2020, and no longer included leisure facilities which would continue to be provided from Bro Ddyfi Leisure Centre.

The new preferred option was to build a new 540-place all-age school in Machynlleth to replace the current Ysgol Bro Hyddgen primary and secondary phase buildings. It would also incorporate early years facilities, a community room that could be used after hours, and an additional learning needs centre, along with wellbeing areas throughout the school, external areas and a 3G pitch. The design could also include a space for a public library if that was required.

The total cost of the project was £49,120,375 to be funded with a 65% contribution by Welsh Government and 35% by the County Council.

The Cabinet Member welcomed the comments of the Learning and Skills Scrutiny Committee.

County Councillor Elwyn Vaughan spoke as the Chair of Governors of Ysgol Bro Hyddgen. He said that whilst there was disappointment that leisure facilities were

included in the new option, there was recognition of the need to be pragmatic and to quickly replace the current building.

County Councillor Aled Davies spoke as leader of the opposition. He noted that there would be significant costs at the leisure centre over the next 10 years and he urged the Cabinet to adopt a phased approach so that wet side facilities could be added later. He also sought an assurance that there would be no downgrading or mothballing of leisure centre facilities.

The Cabinet Member for a Learning Powys reminded colleagues that the focus had to be to deliver a new school for Machynlleth and that any delay would push up costs. The Cabinet Member for a More Prosperous Powys noted that the leisure centres had been underfunded for years and that there was a huge maintenance backlog.

RESOLVED

- a) **To approve the new SOC/OBC for submission to the Welsh Government based on a new preferred option to build a 540-place all-age school in Machynlleth to replace the current Ysgol Bro Hyddgen primary and secondary phase buildings. It will also incorporate early years facilities, a community room that is available after hours, and an additional learning needs centre, along with wellbeing areas throughout the school, external areas and a 3G pitch. The design could also include a space for a public library, if that is required. The reasons for this are as follows:**
- **This scheme is affordable within the Council's Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme Band B funding envelope, and frees up further funding to be utilised on other school projects.**
 - **The estimated costs are lower than the original costs of the community campus, and significantly lower than the updated projected costs of that model**
 - **If approved by the Welsh Government, the Council can then commence the procurement process to appoint a Design and Build contractor and progress to full business case stage.**
 - **Welsh Government intervention rate for Band B programme is 65%, which represents good value for money for the Council.**
 - **Provides an opportunity to draw down additional funding from the Welsh Government from achieving carbon zero in operation.**
- b) **To approve the revised off-site highways cost of £852,600 and to include in the Capital Programme. These costs are not eligible Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme expenditure and will be 100% Powys County Council funded.**

- c) That the Council seeks additional funding from alternative sources to support leisure centres across the county, including Bro Ddyfi Leisure Centre.
- d) That a period of public engagement is undertaken to understand the views of the community about relocating Machynlleth Library to the new build school.

5.	ADOPTION OF ECO4 FLEX IN POWYS
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Cabinet considered the adoption of ECO4 Flex in Powys to expand the range of households who could benefit from help to improve energy efficiency and reduce fuel costs. In Powys ECO4 Flex would be delivered by Warm Wales, a not-for-profit Community Interest Company specialising in tackling fuel poverty

In response to a question from County Councillor Iain McIntosh, the Cabinet Member for a Fairer Powys advised that the scheme would be introduced and publicised immediately. He confirmed that contracts would be between householders and Warm Wales and that the Council would not have any liability for the delivery of the scheme.

RESOLVED to support Option Two and adopt the revised Statement of Intent, attached to the report as Appendix B, for the delivery of ECO4 Flex in Powys by Warm Wales.

6.	RENTING HOMES (WALES) ACT 2016 - TENANCY TERMS FOR NEW TENANTS
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Cabinet considered a report proposing to discontinue the use of Introductory Tenancies for new tenants with all current Introductory tenancies automatically converting to secure tenancies. A review by a Working Group on the use and effectiveness of Introductory Tenancies had found that there is no practical or operational reason to continue their use. The Cabinet Member noted that it was a punitive system that added costs and bureaucracy to the Housing service. He confirmed that the service was committed to filling voids as quickly as possible.

