



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the Council

Multi-Location Meeting - Council Chamber, Guildhall / MS

Teams

Thursday, 7 September 2023 at 5.00 pm

Present: Councillor J P Curtice (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

C Anderson
M Bailey
M Baker
S Bennett
P N Bentu
P M Black
A Davis
P Downing
C R Doyle
M Durke
C R Evans
C M J Evans
V M Evans
E W Fitzgerald
R Fogarty
R Francis-Davies
N Furlong
L S Gibbard
F M Gordon
K M Griffiths
H J Gwilliam
J A Hale
T J Hennegan

Councillor(s)

V A Holland
C A Holley
D H Hopkins
L James
Y V Jardine
A J Jeffery
D H Jenkins
J W Jones
L R Jones
M H Jones
M Jones
S M Jones
S Joy
S E Keeton
E J King
E T Kirchner
H Lawson
A S Lewis
M B Lewis
R D Lewis
P Lloyd
M W Locke
N L Matthews

Councillor(s)

P M Matthews
P N May
F D O'Brien
D Phillips
C L Philpott
J E Pritchard
S Pritchard
A Pugh
S J Rice
K M Roberts
B J Rowlands
R V Smith
A H Stevens
R C Stewart
L G Thomas
W G Thomas
M S Tribe
G D Walker
L V Walton
T M White
R A Williams

Officer(s)

Gareth Borsden
Huw Evans
Martin Nicholls
Ben Smith
Mark Wade
Lucy Moore
Debbie Smith

Democratic Services Officer
Head of Democratic Services
Chief Executive
Director of Finance / Section 151 Officer
Director of Plac
Directorate Lawyer
Deputy Chief Legal Officer

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): A M Day, P R Hood-Williams, W G Lewis, J D McGettrick and A J O'Connor

31. Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

The Deputy Chief Legal Officer gave advice regarding the potential personal and prejudicial interests that Councillors and / Officers may have on the agenda.

The Head of Democratic Services reminded Councillors and Officers that the "Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests" sheet should only be completed if the Councillor / Officer had an interest to declare. Nil returns were not required. Councillors and Officers were also informed that any declarable interest must be made orally and in writing on the sheet.

In accordance with the provisions of the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea the following interests were declared:

- 1) Councillors J P Curtice, A Davies, P Downing, R A Fogarty, L James, D H Jenkins, S M Jones, S E Keeton, N L Matthews, F D O'Brien, K M Roberts, R V Smith, A H Stevens, W G Thomas & R A Williams declared a Personal Interest in Minute 41 "Review of Communities - Community / Town Council Size Policy."
- 2) Councillor S M Jones declared a Personal Interest in Minute 36 "Public Questions." relating to "Amendments to Council Constitution - Review of Petitions Scheme".

Officers:

- 3) Huw Evans declared a Personal Interest in Minute 41 "Review of Communities - Community / Town Council Size Policy."

32. Minutes.

Resolved that the following Minutes be approved and signed as a correct record:

- 1) Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 6 July 2023.

33. Written Responses to Questions asked at the Last Ordinary Meeting of Council.

The Chief Legal Officer submitted an information report setting out the written responses to questions asked at the last Ordinary Meeting of Council.

34. Announcements of the Presiding Member.

a) Green Flag Community Awards

The Presiding Member stated that the Friends of Mayhill Washing Lake and Community Food Garden had yet again received the Green Flag Community Award. The fifth year in a row that they had won it.

She also paid tribute to the volunteers involved with the other Parks / Green smaller community-based gardens and green spaces in Swansea. Their work is invaluable to Swansea and its citizens.

b) Amendments / Corrections to the Council Summons

i) Item 13 “Amendments to the Council Constitution - Review of Petitions Scheme”

Delete Paragraph 8.3 of the Petitions Scheme. Replace with:

“8.3 If the Council rejects your Petition or you feel that the Council has not dealt with your Petition properly, please contact the Democratic Services (DS) Team democracy@swansea.gov.uk Please provide a short explanation of your concern and the resolution you are seeking within 10 clear working days of the decision. The DS Team shall forward your concern to the Presiding Member who will consider it in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer. Their decision will be final.

ii) Item 14 “Councillors’ Questions - Question 7”

Delete Paragraph 2 of the Leader of the Council’s response. Replace with:

“Funding opportunities are being explored in conjunction with the Friends of the Slip Bridge in attempt to restore this important piece of Swansea's heritage.”

iii) Item “14 Councillors’ Questions - Question 9”

Delete the sentence that states:

“The attached schedule shows the PWLB rates and loans.”

