

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2014

- PRESENT:** Councillor Vaughan Hughes (Chair)
Councillor Jim Evans (Vice-Chair)
- Councillors Raymond Jones, Lewis Davies, R Dew, Ann Griffith, John Griffith, D R Hughes, K P Hughes, T LI Hughes, Victor Hughes, W T Hughes, Llinos Medi Huws, A M Jones, G O Jones, H E Jones, R LI Jones, R.Meirion Jones, Richard Owain Jones, Jeffrey M.Evans, Alun W Mummery, R G Parry OBE, Dylan Rees, J A Roberts, P S Rogers, Alwyn Rowlands, Dafydd Rhys Thomas and Ieuan Williams
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Chief Executive,
Deputy Chief Executive,
Corporate Director (Sustainability),
Corporate Director (Lifelong Learning),
Acting Head of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer,
Legal Services Manager (RJ),
Interim Accountancy Services Manager (BHO),
Corporate Transformation & Governance Business Manager (ET),
Committee Officer (MEH).
- ALSO PRESENT:** None
- APOLOGIES:** Councillors Carwyn Jones and Nicola Roberts

The meeting was opened by a prayer offered by Councillor T Victor Hughes

1. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

No declaration of interest.

2. **TO RECEIVE ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRPERSON, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL OR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

The Chair was extremely pleased to welcome Councillor Dafydd R. Thomas to the County Council following his recent illness. Councillor Thomas wished to thank the Members for their good wishes during his illness and the support his close family have received by family and friends. He also wished to thank Team Alaw at Ysbyty Gwynedd for their kindness during his illness.

The Chair extended his sympathy to Councillor J. Arwel Roberts on the loss of his mother-in-law recently.

He also extended his sympathy to the family of Ben Calveley who was killed in a road accident near his home in Carmel, Llannerchymedd. Ben Calveley was related to Councillor Nicola Roberts.

The Chair extended his sympathy to the family of Issac Nash who remains missing following having been swept to the sea at Aberffraw whilst on holiday on Anglesey.

The Chair sympathised with any member of the Council or staff who had suffered bereavement. Members and Officers stood as a mark of their respect.

The Vice-Chair congratulated the Chair on the publication of his book 'Cymru Fawr' recently.

3. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2013-14

Submitted – the report of the Interim Head of Function (Resources) and Section 151 Officer on the finalised Statement of Accounts 2013/2014.

The Chair of the Audit Committee reported that the Audit Committee at its meeting on 23rd September, 2014, upon consideration of the Statement of Accounts had resolved to recommend that the County Council accepts and approves the Statement of Accounts for 2013/2014.

The Interim Head of Function (Resources) and Section 151 Officer stated that minor adjustments had been made to Pages 43 and 70.

RESOLVED to confirm acceptance of the 2013/2014 Statement of Accounts.

4. RESPONSE TO THE WHITE PAPER ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

Submitted – a report by the Chief Executive.

The Chief Executive gave a background report on the White Paper on Local Government Reform. He noted that a Task and Finish Group was established in August 2014 to discuss the implications for Anglesey in the Government's proposals and having already declared its response to the Williams Commission recommendations on the case for public service reform. The Group has met on two occasions to date and has scrutinized in detail all the relevant documentation, the presentations made by Senior Officers, together with the emerging views within the region and on a national basis.

A Seminar was held for all Members of the Council on 18 September, 2014 which provided information regarding the Government White Paper on Local Government Reform and to raise awareness of key issues to be addressed from an Anglesey prospective.

The Chief Executive gave details of the advantages and disadvantages of becoming an early adopting Authority in respect of a proposal to merge.

Members of the County Council raised the following main issues :-

- They were not convinced that there would be benefits to mergers and would answer the financial cuts by local authorities across Wales;
- The views of the residents of the Island should be paramount and consideration should be given to holding a Referendum on the viewpoints of the electorate in respect of the propose merger with a neighbouring authority;
- Voluntary merger would have huge cost implications;
- Staff implications;
- Possible Council Tax increase for the residents of Anglesey due to merger.

The Council considered the recommendations of the report and approved 7.1 to 7.4.

In respect of recommendation whether to enter into a voluntary merger with one or more authorities, a recorded vote was taken under the provisions of 4.1.18.5 of the Constitution.

The recorded vote was as follows :-

Not to declare an expression of interest in an early adopted or a merged Authority :-

Councillors R.A. Dew, Jeff M. Evans, Ann Griffith, John Griffith, D.R. Hughes, K.P. Hughes, T.LI. Hughes, T.V. Hughes, Vaughan Hughes, W.I. Hughes, Llinos M. Huws, A.M. Jones, G.O. Jones, H.E. Jones, Raymond Jones, R.LI. Jones, R. Meirion Jones, R.O. Jones, Alun Mummery, Bob Parry OBE, Dylan Rees, J. Arwel Roberts, Alwyn Rowlands, D.R. Thomas, Ieuan Williams.

TOTAL 25

Against the recommendation :-

Councillor P.S. Rogers

TOTAL 1

Abstentions :

NIL

It was RESOLVED

• **To request further information from Welsh Ministers regarding the options available for consideration by this Council, before determining its position on proposals for merger with other Authorities and, in particular, to seek better clarity around the financial incentives to become an early adopter Authority and, to that end, request that the Minister of Public Services be invited to a meeting of the Full Council to discuss these matters at his earliest convenience.**

• **That in its response to the series of questions raised in the White Paper on Local Government Reform :-**

• **The Council draws attention to its previous response to the Williams Commission Report which covers most of the issues to which the consultees are invited to respond;**

- The Council endorses the response to the consultation produced by WLGA and presented to the WLGA Council on 26 September, 2014.

- That the Council authorises the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive to engage in formal discussions at local, regional and national level to promote the interests of Anglesey citizens, with partner organisations, as the agenda for reform develops and to report on the outcome of these discussions, as appropriate, to Council through the Task and Finish Group, the Group Leaders meetings and the Senior Leadership Team of officers with a view to making a formal presentation to Council for determination prior to implementing any discussions.

- That the Leader and Chief Executive are authorized to establish effective communication and community engagement strategies to gain the views of the citizens and communities of Anglesey prior to the Council adopting its standpoint on Local Government Reform and its implications for Anglesey.

- That the Council, having given proper consideration to the matters outlined in Section 6 of the report, resolved not to declare an expression of interest in an early adopted or a merged Authority, by the closing date of 28 November, 2014.

5. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED to adopt the following :-

“Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, to exclude the press and public from the meeting during discussion on the following item on the grounds that it involves the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the said Act and in the attached Public Interest Test.”

6. CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES - SCHEME OF DELEGATION (IT SERVICES STRUCTURE)

Submitted and accepted - a report by the Deputy Chief Executive.

The meeting concluded at 4.15 pm

**COUNCILLOR VAUGHAN HUGHES
CHAIR**