

15 November, 2017

LLANELLI RURAL COUNCIL

Minute Nos: 273 – 281

At a Meeting of the **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE** of the Llanelli Rural Council held at the Council Chamber, Vauxhall Buildings, Vauxhall, Llanelli, on Wednesday, 15 November, 2017, at 4.45 p.m.

Present: Cllr. F. Akhtar (Chairman)

Cllrs.

T. Devichand	H. J. Evans
S. M. Donoghue	J. S. Phillips
P. M. Edwards	E. Simmons
W. V. Thomas	

273. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. A. G. Morgan, C. A. Rees, A. J. Rogers and I. G. Wooldridge.

274. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

275. BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES

Further to Minute No. 207 (21 September, 2016), Members considered correspondence from the Secretary, Boundary Commission for Wales regarding proposals for the 2018 review of Parliamentary Constituencies in Wales

The Commission had now published its revised proposals after considering all the evidence it had received. There were changes to 19 of the 29 constituencies the Commission initially proposed.

Members then considered the proposals for the Llanelli constituency. The proposed constituency was to be known as Llanelli. The constituency would have 76,302 electors which was 2.1% above the UKEQ of 74,769 electors per constituency. This was based on the existing constituency of Llanelli and the electoral wards within the existing Gower CC and City and County of Swansea electoral wards of Gorseinon, Knightsbridge, Lower Loughor, Penyrheol, Pontardulais and Upper Loughor.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED that the proposal be supported.

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**276. LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION
FOR WALES**

**(1) REVIEW OF THE ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE
COUNTY OF CARMARTHENSHIRE**

Further to Minute No. 231(1), Members received a consultation document on the review of the electoral arrangements for the County of Carmarthenshire from the Chief Executive, Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales.

The review was to be carried out under Section 29 of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013. In considering the electoral arrangements the Commission shall as far as was reasonably practicable comply with the rules set out in Section 30 of the Act.

Following a lengthy discussion of the potential permutations for redressing electoral parity across the County of Carmarthenshire, Members felt the starting point should be the Bynea Ward. The electoral ward was under represented by 64% in comparison to the current member/elector ratio. Bearing in mind the published guidance it was

RESOLVED that the Clerk responds to the initial consultation exercise by suggestion at the very least the Bynea Ward be made into a two member electoral ward and that the matter be revisited once the Boundary Commission produces its first set of draft proposals for public consultation.

**(2) GUIDANCE FOR PRINCIPAL COUNCILS ON THE
REVIEW OF COMMUNITIES**

Members considered the new and updated Community Review Guidance document received from the Review Officer, Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales.

The document had been produced to assist and help consistency in the conduct of community reviews by principal councils. It had been produced to explain the statutory processes that should be followed, reflecting best practice developed by councils over time and the considerations a council may wish to consider in the course of conducting a review.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

**277. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES
DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19**

Members were circulated with the draft Annual Report 2018/19 received from the Chairman, Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales. In accordance with the requirements of Section 147 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, the Panel's draft annual report included proposals which would take effect for the financial year 2018.

Members' attention was drawn to section 13 of the report wherein it stated the payments to members of community and town councils. Members were informed that the Panel recognised the wide variation in responsibilities and accountabilities in the local council sector. Councillors managing income or expenditure of £1 million and those delivering

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significant services, including some that might have been delegated from principal councils, were operating in a much more complex environment than a local council with an annual budget of £10,000. Therefore, the Panel was proposing to form four groups of local councils to reflect the wide variation. The groupings were formulated on income and expenditure levels and the council was categorised as a group A council because its income or expenditure exceeded £200,000. Furthermore, the Panel was of the view that community and town councillors were not volunteers because further to the democratic process they had accepted formal responsibilities and all councillors faced some degree of liability in regard to the operation of council functions and services. To reflect this, the Panel was mandating payment of a contribution to costs and expenses for all community and town councils as set out in determination 44 below. The Panel was also of the view that councils in group A were likely to have a greater number of committees, reflecting its level of activity; and therefore was additionally mandating the payment of senior roles as set out in determination 45 below.

Furthermore, where determinations were not mandatory, community and town councils must firstly decide by resolution which determinations, if any, were to be adopted by the council. The rates specified, if adopted, could not be amended although individual Members could opt out of receiving payments by advising the Deputy Clerk in writing of their individual wishes.

The Clerk then invited Members as in previous years to decide by formal resolution which of the Panel's discretionary determinations shall be adopted in advance of the 2018/19 municipal year assuming the draft Annual Report would not be subject to change prior to it being published in February, 2018, and it was

RESOLVED that the following draft determinations be adopted by the Council unless otherwise specified:

