

13 October, 2015

LLANELLI RURAL COUNCIL

Minute Nos: 198 – 204

At a **COUNCIL** Meeting of the Llanelli Rural Council held at the Council Chamber, Vauxhall Buildings, Vauxhall, Llanelli, on Tuesday, 13 October, 2015, at 6.00 p.m.

Present: Cllr. M. V. Davies (Chairman)

Cllrs.

S. M. Caiach	M. L. Evans
D. M. Cundy	R. E. Evans
S. L. Davies	S. N. Lewis
T. Devichand	J. S. Phillips
S. M. Donoghue	C. A. Rees
H. J. Evans	A. J. Rogers
W. V. Thomas	

Absent: F. Akhtar, L. J. Butler

198. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. L. A. Beer, T. Bowen, T. J. Jones, A. G. Morgan and G. H. Wooldridge.

199. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

200. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED that the following Minutes (copies of which had been previously circulated to Members) be confirmed and signed as a true record of proceedings:

Council	8 September, 2015
Planning and Liaison Committee	14 September, 2015
Recreation and Welfare Committee	15 September, 2015
Policy and Resources Committee	16 September, 2015
Finance and General Purposes Committee	30 September, 2015
Special Council	30 September, 2015
Planning and Liaison Committee	5 October, 2015

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201. MATTERS ARISING

(1) LUNCHEON CLUBS

Further to Minute No. 153, the Clerk informed Members, that a letter had been received from the Head of Specialist Services, Hywel Dda University Health Board on supplying meals to the luncheon club which would be reported to the Recreation and Welfare Committee meeting to be held on Tuesday, 20 October, 2015.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

**(2) MID AND WEST WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY
LLANELLI FIRE STATION**

Further to Minute No. 154(1) the Clerk confirmed that he had spoken to Mr A Nicholas, Llanelli Fire Station, to confirm Members attendance at the station on Wednesday, 21 October, 2015, at 6.00 pm. It had been arranged that Members would have a guided tour of the station and crew officers would be available for Members questions.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

**(3) PWLL RECREATION GROUND
ACCESS ROAD AND CAR PARK**

Further to Minute No. 174, the Clerk confirmed to Members that the Contractor, G D Harries & Sons Ltd had commenced work on site today.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

(4) DAFEN POST OFFICE

Further to Minute No. 178, the Clerk informed Members that a response letter had been received from the Programme Correspondence Team, Post Office Ltd in reply to the Clerk's consultation letter, which would be reported to the Policy and Resources Committee meeting scheduled for the 21 October, 2015.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

(5) C.A.T.C.H.U.P

Further to Minute No. 181, the Clerk informed Members that he held a meeting on 7 October, 2015, with Mr E. Thomas, Trustee, C.A.T.C.H.U.P. to discuss potential financial support from the Council. The meeting was fairly positive but it was a little premature to establish the extent of any financial contribution and indeed the time period over which support might be provided.

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A clearer picture would emerge over the next few months following a reconfiguration of C.A.T.C.H.U.P.'s staff resource and the impact this would have on its general programme of work. Another factor was the amount of grant support the organisation received from Carmarthenshire County Council; it was unclear whether the current award of grant support would be reduced. Given that C.A.T.C.H.U.P. approached the Rural and Town Councils over a joint partnership approach to providing funding support, future meetings with C.A.T.C.H.U.P. would be held jointly with the Town Council. During the meeting the Council's budgetary process for formulating its estimates of income and expenditure was explained to Mr Thomas. If financial support was to be provided, then the cost of this support would need to be incorporated into budget plans for next year's budget.

RESOLVED that the information be noted and to await further developments.

(6) FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Arising out of Minute No. 189, Council Leader, Cllr. Carol Rees expressed her delight that so many groups and organisations had been supported by the Council. Cllr. Rees commented that it was important to value the work and impact the groups had in the Llanelli Rural area. Cllr. Rees was also particularly pleased that the decision to support the groups in the way the Finance Committee had determined was unanimous.

202. SUMMIT ON STRENGTHENING LOCAL DEMOCRACY

Further to Minute No. 157, Members received the Clerk's update report on the Summit on Strengthening Local Democracy and other associated matters. Notes of the meeting were tabled for Members' consideration along with the Clerk's report.

Members were informed the summit meeting was chaired by Nia Griffith MP. The meeting took place on 22 September, 2015, at the Selwyn Samuel Centre, Llanelli to enable representatives to discuss the proposed local government arrangements under Welsh Governments' latest public service reform proposals. The future role of local town and community councils in potentially providing a stronger voice for local communities as part of these arrangements was also considered. The reform proposals put forward options for eight or nine principal authorities covering the whole of Wales. This would give rise to the creation of larger county council areas with fewer councillors representing an increased number of electors.

The following points were raised during the meeting:

- All representatives supported Carmarthenshire County Council remaining in preference to a much larger merger with Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire.
- Power to abolish town and community councils – there was a potential risk of local councils being abolished under a local referendum if the electorate was unhappy with increased costs placed on town and community council budgets, if those councils were expected to take on more services from the county council. The legislative provision for calling local polls should be reviewed as it was too easy to abolish a local council under current arrangements.

