

THE COUNCIL THURSDAY, 8 JULY 2021

Present: Councillor Simon Glyn (Chairman);
Councillor Elwyn Jones (Vice-chair).

Councillors: Craig ab Iago, Menna Baines, Beca Brown, Dylan Bullard, Stephen Churchman, Annwen Daniels, R.Glyn Daniels, Elwyn Edwards, Aled Evans, Peter Antony Garlick, Gareth Wyn Griffith, Selwyn Griffiths, Alwyn Gruffydd, Annwen Hughes, John Brynmor Hughes, R.Medwyn Hughes, Judith Humphreys, Nia Jeffreys, Peredur Jenkins, Aeron M.Jones, Aled Wyn Jones, Anne Lloyd Jones, Berwyn Parry Jones, Elin Walker Jones, Gareth Tudor Morris Jones, Huw Wyn Jones, Keith Jones, Kevin Morris Jones, Linda A.W.Jones, Sion Wyn Jones, Eryl Jones-Williams, Cai Larsen, Beth Lawton, Dafydd Meurig, Dilwyn Morgan, Linda Morgan, Dafydd Owen, Dewi Owen, Edgar Wyn Owen, Gwynfor Owen, W.Roy Owen, Jason Parry, Nigel Pickavance, Rheinallt Puw, Dewi Wyn Roberts, Elfed P.Roberts, Gareth A.Roberts, John Pughe Roberts, Paul Rowlinson, Angela Russell, Dyfrig Siencyn, Mike Stevens, Gareth Thomas, Ioan Thomas, Catrin Wager, Cemlyn Williams, Eirwyn Williams, Elfed Williams, Gareth Williams, Gethin Glyn Williams, Gruffydd Williams and Owain Williams.

Officers: Dafydd Gibbard (Chief Executive), Morwena Edwards (Corporate Director), Iwan Evans (Monitoring Officer), Dafydd Edwards (Statutory Finance Officer), Geraint Owen (Head of Corporate Support Department), Sion Huws (Senior Solicitor - Corporate), Vera Jones (Democracy and Language Manager) and Eirian Roberts (Democracy Services Officer).

Also in attendance: Dr Einir Young (Chair of the Standards Committee) (for item 7)

1. APOLOGIES

Councillors: Anwen Davies, Alan Jones Evans, Dylan Fernley, Louise Hughes, Eric Merfyn Jones, Peter Read, Mair Rowlands and Hefin Underwood.

2. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the annual meeting of the Council held on 13 May, 2021 as a true record.

3. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

The Chief Executive declared a personal interest in item 10 on the agenda – Electoral Registration Officer / Returning Officer - as the report referred to him, and withdrew from the Chamber during the discussion on the item.

4. THE CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Best wishes for a speedy recovery were sent to Councillor Eric Merfyn Jones following his recent surgery.

Councillor Gwynfor Owen, the new member for Harlech / Talsarnau was congratulated and welcomed to the meeting.

Everyone from Gwynedd who had been competing and who had been successful at this year's Urdd Eisteddfod T was congratulated.

5. URGENT ITEMS

None to note.

6. QUESTIONS

(The Cabinet Members' written responses to the questions had been distributed to the members in advance).

(1) Question from Councillor Owain Williams

"What response will Gwynedd Council give to the presumptuous statement from the Westminster Government, and the Conservative Party in particular, namely their order to drape the 'Union Jack' flag on the side of the buildings of the 'Empire', namely the UK, here in Wales?"

Response from the Cabinet Member for Corporate Support, Councillor Nia Jeffreys

"These are not orders, but guidelines and encouragement to raise the Union Jack flag on buildings in British nations. The Council is responsible for raising banners on its own buildings, and we already have a policy for this. I have forwarded the details of this policy to members for information."

Supplementary Question from Councillor Owain Williams

"I ask this Council to contact the UK Prime Minister's Office and ask for an explanation and an apology for insulting and belittling our nation."

