
THE COUNCIL, 09.10.14

Present: Councillor Dewi Owen (Chairman);
Councillor Dilwyn Morgan (Vice-chairman).

Councillors: Craig ab Iago, Stephen Churchman, Endaf Cooke, Edward Dogan, Dyfed Edwards, Elwyn Edwards, Huw Edwards, Trevor Edwards, Thomas Ellis, Alan Jones Evans, Aled Evans, Jean Forsyth, Simon Glyn, Selwyn Griffiths, Alwyn Gruffydd, Siân Gwennlian, Annwen Hughes, Chris Hughes, Jason Humphreys, Peredur Jenkins, Aeron Jones, Brian Jones, Charles W.Jones, Elin Walker Jones, Eric Merfyn Jones, John Wynn Jones, Eryl Jones-Williams, Beth Lawton, June E.Marshall, Linda Morgan, Michael Sol Owen, William Tudor Owen, Nigel Pickavance, Peter Read, John Pughe Roberts, Liz Saville Roberts, W.Gareth Roberts, Mair Rowlands, Angela Russell, Dyfrig Siencyn, Mike Stevens, Gareth Thomas, Ioan Thomas, Paul Thomas, Ann Williams, Eirwyn Williams, Elfed Williams, Gethin Glyn Williams, Gruffydd Williams, Hefin Williams, John Wyn Williams, Owain Williams, R.H.Wyn Williams, Mandy Williams-Davies and Robert J.Wright.

Also present: Dilwyn Williams (Chief Executive), Iwan Trefor Jones (Corporate Director), Dafydd Edwards (Head of Finance Department), Geraint George (Head of Strategic and Improvement Department), Rhun ap Gareth (Senior Solicitor / Deputy Monitoring Officer), Sion Huws (Senior Solicitor), Arwel E. Jones (Senior Manager - Corporate Commissioning Service), Dafydd Wyn Williams (Senior Manager - Transport), Geraint Owen (Senior Manager - Human Resources), Janet Roberts (Senior Manager - Delivery and Supporting Change Service), Anthony Williams (Performance and Efficiency Improvement Officer) and Eirian Roberts (Member Support and Scrutiny Officer).

Apologies: Councillors Anwen Davies, Lesley Day, Gwynfor Edwards, Gweno Glyn, Gwen Griffith, John Brynmor Hughes, Louise Hughes, Anne Lloyd Jones, Dyfrig Jones, Linda A.W.Jones, Llywarch Bowen Jones, Sion Wyn Jones, Dilwyn Lloyd, Dafydd Meurig, W.Roy Owen, Caerwyn Roberts and Eurig Wyn.

The meeting was opened with a prayer from Councillor Aeron Jones.

1. MINUTES

The Chairman signed the minutes of the previous meeting of the Council held on 17 July 2014 as a true record.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Councillor Simon Glyn declared a personal interest deriving from employment in item 9 on the agenda – Local Government Reorganisation.

The member was of the opinion that it was an interest but that it was not prejudicial and he participated fully in the discussion on the item.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) Condolences

Condolences were expressed to the following:-

Councillor Annwen Hughes on the loss of her mother.

Councillor Peter Read on the loss of his father.

Councillor Roy Owen on the loss of his mother-in-law.

It was also noted that the Council wished to remember others within the county's communities who had lost loved ones recently.

The Council members stood as a mark of respect.

(b) Best Wishes

Well wishes were expressed to the new Chief Executive, Dilwyn Williams, who was present at his first meeting of the Council as Chief Executive.

It was also noted that this would have been the first meeting of the Council for Iwan Evans, the new Monitoring Officer, but due to bereavement the Deputy Monitoring Officer was present on his behalf.

(c) Congratulations

Everyone from Gwynedd who had been successful at the Carmarthenshire National Eisteddfod this year were congratulated, especially Guto Dafydd, Stratetig and Improvement on winning the Crown and Lleucu Roberts on winning the Prose Medal and the Daniel Owen Memorial Prize.

Haf Thomas, Human Resources was also congratulated on being accepted to the Gorsedd.

(ch) A Good Cause

It was noted that a bike ride by 'Gafael Llaw', a charity from the area that was established to support children and young people with cancer, had succeeded to raise £60,000, with the money going towards supporting the aim of the charity, which was to upgrade facilities and resources for children on Dewi Ward, Ysbyty Gwynedd.

