

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD AT COUNTY HALL AND ON ZOOM ON TUESDAY, 7 MARCH 2023

PRESENT

County Councillor M Dorrance (Chair)

County Councillors J Berriman, J Charlton, R Church, S Cox, S C Davies, J Gibson-Watt, S McNicholas, P Roberts, D Selby and D A Thomas

In attendance: County Councillors A Davies, E Vaughan

Councillor Dorrance took the Chair as Councillor Gibson-Watt had connectivity problems.

1.	APOLOGIES
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Apologies were received from the Chief Executive.

2.	MINUTES
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The Leader was authorised to sign the minutes of the meetings held on 7th and 14th February 2023 as correct records.

3.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
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County Councillor S Davies declared a personal non prejudicial interest in item 4 as a local authority appointed governor of Ysgol Gymraeg Dyffryn Y Glowyr.

County Councillors M Dorrance and J Gibson-Watt declared personal interests in item 5.

4.	ESTABLISHING A WELSH-MEDIUM STREAM AT YSGOL Y CRIBARTH
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Cabinet considered responses received to the consultation on the proposal to formally establish a Welsh-medium stream at Ysgol y Cribarth from September 2023. The consultation period had run from 19th December 2022 to 6th February 2023 with consultees asked to complete the online consultation form, or filling in and returning a paper copy of the form. In addition, virtual meetings were also held with the staff, governors School Council of Ysgol y Cribarth.

Based on the findings of the consultation, the advice of officers was that the Council should proceed with the proposal to formally establish a Welsh-medium stream at Ysgol y Cribarth by publishing a Statutory Notice for the reasons outlined in the report. The Statutory Notice would be published in April 2023 (after the Easter holidays), and a further report, summarising any objections received, would be considered by the Council's Cabinet in May or June 2023.

County Councillor E Vaughan speaking at the Chair of WESP welcomed the proposal. Whilst he would have liked to have seen the school move further along the Welsh language continuum, he acknowledged that the proposal had the

support of the community. He emphasised the need to ensure investment and support for immersion. He asked for a study to be carried on bilingualism in the area so that it became normalised. He also noted that the pilot had been a success and asked for it to be repeated in other parts of the county.

County Councillor A Davies speaking as the Leader of the opposition said that in his view the proposal was not ambitious enough and that the school should have been moved further along the Welsh language continuum.

County Councillor D Thomas speaking as a local member said that the proposal had his full support and had the support of the local community.

County Councillor S Davies speaking as a local member also spoke in support noting that there was room for more Welsh medium education provision in the area. She was concerned about any impact on Ysgol Gymraeg Dyffryn Y Glowyr which had been established as the area Welsh medium primary school. She also noted that the proposal would in future affect free school transport for pupils wishing to attend Ysgol Gymraeg Dyffryn Y Glowyr. Officers recognised that Ysgol Gymraeg Dyffryn Y Glowyr had been and would remain the Welsh Medium primary school for the area. The school had been a great success and would continue to have an important role providing fully immersive Welsh Medium education. It was also confirmed that nothing in the proposal would affect local authority representation on the governing body.

The Cabinet Member for a Learning Powys noted that it was important to have local support and that maintaining that support would enable further steps to be taken along the Welsh language continuum, with the school becoming dual stream in due course.

Having considered the findings of the consultation and the advice of officers, Cabinet

RESOLVED

- 1. To receive the Consultation Report in respect of formally establishing a Welsh-medium stream at Ysgol y Cribarth.**
- 2. To approve the publication of a Statutory Notice to make a regulated alteration to formally establish a Welsh-medium stream at Ysgol y Cribarth from September 2023.**

5.	RETAIL, LEISURE AND HOSPITALITY RATES RELIEF SCHEME IN WALES 2023-24
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County Councillors M Dorrance and J Gibson-Watt declared interests in this item and left the meeting when it was being considered. County Councillor P Roberts took the Chair for this item.

