

THE EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the hybrid meeting held on 21 October 2025

- PRESENT:** Councillor Gary Pritchard (Leader)(Chair)
- Councillors Carwyn Jones, Alun Roberts, Dafydd Roberts, Nicola Roberts, Robin Williams.
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Chief Executive,
Deputy Chief Executive,
Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer,
Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer,
Director of Education, Skills and Young People,
Director of Social Services,
Head of Democracy,
Committee Officer (MEH),
Webcasting Committee Services Officer (FT).
- APOLOGIES:** Councillors Neville Evans, Dyfed W Jones & Ieuan Williams
- ALSO PRESENT:** Councillors Jeff Evans (Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee) (for items 6 & 8), Glyn Haynes, Kenneth P Hughes & Aled Morris Jones.
- Scrutiny Manager (AD) (for items 6 & 8)

At the end of the meeting, the Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee wished to express his gratitude to Mrs Anwen Davies, the Scrutiny Manager, who will be leaving her post at the end of the month, for her support and work to the Authority and especially to the Scrutiny process of the Council.

1 APOLOGIES

As noted above.

2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No declaration of interest was received.

3 URGENT MATTERS CERTIFIED BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OR HIS APPOINTED OFFICER

None to report.

4 MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meetings of the Executive held on 23 September, 2025 and the extraordinary meeting held on 2 October, 2025 were presented for confirmation.

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the following previous meetings of the Executive be confirmed as correct:-

- **Minutes of the meeting held on 23 September, 2025;**
- **Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on 2 October, 2025.**

5 THE EXECUTIVE'S FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The report of the Head of Democracy incorporating the Executive's Forward Work Programme for the period November 2025 to June 2026 was presented for confirmation.

The Head of Democracy updated the Executive on the new additions to the Forward Work Programme as follows:-

- 25 November 2025 meeting - Terms of Reference of the Governance and Audit Committee / Approval of Final Accounts.
- 25 November 2025 meeting - DWP Connect to Work Programme – Collaboration Agreement (item move from the October meeting).
- 25 November 2025 meeting - Ambition North Wales grant offers
- June 2026 meeting – Performance Quarterly Reports & Quarter 1 budget reports, 2026/2027.

It was resolved to confirm the Executive's updated Forward Work Programme for the period November 2025 to June 2026.

6 COMPLAINTS AND WHISTLEBLOWING 04/2024 - 03/2025

The report of the Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer incorporating information on service complaints for the period 1 April, 2024 to 31 March, 2025 was presented to the Executive for consideration.

Councillor Carwyn Jones, the previous Portfolio Member for Corporate Business and Customer Experience, presented the report which showed the data of complaints and whistleblowing for 2024/2025.

The Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer reported that the Complaints and Whistleblowing Annual Report is presented to the Governance and Audit Committee and includes the Public Services Ombudsman's Annual Letter. The Council's services have validated the data within the report and have agreed the analysis of the complaints. She noted that the Complaints Officers have received training during the year, and the policy has been updated to reflect the introduction of stage 1 and 2 complaints, and the concept of concerns have been removed as is noted in detail in paragraph 3.2 of the report. 3.5 of the report details the services that received complaints during the period 2024/2025 as shown in

Appendix 2. Highways and Property are underperforming as there has been an increase in complaints from 19 in the previous year to 49 in 2024/2025. There was also underreporting in Q1 and Q2 in 2024/2025. She further said that there were improvements in the complaints within the Housing Service from 139 complaints in the previous year to 47 during 2024/2025 and noted that the previous problems resulted from new software that has been introduced. However, whilst there has been an improvement in the number of the complaints received the level of those upheld was high and it is evident that there was underreporting in Q1 and Q2 in the current year. 93% of the complaints received by the Leisure Service were upheld and suggested a need for training of staff in recording complaints rather than recording requests for service. There has been a high level of performance within the Planning Service and Waste Service, and no concerns were raised as regards to late responses.

The Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer further reported on the Public Services Ombudsman's Annual Letter and noted that the number of complaints has decreased from 38 in the previous year to 22 in 2024/2025. She noted that the main message from the Public Services Ombudsman's Letter is that 24% of the complaints in the previous year related to the Council's process in dealing with complaints. This resulted in 10 interventions by the Ombudsman in the previous year, however in 2024/2025 there was a decrease to 5% with only one intervention. Additional details are included in Section 4 of the report.

She further referred that the Council's Complaints Policy which places an emphasis on learning from mistakes and using the information to improve services. There is a need for more robust management within the Highways and Property and Housing Services, along with further training for the Leisure Service. There is a need to act earlier on the Ombudsman's recommendations and to ensure that actions taken are reported to the Ombudsman within the period set out by the Ombudsman. She further said that action plans are required to improve performance where necessary and that Complaints Officers need to undertake training on Equalities and Customer Care now that the training sessions on the CRM have been completed. A review will be undertaken on the CRM in three months and the roll out of the Power BI Dashboard for Directors/Heads of Service/Managers will be undertaken shortly and further guidance will be provided to highlight the need for consistency.

The Leader said that details within Section 4 of the report are important as regards to lessons learnt and it is accepted that some services will receive a higher level of complaints owing to the nature of the services which they provide. There is also a requirement to be more consistent in responding to complaints and the need to identify whether a complaint is a stage 1 complaint against the service. He asked whether there had been compliance with the recommendations made in the Ombudsman's Letter. This was confirmed but it was made clear that the Council had not completed some of the actions in time and had not responded to the Ombudsman within the requested timeframe. The Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer said that there were 6 recommendations made by the Ombudsman but that these related to 2 cases. The recommendations were implemented and reported to the Ombudsman. However, as they were not reported within the timeframe they were not captured within the Annual Letter.

It was RESOLVED:-

- **To implement, as soon as possible: -**
 - **the introduction of the Power BI dashboard for Heads of Service and Directors, in relation to complaints about their service;**
 - **training for complaints officers, and their deputies, on customer care and equalities/diversity;**
 - **updated guidance note on effective complaints handling.**
- **That having considered the Annual Letter from the Public Services Ombudsman (PSOW) for 2024/2025, to require that current performance data on service complaints become a standing item in the routine meetings between Heads of Service/Directors and their Executive lead (Portfolio Holder).**
- **To instruct the Monitoring Officer to remind services of the requirement to:**
 - **action any recommendations from the PSOW, and report completion to the PSOW, within the timeframe set;**
 - **routinely record any lessons learnt from complaints, identifying any patterns and implementing suitable mitigation measures.**
- **To instruct the Monitoring Officer to respond to the PSOW's Annual Letter 2024/202, as required in the penultimate paragraph of the said Letter.**

7 OUTCOME OF THE STATUTORY CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSAL TO RELOCATE YSGOL UWCHRADD CAERGYBI LEARNERS TO A NEW SCHOOL BUILDING FOR 11-18 YEAR OLDS

The report of the Director of Education, Skills and Young People incorporating the outcome of the statutory consultation on the proposal to relocate Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi learners to a new school building for 11-18 year olds was presented for the Executive's consideration.

The Portfolio Member for Education and the Welsh Language presented the report noting that the report focuses on the outcome of the consultation process on the proposal to relocate Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi to a new school building. The Council has a duty under the Schools' Organisation Code to consult with stakeholders when considering school reorganisation proposals. A consultation process was undertaken between 5 June, 2025 to 17 July, 2025 to relocate Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi to a new site. Consultation was undertaken which included with children and young people, parents and Estyn regarding the proposal to relocate the school to a new site.

