

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD AT COUNTY HALL / TEAMS ON
TUESDAY, 26 JULY 2022**

PRESENT

County Councillor J Gibson-Watt (Chair)

County Councillors J Charlton, R Church, S Cox, S C Davies, M J Dorrance,
S McNicholas, P Roberts, D Selby and D A Thomas

In attendance: County Councillor Angela Davies

1.	APOLOGIES
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Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor J Berriman.

2.	MINUTES
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The Leader was authorised to sign the minutes of the meetings held on 28th June and 5th July 2022 as correct records.

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

4.	QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE REPORT
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Cabinet considered the performance report for quarter 1. Each service area had held a performance review meeting with their portfolio holders. Cabinet welcomed the proposed changes as it was important to have measurable outcomes that were kept under review.

RESOLVED

- 1. To note the contents of the report which presents an overview of performance for Quarter 1 (1 April – 30 June 2022) against the objectives and measures published in Vision 2025: Our Corporate Improvement Plan.**
- 2. That Cabinet approve the following amendments in relation to Supported Employment:**
 - Remove the current measure:***
 - Number of Adults with a disability being supported to undertake employment.**
 - Replace with new measures:***
 - The total number of adults with a disability currently in paid employment and supported by**
 - The total number of adults with a disability currently in paid employment and supported by**

3. That Cabinet approve the following amendments in relation to North Powys:

Remove the current measures:

- Improved accessibility to services and community infrastructure that meets the need of the population.
- Improved integration of services, partnership working, and confidence in leadership.
- Increased focus on prevention and health promotion.
- Increased emotional and behavioural support for families, children, and young people to build resilience and support transition into adulthood.
- Strengthen people's ability to manage their own health and well-being and make healthier choices.
- Increased independence and participation within communities.
- Improve the opportunity for people to access education, training, and learning opportunities.

Replace with new measures:

- Percentage of people who attended a Powys Together project or event who reported positive change as result of attending.
- Number of individuals empowered to access virtual and physical health tools and able to use the skills developed in the programme within 6 months of attending the Lasting Impact programme.

5.	STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER FOR QUARTER 1
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Cabinet considered the Strategic Risk Register for quarter 1. Cabinet was advised that HTR0016 shortage of bus and lorry drivers would remain on the HTR service risk register.

RESOLVED that Cabinet notes the current Strategic Risk Register and is satisfied with progress against mitigating actions for quarter 1, approves escalation of HO0034 (detailed under point 3.6) to the Strategic Risk Register and de-escalation of PPPP007 and HTR0016 (detailed under points 3.7 & 3.8) from the Strategic Risk Register.

6.	WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN 2022 - 2032
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Cabinet considered the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) for 2022-2032. The plan had been developed over a number of years largely by the previous administration with close co-operation with Scrutiny and other partners.

A revised version had been submitted to Welsh Government amended to reflect comments made on an earlier draft. Confirmation had been received the previous week that this version of the WESP had been approved and, therefore it would come into force on the 1st September 2022. An action plan would be prepared for the first 5 years by the end of the autumn term 2022. After the new

WESP came into force, local authorities would be required to submit a review report to the Welsh Government by no later than 31 July each year.

The Cabinet Member accepted comments made that it was disappointing to see that the proportion of young people learning through the medium of Welsh was lower than the proportion of Welsh speakers. He advised that the Cabinet was looking at new approaches on how to expand Welsh medium education outside of the traditional Welsh speaking areas.

RESOLVED to approve the updated Welsh in Education Strategic Plan for 2022-2032 as contained in Appendix A to the report.

7.	SCHOOL OUTTURN POSITIONS 31 MARCH 2022 AND BUDGET PLANS 2022-23
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Cabinet considered the outturn position on school reserve movements and balances at 31 March 2022, and the school budget plans for 2022-23 as approved by Governing Bodies and submitted to the authority on 1st May 2022.

