

COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the County Council held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Ruthin LL15 1YN and by video conference on Tuesday, 10 September 2024 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

Councillors Michelle Blakeley-Walker, Joan Butterfield, Ellie Chard, Kelly Clewett, Ann Davies, Karen Edwards, Pauline Edwards, Gwyneth Ellis, James Elson, Chris Evans, Hugh Evans, Justine Evans, Bobby Feeley, Jon Harland, Elen Heaton, Huw Hilditch-Roberts, Martyn Hogg, Carol Holliday, Alan Hughes, Hugh Irving, Alan James, Brian Jones, Delyth Jones, Paul Keddie, Diane King, Geraint Lloyd-Williams, Julie Matthews, James May, Jason McLellan, Barry Mellor, Terry Mendies, Raj Metri, Merfyn Parry, Arwel Roberts, Gareth Sandilands, Peter Scott (Chair), Rhys Thomas, Andrea Tomlin, Cheryl Williams, David Williams, Elfed Williams, Eryl Williams, Huw Williams, Emrys Wynne and Mark Young

ALSO PRESENT

Chief Executive (GB); Corporate Director: Governance and Business (GW); Head of Finance / Section 151 Officer (LT); Corporate Director: Communities (NS); Corporate Director: Economy and Environment (TW); Democratic Services Manager (SP); Zoom Host and Webcast (KJ); and Committee Administrator (SLW)

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3 NOTICE OF MOTION

Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts put forward the following Notice of Motion – Proposal for the removal from office of the Leader of the Council and Cabinet submitted by Councillors Huw Hilditch-Roberts, Pauline Edwards, Geraint Lloyd-Williams, Paul Keddie, Merfyn Parry, Andrea Tomlin, Hugh Evans, Bobby Feeley, Huw Williams, Karen Edwards and Chris Evans.

'We, wish to propose the motion for the removal of Leader Councillor Jason McLellan and his Cabinet. Recent events surrounding the leadership of the council have raised serious concerns about their effectiveness. The disastrous and inefficient execution of the new waste recycling system, coupled with the lack of clarity and ownership highlighted in a recent briefing, has resulted in a complete loss of confidence among residents.

Moreover, the ripple effects of this new system have placed a significant strain on other departments within Denbighshire County Council, as staff resources have

been diverted to address the failures of the recycling initiative. This diversion has led to a noticeable increase in operational costs, which in turn has negatively impacted front-line services that are vital to the community.

The lack of strategy and effective leadership has caused considerable challenges for residents throughout the county, and the financial implications for the authority have been immense. It is no longer sustainable to maintain this approach, and the priority must be the well-being of Denbighshire residents. Therefore, as members of the independent group, we strongly call upon the Leader and his Cabinet to resign.'

Councillor Hilditch-Roberts clarified that the motion was not personal and bringing it had been one of the most difficult decisions the named members behind the motion had had to make. He advised that the intention was to raise the concerns of residents about issues that affected the whole of Denbighshire. Councillor Hilditch-Roberts reported that all councillors had received complaints and vulnerable people were struggling. Therefore, the motion had been brought to debate the performance of the council.

Councillor Hilditch-Roberts stated that the concept of the new waste collection system had been brought in during the previous Cabinet but there was a difference between concept and implementation and the implementation of the new waste collections was not working. He voiced his concerns that Denbighshire was becoming an officer led authority and he thought this was evident from an officer-led response to questions at a recent briefing to members on the waste roll out.

Councillor Hilditch-Roberts highlighted:

- Reduced or low levels of stakeholder confidence reported to Council in July 2024 in respect of Denbighshire's economy, transport infrastructure and cultural heritage.
- The current Cabinet's approach to investment in new school buildings, a reduction in the number of Welsh language speakers in the county and in the council and the recent decision to dispose of the Caldefryn offices, which Councillor Hilditch-Roberts described as the Council's most eco-friendly offices.
- The number of new council houses built during this administration was a disappointing figure.
- The Council's budget had been passed despite £3million savings required to balance the budget not being confirmed at the time the budget was passed.
- Problems relating to the Queens Market in Rhyl which was currently empty and without the management in place to run the building. Councillor Hilditch-Roberts stated that Cabinet should have engaged the Council's leisure services provider, Denbighshire Leisure Limited, to manage the Queen's Market.
- Widespread concerns regarding the reduced library opening hours and he reported poor communication with members on proposals to close public toilets.
- Planning permission delays which held back Denbighshire's economic growth.

