

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BRECKNOCKSHIRE COMMITTEE
HELD AT NEUADD BRYCHEINIOG, BRECON
ON WEDNESDAY 26th MARCH 2014**

Present: County Councillor J.C. Holmes – Chairman

County Councillors P.C. Ashton, M.J.B. Davies, S.C. Davies, S. Davies, M.J. Dorrance, W.A. Fitzpatrick, M.R. Harris, G.G. Hopkins, S. McNicholas, D.W. Meredith, E.T. Morgan, J.G. Morris, W.D. Powell, D.R. Price, G.W. Ratcliffe, D.A. Thomas, D.G. Thomas, H. Williams and S. Williams.

In attendance:

County Councillor D.E. Davies, Portfolio Holder for Finance

Paul Griffiths – Strategic Director Place, Sue Bolter – Head of Regeneration, Property and Commissioning, Tony Caine – Road Safety and Traffic Systems Manager, Derek Price – Group Engineer.

1.	APOLOGIES	BS11-2014
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Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors K.S. Silk, T.J. Van Rees and A. York. Apologies were also received from County Councillor M.C. Alexander, Portfolio Holder for Education and Children's Services who had to attend a meeting of the School Modernisation Board. Members expressed their extreme disappointment that Councillor Alexander was unable to attend because there were many issues that they wished to discuss with her including proposals for ALN, job losses at Ysgol Golwg y Cwm, the Gwernyfed catchment review, Brecon High School being placed in special measures, the remodelling of Llangorse Primary School and the roll out of a voluntary severance scheme to schools. It was agreed that the Chairman would write to her.

The Strategic Director – Place explained that a member of Management Team would attend each Shire meeting so they could feed back to Management Team issues raised in the Shires.

2.	MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – 29th JANUARY 2014	BS12-2014
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The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of the last meeting held on 29th January 2014 as a correct record subject to the correction of Councillor M.J.B. Davies' title from Mrs to Miss. It was agreed that personal titles should not be used in minutes.

3.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	BS13-2014
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County Councillor M.J. Dorrance declared a prejudicial interest under the item Questions to the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Planning in respect of a question on wind turbine developments.

County Councillor D.A. Thomas declared a personal and prejudicial interest under the item Questions to the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Planning in respect of a question on the Section 106 agreement for the Tesco development in Ystradgynlais.

County Councillor H. Williams declared a personal and prejudicial interest under the item Questions to the Portfolio Holder for HR IT and Communications in respect of a question on ALN provision.

4.	CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS	BS14-2014
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There were no announcements from the Chairman.

The Chairman agreed the agenda be varied to take reports from Portfolio Holders next.

5.	REPORTS FROM AND QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS	BS16-2014
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County Councillor Rosemarie Harris, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Planning

Brecon Learning Campus – Members asked about the governance arrangements and were advised that these were part of the Strategic Outline Case which was currently being reviewed by the Programme Board. Ensuring that good governance arrangements were in place would be an important factor in the decision to release funding.

Local Growth Zones – In answer to a Member's question over the Council's commitment to Local Growth Zones, the Portfolio Holder explained that this was a Welsh Government initiative to work with businesses. The Council's officers were working with Welsh Government officials to help deliver this as well as the Council's own priorities. Any suggestion that the Council was not committed to the scheme was refuted. The Strategic Director – Place and the Head of Regeneration, Property and Commissioning had met Welsh Government officials to discuss the scheme and the Council's role in it.

Affordable Housing – Members asked about the Council's commitment to the Rural Housing Enabler network. Welsh Government funding was confirmed, but the Council needed to discuss with housing associations their ongoing commitment after September. The Portfolio Holder noted the cut made in the Housing services budget. Members noted that the Leader had given an assurance that Council support for the Rural Housing Enabler network would continue if Welsh Government funding continued.

Planning Enforcement – The new arrangements where every planning officer had a responsibility for enforcement were outlined. The Head of Service advised that the list of enforcement issues was reducing with more complex cases being brought to the Planning, Taxi Licensing and Rights of Way Committee for determination. Members asked for a report back after the Head of Service reviewed the situation in June.