35. Announcements of the Leader of the Council.

a) RAAC (Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete)

The Leader of the Council stated that no RAAC had been found in any of Swansea Council’s Public Buildings. This has been confirmed in writing to the Welsh Government.

Every year the Council’s Building Services Team carry out Condition surveys of our education establishments, this consists of a site visit by our project surveyors and mechanical and electrical engineers. The survey consists of an inspection into the condition of the fabric of the building where the walls, roofs, windows, and floors are checked along with the mechanical and electrical installations.

The surveyors are looking for signs of deterioration, water ingress, stress fractures, movement, damp / mould, and any signs of wet or dry rot. The Council has never come across the installation of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in any of our education buildings.

For other Public Buildings, condition surveys have been carried out over the years, and this is what informs the Capital Maintenance Budget as we look to be proactive and identify structural defects before they become an issue.

b) Holiday Hunger

The Leader of the Council paid tribute to the Council Teams and Councillors that had supported children and families throughout the summer by running free events and free food to many in need. Over 66,000 free meals were provided to children in Swansea over the summer. The free bus scheme saw approximately, 230,000 journeys using the scheme.

These are just two of the initiatives run by Swansea Council to assist with Holiday Hunger during the Cost-of-Living crisis. The Council hopes to run both initiatives again during the Christmas period should finances allow.

c) Buckingham Group - Construction Company

The Leader of the Council stated that Buckingham Group entered administration on 4 September 2023. The Council has taken over the site and secured it. Council will be in contact with the administrator this week. Discussions with potential main contractors are ongoing aimed at ensuring a new contractor is in place as soon as is possible so works can recommence.

d) Cabinet Portfolio Amendments

The Leader of the Council stated that he had made several minor amendments to Cabinet Portfolios:

- i) Service Transformation Cabinet Portfolio (Councillor Andrea Lewis)
Add "Asylum Seekers & Refugees Lead".
- ii) Well-being Cabinet Portfolio (Councillor Alyson Pugh)
Amend "Safer Swansea Partnership Leaders Representative" to read "Safer Swansea Partnership Lead."
Remove "Refugees & Asylum."

e) Welsh School of Architecture Funding

The Joint Deputy Leader of Council stated that Swansea Council is the sole Welsh Local Authority that had been successful in receiving funding for a research project into co-designing energy efficient, low carbon, retrofitted housing. Four houses in Townhill have been chosen to take part in the project.

f) Visit to Sketty Mosque Lunch Club

The Joint Deputy Leader of Council stated that she along with Councillor Alyson Pugh had recently visited the Sketty Mosque Lunch Club.

g) Congolese & Liberian Rally at Castle Square

The Joint Deputy Leader of Council stated that she recently spoke at the Congolese & Liberian Rally held at Castle Square. She stated that it was great to see so many Councillors supporting the rally.

h) Merchant Navy Day - 3 September 2023

The Joint Deputy Leader of Council stated that she along with the Lord Mayor and the Veterans Member Champion attended the Merchant Navy Day on 3 September 2023.

36. Public Questions.

- 1) Jules Wagstaff asked a question in relation to Minute 42 "Amendments to the Council Constitution - Review of Petitions Scheme".

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance responded.

- 2) Ben Houghton asked questions in relation to Minute 43 "Councillors' Questions" - Question 6.

The Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism responded.

- 3) John Childs asked a question in relation to Minute 42 "Amendments to the Council Constitution - Review of Petitions Scheme".

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance stated that a written response would be provided.