RESOLVED

1. That with effect from the date of the report, that the Council no longer issues Introductory Tenancies for new tenants of the Council.
2. That the Council does not offer Introductory Standard Contracts for new tenants, after the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 comes into force.

7.	ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY
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Cabinet considered the Asset Management Strategy which set out a framework within which all the council's land and property assets (excluding assets managed by the Housing Service) would be appraised, managed, and released to ensure that they continue to contribute to and deliver the Council's objectives. In response to comments by the leader of the opposition, the Cabinet Member for a Connected Powys advised that it was not the purpose of the strategy to recommend which properties to dispose of. The strategy required each asset or group of assets to be reviewed by Strategic Property every five years.

The Executive Director Economy and Environment advised that the council was bidding for funding to support its work in managing its property portfolio and that £175,000 had been received from the Welsh Government agency Ystadau Cymru.

RESOLVED that the Asset Management Strategy is adopted by Cabinet with immediate effect.

8.	APPROVAL OF THE POWYS LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2022 FOR SUBMISSION TO WELSH GOVERNMENT
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Cabinet was asked to approve the Powys Local Development Plan Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022 (AMR 2022) in readiness for its publication and submission to the Welsh Government no later than 31st October 2022. The AMR assesses the extent to which the plan's strategy and key policies, sites and infrastructure requirements were being delivered.

The AMR 2022 demonstrated that the adopted LDP was largely delivering and meeting the monitoring targets, pointing to successful policy implementation. Of the 62 monitoring indicators, 42 were "Green" where the monitoring is on target or completed and the action required was for monitoring to continue. Six were "Yellow" identifying that further investigation/research was required; four were "Amber" suggesting that a Policy Review was required; and four were "Red" indicating that a Plan Review was required as they related to the delivery of the strategy.

The growth strategy of the adopted LDP was primarily led by housing growth and the AMR identified under-performance against the anticipated housing completions target rate. The cumulative number of net additional dwellings delivered since 2011 was 2,470 dwellings against the anticipated 3,036 dwellings. Of the 80 Housing Allocation (HA) sites in the LDP, 54 (68%) still did not have any form of planning permission.

RESOLVED to approve AMR 2022 with Annex 1 and Annex 2 in order for the AMR to be submitted to the Welsh Government by 31st October 2022 in accordance with the relevant legislation.

9.	ANNUAL INFORMATION GOVERNANCE REPORT 2021-2022
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This report was deferred to give time for Scrutiny to look at it.

10.	FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME
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Cabinet noted the forward work programme.

11.	EXEMPT ITEMS
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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).

12.	CHILDREN'S PLACEMENTS
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Cabinet considered a confidential report and Children's Placement Strategy. The report informed Cabinet of the challenges in Children's Services in securing appropriate, regulated placements for Children in Powys Local Authority Care and informed Cabinet of the future Strategy and Plans to ensure a sufficient supply of quality placements across Powys.

Cabinet was advised that considerable activity was underway to take forward Welsh Government's commitment to eliminate private profit from the care of looked after children. The aim was to ensure that public money invested in accommodation for care experienced children did not lead to profit, but instead any surpluses were reinvested into children's services to deliver better outcomes, service improvement and further professional development. This meant that the care of looked after children in Wales would be provided by public sector, charitable or not for profit organisations.

Cabinet asked that any parts of the report that might lead to children being identified be redacted so that it could be made publicly available.

RESOLVED to endorse the Children's Placement Strategy set out in the report and Appendix A to increase in County placement capacity and reduce the reliance on profit making providers ensuring Powys has a range of flexible placement, accommodation and support options in Powys.

County Councillor J Gibson-Watt (Chair)