- Increasing rises in council tax.
- The increasing costs of the waste collection system, the reputational damage inflicted on the council from the roll-out problems, the impact on other services of the council from re-deployment of staff to assist the waste collection service and the difficulties residents experienced contacting the council over uncollected waste.

In closing his address, Councillor Hilditch-Roberts reflected that the council had worked over many years to be close to the community but now he felt the council's leadership to be closer to Cardiff than Denbighshire's communities and he urged members to support the motion.

At this juncture, the Chair informed members that the political group representatives would address the motion, following which, other members would be able to speak.

Councillor Hugh Irving on behalf of the Conservative Group reported that the present administration had little to be proud of after two years in office. He put to members that the current Cabinet had inherited a reasonably satisfactory financial situation but now saw financial difficulties and cost overruns particularly with the new waste collection service.

Councillor Irving highlighted:

- A reliance on staff cuts and other cutbacks which resulted in delivering many of the council's essential services to the levels the public expected of them and resulting reports of low staff morale.
- His disagreement with the budget process that had left some of the required savings unidentified.
- The focus on cuts to much-loved services such as to libraries and public toilets.
- Cabinet's inability to grasp where residents' priorities lay, for example, in Cabinet's promotion of expensive green policies.

In closing, Councillor Irving viewed the problems he had mentioned as highlighting a lack of regard from the Leader and the Cabinet to the residents' concerns and he described the disillusionment evidenced from feedback, press reporting and social media with the administration. For these reasons, he stated that the Conservative Group supported the motion.

Councillor Martyn Hogg, on behalf of the Green Party Group referred to the council's decision to have a thorough enquiry into the roll out of the new recycling system. He viewed the motion before Council to be predetermining the outcome of the enquiry for political reasons and advocated awaiting the outcome of the enquiry.

Councillor Hogg highlighted:

- The motion contained valid issues of general concern, but members needed to have more information to make informed decisions.
- His disagreement with the Independent Group's conclusion that the waste collection problems resulted from a failure of the Council's leadership. He

regarded this as a premature conclusion, that could be properly reviewed the enquiry.

- How the waste collection changes had been instigated during the last Council term by the Cabinet in office at that time yet prior to its launch, it had become embroiled in political controversy. Some of the former Cabinet members who had advocated for the new system became vocal critics of it which Councillor Hogg considered to be political opportunism.
- A successful vote of no confidence at this time would not benefit the residents of Denbighshire and undergoing changes in the Council's administration would be an untimely distraction.

Councillor Delyth Jones on behalf of the Plaid Cymru Group thanked Councillor Hilditch-Roberts for bringing the motion and allowing members the opportunity to look at the issues surrounding the new service change in waste and recycling as well as other relevant matters.

Councillor Jones highlighted:

- A full acknowledgement that the waste collection roll-out had not been acceptable and aspects of the changes had caused many challenges, frustrations and stress to residents, members, and officers alike.
- The Plaid Cymru Group supported the full scrutiny enquiry of the roll-out issues as requested by the Leader and the lead member as it was imperative that conclusions and decisions must be based upon the facts as opposed to opinions.
- Currently lacking the detailed information that the scrutiny enquiry would provide, Councillor Jones summarised key points and timescales in the formation of the new waste collection model under the previous Cabinet from 2018 to April 2022 where a final revised Business Case was approved by the previous Cabinet at one of their last meetings before the end of the Council term. These key points included decisions to move to the new waste and recycling system for environmental and financial reasons, development of the new business and service delivery model, the tendering and procurement processes and approval of the final business case.
- The current Leader and Cabinet had inherited the advanced plans for waste collection change from the previous administration and taken these forward in good faith in contrast to a number of councillors who were involved in the previous administration and had been fully supportive of the changes whilst they had been on Cabinet but had sought to undermine them in opposition.
- The Plaid Cymru Group did not believe that today's Cabinet was responsible for any mistakes made by the previous administration and there had been a number of operational problems that had undermined the effectiveness of the new service that could not be attributed to political leadership failures.
- It was not yet possible to come to a clear and balanced view of where the burden of responsibility for the waste roll-out problems lay but this would be clearer following the scrutiny enquiry.