It was noted that around 20 people from Gwynedd had gone on the 650 mile bike ride over 7 days, going around 15 children wards in Wales' hospitals, and that two of the cyclists were members of Council staff; Iwan Trefor Jones, Corporate Director (and the Chairman of Gafael Llaw) and Steffan Jones, Senior Manager of the Highways Department.

Both were extremely grateful for the support by staff and members of the Council to the bike ride and for all the financial contributions.

(d) Note

It was noted that the Council had once again been successful in renewing the Gold Award for Corporate Health Standard, and this during a re-assessment meeting, and that it was now one of only six local authorities in Wales that held this high level. The standard, that was led by the Assembly Government, assessed the health promotion

activities and initiatives that were implemented by employers to care for their staff's health and wellbeing.

During the recent Awards Ceremony of the Wales Co-operative Centre, it was noted that the Chief Executive of the Centre had referred specifically to the Council's work regarding supporting the social enterprises sector in Gwynedd. He referred to Gwynedd's status as a "Social Enterprise Area", the support that was given to social enterprises in the area and the work that had been done regarding identifying opportunities for enterprises to provide and supply goods and services on behalf of the Council. A trophy was presented to the Council to acknowledge the valuable work it had done in this field.

4. QUESTIONS

Question from Councillor Eryl Jones-Williams

"May we as councillors have a clear image of the situation regarding the Briwet Bridge Plan and the delay, the vehicle bridge and the completion dates for the plan?"

Response of Councillor Gareth Roberts, Cabinet Member - Environment

(The Cabinet Member's written answer had been distributed to the members in the group meetings on the morning of the Council meeting.)

"I sympathise with the people around the site. Obviously it is an inconvenience, but the good news is that it is an investment of £20m for the area and the place will be greatly improved after implementing this plan and the new bridge will be much better than the old one. Therefore it is going to make a big difference to that area."

A supplementary question from Councillor Eryl Jones-Williams

"Will there be a financial cost on Gwynedd Council for the delay?"

Response of Councillor Gareth Roberts, Cabinet Member - Environment

"It is hard to give a definite answer because the contract has been awarded to Hochtief and the risks have been transferred to the company that are working on the bridge, unless there is some fault on us as the Council. If they are at fault, then they are carrying the risk. As far as I know at the moment, we are not at fault as of yet in any way or form therefore if they were to go over the date, it would be their loss and there would not be any sort of financial risk to this Council. There was one issue with the pylon, but Hochtief have settled that issue with the National Grid, so again, it was not our fault, but it was something that Hochtief had not been aware of from the beginning. Everything else are things that they have had to think about, such as transferring the water pipe and so on. If there is a delay with the company that transfers that, it's something that the Hochtief company should have thought about beforehand. Therefore, there is no risk to us at this time, but if we were at fault for any reason then that would be another matter."

5. A PRESENTATION BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR THE ECONOMY

A presentation was received from Councillor John Wynn Jones, Cabinet Member – Economy, detailing the fields that he dealt with, the service's priorities, the activities that were currently on the horizon as well as plans for the future.

The Cabinet Member responded to a series of questions by members regarding:-

- The Snowdonia Enterprise Zone and the future of the Trawsfynydd site;
- Promoting tourism in South Gwynedd;
- Improving collaboration between the planning and economy services;
- The importance of supporting petrol stations and retail businesses in rural areas;
- Income from festivals and events.

It was noted that the old Seiont II Maritime Museum continued to be on the maps on the visitor notice boards around Caernarfon town and the Cabinet Member agreed to pass on the comment to the department.

The Cabinet Member was thanked for his presentation and Councillor Sian Gwenllian was congratulated on her appointment as Champion of Small Businesses.

6. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

The Leader submitted a report seeking the Council's opinion on the draft viewpoint that was proposed in paragraphs 9.1 and 9.4 of the report in response to the Government's White Paper on Local Government Reorganisation.

During the discussion:-

- It was noted that paragraph 9.4(ch) was core to the Council's viewpoint. It was emphasised that it was necessary to be uncompromising while discussing with other councils to ensure that this Council's Language Policy was not weakened in any way and it was suggested to list the current aims of the Council's Language Plan under paragraph 9.4(ch) to reinforce the stance of this Council.
- It was agreed that the interests of Gwynedd's residents should be protected, but it was therefore suggested that there was a danger in cutting the number of councillors in communities.
- It was emphasised that the reorganisation would definitely happen, whether it be 2018 or 2020, and due to the fact that there were financial incentives to councils who merged voluntarily, the door should not be closed on any possibility that could lead to savings in managerial, central or back office costs that would, in turn reduce the size of the cuts that any council would have to make over the coming years.
- It was suggested that the door should be left slightly open, but only after waiting to see what incentives they intended to propose to councils that joined voluntarily.
- Some concern was noted about losing the 'local' element of local government.