Economic Development – It was confirmed that Office for National Statistics data was available on a ward by ward basis and could be made available to Members either by email or a presentation could be arranged for the next meeting.

Section 106 Agreement Tesco's Ystradgynlais

County Councillor D.A. Thomas declared an interest in this matter and left the meeting while it was being discussed.

The Head of Regeneration, Property and Commissioning noted Members' concerns that the Section 106 agreement to build ten workshop units would soon lapse and agreed to look into the matter.

Wind Turbines

County Councillor M.J. Dorrance declared an interest in this item and did not participate in the discussion.

Members noted that the impact on tourism of wind turbine developments was raised regularly at the Planning Committee and yet there did not seem to be any definitive evidence on the subject. Officers would check with the legal team representing the Council at the wind farm inquiry but their understanding was that there was no research which proved that turbines harmed tourism.

Former Brynhenllys Opencast Site – One of the local Members reported that over ten years after Brynhenllys opencast site was closed footpaths on the site were still closed to walkers. The Head of Regeneration, Property and Commissioning agreed to follow this up.

County Councillor Steve Davies, Portfolio Holder for HR IT and Communications

Member IT Support – The Portfolio Holder explained the new arrangements for Member IT support which would save £42,000 per annum. The Portfolio Holder asked Members to contact him if they had any problems with the new arrangements.

Communications – Consideration was still being given to how to bridge the communications gap following the budget decision to stop producing the Red Kite newsletter.

Contract for Adult Social Care – The Portfolio Holder for HR, IT and Communications explained that small businesses had been given the opportunity to tender but that they did not have the capacity to deliver the contract and therefore a further procurement exercise had been necessary.

Additional Learning Needs

County Councillor H. Williams declared an interest in this item and left the meeting while it was being discussed.

A Member reported that staff had received letters from HR which implied that changes would be coming in from 1st September which called into question the

consultation process currently underway. The Portfolio Holder agreed to find out from HR what had been issued to staff and if necessary put a stop on further communications. Members asked to be kept informed.

County Councillor D.G. Thomas left the meeting.

Strike Action at Maesydderwen High School - The strike had been over the portability of terms and conditions. At the moment there was no indication of any further strike action planned. The strike affecting a number of schools today was a national strike over pay, pensions and conditions.

County Councillor W.D. Powell left the meeting.

Webcasting – Tenders for a new congress system for the Council's main offices in Brecon, Llandrindod Wells and Welshpool were being evaluated.

County Councillor M.R. Harris left the meeting.

6.	ROAD SAFETY AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT	BS15-2014
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6.1 Road Safety and Traffic Management Schemes

6.1.1 U0158/B4560 Junction Between Llangors and Talgarth – Proposed Visibility Improvement

RESOLVED	Reason for Decision
That the scheme be approved and included in the County Road Safety and Traffic Management Schemes capital programme for construction.	To improve visibility at the junction.

6.1.2 Llangorse Lake Footway Link

RESOLVED	Reason for Decision
That the scheme be approved and included in the County Road Safety and Traffic Management Schemes capital programme for construction.	To improve road and pedestrian safety.

6.1.3 C0089 C0089 Junction Llanfilo – Proposed Visibility Improvement

RESOLVED	Reason for Decision
That the scheme be approved and included in the County Road Safety and Traffic Management Schemes capital programme for construction.	To improve road safety.

6.1.4 C0092 C0095 Junction Groesffordd Junction Improvement

RESOLVED	Reason for Decision
That the scheme be approved and	To improve road safety.

included in the County Road Safety and Traffic Management Schemes capital programme for construction.	
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6.1.5 C0108/ B4560 Junction Between Llangors and Bwlch – Proposed Visibility Improvement

RESOLVED	Reason for Decision
That the scheme be approved and included in the County Road Safety and Traffic Management Schemes capital programme for construction.	To improve visibility at the junction.