Councillor Jones then addressed other points that had been made in connection with the motion:

- Councillor Jones referred to the numerous discussions led by Cabinet with all members aimed at understanding and tackling the challenging budget shortfalls which were beyond the Council's control. Denbighshire was experiencing the need to make large budget cuts in common with all of the other county and county borough councils in Wales and beyond.
- Producing a balanced and lawful budget in the current financial climate required difficult decisions and all members had been afforded the opportunity to any offer credible, achievable alternative solutions.
- In respect of the difficult decision to reduce library opening hours Councillor Jones stated that the public consultation responses had not been ignored, and the Lead Member, Councillor Emrys Wynne, had challenged officers robustly and lowered the proposed reduction from 50% to 40%. She confirmed that the closure of libraries, though happening in some authorities, had not been considered in Denbighshire. A Library Task Force formed to investigate how the service could flourish for the future was another example of a positive approach to a challenging situation.

Councillor Jason McLellan, Leader of the Council and of the Labour Group, acknowledged that the waste collection roll-out problems had occurred on his watch and that he had publicly and repeatedly apologised to the residents affected and sought to address and correct the failings. Councillor McLellan regarded household waste collection as a fundamental, core Council service, and the roll-out of the new service had gone wrong. He thanked members for assisting their residents in addressing missed collections.

Councillor McLellan advised members of his decision to ask the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group to instigate a full investigation into the waste roll-out issues.

Councillor McLellan highlighted:

- His agreement with Councillor Delyth Jones's assertion that the current Council and Cabinet had inherited a developed, costed project with a business plan from the previous administration for the waste service changes. He rebuffed the notion that his Cabinet had inherited only a concept or brief idea of a new collection system.
- How the previous Cabinet's decisions from 2018 until the end of its term in April 2022 had set in place tenders for vehicles and the waste collection station and the detailed modelling for the collection routes.
- He acknowledged that there were councillors who would like to have retained the old recycling and collection system but stated that reversing the direction taken would have cost the Council millions of pounds and not delivered the waste recycling, environmental and other benefits that had prompted the previous administration to change the waste collection system.

In addressing the motion's claims about his leadership, Councillor McLellan emphasised that he had taken responsibility for the problems and he and the lead member, Councillor Barry Mellor had been thoroughly involved and working hard with officers in challenging the route designs and the service delivery to resolve the problems. He outlined how there were clearly errors made in the way the new service and its business plan had been designed to be delivered in terms of the

service's capacity to collect refuse from the intended routes. The commencement of the roll-out demonstrated how the assumptions did not meet the reality on the ground. Councillor McLellan did not want to make judgements about the errors that had been found in the assumptions, as that would be part of the scrutiny enquiry's role. Councillor McLellan offered his apologies to residents who had experienced missed waste collections.

In addressing the waste collection service problems Councillor McLellan outlined that:

- Deploying additional resources meant incurring additional costs.
- He reported the collection figures for the last week which showed a 99.4% collection rate and an improving situation.
- The numbers of staff from other departments in the Council used as temporary support for the waste collection service was relatively low, from zero to 8 staff members per day, and averaging 3 staff members a day. These staff were taken from a large pool of Council staff and did not include front-line staff.
- During the roll-out period the opposition groups had not submitted any viable suggestions to resolve the problems that had been encountered, other than to revert to the old system, which it was not possible to do.

In conclusion, Councillor McLellan addressed the other challenges to his leadership made during the discussion of the motion:

- Councillor McLellan did not view challenges around budget decisions as an attack on his leadership. The severe financial situation the Council faced required him as Leader to be prepared to take difficult decisions. All members were invited to observe and participate in the regular budget updates and briefings.
- The closure of the Caledfryn offices reflected the changes in the working world, with the Council no longer needing three large offices. Disposal of Caledfryn as a capital asset made the most sense.
- In reference to Councillor Hilditch-Roberts' criticism of the current investment in school buildings, Councillor McLellan stated that Councillor Hilditch-Roberts' term as lead member for education had occurred during the period the Welsh Government had been providing funding to Denbighshire to build schools, including two Welsh medium schools.
- Referring to the Queen's Market, the Welsh Government had required the building to be built before the operator was chosen and there had been real difficulties arising from potential operators having different views on the design of the building. This was therefore not a Cabinet failing and was under discussion and Councillor McLellan expressed confidence that the issue would be resolved.
- The Council had 39 audit reports in the last 2 years since Councillor McLellan had been elected Leader. Thirty of those had received a high assurance rating, 9 had received a medium assurance rating and there had been no low assurance audits. He stated that demonstrated good governance and good leadership was in place.