Response from the Cabinet Member for Corporate Support, Councillor Nia Jeffreys

"I also agree that the attitude is presumptuous and insulting. I believe we are doing everything within our ability within this Council. For example, British Ministers recently wanted to hold a 'UK Day' and wanted children to sing a particular song in schools about the union and the strength of the United Kingdom. I am very grateful to the Football Association of Wales for having the idea that children in Welsh schools could sing the national anthem on the same day, and I was very proud to see on the news and social media, following guidance from the Head of Education Department in Gwynedd, that children across Gwynedd schools did this. Therefore, as a Council I believe we do everything within our ability to promote our Welsh culture and identity."

(2) A question from Councillor Alwyn Gruffydd

"Bearing in mind that the 'Housing Action Plan' labels the Help-to-Buy Scheme as a "very popular" one and that the money invested in the scheme can be "recycled", and considering the cost associated with the construction of new housing, and that we cannot build ourselves out of this crisis in any case, is it necessary for the Council to promote a much broader use of equity provision schemes such as the 'Homebuy Wales' scheme, which is much more cost efficient and an alternative method to help people to live in their local areas?"

Response from the Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Craig ab Iago

"We are in the middle of a real housing crisis and each one of us have stories or examples in our wards of unfairness and house prices that are too high, or buildings being lost to people from outside Wales who wish to make a quick profit. The situation is becoming more desperate every day. We heard recently that our house prices had increased the most in Britain. These are things that we are all

concerned about and I would say that this is the highest priority for us all in terms of the things we need to resolve. And this is the Housing Action Plan - a way of responding to this from the housing aspect, and the plan has been produced for one purpose, namely to home local people. This is the ethos behind everything in the plan. It is totally innovative and we are leading on this throughout Britain as the plan exists wholly for that. However, we have built flexibility to the system. We are attempting to trial as many things as we can and we are going to undertake the work over the years. The plan mentioned by Councillor Alwyn Gruffydd is included in it. But of course, our response there is not going to resolve the problem until we tackle the planning aspect, and there is only one way to tackle this, and for some reason, it is clear to me that Welsh Government has no intention of doing so. You would expect this from the Westminster Government as they are not concerned about us at all, but you would not expect a lack of reply from Welsh Government! It is very difficult to understand why our Government would want to see our communities die, as is currently the case, and not responding at all. However, this is the situation we are now facing. The only thing we can do is continue to put pressure on them, and discuss this and keep it in the news as we have already done. Should they give us more funding on the housing side to invest in this, we would do so, as this is what we want to do. There is no lack of desire here to resolve the problem and to do more of what we are seeking to do, only a lack of resources at present."

A Supplementary Question from Councillor Alwyn Gruffydd

"Is it not time for this Council to start offering mortgages to local people?"

Response from the Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Craig ab Iago

"We have been discussing in the Department now for approximately eighteen months. There is more we can do, and we are also learning. We are not saying that everything is in the Housing Action Plan. We need to add more to it but, of course, there is a lack of funding, a lack of resources and a lack of time. But definitely, it is something that we have been discussing. There is no simple answer to this. We need to do so many different things as we can, but the answer is to resolve the planning aspect."

(3) Question from Councillor Beca Brown

"I would like an update on matters arising from the climate change emergency - what has happened so far, and what are the Council's plans following this?"

Response by the Leader, Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn

"This is the most important subject we can discuss these days, and as it is a corporate, cross-departmental matter, it is appropriate for me to answer the question.

You may remember that you received a report on the matter for a Council meeting on 19 December 2019, where we reported that the Cabinet had established a task-force to consider what needed to be done further in the field. The intention was also noted to draw up a whole-council Climate Change Action Plan.

It must be recognised that the work has lost momentum as a result of the Covid-19 crisis. The work undertaken by Council departments in the relevant fields (recycling, de-carbonisation, responding to flooding, biodiversity) etc. has obviously continued, but although officers have been working on a draft version, the timetable to publish the action plan has slipped.