At 31st March 2022 the total cumulative reserve for schools was in a surplus position of £8.6 million. The total position on schools' carried forward balances was a surplus of £8.9 million. This was a much-improved position compared to Schools' original budgets (May 2021) which had projected a total surplus balance of £1.4 million for 31 March 2022, an improvement of £7.5 million during the financial year. This was in part due to in excess of £5.9 million of additional grant funding received during the final quarter of 2021-22, of which £4.4 million was delegated directly to schools reducing their on-going costs. In line with Welsh Government advice, these surpluses would not be clawed back from schools but they would be asked to report back on how surpluses would be used.

Cumulative deficit balances in future years remained a concern and a significant risk to the authority, but schools were generally working well with Council officers to bring in-year budgets into balance and prevent the deficits increasing further. Meetings would be arranged with schools whose budgets were causing most concern.

8.	FINANCIAL FORECAST FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023 (AS AT 30TH JUNE 2022)
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Cabinet considered the financial outturn report for the period ended 30 June 2022. Cabinet noted that of the cost reductions of £8.072 million approved as part of the Council's budget for this year some £3.428 million, 32% were unachieved and at risk of delivery in year. Services were being challenged as to why the position for some proposals has changed and would be required to consider mitigating action to ensure that they could deliver within the budget allocated.

Cabinet noted that the underspend achieved last year due to the additional funding received from Welsh Government was not likely to be repeated. With

additional pressures arising from Covid, the Ukrainian crisis and inflation the call on reserves was likely to increase through the year.

The greatest financial risk remained the ability to deliver a balanced budget over the medium and longer term. On current modelling a £14 million budget gap was projected up to 2027 and was likely to increase. The Medium Term Financial Strategy and the assumptions on which the Financial Resource Model was based was being reviewed and would be considered by Cabinet and Council in September.

The report also contained a number of requests for budget virements:

- £380,350 transferred from Childrens to Adults Social Care for the Out of Hours Service that is now going to be line managed by officers within Adults and recharged back to Childrens.
- £427,110 between the Schools Central budget to School Improvement budget within the Education Service.
- £120,000 removed from each of the expenditure and income budget previously set for Bailiffs invoices under Income and Awards.
- £192,916 from the County Council Election reserve to finance the costs of delivering the county elections in May 2022.

RESOLVED

- 1. To note the current budget position and the projected full year forecast to the end of March 2023.**
- 2. Service heads are required to develop their commentary at Appendix B to ensure that they set out how they will bring their budgets back in line and identify any mitigating actions that need to be agreed.**
- 3. The grants set out in section 5.1 are noted**
- 4. The virements set out in section 5.2 are approved, to comply with the virement rules for budget movements between £100,000 and £500,000 as set out in the financial regulations.**

9. CAPITAL FORECAST 2022-23, AS AT 30TH JUNE 2022
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Cabinet noted that the revised programme at the 30th June 2022 was budgeted at £115.31 million following the successful award of additional grants and the reprofiling of budgets between financial years. Actual spend amounted to £11.22 million, representing 10% of the total budget.

The report contained a number of requests for virements:

- £0.14 million to fit out vehicles for the staff transferred back from HOWPS.
- £0.5 million to fund the renewal of the Catering Management and Cashless System to ensure there is continuity of service to learners,

families and schools and enhancements to the back-office support that the system provides to schools and the central Catering team.

- £0.14 million to fund significant material and resource price increases, especially steelwork and concrete required for the construction of Abermule Business Park.

RESOLVED

- 1. That the contents of the report are noted.**
- 2. To approve the virements proposed in section 4, this is to comply with the virement rules for budget movements between £100,000 and £500,000 set out in the financial regulations.**

10.	TRANSITION FROM IMPROVEMENT BOARDS
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Cabinet considered a proposal to stand down the Improvement Board for Education and Housing. It was felt that the Scrutiny Committees would provide the necessary assurance without the need for additional governance in the form of Improvement Boards for Education and Housing. It was proposed to retain the HTR Improvement Board for the time being as there had been a delay in obtaining the additional support required for this area. It was further suggested that Scrutiny Chairs were given the opportunity to attend the Transformation Delivery Board as observers. Attendance may inform the Scrutiny Chair's understanding of the Transformation Portfolio and influence items for the scrutiny work programme.