6.1.6 C0037/ U0223 Junction Cradoc Road, Brecon – Junction Improvement

RESOLVED	Reason for Decision
That the scheme be approved and included in the County Road Safety and Traffic Management Schemes capital programme for construction.	To improve road and pedestrian safety.

6.2 Hay Residents Parking Proposal

The Committee considered the proposed residents parking scheme for Hay on Wye and the results of a survey of residents. The Local Member, County Councillor Ratcliffe, reported requested amendments to the Scheme from Hay Town Council to remove proposals for Lion Street opposite the Drill Hall, to allow one hours parking on Main Street and limit parking on side streets to one hour. The Committee was advised that this would make enforcement easier.

RESOLVED	Reason for Decision:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To note the response rate of the consultation and accept that the conditions of the Residents Parking Policy have been sufficiently met and therefore the legal procedures for the Traffic Order should be initiated. 2. To amend the proposed limited waiting times within the proposed residents parking zones to a maximum of 1 hour no return in 2 hours. 3. That parking within the Town be limited to a maximum of 1 hour. 4. Delete the proposal to introduce limited waiting on Lion Street opposite the Drill Hall. 	To clarify the current position and to allow the Traffic Order process to be initiated.

Members asked about rolling out residents parking schemes to other towns. The Road Safety and Traffic Systems Manager explained that the next scheme was planned in Newtown.

County Councillor E.T. Morgan left the meeting.

6.3 Traffic Management – 30 mph Speed Limit, Glasbury

The Committee was advised that the costs of the Traffic Regulation Order would be met by the Community Councils. County Councillor Hopkins asked for the limit extended past the bungalows on Pipton Road and he advised that the Community Councils were happy for this section of road to be included.

RESOLVED	Reason for Decision:
Committee is asked to resolve that consultation procedures be initiated and if no substantive objections are received the proposal be implemented.	To reduce traffic speeds at a busy junction, and increase road safety

County Councillor G.W. Ratcliffe left the meeting.

County Councillor D.E. Davies joined the meeting.

7.	REPORTS FROM AND QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS	BS16-2014
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County Councillor Dai Davies, Portfolio Holder for Finance

2013/14 Budget – A small underspend was projected.

Landsbanki update – 95% of the amounts originally deposited with Landsbanki had been recovered. With interest received, the sale had resulted in the Authority receiving a surplus of 50,000 as the sale proceeds exceeded the balance of the debt outstanding in the ledger. The Strategic Director – Resources was preparing a more detailed note and Members asked for a note to be included on whether this was added to the general capital fund or if it could be allocated to specific schemes.

Anti-Poverty and Flying Start – The Portfolio Holder was asked about the Council's anti-poverty strategy and about expanding Flying Start. He agreed to email details of the Council's anti-poverty strategy to Members.

Schools Delegated Budgets – Members expressed concern over growing deficit budgets and frustration that voluntary severance was not available as a tool to help schools manage their budgets.

Wind Farm Developments - The Portfolio Holder advised that the Council's expenditure on the public inquiry was £1.6m to date but with 19 more applications pending this was a significant risk to the Council. There had been no assessment of planning gain.

8.	SHIRE MEETINGS	BS17-2014
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Members discussed the value of Shire meetings with some arguing that they served no purpose and that the money would be better spent supporting Scrutiny or in the community, whilst others argued that it was the only forum in which Members could raise local issues. Members noted that whilst they had been prepared to move to bi-monthly meetings there was a reluctance to change in Montgomeryshire and Radnorshire. It was noted that the Strategic Director – Resources was preparing a paper on the costs of holding shire Committees and it was decided to defer voting on keeping or changing the current arrangements until those figures were available.

9.	REPORTS FROM AND QUESTIONS TO MEMBERS SERVING ON OUTSIDE BODIES	BS18-2014
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There were no reports.

10.	CORRESPONDENCE	BS19-2014
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There were no items of correspondence.

11.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	BS20-2014
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Members were reminded that the next meetings would be held on Wednesday 14th May (Annual Meeting) and 28th May 2014.

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR JEFF HOLMES
CHAIRMAN**