

## **CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (CALL-IN OF A DECISION)**

### **Minutes of the virtual meeting held on 14 October 2020**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Aled M Jones – Chair  
Councillor Dylan Rees – Vice-Chair

Councillors John Griffith, Richard Griffiths, Richard O Jones, Bryan Owen, Alun Roberts, J Arwel Roberts.

#### **Call-In Request Signatories who are not members of the Committee**

Councillor K P Hughes, Eric W Jones, Peter Rogers.

#### **Portfolio Member**

Councillor Bob Parry OBE FRAGS – Portfolio Member (Highways, Property and Waste).

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Chief Executive,  
Deputy Chief Executive,  
Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer,  
Head of Highways, Property and Waste,  
Principal Valuation Officer (TDE),  
Legal Services Manager (RJ),  
Solicitor (AJ),  
Head of Democratic Services,  
Scrutiny Manager (AD),  
Communications Officer (GJ),  
Committee Officer (MEH).

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Nicola Roberts and Lewis Davies.  
Councillor Robin Williams – Portfolio Holder (Finance).

**ALSO PRESENT:** Leader of the Council – Councillor Llinos M Huws,  
Councillors R A Dew, T LI Hughes OBE, Carwyn Jones, G O Jones, R Meirion Jones, Alun Mummery, Dafydd Roberts, Dafydd R Thomas, Ieuan Williams

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## **1 DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Declarations of interest were received as follows:-

Councillor K P Hughes declared a personal interest in respect of Item 2 as he represents the County Council on the Anglesey Agricultural Society. Following legal opinion he was allowed to speak in respect of this item.

Councillors Aled M Jones, Bryan Owen and Bob Parry OBE FRAGS declared a personal but not prejudicial interest in respect of Item 2

## **2 CALL-IN A DECISION - LAND AT MONA INDUSTRIAL ESTATE - APPLICATION BY THE ANGLESEY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY TO AMEND LEASE CONDITIONS**

A decision made by the Executive at its meeting held on 28 September, 2020 in relation to the Application by the Anglesey Agricultural Society to amend lease conditions which was called in by Councillors Peter Rogers, Eric Jones, Bryan Owen, K P Hughes and Aled M Jones. The Executive's decision, the call-in request and the report of the Head of Highways, Property and Waste was presented.

Councillor Peter Rogers as Lead Call-In Member, explained the reasons for calling in the decision made by the Executive on 28 September, 2020 as set out in the call-in request form which was as follows:-

'The decision that the Executive made as obviously made without fully appreciating the severe economic strain the Anglesey Show is itself under. The Show and Showground provide immense social and economic benefit to the Island of Anglesey and in uncertain times I believe we have a responsibility to do everything we can to help ensure its future'.

The Chair read out the following to the Committee:-

- Correspondence dated 13 October, 2020 from the Chair of the Anglesey Agricultural Society;
- Correspondence, referred to as Appendix 1, dated 8 June, 2020 from the Anglesey Agricultural Society together with email sent by the Principal Valuation Officer to Mr Gareth Dawkins, HMRC;
- Correspondence from the Society to the Council dated 22 July, 2020.

Councillor Rogers as Lead Call-In Member, said there are concerns as to the future of the Anglesey Agricultural Society as the Show had to be cancelled this year due to the pandemic as have other organised events on the showground. He noted that the Society is in financial difficulties and also has had to dismiss the staff employed and is totally dependent on volunteers to try and secure the future of the Anglesey Agricultural Society. Having the opportunity to sub-lease the land at the Mona Industrial Estate for the provision of a facility for 100 HGV's plus some temporary ancillary buildings in readiness of final departure from the EU could have been a financial lifeline for the Anglesey Agricultural Society. The Executive's decision on 28th September, 2020 to refuse the sub-lease of the land at Mona Industrial Estate was that HGV's would be travelling through the villages on the A5 highway. Councillor Rogers expressed that there is no need for the HGV's to travel through the villages; when the A55 was constructed a road was constructed right across the edge of the Showground to carry thousands of tonnes of stone from the Quarries off the A5 onto the site of the A55 and now a high bank of soil is blocking the entrance onto a layby. The Anglesey Agricultural Society owns all the land at this site and this could be used for entrance from the A55. The alternative is that the HGV's turn off at Junction 6 of the A55 and travel along the A5 to the Mona Industrial Estate; the traffic would not be travelling through any village. Councillor Rogers further said that Mona Industrial Estate has numerous businesses operating from the site already. He said that the Authority has not consulted with the Anglesey Agricultural Society and he considered that the Authority and the Society could have gained financial in accepting that the Mona Industrial Estate could be developed as a storage facility of HGV's if there is a no deal Brexit; the UK will be leaving the EU in January next year.