RESOLVED that

- 1. Improvement Boards for Education and Housing are stood down with immediate effect**
- 2. Appropriate Scrutiny Committees include within their forward work programmes sufficient capacity to undertake effective scrutiny of the service performance and risk (or more broadly Corporate Health) at least quarterly**
- 3. Scrutiny Committees submit their findings and any recommendations to the Cabinet at least quarterly**
- 4. HTR Improvement Board continues and that a further review is undertaken in 6-12 months or earlier if deemed appropriate.**

11.	REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR EXTERNAL DOMICILIARY CARE PROVIDERS TO PAY FOR INCREASED MILEAGE RATES FOR CARE WORKERS
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Cabinet considered a proposal for additional funding for external domiciliary care providers to pay for increased mileage rates for care workers from 35p per mile

to 45p per mile in line with the rate paid to council domiciliary care workers. This would require a virement of £148,991 in the current financial year and would be considered as part of budget setting in future years. Contract monitoring spot checks would be undertaken to ensure that the increase was passed on to carers. Cabinet was advised that there had been no indication that the HMRC mileage rate was due to be increased.

RESOLVED

- 1. For Cabinet to agree that the mileage rates in the Powys Pledges for external domiciliary care providers will match the mileage rates paid to Powys County Council staff with effect from the 9th July 2022.**
- 2. For Cabinet to approve the proposed spend as discussed in point 4.2 of the report, to allow sufficient flexibility to meet peaks in expenditure. This is estimated to be maximum spend of £203,882 per annum or £148,991 pro rata from 9th July 2022 (to tie in with the start of the 4 weekly billing period). The additional funds will be passed onto the external domiciliary care providers, who in turn will pass onto their workforce according to the Powys Pledges.**
- 3. That a virement of up to £148,991 is approved and transferred from the Budget Management Reserve for the 2022/23 financial year. The ongoing cost for future years will be identified by the service in the Financial Resource Model (FRM) as part of budget setting for 2023-24 and future years.**
- 4. That a contract variation is sent to providers who can prove that they pay an increased mileage rate and this increases or decreases are in line with Local Authority rates.**
- 5. That officers review the appropriateness of maintaining the equity of travel expense rates between public sector and private sector care staff in July 2023 and throughout the twelve month period through routine contract monitoring. This review will consider the wider impact on recruitment and retention within the domiciliary care sector.**

12.	PROPOSAL TO INCREASE HACKNEY CARRIAGE LICENCE FARES
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Cabinet was advised that there had been no objections to the proposed increase to hackney carriage licence fares during the consultation and that therefore they had been introduced.

13.	SHARED PROSPERITY FUND: SUBMISSION OF A REGIONAL INVESTMENT PLAN FOR MID WALES
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Cabinet considered the submission of a Regional Investment Plan for Mid Wales to the UK Government to secure an indicative financial allocation of £27.4 million for Powys through the Shared Prosperity Fund.

The Regional Investment Plan for Mid Wales was a strategic document that set out high level ambitions and outcomes that the region sought to achieve and the interventions to prioritise. These high level ambitions could be refined and modified as the programme progresses.

A local partnership group would support delivery and in Mid Wales this was proposed to be two local groups for Ceredigion and Powys, reporting upwards into existing regional arrangements.

The report set out the proposed financial allocations between interventions of 40% to Communities and Place; 40% to Supporting Local Business and 20% to People and Skills. Ceredigion had agreed to the same allocations.

County Councillor Angela Davies, the Chair of the Economy, Residents and Communities Scrutiny Committee presented the Committee's comments. The Committee had made two recommendations, both of which had been accepted.

The Leader reported that he and the Leader of Ceredigion County Council, County Councillor Bryan Davies, had met Baroness Bloomfield, the UK Government Minister with responsibility at the Royal Welsh Show and had asked her that the Multiply programme include literacy as well as numeracy. She was unable to give a commitment until a new ministerial team was in place following the appointment of a new Prime Minister, but she did confirm that there was no threat to the funding.