1. Determination 44: Community and Town Councils must make a payment to each of their members of £150 per year for costs incurred in respect of telephone usage, information technology, consumables etc.
2. Determination 45: Community and town councils in group A must make an annual payment of £500 each to a minimum of one and a maximum of five members in recognition of specific responsibilities. This is in addition to the £150 payment or costs and expenses. That the Remuneration Panel be requested to review this draft determination because it is unfair to single out a select few councillors to receive a special responsibility allowance. All members contribute equally to the business arrangements of the Council and fully participate in the decision making process by attending a monthly cycle of committee meetings throughout the year. They also perform a key role in supporting the Council's governance arrangements which was far more detailed and complex when compared against that of most other Councils. In view of this the Council believes a fairer arrangement would be to introduce a new determination which permits a group A council to pay an attendance allowance to all councillors when they attend meetings. A caveat could be included whereby the allowance could be paid where the meeting exceeds a period of 30 minutes or more. For anything less than 30 minutes then no allowance would be paid. The fee could be set to at least match the national living wage allowance and paid as a simple flat rate regardless of the overall duration of the meeting.
3. Determination 46: Community and town Councils in groups B, C or D are authorised to make an annual payment of £500 each up to five members in recognition of specific responsibilities. This is in addition to the £150 payment for costs and expenses if that is made. This determination does not apply to the Council under the draft proposals.

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4. Determination 47: Community and town Councils are authorised to make payments to each of their members in respect of travel costs for attending approved duties. Such payments must be the actual cost of travel by public transport or the HMRC mileage allowances as below:

- 45p per mile up to 10,000 miles in the year.
- 25p per mile over 10,000 miles.
- 5p per passenger per mile carried on Council business
- 24p per mile for private motor cycles.
- 20p per mile for bicycles.

5. Determination 48: If a community and town council resolves that a particular duty requires overnight stay, it may authorise reimbursement of subsistence expenses to its Members at the maximum rates set out below on the basis of receipted claims:

- £28 per 24 hour period allowance for meals, including breakfast where not provided.
- £200 – London overnight.
- £95 – elsewhere overnight.
- £30 – staying with friends and/or family overnight.

6. Determination 49: Community and town councils are authorised to pay financial loss compensation to each of their members where such loss has actually occurred, for attending approved duties as follows:

- Up to £34.00 for a period not exceeding 4 hours.
- Up to £68.00 for a period exceeding 4 hours but not exceeding 24 hours.

7. Determination 50: Community and town councils are authorised to provide for the reimbursement of necessary costs for the care of dependent children and adults (provided by informal or formal carers) up to a maximum of £403 per month. Reimbursement must be for the additional costs incurred by Members in order for them to carry out their approved duties. Reimbursement shall only be made on production of receipts from the carer.

8. Determination 51: Community and town councils are authorised to provide a Civic Head payment to the mayor/chair of the council up to a maximum of £1,500 to undertake the functions of that office. This is in addition to the £150 payment for costs and expenses if that is made.

9. Determination 52: Community and town councils are authorised to provide a Deputy Civic Head payment to the deputy mayor/deputy chair of the council up to a maximum amount of £500 to undertake the functions of that office. This is in addition to the £150 payment for costs and expenses if that is made.

During discussion of the above, Cllr. W. V. Thomas left the meeting.

278. CARMARTHENSHIRE WELL-BEING PLAN 2018 - 2023

Members received a consultation document about the draft Carmarthenshire Well-being Plan 2018-2023 from the Carmarthenshire Public Services Board (PSB).

The PSB brought a number of organisations together to provide a service to the public of Carmarthenshire and its aim was to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of the residents and work collectively to add value to services but also to develop new and innovative approaches to address the needs of the people and communities.

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The first draft of the consultation provided an opportunity for the Council to let the PSB know if it thought the objectives and actions that were proposed by the PSB would make a difference to the well-being of the people of Carmarthenshire.

Following a lengthy discussion, Members generally supported the four draft objectives set out in the plan and felt they were broad enough to permit the development of a number of key interventions and actions to improve well-being. Members held concerns over the degree of poverty in its administrative area and would support all initiatives to help alleviate the causes of poverty. To this extent, Members wanted to see the enhancement of learning opportunities within the county closely linked to good educational standards. This in turn should be supported by good standards of housing and the creation of local employment opportunities. Members also believed that it was imperative to secure inward investment to promote the physical regeneration of Llanelli town and district. Members were of the firm opinion that all these issues could be systematically tackled via the draft well-being objectives identified in the plan, and through public bodies and other stakeholders working in partnership to achieve common goals.

RESOLVED that the Clerk be authorised to respond to the consultation document highlighting Members' views.

During discussion of the above, Cllr. H. J. Evans left the meeting.

**279. HYWEL DDA COMMUNITY HEALTH COUNCIL
ANNUAL PLANNING REVIEW**

Members considered a planning questionnaire for 2018-2019 received from the Chief Officer, Hywel Dda Community Health Council (HDCHC) which sought feedback on the organisation's Annual Planning Review.

Following consideration of the six key questions which centered around HDCHC's role in influencing, communicating, how it best represents local interests, the focus of its activities going forward; Members commented that they were disappointed that there had been no dialogue or relationship with the HDCHC over the past year but that this would hopefully change particular given the important role the organisation performs and it was

RESOLVED that the Clerk completes the questionnaire highlighting Members views and comments.

280. 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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281. STAFFING MATTERS

Members considered the report of the Deputy Clerk informing of staffing matters.

RESOLVED that the report referenced 11:2017 be accepted.

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The meeting concluded at 6.20 p.m.

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