However, we are aware of the importance of revisiting this field of work with urgency, and at its meeting in January 2021, the Cabinet resolved to establish a Climate Change Board to steer the work. It was also resolved to fund a project manager for a 12-month period initially in order to meet the basic element of coordinating all the work. An officer has been appointed to the post of the Climate Change Programme Manager and she has commenced in post this week.

The Climate Change Board will meet over the coming weeks in order to restart the work. The priority will be to draw up a work programme for the next six months, and this will include holding workshops with you as members in order to consider whether there are gaps in our draft action plan, and to update the plan for it to be published in its final form before the end of 2021."

A supplementary question by Councillor Beca Brown

"Will the public be able to provide an input as well?"

Response by the Leader, Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn

"This is important and we are aware that citizens are eager to participate in this discussion. As part of our regeneration strategy, we are about to commence an engagement plan or a conversation with our communities in the 13 well-being areas on a variety of subjects, and will ask them how they view their area in 2035, and ask them what are their priorities and concerns. We have not got all the answers and we are eager to receive feedback from local residents, and if there are ideas for operational plans, then we should be producing those plans on a joint basis. This is the first step on the journey, which is a comprehensive piece of work, and we have 10 officers who will start the work of visiting the well-being areas, and we are giving priority to this. If more resources will need to be provided, then we will deliver this. The first part of the process will involve speaking to our local councillors as they have a store of very valuable information about their communities and who within their communities are leading, or can contribute towards the discussion. This will start soon and I have a request here for all members, especially with a subject such as climate change, to consider what is taking place in our areas, and we are eager to hear your ideas in order to be able to collaborate with our communities."

(4) Question from Councillor Gruffydd Williams

"Given that there are three times more holiday homes than holiday units here in Gwynedd, and that the highest number of holiday homes in Wales are to be found here in Gwynedd, does the Leader not think that putting pressure on Welsh Government to pursue the three-point plan is a weak strategy?"

Response from the Leader, Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn

"No. Members are aware that the report by Dr Simon Brooks, "Second Homes: Developing Policies in Wales", is based to a great degree on very thorough research work by the Planning Department of this Council. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the planning officers who continue to work and research into these fields. The report of Dr Simon Brooks made 12 recommendations and at its meeting on 15 June, the Council Cabinet resolved to call on Welsh Government to take urgent action and to adopt all those 12 recommendations. The Government was also asked to strengthen the recommendation that sought to respond to the current situation where it is possible for a second home owner to avoid paying Council tax.

The Cabinet also called on the Government to prioritise the recommendations that would make the biggest difference, identifying the three that should be implemented with urgency.

Following the Cabinet's decision, I wrote to the First Minister calling on him to take action without delay. A copy of this letter is included as part of item 14(b) in the agenda of this Council.

We have received a response this morning by the Minister for Climate Change, Julie James MS. It is a lengthy and technical response, which essentially states that we must follow the existing guidelines and legislation, but we will share that response with all members as soon as we can."

Supplementary question from Councillor Gruffydd Williams

"Bearing in mind that the Government has now promised to address 2 of the 3 points he is calling for, does the Leader agree that it is now obvious that there is a need to address the broader and much more important matters, namely the issue of holiday homes?"

Response by the Leader, Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn

"We are disappointed to a large extent that the Government is not taking clear action, but we are pleased that they will hold the discussion with us, and I have already expressed my desire to be part of that conversation. I will refer to those matters we think are going to have the greatest impact on holiday homes, second homes, etc. and I can assure you that I will give this priority, and set our viewpoint as a Council very clearly. At a meeting yesterday with the Minister for Finance and Local Government, Rebecca Evans MS, the matter of rural housing was raised and she said that this was a priority for the Government. This is some kind of comfort for us and she will commence a virtual tour around the councils at the end of the month. I believe that a meeting has been arranged between her and me at the end of this month with the Chief Executive. Therefore, I will take every opportunity to press and ask the Government to take action as soon as possible, and I hope I can influence them."

7. THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

Dr Einir Young, Chair of the Standards Committee, was welcomed to the meeting to present the committee's annual report for 2020/21.

When presenting the report, it was noted that no complaints of breaching the Code of Conduct had been referred to the Standards Committee for a decision, and that this reflected well on the culture across the county. It was understood that some would be disappointed that the threshold for referral was too high, but as explained to the Council in the past, the Standards Committee did not decide which cases were referred to them. The Committee had noted the concern that had been raised previously by elected members with regard to this, and when the North Wales Standards Committee Forum would reconvene, this would be a topic for discussion.

Dr Einir Young thanked Committee members, the Monitoring Officer, the Senior Corporate Solicitor and the Democracy Service Officer for all their assistance.

Members were then given an opportunity to make observations and ask questions.

A member expressed his disappointment in hearing that no investigation had been held again this year and he questioned whether the Ombudsman's Office offered value for money. He also suggested that it would be beneficial for councils to record their

meetings so that evidence would be available should any problems arise at any time. In response, it was noted that this was a matter that was raised annually at the Council meeting and that the public interest test was currently under consideration as part of the Code of Conduct review. It was explained that the test allowed the Ombudsman to attribute his resources to investigate matters in areas, such as health. However, this raised a question regarding the suitability of the model for community councils because, if the threshold was so high, should there not be a different model available that responded to the requirements of community councils, instead of them being measured in the same way as a county council or health authority? As a result, there was a need to hold this discussion as the review progressed.

Dr Einir Young was thanked for her presentation.

RESOLVED to accept the report.

8. GWYNEDD COUNCIL ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020/21

Submitted - a report by the Leader requesting that the Council approve and adopt Gwynedd Council's Performance Report 2020/21 as a clear, balanced and accurate picture of the Council's performance in 2020/21.

He thanked all staff members who had contributed to the work and especially the Council's Business Support Service Manager and Business Support Officer for gathering all the information and for preparing the report in such a coherent and interesting manner.

Members were then given an opportunity to make observations and ask questions. The following matters were raised by individual members:

- Referring to page 46 of the agenda, which noted that the North Wales Growth Bid would lead to an investment of £1.1bn in the north Wales region over the next ten years, creating up to 4,000 jobs across north Wales, it was asked how much of this investment would be likely to come to Gwynedd. In response, it was noted that it was not believed there were specific targets for Gwynedd, but it was intended to monitor the situation and report back to the North Wales Economic Ambition Board on what would take place. It was explained that a number of projects were taking place across the region such as the digital projects that extended and improved digital connectivity across the entire region. The number of jobs had been determined for specific projects in Bangor University and Glynllifon and more details about those could be provided for members in the future.
- In light of the fact that Wylfa B was now very unlikely to take place, it was asked where the thousands of new jobs that were promised would be, and who would occupy the remaining 8,000 additional homes in Gwynedd and Anglesey. In response, it was explained that Wylfa B was not part of North Wales Economic Ambition Board projects, or included in their job figures. The changes as a result of whatever would happen to the Wylfa B site would be addressed in the review of the Local Development Plan, along with any other matters that are relevant to re-examine, such as the number of houses and the number of jobs.
- Referring to page 49 of the agenda, which referred to ensuring European funding to realise plans as part of the Creating High Value Jobs project, it was asked what impact Brexit would have on current and future investments. In response, it was noted that a number of projects were already in place that took advantage of European funds, and it was believed that these would continue until 2023. However, the funding in future would be much less than the £350m per week that had been promised by the British Government, and although the Shared Prosperity Fund was supposed to compensate for this, every county council across Britain had to compete for the small amounts available.

