

COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the County Council held in Council Chamber, County Hall, Ruthin LL15 1YN on Tuesday, 14 April 2015 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

Councillors Ian Armstrong, Raymond Bartley, Brian Blakeley (Chair), Joan Butterfield, Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones, Ann Davies, Meirick Davies, Richard Davies, Stuart Davies, Peter Duffy, Hugh Evans, Peter Evans, Bobby Feeley, Huw Hilditch-Roberts, Martyn Holland, Colin Hughes, Rhys Hughes, Hugh Irving, Alice Jones, Huw Jones, Pat Jones, Gwyneth Kensler (Vice-Chair), Geraint Lloyd-Williams, Jason McLellan, Barry Mellor, Win Mullen-James, Bob Murray, Peter Owen, Merfyn Parry, Paul Penlington, Pete Prendergast, Arwel Roberts, Gareth Sandilands, David Simmons, Barbara Smith, David Smith, Bill Tasker, Julian Thompson-Hill, Joe Welch, Cefyn Williams, Cheryl Williams, Eryl Williams and Huw Williams

ALSO PRESENT

Chief Executive (MM), Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services (GW), Democratic Services Manager (SP), Project Manager, Modernising Education (JC) and Committee Administrator (SLW)

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bill Cowie, James Davies, Carys Guy and Dewi Owens

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Paul Penlington declared a personal interest in Item 7 – Approval of Final Business Case for Ysgol Glan Clwyd Redevelopment.

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

No urgent matters were raised.

At this juncture, the Chair welcomed Councillor Peter Prendergast to his first Council meeting.

The Chair also offered congratulations to Councillor Peter Owen and his family on the celebration of his 63rd Wedding Anniversary today.

4 CHAIRMAN'S DIARY

A list of civic engagements undertaken by the Chair for the period 27.01.2015 to 27.03.2015 had been circulated prior to the meeting.

***RESOLVED** that the list of civic engagements undertaken for the Council by the Chair be received.*

5 MINUTES

The minutes of the Council meetings held on 29 January 2015 and 24 February 2015 were submitted.

Matters Arising - 24 February 2015 – Page 15 Item No. 5 Council Tax and Associated Matters.

Councillor Meirick Lloyd Davies requested a response following the matter being discussed by the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs Group.

Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts confirmed the matter had been discussed at Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs Group and it had been agreed the item would be included in the Agenda of the Communities Scrutiny Committee on 9 July 2015. An invitation had been extended to the Minister for Finance and Government business, Jane Hutt, to attend the meeting on the 9 July, 2015.

Councillor Meirick Lloyd Davies also requested an update as to whether a letter had been sent out to the Police Commissioners Office for a breakdown of what had been achieved and would likely to be achieved based on the Police precept amount. An action plan produced for the region had also been requested.

Councillor Bobby Feeley confirmed a letter had been sent.

***RESOLVED** that, subject to the above, the minutes of the meetings held on 29 January 2015 and 24 February 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.*

6 ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR OF COUNCIL

The Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services presented the report (previously circulated) seeking agreement for the proposed Chair and Vice-Chair of the County Council for the municipal year 2015/16 to be formally elected at the Council's annual meeting on 12 May, 2015. Nominations for both posts had been sought.

Election of Chair – Councillor Eryl Williams proposed, seconded by Councillor Hugh Evans, that Councillor Gwyneth Kensler be nominated Chair for the 2015/16 municipal year. There were no further nominations. Councillor Kensler thanked members for their support and was congratulated upon her nomination.

Election of Vice Chair – Councillor Martyn Holland proposed, seconded by Councillor Arwel Roberts that Councillor Ann Davies be nominated for Vice Chair for the 2015/16 municipal year.

Councillor Joan Butterfield proposed, seconded by Councillor Bill Tasker that Councillor Win Mullen-James be nominated for Vice Chair for the 2015/16 municipal year.

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, a secret ballot was undertaken for the proposed Vice Chair.

23 votes for Councillor Ann Davies
19 votes for Councillor Win Mullen-James

Councillor Ann Davies was nominated as the proposed Vice Chair for the 2015/16 municipal year. Councillor Davies thanked members for their support and was congratulated upon her nomination.

RESOLVED that Councillor Gwyneth Kensler be proposed Chair and Councillor Ann Davies be proposed Vice Chair of the County Council for the municipal year 2015/16 to be formally elected at the Council's annual meeting on 12 May, 2015.

7 APPROVAL OF FINAL BUSINESS CASE FOR YSGOL GLAN CLWYD REDEVELOPMENT

The Lead Member for Education, Councillor Eryl Williams, presented the report (previously circulated) seeking approval of the Final Business Case for Ysgol Glan Clwyd Redevelopment.