Cabinet noted that the current Retail, Leisure & Hospitality Rates Relief scheme for 2022-23, which offered relief of 50%, was being extended with a further temporary Business Rates Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief scheme for the financial year 2023-24 offering increased relief of 75% on Business Rates

bills with the total available relief being subject to a cap in the total amount each business can claim across Wales of £110,000.

Powys was to receive funding of up to £4.9m by way of a Welsh Government Grant, and it was estimated that 900 Powys businesses may be entitled to the 75% rates relief, estimated at total value of £4.1m off their Business Rates bills. Due to the £110,000 cap, the relief would need to be applied for via an on-line application form. The report set out the qualifying criteria. It was confirmed that charities and not for profit organisations could apply. It was also confirmed that businesses would be written to advising them of the scheme and that it would be promoted on the Council's social media.

RESOLVED

1. **That a Business Rates Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief scheme 2023-24 be established in accordance with section 3 of the report.**
2. **Applications for Business Rates retail, leisure, and hospitality rates relief 2023-24 under the scheme referred to above shall be delegated to and determined by the Portfolio holder for Finance in consultation with the Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer).**

County Councillors M Dorrance and J Gibson-Watt returned to the meeting.

6.	QUARTER 3 STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER
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Cabinet considered the Strategic Risk Register for the third quarter of 2022/23. There were 15 risks on the strategic risk register and strategic risk owners had provided a short summary of progress since last quarter, to give assurance that mitigating actions were being actioned and monitored.

The following risks were escalated to the Strategic Risk Register:

IAWARD0009: If the Council is susceptible to higher levels of fraud, as people struggle with the cost-of-living crisis and as organised fraud take advantage of the challenging environment

PPPP0029: If planned power outages (rota disconnections) occurs then it may affect our ability to deliver services.

CS0091 If there is insufficient capacity to respond to the longer-term demand in children's and adults' services in timely manner

The report set out potential consequences and mitigating actions.

Two risks were proposed for de-escalation from the Strategic Risk Register:

ED0022: If the Council is unable to improve financial management of the schools' budget, through ongoing adjustments to the distribution formula, they

will be unable to manage the budget, resulting in a significant compromise to the quality of education for Powys learners

CS0081: If Children's Services are unable to manage within budget.

Both would be managed on their own service risk registers and the following principal applied; Any individual services budget related risk will be integrated into FIN0001 however should an individual service risk score elevate to catastrophic it will be considered for escalation to the strategic risk register separately.

County Councillor A Davies speaking as the Leader of the opposition queried de-escalating ED0022 and asked whether the school maintenance budget was sufficient to ensure school buildings remained fit for use. He asked the S151 Officer if the budget decision not to fully fund budget pressures would impact on the risks going forward. The S151 Officer advised that there were appropriate budget monitoring systems in place and that schools governing bodies would be supported in setting budgets. The Cabinet Member for a Learning Powys also noted that changes to the school funding formula would have a mitigating effect, not least by reducing the costs of supply cover.

RESOLVED that Cabinet notes the current Strategic Risk Register and is satisfied with progress against mitigating actions for quarter 3, approves escalation of IAWARD0009, PPPP0029 and CS0091 (detailed under points 3.5, 3.6 and 3.8 of the report) and de-escalation of ED0022 and CS0081 (detailed under point 3.7) to the Strategic Risk Register.

7.	RISK APPETITE
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Cabinet considered the Risk Appetite statement. The risk appetite definition was the amount and type of planned risk that the Council was willing to take to meet strategic objectives and deliver services. By deciding risk appetite, the Council would more effectively prioritise risk for mitigation, better allocate resources, and demonstrate more robust decision making around project/programme initiation.

On Programme and Project Delivery, where there was a low to high risk appetite, it was clarified this did not mean there was a tolerance for cost and project overruns.

RESOLVED to approve the Risk Appetite as set out in appendix A of the report.

8.	DELEGATED DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE THE LAST MEETING
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The delegated decisions taken by Cabinet members since the last meet were noted.

9.	FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME
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The forward work programme was noted. Heads of Service were asked to keep the programme up to date and to liaise with Scrutiny chairs.

County Councillor M Dorrance
Chair