The Director of Education, Skills and Young People reported that there has been challenges as to the condition of Ysgol Uwchradd Caerbyi's present building due to RACC. The statutory consultation was undertaken to comply with the guidance. Other options were also considered for Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi and it was concluded that the relocation of the school was the most appropriate option. He expressed that regarding school transport issues the proposal complies with Modernising Learning Communities Strategy and active travel routes will be considered. 79% of responders agreed with the proposal to relocate Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi to a new school building for 11–18-year-olds. He noted that 20% of the comments received by stakeholders considered that the proposed site to relocate the school is too far from the middle of the town, that the current building should be updated or rebuilt on the current site. The Director of Education, Skills and Young People said that the relocation of Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi to a new building will secure education for pupils in the catchment area of Holyhead and to meet future requirements. The maintenance costs for the current building have reached £29m, and the building of a new school will result in savings for the Council when the building is transferred to the authority. He further noted that an impact assessment has been conducted as regarding to equality and the Welsh language.

Councillor Jeff Evans, Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee reported on the discussions held on the item at the Corporate Scrutiny Committee held on 15 October 2025. He noted that having considered the outcomes of the statutory consultation as regards to the relocation of Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi the committee resolved to recommend to the Executive to accept the recommendations as is outlined in the report.

The Chair referred that over 1,000 responses were received during the consultation process to relocated Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi. 21% of those responders expressed concerns regarding the location of the proposed site, however, Appendix 1 attached to the report provides clear responses to those concerns and the reasons as to the reasons for the relocation of the school.

Councillor Carwyn Jones considered that there have been sufficient responses to the consultation process regarding the proposal to relocate Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi to a new site. It was encouraging as to the responses of the Schools' Councils within the catchment area regarding the proposal and have suggested comments for consideration for the future of the school.

It was RESOLVED:-

- **To approve the proposal (following the report on the outcome of the statutory consultation held on the proposal) to “Relocate Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi learners to a new school building for 11–18-year-olds”.**
- **To authorise Officers to publish a statutory notice in respect of the proposal.**

8 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was 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 the discussion on the following item on the grounds that it involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the said Act and in the Public Interest Test presented.”

9 STRATEGIC OUTLINE CASE - RELOCATE YSGOL UWCHRADD CAERGYBI LEARNERS TO A NEW SCHOOL BUILDING FOR 11–18-YEAR-OLD LEARNERS

The report of the Director of Education, Skills and Young People incorporating the Strategic Outline Case to relocate Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi learners to a new school building for 11-18 years old learners was presented to the Executive for consideration.

The Portfolio Member for Education and the Welsh Language presented the report and said that the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) contains a case for a new school building for Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi to replace the current building by September 2030. Details of the funding proposals to build a new school was outlined to the Committee. As the scheme will be delivered through the Mutual Investment Model (MIM) the proposal would lead to a saving in the central repairs and maintenance budget for the next 25 years.

The Director of Education, Skills and Young People reported that a well-designed school environment together with green outdoor spaces could improve the physical and mental health of young people as at present the current school is dependent on the Millbank playing field for recreational purposes. A new school building will provide additional specialist modern resources. As the potential new school building would have a lower capacity than at present, surplus places at Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi would be reduced. He further said, that having a purpose-built community resources in the new school building, as well as the co-location of other services, as well as access to modern facilities would be expected to attract increased community use and family engagement and involvement.

Councillor Jeff Evans, Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee reported on the discussions held on the item at the Corporate Scrutiny Committee held on 15 October 2025. He noted that having considered the outcomes of the statutory consultation as regards to the relocation of Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi the committee resolved to recommend to the Executive to accept the recommendations as is outlined in the report.

The Executive were appreciative of the responses to the consultation process and especially the comments received from the Schools' Councils within the catchment area.

It was RESOLVED to:-

- **approve the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) for the new school building for Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi;**
- **approve the submission of the SOC to Welsh Government by 8 January 2026 for the Business Case Scrutiny Group meeting a fortnight later;**
- **approve ring fencing capital receipts from the sale of the present Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi site to repay part of the Council's investment towards the construction of the new school building for Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi;**
- **delegate authority to the Director of Education, Skills and Young People in consultation with Head of Function (Resources) & S151 Officer and Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer to amend the SOC if necessary - if the changes do not result in material changes (in terms of policy, principles, financial contribution, risks and harm to third parties).**

**COUNCILLOR GARY PRITCHARD
CHAIR**