The Welsh Government had previously approved the Strategic Outline Case (May 2013) and Outline Business Case (October 2013) for this project. Approval would be required for the Final Business Case to be considered for approval by the Welsh Government.

The Ysgol Glan Clwyd project would provide an extended and refurbished school building to meet the growing demand for Welsh medium education in the north of the county.

The following points of discussion took place:

- The project had been a successful partnership between the Welsh Government and Denbighshire County Council. Members and Officers in Denbighshire felt very strongly about the Welsh language and this project needed to be promoted as "good news".
- This had been an eight year plan and figures had revealed the need for Welsh medium education was on the increase.
- Councillor Dewi Owens was the local representative on the Project Board and it had been recommended that Councillor Bill Cowie also receive copies of the Project Board papers.
- The Environmental Efficiency Officer had attended the previous Project Board meeting to clarify the future liability, maintenance and efficiency requirements.
- The design of the school had been paramount. The school had been involved in the design. Visits to other schools to inspect designs had been arranged.
- The issue of the reduction of Welsh provision for Junior schools had been raised. The Lead Member explained that the need for Welsh medium education within senior schools had been on the increase. Not only were

Welsh medium schools feeding into the senior school but also students from English medium schools and schools from bordering counties.

- The new Faith School plans were on track. There were issues regarding siting of the school but the business case would be drawn up and progress would be made by the Autumn of 2015.

Councillor Eryl Williams proposed the recommendation and expressed his gratitude to the Head of Customers and Education Support, Jackie Walley, and her team for all their work.

Seconded by Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill.

Members voted on the report recommendations as follows:

42 votes for, 0 against, 0 abstentions

RESOLVED that Council unanimously approve the Final Business Case for Ysgol Glan Clwyd.

8 WELSH GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER - REFORMING LOCAL GOVERNMENT: POWER TO LOCAL PEOPLE

The Leader, Councillor Hugh Evans, presented the report (previously circulated) to seek Council's approval of a draft consultation response to the Welsh Government White Paper to be submitted on behalf of the Council prior to the deadline date of 28 April 2015.

The Head of Legal, HR, and Democratic Services had collated a comprehensive response setting out the main issues which the Council welcomed and providing constructive criticism where appropriate. In addition, the response set out issues which the Council disagreed with and believed may restrict the ability of newly merged authorities to perform well and improve.

In depth discussion took place and the following points were raised during debate:

- It was requested that a written request be sent to the Welsh Government on behalf of Denbighshire County Council asking for the cost of the Williams Report and the Boundary Review.
- The response to the Welsh Government White Paper to be forwarded to the appropriate Assembly Members, asking for their support.
- It was recommended that Members forward individual responses to the Welsh Government together with Group responses.

Councillor Hugh Evans proposed the recommendation, seconded by Councillor Martyn Holland.

Members voted on the report recommendations as follows:

36 votes for, 1 against, 0 abstentions

At this juncture the Leader informed Members of a joint Cabinet meeting which had taken place with Conwy last month. Conwy had approached Denbighshire with a proposal of forwarding a joint response to the Welsh Government White Paper.

The Chief Executive clarified that where there was common ground between Denbighshire's response and the response from Conwy, a joint response would be put together.

Councillor Stuart Davies proposed the joint response with Conwy County Borough Council, seconded by Councillor Peter Evans.

Members voted on the proposal as follows:

29 votes for, 7 against, 3 abstentions

RESOLVED that

- (i) *Council agreed the draft consultation response and approved its submission to the Welsh Government.*
- (ii) *the Leader and Chief Executive be authorised to discuss with Conwy County Borough Council a joint response on those issues of common support and concern and if agreement was reached, to approve a joint response following consultation with Group Leaders.*

9 INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES ANNUAL REPORT 2015/2016

The Democratic Services Manager, Steve Price, presented the report (previously circulated) to make Members aware of the Panel's determinations for 2015/16 in respect of payments to members and co-opted members.

The Panel's determinations would take place from the Annual Council which would be held on 12 May 2015.

An individual member could choose not to receive their basic allowance by putting the request in writing.

Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill proposed the recommendation, seconded by Councillor Martyn Holland.

Members voted on the report recommendations as follows:

34 votes for, 0 against, 2 abstentions

RESOLVED that:

- (i) *Members adopt the determinations of the Panel for the 2015/16 municipal year in respect of the payment of Basic Salaries and Senior Salaries and payment to co-opted members*

(ii) *Members determined the level of remuneration to be paid to the Chair and Vice-Chair to remain as 2014/15 for the 2015/16 municipal year*

10 COUNTY COUNCIL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services introduced the Council's Forward Work Programme (previously circulated).

RESOLVED that the Council Forward Work Programme be approved and noted.

Meeting concluded at 12.15 p.m.