

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

**County Council
24th January 2019**

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Rosemarie Harris, Leader

SUBJECT: Question from County Councillor Gareth Ratcliffe

With the County Council facing further cuts to non-statutory and delegated functions it is more and more looking to communities to run these services where possible. Communities such as Hay-on-Wye have been trying for over 3 years to agree a transfer of assets with the County Council and take on functions, but has been unable to do so, due to factors that include the recent unilateral decision by the current Cabinet to change the agreement made with the previous County Council Cabinet. This has resulted in Hay Town Council budgeting the precept and making commitments, which it may not now be able to implement, to keep the services within the community. This is not the only community to have had difficulty in working with the County Council on the transfers of assets. There are ongoing concerns being raised from many communities about the lack of flexibility and the County Council being restrictive in the name of “fairness to all”.

Can the Leader brief the full Council on how the Cabinet is planning to work with local councils and communities over the next round of cuts, with the further expectations from UK and Welsh Governments that communities will need to run more services within the community using volunteers?

Response

Powys has always sought to work with key partners such as Town and Community Councils and we can point to some success when it comes to transferring assets and services. Members will be aware from recent Budget Seminars that the Council faces continuing financial pressure as service pressures exceed our funding. This means it is likely that some services valued by communities may instead be run by local groups or Town and Community Councils. The Council remains open to discussing such changes with any group that comes forward with a proposal. This can be done in a number of ways and for example the Community Interest Company in Llanfyllin was the first such arrangement in Wales demonstrating we will be open to any model proposed.