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- Referring to pages 122-123 of the agenda, dissatisfaction was expressed that planning applications had taken an average of 89 days to reach a decision during 2020/21, and that one application had taken a whole year. As a result of raising the matter with the Department, it was added that it had become apparent that the officer dealing with the application was ill, and it was asked to what extent managers supervised officers who worked from home in terms of their well-being and mental health. In response, it was explained that no comments could be made on individual cases but members were asked to refer any such concerns to the attention of the Chief Executive. It was added that it was important to recognise that staff had been through a period of monumental change during the past eighteen months, and had coped fantastically with it to a very large degree. It was not believed that staff needed supervision in most cases as they were effortful and conscientious people who did their best at all times. However, they needed support, especially when working remotely and detached from their teams from day to day, and arrangements and support was in place to ensure that this occurred in every part of the Council.
- The reference to establishing an Autism Scheme in Gwynedd in the report of the Children and Supporting Families Department was welcomed, but it was noted that there was no mention of the scheme in the report of the Adults, Health and Well-being Department. In response, it was explained that the scheme had appeared in the report of the Children and Supporting Families Department as this Department would lead the work and challenge the performance of the cross-departmental Project Group (which included officers from the Children and Supporting Families Department and the Adults, Health and Well-being Department, along with partners such as Anglesey County Council and the Health Board). It was explained that the scheme lied within the Children and Supporting Families Department as the support needed to commence from the individual's childhood, but it was a whole life scheme as the individual transferred from the Children's Service to the Adult Service. Should members wish to know more about the activities and the project, and get the opportunity to share opinions and personal experiences in some cases, it was further noted that it could be arranged for them to meet with both Cabinet Members and relevant officers.
- It was asked whether or not Gwynedd was ready for the wave of mental health problems that would arise as a result of Covid. In response, it was noted that discussions were in the pipeline between the Council and the Health Board in an attempt to anticipate future demand. It was added that the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Well-being was very happy to arrange a meeting between members and relevant officers to have a better understanding. It was further noted that the increase in cases was highlighted through Council services with customers turning to the Council from all directions. For example, in the housing field, a serious increase had been seen over the past eighteen months in the number of people losing tenancies as a result of mental health problems, but the Council had managed to fund a new staff member in the Mental Health Team within the Health Service, who would be available specifically to help social housing tenants to protect their tenancies.
- Referring to page 61 of the agenda, the Education Department was congratulated on completing the work of establishing a new building for Ysgol y Garnedd in Bangor.
- Referring to page 103 of the agenda, it was asked how it could be certain that the success of the Council's strategy, rather than children being lost under the radar due to Covid, was responsible for the slight reduction in the number of looked-after children in 2020/21. In response, it was noted that the Council had been under pressure from Welsh Government to set targets for the number of looked-after children, but it had refused to do so as it was not believed that the target was suitable, and that the Council provided as required, rather than in order to reach any targets. The collaboration between the Education Department and the Children and Supporting Families Department was praised, and special gratitude was expressed to school staff for identifying and referring children who could have gone

under the radar due to Covid, to the Children's Service. It was further noted that the arrangements of the Department were very robust in terms of assessing the data in relation to referrals, e.g. were the referrals similar to the past year and to similar years? Also, a lot of triangulation work took place in order to see what the data told us. Nevertheless, it was difficult to know for certain that everything was coming in as it should as it was such an unprecedented period. It was noted further that many campaigns had been held to ensure that everyone in society, the staff and members kept their eyes open, and referred any matter of concern to the Referrals Team, and by collaborating with the police, and other key partners, it was hoped that the Council did everything it could to ensure that these safeguarding matters came to the Department's attention. Also, as part of the strategy to keep families together, high rates of children could stay with their parents, or extended family, instead of becoming looked-after.