37. Swansea Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy 2023-2026.

The Cabinet Member for Well-being submitted a report that outlined the Swansea Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Strategy 2023-2026. The Strategy ensures that the Council meets its statutory duty as specified in the VAWDASV (Wales) Act 2015 and the priorities to be taken forward, driving change.

It is a strategic partnership document for delivering priorities for ending Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) in Swansea.

Resolved that the Swansea Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Strategy 2023-2026 be approved.

38. Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 2022-2023.

The Head of Democratic Services submitted the Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 2022-2023. The for information set out the work of the Committee over the period.

39. Membership of the Governance & Audit Committee.

The Head of Democratic Services submitted a report that sought consideration of reducing the membership of the Governance & Audit Committee from 15 to 12 members (8 Councillors & 4 Statutory Co-opted Lay Members).

Resolved that:

- 1) The reduction in the membership of the Governance & Audit Committee from 15 to 12 Members (8 Councillors & 4 Statutory Co-opted Lay Members) be approved.
- 2) The Labour Group & the Uplands Group identify one Councillor each who will be removed from the Committee. Those Councillors being removed are A J Jeffery & K M Roberts.

40. Extension of Term of Office for Independent (Co-opted) Member(s) of the Standards Committee.

The Head of Democratic Services submitted a report that sought to re-appoint Michela Jones and Mike Lewis for a further 4-year term of office as Statutory Co-opted Lay Members of the Standards Committee.

Resolved that:

- 1) Michaela Jones be re-appointed as a Statutory Independent (Co-opted) Member of the Standards Committee for one further consecutive Term of Office ending on 30 September 2027.
- 2) Mike Lewis be re-appointed as a Statutory Independent (Co-opted) Member of the Standards Committee for one further consecutive Term of Office ending on 30 September 2027.

41. Review of Communities - Community / Town Council Size Policy.

The Returning Officer submitted a report that sought consideration of a Community / Town Council Size Policy to assist with the review of Communities process being carried out by the Local Democracy & Boundary Commission for Wales (LD&BCW).

Resolved that the Community / Town Council Size Policy be adopted.

42. Amendments to Council Constitution - Review of Petitions Scheme.

The Presiding Member, Monitoring Officer and Head of Democratic Services jointly submitted a report which informed Council of the amendments to simplify, improve and / or add to the Council Constitution.

The Head of Democratic Services stated that the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 placed a duty on Councils to make and publish a Petitions Scheme. The Petitions Scheme was adopted by Council on 24 May 2022. He stated that a review of the Petitions Scheme had been carried out and the report sought to amend the Scheme.

The Head of Democratic Services asked that the Petitions Scheme be adopted further by Deleting Paragraph 8.3 of the Petitions Scheme and replacing with:

“8.3 If the Council rejects your Petition or you feel that the Council has not dealt with your Petition properly, please contact the Democratic Services (DS) Team democracy@swansea.gov.uk

Please provide a short explanation of your concern and the resolution you are seeking within 10 clear working days of the decision. The DS Team shall forward your concern to the Presiding Member who will consider it in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer. Their decision will be final.”

Resolved that:

- 1) The Petitions Scheme as outlined in Appendix A of the report be adopted subject to:
 - i) The amendment to Paragraph 8.3 of the report as set out above being added.
 - ii) A further amendment be made adding discretion to the Chair of the Petitions Scheme to waive the requirements to hit the threshold targets should a smaller number be affected.
- 2) A report be submitted to a future Council meeting setting out the size and terms of reference of the Petitions Committee.

43. Councillors' Questions.

1) Part A 'Supplementary Questions'

Four (4) Part A 'Supplementary Questions' were submitted. The relevant Cabinet Member(s) responded by way of written answers contained in the Council Summons.

Question 3

Councillor F D O'Brien asked if the Cleansing Team could drop waste off at Clyne Civic Amenity Site thereby saving wasted journeys to Llansamlet Bailing Plant.

The Cabinet Member for Community stated that a written response would be provided.

2) Part B 'Questions not requiring Supplementary Questions'

Six (6) Part B 'Questions not requiring Supplementary Questions' were submitted.

The meeting ended at 6.54 pm

Chair