

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD BY TEAMS ON TUESDAY, 13  
JULY 2021**

**PRESENT**

County Councillor M R Harris (Chair)

County Councillors MC Alexander, B Baynham, P Davies, A W Davies, H Hulme,  
I McIntosh and R Powell

In attendance: County Councillors D Jones and P Roberts

<b>1. APOLOGIES</b>
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Apologies for absence were received from the Corporate Director (Children and Adults).

<b>2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>
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County Councillor Alexander declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item Llanfyllin/North Powys Area Transformation Phase 2 Proposal Paper. The Leader noted that Members who are Governors have a general exemption to speak on Education Transformation matters.

<b>3. CASTLE CAEREINION CHURCH IN WALES SCHOOL</b>
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Cabinet considered responses to the proposal to close Castle Caereinion Church in Wales School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to attend their nearest alternative schools. The Portfolio Holder for Education and Property apologised for an error in the report relating to the distance between the school and Welshpool but advised that this was not a material issue and the document was still sound.

County Councillor Pete Roberts, the Chair of the Learning and Skills Scrutiny Committee advised that the Committee had accepted the arguments made by officers of the challenge of delivering the curriculum in a small school and accepted that other options had been considered. The Committee had noted the number of pupils in the catchment attending other schools. The Committee had raised concerns at the extra costs falling on families who wished to send their children to another Church in Wales school and suggested that transport should be provided for pupils currently at the school for the duration of their primary education only, to avoid setting a precedent. The Committee had also been concerned at the impact on the community hall's viability if the school was to close and encouraged officers to bring forward proposals to support the hall.

The local member County Councillor David Jones expressed his disappointment at the recommendation to close the school. He noted that the school had suffered because of a year when no pupils had joined the school but that there were some planned housing developments in the village. He questioned how pupils would be able to take part in extra-curricular activities in other schools without relying on transport by car. He noted that the village hall would lose

between £3,000 and £4,000 income from the school per annum bringing into question its viability. Councillor Jones emphasised the strong links between the school and the church and asked that Cabinet look at other proposals so that education could continue in Castle Caereinion and children could continue to have a faith education.

The Portfolio Holder advised that there was discretion in the code on school transport in respect of faith-based schooling. This would be looked at and options would be brought back for Cabinet's consideration as part of the response to objections to the statutory notice. The Portfolio Holder asked that council officers look at what sources of funding were available to the village hall. The Strategic Lead for Education highlighted the challenges of delivering the new curriculum that was being introduced from September 2022 in small schools. Cabinet was advised that pupil projections remained low with 19 pupils expected in September 2021.

**RESOLVED**

- 1. To receive the Consultation Report in respect of closing Castle Caereinion C. in W. School.**
- 2. To approve the publication of a statutory notice to close Castle Caereinion C. in W. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to attend their nearest alternative schools.**

<b>4.</b>	<b>LLANFYLLIN / NORTH WELSHPOOL AREA TRANSFORMATION PHASE 2 PROPOSAL PAPER</b>
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County Councillor Alexander left the meeting for this item having declared an interest.

Cabinet was asked to give its approval to commence the statutory process on the proposal to close Ysgol Bro Cynllaith from the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools in Powys.

County Councillor Aled Davies spoke as the local Member. He noted that there were a number of key issues that needed to be drawn out in the consultation. He was concerned that many pupils would move to school in Shropshire if the school closed and would be lost to the Welsh education system. He was also concerned about travel times for younger pupils travelling to alternative schools. He would like to see further options explored including closer working with the new all through school in Llanfyllin.

**RESOLVED to approve commencing the statutory process on the proposal to close Ysgol Bro Cynllaith from the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools in Powys.**

County Councillor Alexander returned to the meeting.

<b>5.</b>	<b>SCHOOL OUTTURN POSITIONS 31 MARCH 2021 AND BUDGET PLANS 2021-22</b>
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Cabinet noted the outturn position on school reserve movements and balances at 31 March 2021, and the school budget plans for 2021-22 as approved by Governing Bodies and submitted to the authority on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2021.

There was a surplus of £3.2 million, which was a significant improvement on the position at May 2020 when the projected deficit was £2.3 million. This was due in part due to the £3.3 million of additional grant funding received by Powys schools from Welsh Government during March 2021, but also in large part as a result of schools being closed for part of the year and to schools reducing their ongoing costs in a timely manner.

The Portfolio Holder for Education and Property and the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Transportation commended schools and officers for the significant improvement and noted that warning notices had been removed from Crickhowell High School and Newtown High School. The outturn position at the end of March 2021 demonstrated the impact this was having, but further challenge remains to reduce the deficits further. It was confirmed that funding to schools was through the schools funding formula and that the additional Welsh Government funding was passed on to the schools in accordance with Welsh Government criteria.