A vote was taken on the motion, with the addition of including a reference to the current objectives of the Council's Language Plan, and the motion was carried.

RESOLVED to approve the draft viewpoint that was proposed in paragraphs 9.1 to 9.4 of the report responding to the Government's White Paper on Local Government Reorganisation, and expand paragraph 9.4(ch) to note the following:-

“Implementing a Language Policy that is firmly in favour of the Welsh language is key for any new council that Gwynedd would be a part of for the future, including the current objectives of the Council's Language Plan, which are:-

- *Enable everyone that receives or uses the Council's services, or contributes to the democratic process, to do so through the medium of Welsh or English according to their own personal preference.*
- *Promote the use of the Welsh language in the Council's area and be an anchor for the language in its revival across Wales.*
- *Promote the use of the Welsh language by other public bodies that are involved with the Council, and support and promote the use of Welsh by bodies and businesses that provide public services in the Council's areas.*
- *Establish the Welsh language as the official language for the Council's internal administration by providing training facilities in jobs to enable staff to develop their language skills in Welsh and English.*
- *Develop pupils and students' ability to be confident bilingually to enable them to become rounded members of the bilingual society that they are part of."*

7. COUNCIL PAY POLICY

The Cabinet Member - Resources submitted a report, which recommended an adjustment to the Pay Policy, in order to facilitate the ability to appoint.

The Cabinet Member noted that in light of receiving legal opinion very recently, he recommended that the Council adjusted its Pay Policy by expanding Chief Officers' pay level to include provision for an additional market supplement of up to £5,000. He added that the additional level would be payable on appointment only, if a business risk assessment showed clear justification of the need, which would be completed and implemented by the appointing body.

Some members were of the opinion that a market supplement should not be offered to Chief Officers in the current financial climate, but several other members noted that it was necessary to pay the price of the market in order to attract the best possible applicants.

As a compromise, an amendment was proposed and seconded to include provision for a market supplement of up to £3,000.

A notice of a further amendment was given.

In his closing statements, the Cabinet Member noted that he accepted the amendment and he withdrew his original motion with the consent of the meeting and the seconder. Therefore, the motion as amended replaced the original motion and become an original motion.

A registered vote was called for on the original proposal.

An amendment was proposed and seconded to include provision for a market supplement of up to £2,000.

A vote was taken on the amendment and it fell.

In accordance with Procedural Rules, the following vote was recorded on the original motion:-

In favour of the motion: (38) Councillors Craig ab Iago, Edward Dogan, Dyfed Edwards, Elwyn Edwards, Huw Edwards, Alan Jones Evans, Aled Evans, Jean Forsyth, Selwyn Griffiths, Siân Gwenllian, Annwen Hughes, Peredur Jenkins, Charles W.Jones, Eric

Merfyn Jones, John Wynn Jones, Beth Lawton, June E.Marshall, Dilwyn Morgan, Linda Morgan, Dewi Owen, Michael Sol Owen, William Tudor Owen, Nigel Pickavance, Peter Read, John Pughe Roberts, W.Gareth Roberts, Mair Rowlands, Angela Russell, Dyfrig Siencyn, Mike Stevens, Gareth Thomas, Ioan Thomas, Paul Thomas, Eirwyn Williams, Gethin Glyn Williams, Hefin Williams, John Wyn Williams, R.H.Wyn Williams, Mandy Williams-Davies.

Abstaining: (2) Councillors Elin Walker Jones and Eryl Jones-Williams.

Against: (14) Councillors Stephen W.Churchman, Endaf Cooke, Thomas Ellis, Simon Glyn, Alwyn Gruffydd, Chris Hughes, Jason Humphreys, Aeron Jones, Ann Williams, Elfed Williams, Gruffydd Williams, Owain Williams and Robert J.Wright.

RESOLVED to amend the Pay Policy by extending Chief Officers pay level to include provision for an additional market supplement of up to £3,000 payable where that has been justified by a business risk assessment.

8. AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION

The Leader submitted a report recommending amendments to the Constitution:-

- (a) to respond to the changes in responsibilities following re-structuring the old Democracy and Legal Department
- (b) to ensure that it conforms to the statutory requirements of the Local Government (Standing Orders) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2014
- (c) to deal with remote attendance at meetings through video equipment
- (ch) to deal with the situation of chairing the Central Licensing and General Licensing Committees.

