

21 July, 2021

LLANELLI RURAL COUNCIL

Minute Nos: 137 – 143

At a Meeting of the **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE** of the Llanelli Rural Council held at the Council Chamber, Vauxhall Buildings, Vauxhall, Llanelli, and via remote attendance on Wednesday, 21 July, 2021, at 4.45 p.m.

Present: Cllr. S. M. Donoghue (Chairman)

Cllrs.

C. P. Beer	H. J. Evans
S. L. Davies	A. G. Morgan
T. Devichand	S. K. Nurse
P. M. Edwards	J. S. Phillips

137. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. J. P. Hart (Cllr. S. K. Nurse deputising) and I. G. Wooldridge.

138. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

139. ELIGIBLE COMMUNITY COUNCILS (GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE) (QUALIFICATIONS OF CLERKS) (WALES) REGULATIONS 2021

Members received a consultation document and an accompanying questionnaire from the Welsh Government.

The Minister for Finance and Local Government had published the consultation 'Eligible Community Councils (General Power of Competence) (Qualifications of Clerks) (Wales) Regulations 2021'. The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 set out the intention of Welsh Ministers to specify in regulations the qualifications or description of qualifications that the clerk to a community council must hold in order for the community council to meet the second of the three eligibility conditions to become an 'eligible community council'.

The conditions a community council must satisfy in order to resolve itself an 'eligible community council' to use the general power of competence were:

- At least two-thirds of the total number of members of the council had been declared to be elected, whether at an ordinary election or at a by-election.

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- The clerk to the council holds such qualification or description of qualification as may be specified by the Welsh Ministers by regulations.
- The council had received unqualified auditors opinions from the Auditor General for Wales, for two consecutive financial years. The latest unqualified auditor's opinion must have been received during the 12 months preceding the day on which the council's resolution was passed.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED that the Clerk responds to the consultation document by completing the accompanying questionnaire, highlighting members' views and observations in support of the recommended suite of qualifications that a clerk to a community council must hold to satisfy the particular eligibility condition.

140. REVIEW OF ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS OF THE COUNTY OF CARMARTHENSHIRE – FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT

Further to Minute No. 196 (18 September, 2019 refers), members received the final recommendations report from the Chief Executive, Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales on the review of electoral arrangements for the County of Carmarthenshire. The review was conducted in accordance with the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013.

Members noted the proposals to change the existing Bynea County Council electoral ward from a single member to a two member electoral ward. The recommendations also proposed combining the Dafen and Felinfoel County Council electoral wards into a single ward represented by two members. The ward name would be known as 'Dafen and Felinfoel'. There were no changes to the community ward arrangements in so far as the county council recommendations affected the Llanelli Rural area.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

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

RESOLVED that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the following matters 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.

142. COUNCIL POLICIES

Members considered a request from Cllr. A. G. Morgan to review council policies to facilitate or strengthen the following arrangements:

- (1) Recording of meetings
- (2) Protocol for dealing with long term member absence
- (3) Officer member re-assurance protocol
- (4) Bullying policy in meetings

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Lengthy discussion ensued and prior to a vote being taken on each subject area Cllr. Morgan requested the Clerk to record the names of members who voted on the matter so as to show whether they voted for or against the motions in respect of items (1) and (2) as follows, but noting that Cllr S.M. Donoghue abstained in regard to item (1):

(1) Recording of meetings

For
A. G. Morgan

Against
C. P. Beer
S. L. Davies
T. Devichand
P. M. Edwards
H. J. Evans
S. K. Nurse
J. S. Phillips

(2) Protocol for dealing with long term member absence

For
A.G.Morgan

Against
C. P. Beer
S. L. Davies
T. Devichand
S. M. Donoghue
P. M. Edwards
H. J. Evans
S. K. Nurse
J. S. Phillips

RESOLVED that:

- (1) The motion to record meetings be declined.
- (2) The motion to introduce a protocol for dealing with long term member absence be declined on the basis the current arrangements were satisfactory in that the responsibility and onus for managing member attendance rests with each and every member to manage themselves.
- (3) The motion regarding introducing an officer/member re-assurance protocol be declined as it was felt the current general officer/member protocol was satisfactory in fulfilling this purpose. However, if either an officer or member of the council wanted to be accompanied by an individual when conducting one to one meetings with one another then this was permissible and supported.
- (4) The motion to introduce a bullying policy to regulate member conduct during meetings be declined on the basis that the national ethical framework dealt with this under 'The Conduct of Members (Model Code of Conduct) which the council had already adopted.

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143. STAFFING MATTERS

Members considered the report of the Technical and General Operations Manager informing of staffing matters.

RESOLVED that the report referenced 07:2021 be accepted.

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The meeting concluded at 5.56 p.m.

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