Councillor Rogers asked the Committee to defer the decision on the Call-In of the Decision of the Executive and that consultation needs to take place with the Anglesey Agricultural Society and HMRC for the development of the Mona Industrial Estate site. Councillor Bryan Owen seconded the proposal.

Councillors K P Hughes, Eric Jones and Bryan Owen were given the opportunity to speak as signatories of the call-in request and raised the following matters:-

- This would have been an opportunity for the Anglesey Agricultural Society and the Council to financially gain from the development of the site at Mona Industrial Estate for the storage facility of HGV's;
- Reference was made that the Council has not discussed the options for the site at Mona Industrial Estate with the Society nor the residents near the site;
- There is an option for the HGV's to exit from Junction 6 (Turnpike) along the A5 to the Mona Industrial Estate with not having to travel through any village. A Traffic Management Plan would have been commissioned for any use of the site at Mona;
- The Government has indicated that only one ferry port in Wales will have a free port status;
- The potential loss of the Anglesey Agricultural Society would have a major impact on the enjoyment of the residents and visitors to the Island and would affect the agricultural life of Anglesey.

Councillor Bob Parry OBE FRAGS, Portfolio Holder for Highways, Property and Waste said that during discussion in 2019, as regards to the identifying suitable land for the storage of HGV's to and from the port of Holyhead, the Parc Cybi site, Truckstop Facilities at Holyhead and Mona Industrial Estate were considered. He noted that a lease agreement for approximately 17 hectares of land within the buffer zone was entered into with the Anglesey Agricultural Society in 2018 to allow use as a park and ride facility for the two day Anglesey Show in August. The MOD has imposed restrictions on the Council's freehold title as regards to entrance to any emergency situation that may arise for the use of the runway at Mona Airfield together with restrictions on the building on site near the runway. He noted that the Executive had given due consideration to the application by the Anglesey Agricultural Society to amend the lease conditions and it was considered that amending the lease due to the MOD restrictions would not be feasible. Councillor Parry further said that appropriate sites are on the A55 i.e. Parc Cybi Holyhead, and land at the recently completed Park and Share in Gaerwen; both sites would be far safer for the HGV's to turn off the A55 to these facilities.

Councillor Parry expressed that the future of the Anglesey Show is of concern but there are other funding avenues for the Anglesey Agricultural Society to seek funding i.e. The Anglesey Charitable Association.

The Head of Highways, Property and Waste reported the lease agreement with the Anglesey Agricultural Society is a contractual term of an initial 5 years commencing on 15th March, 2018 and expiring on 14th March, 2023 with an option to renew for a further 5 years until 14th March, 2028. He noted that the Isle of Anglesey Borough Council bought the land from the MOD and legal restrictions were imposed as regards to the use of the land on the Council and its tenant. The Society has used land for the use of park and ride facility during the two days of the Agricultural Show and the land was used during adverse weather conditions during the week of the National Eisteddfod in 2017. The Head of Highways, Property and Waste said that a site for the HGV's is required in January next year and the site at Mona would need substantial mitigation actions with the need for a new junction off the A55, the lifting of numerous legal conditions and would impair on the commercial lease agreement.

The Principal Valuation Officer reported that the correspondence by the Anglesey Agricultural Society read out to this Committee is incorrect as regards that the Council had suggested the Mona Industrial Estate as a site to store/stack HGV's to and from the port of Holyhead; HMRC had contacted the Authority with the suggestion of the Mona Industrial

Estate a site. The Chair questioned whether the contents of the email from HMRC was discuss with the Portfolio Holder. The Head of Highways, Property and Waste that the matter was discussed with the Portfolio Holder at the time but there was no information as regards to the level of use of the land at Mona and no mention of 100 HGV's to be checked on the site.