RESOLVED

- 1. To note the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Prospectus, Allocations and Key Requirements to unlock funding from UK Government.**
- 2. To note the approach to consultation and engagement to inform the development of a Regional Investment Plan – and to approve the principles set out, to enable detailed plan drafting.**
- 3. To approve the indicative financial allocations of 40% to Communities and Place; 40% to Supporting Local Business and 20% to People and Skills.**
- 4. To delegate authority and authorise the Corporate Directors and Section 151 officer of both Authorities, in consultation with the Leaders of the Councils, to take the necessary decisions and actions required to finalise a**

related investment plan and accept the allocation of funds, as well as to implement and administer the scheme and all related plans in accordance with the requirements and priorities of the prospectus and fund.

- 5. To approve the split of capacity funding of £40k available to Mid Wales, 50/50 to each Local Authority – to reflect the joint working in developing the regional investment plan to date.**
- 6. To approve that Ceredigion County Council will be the lead (host) authority for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.**

14. LUF0268 MONTGOMERY CANAL RESTORATION PROJECT

Cabinet considered a report on the status of the successful Levelling Up Funding award for the Montgomery Canal Restoration project and the next steps required to deliver the project. £13,937,565 had been awarded towards total project costs of £15,486,182.97. The Cabinet Member for a More Prosperous Powys took on board comments made by a colleague that Y Lanfa was a focal point for the canal and his wish to see it put to a use better suited to its historic connection with the canal. Officers also confirmed that carbon emissions would be monitored at every stage of the project.

RESOLVED to

- 1. Agree the draft Service Level Agreement with the Canal & River Trust set out in Appendix B to the report, to deliver the project.**
- 2. Authorise the Head of Legal & Democratic Services in consultation with the Director of Economy & Environment, the Head of Finance and Cabinet Member for a More Prosperous Powys, to make necessary adjustments to the draft SLA to ensure agreement with the Canal and River Trust and swift progress of the project.**
- 3. Authorise the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to sign the final SLA on behalf of the Council.**
- 4. Approve the Governance structure to oversee the delivery of the project as set out in Appendix C.**
- 5. Approve the delegation of powers to the 'Montgomery Canal Restoration Project Board' to oversee the delivery of the project with such delegation being 'restricted' to actions within the scope, costs and programme outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding, Application Bid, Project Management Update and associated bid documentation.**

6. **Approve the Terms of Reference for the Montgomery Canal Restoration Project Board as set out in Appendix D to the report.**

15. DELEGATED DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE THE LAST MEETING

Cabinet noted the delegated decisions taken since the last meeting.

16. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Cabinet noted the forward work programme.

17. EXEMPT ITEMS

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 3 of The Local Authorities (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007).

18. LUF0269 BRECON & RADNORSHIRE STRATEGIC TOWN CENTRE INVESTMENT
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Cabinet considered a report on the status of the successful Levelling Up Funding award for the Brecon & Radnorshire Strategic Town Centre Investment and next steps. Funding up to the value of £6,953,537 had been awarded towards the purchase and refurbishment of a modern office unit in Brecon, the redevelopment of Theatr Brycheiniog and the acquisition of a site adjacent to the Automobile Palace in Llandrindod Wells for social housing.

RESOLVED

1. **To approve the Governance structure to oversee the delivery of the project, outlined in Appendix A to the report.**
2. **To approve the delegation of powers to the “Strategic Town Centre Investment Project Board” to oversee the delivery of the project. The delegation of powers being ‘restricted’ to the scope, costs and programme outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding, application bid, Project Management Update and associated bid documentation.**
3. **To authorise the Executive Director of Economy & Environment and the Monitoring Officer to make necessary adjustments to the agreement with Theatr Brycheiniog with the Cabinet member with Portfolio to ensure agreement with the theatre and swift progress of the project.**

**County Councillor J Gibson-Watt
(Chair)**