The Chair opened the debate to other members whose comments included the following points.

- Councillor Brian Jones stated that as the former lead member for waste he had been personally opposed to scrapping the blue bins in favour of the trolley-box system, but Cabinet had then been provided with further reports and information, including from WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme) that were advising the Council. Ultimately, Councillor Jones stated that the previous Cabinet had been forced to change the waste collection system because of changes to the Welsh Government's funding of the service. He reported that he had proposed a solution for the Queen's Market this summer that had not been accepted and urged members to consider their residents' priorities when voting on the motion.
- Councillor Karen Edwards reviewed the waste collection problems she had experienced in her ward and that, although partially improved, was still not delivering the expected statutory services. She informed members of the complaints she had received including video evidence of waste collection staff dumping segregated batteries in a hedge and the co-mingling of the segregated recycling and waste. Councillor Edwards criticised the Leader and lead member for a failure of leadership and referred to continuing cost overspends arising from the failures in the waste roll-out scheme.
- Councillor Bobby Feeley summarised her past career as Councillor in Denbighshire. Regarding her support for a vote of no confidence in the Leader and Cabinet she reflected on wider concerns than the waste collection problems which she stated had been disastrous, referring to her dissatisfaction of council tax and budget setting processes, the effect of experienced staff leaving and not being replaced, and corporate priorities being missed.
- Councillor Terry Mendies confirmed he would support the vote of no confidence not only due to the new waste collection issues but also because of the council tax rises over the past 2 years and those that were likely to be set in future years, the operation of the Queen's Market, cuts to the library services, and planning application and enforcement backlogs.
- Councillor Huw Williams referred to the scrutiny review process.
- Councillor Pauline Edwards expressed concern regarding newly elected Councillors being elected on to Cabinet and felt backbench member perspectives was not properly considered by the current Cabinet and her concerns about the council's ability to set a balanced budget.
- Councillor Hugh Evans, former Leader of the Council, outlined the roles of Cabinet, lead members and officers in projects like the waste collection service changes. He stated that Denbighshire did have good services, officers and members but given the difficulties the Council faced it risked being placed in special measures in future. Councillor Evans was concerned about the vulnerable people within the communities who relied on Council services. Councillor Evans queried how savings from services were being identified and stated that the corporate plan was struggling and now needed to be focussed on the Council's key service delivery areas. Councillor Evans suggested to the lead member, Councillor Mellor, that a member task and finish group be convened urgently to guide the implementation of the waste collection service changes.

In order to convey an understanding of the difficult financial situation Councillor Evans queried whether Cabinet could operate with 8 members instead of 9.

- Councillor Justine Evans stated she had been elected to represent the people of Rhyl and it had become increasingly difficult to defend decisions made and therefore she would be supporting the vote of no confidence.
- Councillor Mark Young referred to his membership of the Cabinet during the last administration and he raised concerns regarding the budget and the future for services.
- Councillor Merfyn Parry encouraged all members to think what their vote would mean and he requested a recorded vote to be held following the debate, which was agreed by members.
- Councillor Julie Matthews clarified that the Corporate Plan had been revised in consultation with members at a member workshop and with the Group Leaders to recognise the financial constraints and release service capacity. Councillor Matthews as lead member for the Corporate Plan, agreed that the corporate plan priorities could be revised if it was appropriate to do so. Importantly, Councillor Matthews urged all members to come together as one Council to work co-operatively.
- Councillor Chris Evans highlighted the un-business-like position where the Council was obliged to spend an additional £60,000 of public money per week to rectify the problems of the new waste collection service. He listed other public services that could have benefited from such an investment.
- Councillor Andrea Tomlin referred to the situation in Prestatyn, which she said had suffered as the result of poor Cabinet decisions and communication and a reluctance to allow other members to engage during her time as a councillor including on library opening hours, late night car parking charges and 20mph designations. Councillor Tomlin said the waste collection problems had been particularly acute in Prestatyn and she challenged the Leader's earlier summary of the current performance of the waste collection service. Councillor Tomlin also referred to a deterioration in street scene operations and she confirmed her support for the motion to remove the Leader and Cabinet.

