

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD AT COUNCIL CHAMBER -
COUNTY HALL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS, POWYS ON TUESDAY, 3 MARCH 2020**

PRESENT

County Councillor M R Harris (Chair)

County Councillors MC Alexander, G Breeze, A W Davies, P Davies, J Evans and R Powell

The Leader thanked all the staff who had been involved in the Council's response to Storm Dennis. She and the Chief Executive also gave an update on the work going on in the Council and with partner agencies to cope with the coronavirus outbreak.

1.	APOLOGIES
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Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor Heulwen Hulme.

2.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
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County Councillor James Evans declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the item on High Street and Retail Rates Relief Scheme.

3.	MINUTES
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The Leader was authorised to sign the minutes of the last meeting held on 11th February 2020 as a correct record.

4.	LADYWELL GREEN INFANTS SCHOOL AND HAFREN C.P. JUNIOR SCHOOL
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Cabinet was advised that no objections had been received to the proposal to close Ladywell Green Infants School and Hafren C.P. Junior School from the 31st August 2021, and to establish a new English-medium primary school for pupils aged 4-11 from the 1st September 2021 during the statutory notice period.

RESOLVED

- 1. to approve the proposal to amalgamate Ladywell Green Infants School and Hafren C.P. Junior School in order to establish a new English-medium primary school for pupils aged 4-11 on the current sites of the two schools, by:**
 - **Closing Ladywell Green Infants School and Hafren C.P. Junior School from the 31st August 2021**
 - **Establishing a new English-medium primary school for pupils aged 4-11 on the current sites of Ladywell Green Infants School and Hafren C.P. Junior School on the 1st September 2021**

2. That in line with Section 3.7.2 of the Scheme for Financing Schools, it is proposed that:

- **Spend at the schools is restricted to that included in their approved budget plan and no virement of funds between budget headings is permitted unless approved by the Authority.**
- **Any staffing changes have to be approved by the Authority.**
- **Any contracts awarded for the supply of goods or services have to be approved by the Authority.**

5.	21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS PROGRAMME YSGOL CEDEWAIN PROJECT
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Cabinet considered a Strategic Outline Case to Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools Programme for capital investment to build a new 108 place special school to replace the existing Ysgol Cedewain building in Newtown. Cabinet fully supported the proposal.

RESOLVED

- 1. To submit the Strategic Outline Case, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, to Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools Programme for capital investment to build a new 108 place school to replace the existing Ysgol Cedewain building in Newtown.**
- 2. The note that the estimated cost of the overall project is £22,678,200.00 with Welsh Government funding 75% of the costs, and the Council funding the remaining 25%, and to note that the current total cost estimate includes an early stage risk contingency of 25%.**

6.	REVISED PROTOCOL FOR AUTHORISING MOTOR VEHICLE EVENTS AFFECTING FOOTPATHS, BRIDLEWAYS AND RESTRICTED BYWAYS UNDER S.33 ROAD TRAFFIC ACT 1988
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Cabinet considered revisions to the protocol for authorising motorsport events affecting footpaths, bridleways and restricted byways. The Portfolio Holder advised that there had been extensive consultation and that the revisions were intended to address issues that had been raised by officers, members and the motor sport industry as to the effectiveness and operation of the current protocol. Cabinet recognised the importance of motor sports events to the local economy.

RESOLVED

- 1. That the revised Protocol and Guidance as set out in Appendices 3 and 4 of the Report are approved and to be put into effect on or before 31st August 2020**

2. That the fees set out in paragraph 3.5 are approved.
3. That the further arrangements set out in paragraphs 3.6 and 3.7 of the report are approved.
4. The reason for the recommendation is to safeguard the future of motor sports within the county, whilst at the same time ensuring statutory compliance and managing public safety during an event.