On a point of accuracy, it was noted that the new wording in the English version of Appendix 3 should be underlined, rather than crossed out.

RESOLVED to amend the Constitution in accordance with the content of Appendices 1-4 of the report, subject to correcting the English version of Appendix 3 to read:-

“PROCEDURAL ORDER 9.12.3

- (5) No member shall serve as a chairman on more than one committee. This provision shall not prevent a member who is a chairman of a committee from taking the chair of a committee under paragraph (2) nor from serving as the chairman of the Central Licensing Committee and the General Licensing Committee at the same time.”***

9. APPOINTMENT OF ELECTED MEMBER TO THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Leader submitted a report which recommended that the Council appointed Councillor Lesley Day to the Standards Committee.

RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Lesley Day to serve on the Standards Committee as an Elected Member for a period of four years or until the next general local government election following her appointment, whichever is first.

10. GWYNEDD COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2013/14

The Leader submitted a report which recommended that the Council approved the document as a balanced, fair and accurate reflection of the Council's performance during 2013/14, and to adopt the report.

RESOLVED to approve the report as a balanced, fair and accurate reflection of the Council's performance in 2013/14, and to adopt the report.

11. NOTICES OF MOTION

- (A) It was reported that a notice of motion had been received, along with a procedural motion, in accordance with the Procedural Rules, from Councillor Owain Williams, requesting that the following proposal be discussed at the full Council instead of being referred to a committee.

RESOLVED to discuss the motion at this meeting.

The following proposal was proposed and seconded:-

"Following the latest attacks by the Israeli State on the territory of the Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip, this Council calls for a trade embargo with Israel and condemns the over-reaction and savageness used.

Furthermore, we confirm and underline this Council's decision to stop investing in Israel or in that country's establishments.

We believe that if Gwynedd leads the way there is hope that other councils in Wales and beyond will follow our example."

During the discussion:-

- The proposal was supported and the member was congratulated for bringing the matter before the Council.
- It was noted that it was important that Gwynedd Council looked out on the world and that it tried to influence to the best of its ability on a situation like this.
- It was emphasised that it must be made clear that the proposal condemned the Israeli State and not the Jewish religion.

RESOLVED to accept the motion.

- (B) It was reported that a notice of motion had been received, along with a procedural motion, in accordance with the Procedural Rules, from Councillor Mair Rowlands, requesting that the following proposal be discussed at the full Council instead of being referred to a committee.

RESOLVED to discuss the motion at this meeting.

The following proposal was proposed and seconded:-

"That this Council will use the domain *.Cymru* using the web address *gwynedd.cymru* rather than *gwynedd.gov.uk* and that we will encourage other councils throughout Wales to follow our example."

During the discussion, support for the proposal was expressed and the member was congratulated for bringing the matter before the Council.

On a point of explanation, the Cabinet Member - Customer Care referred to national work that had already been completed on this. He noted the following:-

- At least 18 months ago, public establishments were asked to express interest in using the new extension .cymru/.wales and what addresses they would like to register.
- Gwynedd Council had asked for gwynedd.cymru, gwynedd.wales, cyngorgwynedd.cymru and gwyneddcouncil.wales.
- That gwynedd.cymru or gwynedd.wales would not be reserved for Gwynedd Council, as it referred to an area rather than an establishment, but confirmation was given that cyngorgwynedd.cymru and gwyneddcouncil.wales were reserved for the Council.
- That this followed the national standard “cyngor[enw’rcyngor].cymru” and “[councilname]council.wales”.
- That the current extension, .gov.uk, was allocated for local and central government establishments only.
- That the Welsh Government were in discussions with Nominet (the body that was responsible for registering the domain names) to establish llyw.cymru and gov.wales.

In light of this explanation, the proposer amended her proposal as follows with the consent of the meeting and the seconder.

“That this Council will use the domain *.Cymru* using the web address *cyngorgwynedd.cymru* and *gwyneddcouncil.wales* rather than *gwynedd.gov.uk* and that we will encourage other councils throughout Wales to follow our example.”

A vote was taken on the amended motion, and it was carried.

RESOLVED to accept the amended motion.

- (C) Submitted – for information, a letter received from Scotland’s Prime Minister in response to Councillor Alwyn Gruffydd’s notice of motion to the previous meeting regarding the referendum on Scottish independence.

RESOLVED to note the letter.

The meeting commenced at 1.00pm and concluded at 3.15pm.