Councillor Barry Mellor, lead member for Environment and Transport thanked Councillor Hugh Evans for his advice and confirmed he would look into the suggestion of setting up a Task and Finish Group. He admitted that the waste collection service roll-out had been flawed and further actions were required to ensure the viability of the service in the long-term. However, he was confident that the service was adapting to the challenges and had learned key lessons and information from the initial implementation. Councillor Mellor was confident that the new rounds would work once they became established though he noted that no waste collection service could guarantee a service without any missed collections.

Councillor Mellor referred to the roles played by the previous Cabinet members in instigating and designing the new waste collection system.

Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts as mover of the motion summarised the purpose of the motion and the stances taken at the beginning of the meeting by some of the political groups. He reported the ideas he had offered at the outset of the roll-out

and his disappointment that the roll-out had not been trialled by area instead of countywide. He clarified that a major concern from the impact on other services as a result of the collection problems had been the inability of residents to contact the council because the customer service channels had been congested from the thousands of calls made by residents owing to their missed waste collections.

Councillor Jason McLellan, Leader of the Council thanked the Chair for his skill and fairness in presiding over an important debate. He summarised the position that had been debated about future actions and the scrutiny enquiry into the roll-out. He expressed his surprise at the comments of the previous lead member for waste, regarding the professed influence of the Welsh Government in pushing the new system forward, because he had not found reference to it in the minutes of meetings where he said the former lead member had shown support for the new system.

Finally, Councillor McLean stated he would continue to address the serious funding and austerity problems the Council faced, which would require taking difficult decisions and he thanked his lead member for finance and the Council's finance officers for their contributions to this work.

A RECORDED VOTE TOOK PLACE – proposed by Councillor Merfyn Parry and seconded by Councillor Karen Edwards

In favour of the motion:

Councillors Ann Davies, Karen Edwards, Pauline Edwards, James Elson, Chris Evans, Hugh Evans, Justine Evans, Bobby Feeley, Huw Hilditch-Roberts, Hugh Irving, Brian Jones, Paul Keddie, Geraint Lloyd-Williams, Terry Mendies, Merfyn Parry, Andrea Tomlin and Huw Williams

Against the motion:

Councillors Michelle Blakeley-Walker, Joan Butterfield, Ellie Chard, Kelly Clewett, Gwyneth Ellis, Jonathan Harland, Elen Heaton, Martyn Hogg, Carol Holliday, Alan Hughes, Alan James, Delyth Jones, Diane King, Julie Matthews, James May, Jason McLellan, Barry Mellor, Raj Metri, Arwel Roberts, Gareth Sandilands, Rhys Thomas, Cheryl Williams, Elfed Williams, Eryl Williams, and Emrys Wynne

Abstentions: Councillors David G Williams, Mark Young and Peter Scott

FOR – 17
AGAINST – 25
ABSTAIN – 3

RESOLVED that the Council does not support the motion to remove the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet.

4 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR OF COUNTY COUNCIL

The Chair, Councillor Peter Scott, requested nominations for the appointment of a new Vice-Chair of the Council for the remainder of the 2024-2025 municipal year.

Councillor Rhys Thomas proposed Councillor Arwel Roberts and the nomination was seconded by the former Vice-Chair of Council, Councillor Diane King.

No further nominations were proposed.

All members present affirmed their assent to the appointment of Councillor Arwel Roberts who duly declared his acceptance of the office of Vice-Chair.

RESOLVED that Councillor Arwel Roberts be appointed as Vice-Chair of Denbighshire County Council for the remainder of the 2024-2025 municipal year.

5 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

No urgent matters were raised.

Question put forward by Councillor Terry Mendies –

“Why has an Enforcement Notice issued to a Property in Llandegla on 7th September 2020 not been enforced despite the notice having its fourth Birthday 3 days ago.”

The Lead Member for Local Development and Planning, Councillor Alan James, responded as follows:

“This case has been a legally complex situation. Officers served a Planning Enforcement Notice. The Notice was not complied with and, therefore, the council decided to undertake works in default to seek compliance with the Notice. All works were completed, and the site has reverted back to its previous condition. Officers also successfully applied for a Court Injunction to ensure that no unauthorised changes take place again on the land. In addition, officers also prosecuted the landowner securing a fine.

In my view, the main point here is that the site has been remediated, the adverse impact on public amenity has, therefore, been remedied in full”.

Councillor Terry Mendies indicated his satisfaction with the response to his question.