- Referring to page 124 of the agenda, it was asked what was the latest situation in terms of recommencing the public transport services that had been cut during the Covid period, and the Welsh Government's plan in terms of improving public transport. In response, it was noted that the Deputy Minister for Climate Change, Lee Waters, MS had submitted a very ambitious transport plan to us, which disregarded the needs of rural areas. After making an observation on this, the Deputy Minister submitted an astonishing rural plan although he was unclear as to how it would be delivered. The situation in terms of the current service was unclear, but there was concern that the Government wished to centralise the bus service with Transport for Wales, and this did not raise much hope to improve the service in Gwynedd. It was further noted that the Environment Department had undertaken a piece of work prior to the pandemic examining the provision, such as when it would be possible to use a taxi or mini bus, rather than a bus that could carry 50 people. The pandemic had greatly affected the Department and the Government had largely subsidised this side of the work during the pandemic. The Government, via Transport for Wales, had been seeking to push forward with new schemes, but the whole picture so far in terms of what they had in mind was unclear. Any members having difficulties locally were asked to bring such evidence to the Department's attention.

RESOLVED to approve the report as an accurate, balanced and clear reflection of the Council's performance in 2020/21, and to adopt it.

9. LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND ELECTIONS (WALES) ACT 2021

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Support submitted a report inviting the Council to adopt arrangements to hold Council meetings in order to address the new requirements in Part 3 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

Members were then given an opportunity to make observations and ask questions. The following matters were raised by individual members:

- It was noted that it was important to ensure that anyone with a particular interest in a matter was able to attend a virtual meeting and voice their opinion rather than watching a web-cast only. Also, a desire was stated to return to face-to-face meetings as soon as possible on the basis that virtual meetings were not convenient to make important decisions. In response, it was explained that the form of meetings would inevitably change as a result of this act, and that remote attendance would be part of the meetings as elected members had a statutory right to this. Arrangements to allow the public to participate in committee meetings were not currently part of the matter under consideration, and that those arrangements remained the same, but on a virtual basis. Work to move away from the interim system would involve identifying a pattern that worked best across the range of meetings, but it was emphasised that the electronic system

and the statutory rights that went hand in hand with it meant that this landscape would either way inevitably change and on a permanent basis.

- As hybrid meetings would be statutory in future, it was asked whether Welsh Government would contribute financially towards the substantial investment in Information Technology that would be required in order to realise this. In response, it was noted that an enquiry could be made to the Head of Finance Department and come back to the member with the financial information. It was also noted that there was an intention to start trialling the hybrid equipment during August in order to ensure that the provision was technically easy to use and responded to the requirements of bilingualism, voting matters, web-casting, etc.
- It was noted that it was important to continue to hold meetings virtually after restrictions eased, as this way of meeting saved time, travelling costs and vehicle emissions, and it also allowed members to be present from any location.
- On the contrary, it was noted that it was more difficult for members to get their points across strongly in virtual meetings and everyone was encouraged to support a return to the Chamber as soon as possible.
- It was suggested that meetings should continue to be held virtually but not all the time, and that it would be good for members to meet face-to-face occasionally.

RESOLVED

- (1) To adopt the arrangements and protocol to continue to meet virtually until they are reviewed in accordance with the report submitted to the Council.**
- (2) To approve the changes to the Constitution in Appendix B of the report to the Council.**

10. ELECTORAL REGISTRATION OFFICER / RETURNING OFFICER

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report inviting the Council to appoint an Electoral Registration Officer / Returning Officer, as the current post-holder had retired.

RESOLVED

- (1) To appoint the Chief Executive as Electoral Registration Officer for every constituency and part of a constituency within the County, in accordance with Section 8(2A) of the Representation of the People Act 1983.**
- (2) To appoint the Chief Executive as Returning Officer for the election of councillors to the Council and the election of community councillors within the County in accordance with Section 35(1A) of the Representation of the People Act 1983.**

11. SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

Submitted - the scrutiny annual report for 2020/21 by the Chair of the Scrutiny Forum, Councillor Beth Lawton. She thanked the scrutiny chairs and vice-chairs and all scrutiny members for their work during the year. She also thanked the heads of department and the Democracy Service officers for supporting the members and drawing up the report.