The Deputy Chief Executive explained that up to the 18 October, 2019 the Authority and Welsh Government were preparing for a no-deal Brexit. A contingency plan was needed to be put in place for the HGV's potentially impacted or delayed by the new border arrangements at the Port of Holyhead. The Road King Site in Holyhead was the main site for the storage of the HGV's, then the Parc Cybi road as contraflow between Junction 2 and 3 of the A55, and land at the Mona Industrial site to store up to 500 – 600 HGV's. Following the 18 October, 2019 the Authority did not receive any correspondence thereafter on a strategic or political level for storing HGV's until an email was received by the Property Department by HMRC in April 2020 as regards to the lease on the land at Mona Industrial Estate. The lease related for a minimum of 5 years with HMRC/DEFRA activities to be undertaken. The Authority and Welsh Government were not afforded discussions on a strategic level as regards to the matter. Thereafter, the Authority requested that it was part of the negotiations as regards to the preparations and requirements of HMRC and Defa and to be able to afford local information regarding the Island and to safeguard the amenities of residents of the Island. The Deputy Chief Executive said that the Authority has suggested numerous locations for the storage of HGV's i.e. Business Parks along every junction along the A55, and negotiations are still continuing with HMRC and Defra. The Chair questioned whether the Officers from the Authority have met on site with representatives from the Anglesey Agricultural Society. He also noted that there has been mention in this Committee that there is a road that was used during the construction of the A55 near the site which would result in HGV traffic not having to travel through the village of Gwalchmai. The Deputy Chief Executive responded that at present the Authority's negotiations are specifically with the Officers in Welsh Government and HMRC and the Authority has only made observations on the Mona Industrial Estate site and no reference has been made to the Anglesey Show Ground site. Reference has been made to HMRC that a road from the A55 exists through the showground but it is inevitable that a new junction off the A55 would need to be constructed and a flyover to enable HGV's to be able to enter the site from both directions from the ferries at last mornings and night time. The Deputy Chief Executive further said that no formal meeting has taken place with representatives from the Anglesey Agricultural Society as the Anglesey Showground has not been part of discussions with the other government bodies.

The Deputy Chief Executive said that a recent email has been received from HMRC which stipulates that the location site for 5 years, HMRC/DEFRA facility has been considered internally and that Mona Industrial Estate is now not part of their consideration as a suitable site following the local opinion. However, negotiations are still taking place but no specific site has been identified at present.

The Legal Services Manager read out the current leasehold agreement with the Anglesey Agricultural Society as is shown within the report to the Committee.

The Chair read out an email on behalf of Councillor Nicola Roberts, a Member of the Committee and a Local Member for the Canolbarth Môn Ward who was unable to attend the meeting due to illness.

Councillor Dylan Rees a Member of the Committee and a Local Member for the Canolbarth Môn Ward and he referred to the Officer's report as regards to recommendation of refusal of the amendment to the lease conditions. He expressed that the HGV's drivers will be dependent of satnavs and it will be inevitable that they will take the route through the

village of Gwalchmai which will be dangerous as cars park outside the local post office and outside their residents homes. Councillor Rees read out a letter by a resident of the village.

The Portfolio Holder for Highways, Property and Waste expressed that there are deep concerns in the village of Gwalchmai as to the potential level of heavy traffic that would travel through the village if land at the Mona Industrial Estate was to be used for HGV's. He read out a letter on behalf of the Trewalchmai Community Council to the Committee. He noted that there are other villages along the A5 that could be affected. He further said that the lease stipulates that no buildings can be erected near the runway at Mona and DEFRA would need adequate buildings to enable to carry checks on the HGV's documentation.

The Committee considered the information presented and made points as follows:-

- Reference made as to the timeframe for the possible construction of a slip road and fly-over off the A55 as the United Kingdom will leave the EU in January, 2021. The Head of Highways, Property and Waste responded that it would be a matter for Welsh Government to decide on any construction on the A55 but it would be estimated it would take at least two years to construct and at a cost of £6m to £7m;
- The effect on the local residents, near the Mona Industrial Estate and the effect of residents in the villages on the A5 would be unacceptable due to HGV's travelling back and forwards through the villages;
- There are other locations near the Port of Holyhead i.e. Parc Cybi which would be more suitable for such activities of storing/stacking HGV's;
- Whilst expressing deep concern for the future of the Anglesey Agricultural Show it was considered that the Society could seek funding from other source of funding i.e. the Charitable Association.

Councillor R O Jones proposed that the call-in request be rejected and Councillor J Arwel Roberts seconded the proposal.

In the ensuing vote the proposal to reject the call-in was carried, and

**It was RESOLVED to reject the call-in of the Executive's decision from its meeting held on 28 September, 2020 in relation to Land at Mona Industrial Estate – Application by the Anglesey Agricultural Society to amend lease conditions.**

*The Executive's decision of the 28 September, 2020 therefore takes effect forthwith.*

**COUNCILLOR ALED M JONES  
CHAIR**