6 MINUTES

The minutes of Full Council held on 9 July 2024 were submitted.

Matters Arising –

Page 19 – Appointment of Director of Denbighshire Leisure Limited - Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts raised his concerns about the heavy workload pressures on the Corporate Director: Environment and Economy and asked that this comment be minuted.

Page 14 – Item 4 Minutes – Councillor Julie Matthews stated she had not circulated the letter of response sent to Mr. Gonzalez to all councillors but would circulate it following the meeting.

RESOLVED that, subject to the above, the minutes of Full Council held on the 9 July 2024 be confirmed as a correct record.

7 APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR OF DENBIGHSHIRE LEISURE LIMITED

The Corporate Director: Governance and Business, introduced the Appointment of Director of Denbighshire Leisure Limited report (previously circulated). He confirmed that a board director had been appointed at the last Council meeting for a Senior Leadership Team member vacancy. The Corporate Director advised that the Denbighshire Leisure Limited Board now had a further vacancy for a backbench councillor after the previous incumbent, Councillor Diane King, had been appointed to Cabinet and had taken a Cabinet member seat on the board.

Councillor Merfyn Parry nominated Councillor Paul Keddie, seconded by Councillor Karen Edwards.

Councillor Diane King nominated Councillor James May, seconded by Councillor Gareth Sandilands.

A vote took place by a show of hands and the result was as follows –

For Councillor Paul Keddie – 19
For Councillor James May - 17

RESOLVED that Council appoints Councillor Paul Keddie to the role of non-Cabinet elected member Director of Denbighshire Leisure Limited (DLL).

8 COUNCIL POLICY ON MEMBER TRAINING

The Democratic Services Manager introduced the Council Policy on Member Training report (previously circulated) and guided members through the report.

A programme of member inductions, training and development commenced immediately after Council elections in May 2022. The sessions initially delivered had been focussed on inducting new and returning members and included training on the Council's Code of Conduct, Members ICT provision, familiarisation with services, equality and diversity, safeguarding and an introduction to Scrutiny. The Council continued to provide training and development opportunities for members on an ongoing basis.

The Democratic Services Manager reported that a survey had been conducted between February and March 2024, open to councillors, senior officers and lay members with the results shown in Appendix 2 of the report. He advised members of the contents of the proposed council policy on mandatory member training which was contained in appendix 1 of the report.

In response to a question from Councillor Bobby Feeley, it was confirmed that member training was mostly resourced from officer time, as officers usually provided training on their service areas to members. Where external facilitation was preferable or required, it was often delivered free of charge to the Council, particularly by the Welsh Local Government Association. Occasionally, the Council needed to buy-in external training provision using a small corporately funded member training budget, which was managed carefully and usually underspent. Members unanimously voted to adopt the policy.

RESOLVED that Council adopts the draft Council Policy on Member Training, as attached to appendix 1 to the report.

9 NOTICE OF MOTION

Councillor Delyth Jones put forward the following Notice of Motion:

'With the demand for social services support for children and young people increasing on a scale not previously seen in our county, and the enormous pressure this places on our budget as a council. The Plaid Cymru Group propose that we, as a council write to all the members of parliament who represent our county in Westminster on the matter. We propose that we ask all relevant members to re-look at their position on the issue of the two-child benefit cap and support the need to abolish it. In so doing, to show their support for Denbighshire's most vulnerable families as well as helping to reduce the demand on our social services locally.'

Councillor Jones spoke in favour of the motion, which was seconded by Councillor Julie Matthews. Councillor Matthews and Councillor Rhys Thomas supported the motion with statements, including references to the two-child benefit cap's contribution to child and family poverty, which was a particular concern in the county because some areas of Denbighshire suffered amongst the highest levels of deprivation in Wales, the demands family poverty placed on the Council's social services and the negative effects the benefit cap could have in terms of seeking or moving to higher paid employment. Members unanimously voted in favour of the motion.

RESOLVED that Council approves the motion and a letter be issued to the members of the UK Parliament who represent Denbighshire constituencies urging their support for the abolition of the two-child benefit cap.

10 COUNTY COUNCIL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Corporate Director: Governance and Business, introduced and summarised the latest position of the Council and Council Workshop Forward Work Programmes.

RESOLVED that the Council's Forward Work Programme and the Council Workshop Forward Work Programme be noted.

THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 1.35 P.M.