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- Decision making powers of the proposed Area Boards – information was needed on their proposed terms of reference and local role. Furthermore, what was the role of town and community councils on these Area Boards? What was the geographic area covered by these Area Boards? Llanelli should have its own Area Board. It would not be acceptable to have an Area Board covering Carmarthenshire.
- There were concerns expressed over the loss of community identity if the intention was to proceed with town and community council mergers. It was felt that local councils should be encouraged to enter into voluntary collaboration arrangements instead of mergers. Precept equalisation was a key point.
- The proposed member elector ratio of 1:4,000 for county councillors was discussed. It was felt that the ratio was too high and would weaken local democracy with fewer county councillors being elected to serve on the new local authorities; representing much larger electoral wards across a much larger geographic area.
- There were areas of Wales without town and community councils. What would happen to democratic representation in these areas? The electorate in these areas would be at a disadvantage in terms of only having a single tier of local government potentially representing them.
- Resources (especially finance) must follow the transfer of services or the introduction of new service delivery arrangements at the town and community council level. Otherwise the proposed public service reforms would be ineffective. Raising the capacity of the local council sector would also take time and there could be no guarantees this would work.
- There was too much over-reliance on the voluntary sector to help plug service gaps.
- The Rural Council's request to agenda humanitarian aid and assistance to help support refugees in the Middle East was raised. This was briefly discussed and the general consensus was this would be further discussed at future meetings of the group. It was too early to make definite plans because the First Minister had only just started visiting county councils to discuss their role. However, the group agreed to revisit the position once more information became available.
- It was agreed that there was value in convening this group and so it was felt that the group should continue to meet during the passage of public service reform proposals.

The Clerk then referred to the Llanelli Area Town and Community Council's group, informing Members other town and community councils were now interested in joining the group following the summit meeting. It was hoped that meetings of the four councils would continue and be extended to include a further four or five local town and community councils in the Llanelli area.

The Clerk commented that programming regular meetings of the group had not been ideal and had led to some delay between meetings. However, to facilitate getting matters back on track a Clerk's meeting had been arranged for 19 October, 2015. It was felt there was an ever increasing public agenda of topical issues coupled with the planned public service reforms to justify further meetings continuing on a regular basis.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED that the information be noted and that the Clerk report to a future Council meeting if there are further developments requiring the Council's attention.

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FURTHER RESOLVED that in regard to the issue of local support for providing humanitarian aid and assistance to the refugees in the Middle East, it was noted that this will be revisited by the summit group when it next meets, however, and as an additional measure that it is also raised at future meetings of Llanelli Area Town and Community Council's group.

203. MATTERS REPORTED

RESOLVED that the schedule of matters reported be noted.

204. LLANELLI JOINT BURIAL AUTHORITY

Members received the following Minutes of a meeting of the Llanelli Joint Burial Authority held on 10 June, 2015:

“At the Annual Meeting of the Llanelli Joint Burial Authority held at Vauxhall Buildings, Vauxhall, Llanelli, on Wednesday, 10 June 2015 at 4:00 pm.

Present: M. V. Davies (Chairman)

Cllrs.

T. Bowen	P. J. Edmunds
M. J. P. Burns	R. E. Evans
C. J. Reed MBE	

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

Members proceeded to appoint a Chairman and following the motion of Cllr. P. J. Edmunds, seconded by Cllr. C. J. Reed MBE, it was

RESOLVED that Cllr. M. J. P. Burns be appointed Chairman.

2. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

Cllr. M. J. P. Burns thanked Members for appointing him as Chairman for the ensuing year and also thanked Cllr. M. V. Davies the outgoing Chairman for his work during the last year.

3. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Following the motion of Cllr. R. E. Evans, seconded by Cllr. M. V. Davies, it was

RESOLVED that Cllr. T. Bowen be appointed Vice Chairman.

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4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. L. J. Butler, T. J. Jones and L. J. Stedman.

5. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED that the following minutes (copies of which had been previously circulated) be confirmed and signed as a true record of proceedings.

Ordinary Meeting - 13 May 2015

7. INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORTS

RESOLVED that the income and expenditure report for April 2015 and the provisional report for May 2015 be noted.

8. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

Consideration was given to the schedule of payments for May 2015, which revealed expenditure for the month, amounted to £24,125.78.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

9. AUDIT ANNUAL RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDING
31 MARCH 2015

Members considered the Audit Annual Return document for the financial year ending 31 March 2015 and it was

RESOLVED that the general preparation of the document which included a summary of the Statement of Accounts in Section 1 and the Annual Governance Statement provided in Section 2 be approved accordingly.

10. PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT, 1960

RESOLVED that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted the following matter be considered in private and that the power of exclusion of the public under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, 1960 be exercised.

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11. REVIEW OF INTERNAL CONTROL AND INTERNAL AUDIT

Members considered the Secretary's report on internal control and internal audit services together with correspondence received from Auditing Solutions Ltd, dated 6 June 2015 outlining a three year strategic plan for the continued provision of internal audit services to the Burial Authority. Following discussion it was

RESOLVED that the Secretary's report be accepted and that Auditing Solutions Ltd's contract be renewed with immediate effect to cover the financial year periods 2015/16 to 2017/18 inclusive.

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The meeting concluded at 4:30 pm”
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RESOLVED that the Minutes be noted.

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The Meeting concluded at 6.40 p.m.
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The afore-mentioned Minutes were declared to be a true record of the proceedings and signed by the Chairman presiding thereat and were, on 10 November, 2015, adopted by the Council.