Members were then given an opportunity to make observations and ask questions.

It was noted that there was no reference in the report to the Planning and the Welsh Language Scrutiny Investigation, and a request was made for information on the Council website as it did not seem to be there at present.

On behalf of the Cabinet Members, the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People thanked the scrutiny committee members, stating how important their role was in the process of maintaining the services from day-to-day. He also thanked those members who were part of the performance challenging meetings for their support and input.

The Chair of the Scrutiny Forum was thanked for all her work and guidance, and for submitting the report on behalf of the scrutiny chairs.

RESOLVED to accept the report.

12. THE COUNCIL'S POLITICAL BALANCE

The Head of Democracy Services submitted a report reviewing the Council's political balance following:

- A by-election in the Harlech / Talsarnau ward following the resignation of former Councillor, Freya Bentham, Independent Group;
- The election of Councillor Gwynfor Owen in the Harlech / Talsarnau ward, Plaid Cymru Group.

It was noted that a short video clip could be viewed on the members' intranet site explaining how the committee seat allocation formula worked.

RESOLVED

- (1) Adopt the seats allocation noted in Appendix A of these minutes.**
- (2) Delegate the authority to the Head of Democratic Services to make appointments to the committees on the basis of political balance, and in accordance with the wishes of the political groups.**

13. NOTICES OF MOTION

Submitted - the following notice of motion by Councillor Gruffydd Williams, in accordance with Section 4.20 of the Constitution, and it was seconded:

"That Gwynedd Council supports the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons."

The proposer of the motion noted that several anti-nuclear weapon groups and organisations had submitted letters of support to the motion. He set out the context for his motion underlining that the United Kingdom was one of the few countries that had not signed the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons that had come into force on 22 January, 2021. He added that Gwynedd Council could show humanitarian leadership by supporting the motion in order for the Westminster Government and politicians from other parties to understand that there was a principled and moral objection to nuclear weapons in Wales.

Strong support was expressed by members on the following grounds:

- As the British Government had not participated in the discussions, they did not have an opportunity to shape the Treaty and that they were short-sighted to it.
- The clauses in Article 1 of the Treaty, which involved control and prohibition, refuted the argument of the British Government that signing the Treaty would not bring us closer to a world without nuclear weapons. Should every country sign and adhere to these principles, we would live in a world that was free of nuclear weapons.

In light of the viewpoint of the British Government on the matter, an amendment was proposed and seconded to add the following to the motion:

"...and also call on the British Government to commit to the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons."

The proposer of the original motion agreed to amend the motion on these lines with the Council's consent.

During the discussion on the amendment, it was noted that we live in an unstable world with growing global inequality. Covid had hit us hard and climate change already led to the displacement of people and threatened food networks. In the unstable world of this day and age, Governments more than ever needed to continue to take action towards nurturing peace, rather than supporting and investing in nuclear weapons.

A vote was taken on the amendment and it carried.

As the amendment was accepted, the Monitoring Officer explained that the original motion had been amended and that a further vote was needed on the wording of the amendment, rather than the wording of the original. The majority voted in favour of the motion.

RESOLVED to adopt the motion, namely:

That Gwynedd Council supports the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, and also calls on the British Government to commit to the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

14. RESPONSES TO PREVIOUS NOTICES OF MOTION

Submitted, for information:

- (a) Letters from the UK Government Minister for Welfare Delivery and the Welsh Government Minister for Social Justice in response to Councillor Elin Walker-Jones' notice of motion to the 4 March, 2021 meeting regarding Universal Basic Income.
- (b) Letters to the First Minister for Wales (i) in response to Dr Simon Brooks' report "Second Homes – Developing New Policies in Wales", and (ii) calling for an earlier review of the Joint Local Development Plan following the Extraordinary Council meeting on 28 June, 2021.

The meeting commenced at 1.00 pm and concluded at 3.10 pm

CHAIR