7.	HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) THIRTY YEAR FINANCIAL BUSINESS PLAN 2020-2021
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Cabinet considered the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Thirty Year Financial Business Plan Starting 2020-2021. The Plan set out detailed proposals for the five year period starting in 2020-2021 with outline proposals thereafter. This would allow for a strategic approach to be taken with investment decisions and planning and for more informed consultation and communication with residents and tenants. The plan set out the levels of investment for the following programmes:

New Homes for Powys (Capital Programme)
WHQS (Capital Programme)
Compliance One Hundred
Green Powys
Fit for Life
Love Where You Live
Careline
Repairs and Maintenance

RESOLVED to approve the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Thirty Year Business Plan Starting 2020-2021.

8.	HIGH STREET AND RETAIL RATES RELIEF SCHEME IN WALES 2020-21
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County Councillor James Evans declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item and left the meeting while it was being considered.

Cabinet was advised that Welsh Government had announced the continuation of the Business Rates high street and retail rates relief scheme for 2020-21 to support businesses within the retail sector in Wales. £1,080,000 was being made available to the Council by way of a Welsh Government Grant.

Properties benefiting from this relief would be occupied retail properties such as shops, pubs and restaurants with a rateable value of £50,000 or less on 1 April 2020. The maximum relief available per property in 2020-21 would be £2,500, the same figure of relief available in 2019-20. During the 2019-20 year, 605 Powys businesses were granted a share of £1,048,000 being 97% of available grant.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Countryside and Transport also advised that following Storm Dennis, the Council had contacted businesses affected by flooding to inform them of the discretionary rate relief scheme.

RESOLVED

- 1. That a Business Rates high street and retail rates relief scheme 2020-21 be established in accordance with section 3 of this report**
- 2. Ratepayers that received high street and retail rates relief in 2019-20 and remain in occupation as at 1 April 2020 be automatically granted this relief for financial year 2020-21.**
- 3. New applications for Business Rates high street and retail rates relief 2020-21 under the scheme referred to above shall be delegated to and determined by the Portfolio holder for Finance in consultation with the Head of Financial services (Section 151 Officer).**

County Councillor James Evans returned to the meeting.

9. FINANCIAL OVERVIEW AND FORECAST AS AT 31ST JANUARY 2020

Cabinet was advised that the forecast as at 31 January 2020 showed an underspend at year end of £6,000 compared to a forecast overspend of £570,000 at the end of December 2019. This improvement was as a result of the delivery of additional cost reductions. Subject to delivery of further expected cost reductions in February and March, the outturn was forecast to be an underspend of £650,000. Cabinet was further advised that the financial impact of Storm Dennis would not be known for some months. Not only had damage been caused to roads and infrastructure, but staff had been diverted away from fee earning work to deal with flooding. Without financial support from Welsh Government the costs would be borne by the Council. This would impact on the revenue outturn position and any resulting overspend would be financed from the Council's reserves.

The report also included a virement to reduce collection costs from £231,000 to £130,000 from the bring site budget to reflect reduced collection costs following the removal of the garden waste green banks at all the small recycling bring sites.

RESOLVED

- 1. That Cabinet note the budget position.**
- 2. That the virement noted above be approved.**

10.	CAPITAL FORECAST AS AT 31ST JANUARY 2020
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Cabinet was advised that the forecast outturn on the revised 2019-20 capital budget as at 31st January was an underspend of £11.6 million on service budgets and £4.6 million on the Housing Revenue Account. Actual spend and committed expenditure as at 31 January 2020 amounts to £57.26 million representing 72% of the total revised budget comprising actual spend of £43.35 million and £13.92 million committed.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

11.	CORRESPONDENCE
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There were no items of correspondence.

12.	DELEGATED DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE THE LAST MEETING
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Cabinet received a list of delegated decisions taken by Portfolio Holders since the last meeting.

13.	FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME
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The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Housing and Regulatory Services advised that he was delaying the report on Ecoflex coming to Cabinet until he had an opportunity to consider the views of Scrutiny.

County Councillor M R Harris (Chair)