**RESOLVED that the report be noted.**

<b>6.</b>	<b>APPROVAL OF THREE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS - ARCHAEOLOGY, HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT, NEWTOWN &amp; LLANLLWCHAIARN PLACE PLAN</b>
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Cabinet considered Supplementary Planning Guidance documents for Archaeology, Historic Environment, the Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn Place Plan and the Supplementary Planning Guidance Consultation Statement. Cabinet was advised that the documents supplemented Local Development Plan policies and provided guidance for agents, applicants, members of the public and elected members. All had been considered by the LDP Working Group and been subject to a six-week consultation. Cabinet noted that the Newtown Place Plan was the first in Powys and commended the work that the Town Council and community had put into it.

**RESOLVED to approve:**

- (a) Newtown & Llanllwchaiarn Place Plan SPG, July 2021 (Appendix 3)**
- (b) i Archaeology SPG, July 2021 (Appendix 1)**

- ii **Historic Environment SPG, July 2021 (Appendix 2)**
- (c) **The Supplementary Planning Guidance Consultation Statement, July 2021 (Appendix 4).**

<b>7.</b>	<b>ANNUAL INFORMATION GOVERNANCE REPORT 2020-2021</b>
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Cabinet considered the Annual Information Governance Report for 2020/21. The report detailed the information governance activities undertaken, information security incidents, information requests and the standards of compliance achieved in 2020/21. The report highlighted a number of areas where the pandemic had impacted on information governance activities and Cabinet also noted that the service had provided advice to the NHS Test Trace and Protect service. Cabinet was advised that no regulatory action, such as fines or enforcement orders, had been made against the Council by the Information Commissioners Office. Where the ICO had recommended further improvements, such as service/role specific training, checking processes employed, then these were implemented by the relevant service area.

Based on the information set out in the report, the Senior Information Risk Owner's assessment on the statement of assurance was Partial Assurance that the council's arrangements adequately reflect the principles of good information governance. Some key risks were not well managed, and processes required the introduction or improvement of internal controls to ensure effective governance but plans for future improvement were in place and were monitored by the Corporate Information Governance Group.

**RESOLVED to note the assurance set out in 13.5 of the report and the planned activity for 2021-2022 as set out in paragraph 14.**

<b>8.</b>	<b>AMENDMENTS TO THE GROWING MID WALES INTER AUTHORITY AGREEMENT</b>
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Cabinet considered amendments to the Growing Mid Wales Inter Authority Agreement to ensure good governance for the development of a Portfolio Business Case and agreeing a Final Deal Agreement with WG and the UK Government. The changes had been approved by the Growing Mid Wales Board and were being considered by Ceredigion County Council's Cabinet.

**RESOLVED that the Inter Authority Agreement is amended in accordance with the draft set out in Appendix 1 to the report.**

<b>9.</b>	<b>POWYS AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAMME DELIVERY PLAN GUIDE</b>
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Cabinet considered the Council's Affordable Housing Programme Delivery Plan (PDP) Guide which set out how grant support for the development of affordable housing in Powys would be allocated.

A new single grant scheme, the Social Housing Grant (SHG), available to all social housing providers had been introduced in April 2021. The indicative SHG allocation in Powys for 2021/22 was £8,388,125 for Housing Associations and £2,097,031 for the Council. Cabinet noted that the Council had 13 housing schemes planned up to 2024, housing associations had 20 schemes and there were two extra care schemes which between them would need £52 million funding. Whilst alternative sources of funding were being explored, the disparity between the SHG likely to be available and the extensive range of proposals highlighted the importance of having in place a robust, equitable and evidenced based approach to prioritising the schemes within the PDP. Cabinet noted that the new homes being built by the Council were extremely energy efficient and would help in meeting the carbon net zero target by 2030.

### **RESOLVED**

- 1. To approve the 'Powys Affordable Housing Plan Delivery Programme Guide' as set out in appendix 1 to the report.**
- 2. To approve the delegation of authority to EMT to approve each year's PDP.**

<b>10.</b>	<b>FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME</b>
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Cabinet noted the forward work programme.

<b>11.</b>	<b>EXEMPT ITEMS</b>
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**RESOLVED to exclude the public for the following item of business on the grounds that there would be disclosure to them of exempt information under category 1 of The Local Authorities (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007).**

<b>12.</b>	<b>MOVING ON UP PROPOSAL FOR A REDESIGN OF POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL HOUSING SERVICES</b>
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Cabinet considered the confidential report and business case for the redesign of the Council's Housing Service.

### **RESOLVED**

1. **To approve the Business Case for 'Moving on Up', attached to this report.**
2. **That the report (and its Appendices) should remain confidential until July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021, as they contain private and confidential information relating to staff.**

**County Councillor M R Harris (Chair)**