



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the Council

Multi-Location Meeting - Council Chamber, Guildhall / MS

Teams

Thursday, 9 November 2023 at 5.00 pm

Present: Councillor J P Curtice (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

C Anderson
M Bailey
M Baker
P N Bentu
P M Black
A Davis
A M Day
P Downing
C R Doyle
M Durke
C R 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
T J Hennegan
V A Holland

Councillor(s)

C A Holley
P R Hood-Williams
B Hopkins
D H Hopkins
L James
O G 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
A S Lewis
M B Lewis
W G Lewis
P Lloyd

Councillor(s)

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

Officer(s)

Gareth Borsden	Democratic Services Officer
Huw Evans	Head of Democratic Services
Martin Nicholls	Chief Executive
Ben Smith	Director of Finance / Section 151 Officer

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): A Anthony, C M J Evans, J A Hale, H Lawson, R D Lewis, K M Roberts and L G Thomas

55. Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

The 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 actually 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 C Anderson, M Bailey, P N Bentu, P M Black, J P Curtice, A Davies, A M Day, P Downing, C R Doyle, M Durke, C R Evans, V M Evans, E W Fitzgerald, R A Fogarty, R Francis-Davies, N Furlong, L S Gibbard, F M Gordon, K M Griffiths, H J Gwilliam, T J Hennegan, V A Holland, C A Holley, P R Hood-Williams, B Hopkins, D H Hopkins, L James, O G James, Y V Jardine, A J Jeffrey, D H Jenkins, J W Jones, L R Jones, M H Jones, M Jones, S M Jones, S A Joy, S E Keeton, E J King, E T Kirchner, A S Lewis, M B Lewis, W G Lewis, P Lloyd, M W Locke, N L Mathews, P M Matthews, P N May, J D McGettrick, F O'Brien, A O'Connor, D Phillips, C L Philpott, J E Pritchard, S Pritchard, S J Rice, B J Rowlands, R V Smith, A H Stevens, R C Stewart, W G Thomas, M S Tribe, G D Walker, L V Walton, T M White & R A Williams declared a Personal Interest in Minute 63 "Councillors ICT Allowances Policy - May 2022 & Beyond".
- 2) Councillors V M Evans & P Lloyd declared a Personal Interest in Minute 67 "Notion of Motion - Bus Cuts".

56. Minutes.

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

- 1) Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 5 October 2023.

57. 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.

58. Announcements of the Presiding Member.

a) Condolences

i) Margaret Smith - Former Councillor, Former Lord Mayor & Honorary Alderman

The Presiding Member referred with sadness to the recent death of Margaret Smith. Margaret Smith was a former Councillor, former Lord Mayor 2004-2005, and an Honorary Alderman.

Margaret Smith represented the Pennard Ward for approximately 30 years on:

- Swansea City Council 1976 - 1996.
- City and County of Swansea 1995 - 2012.

ii) Adeline Evans, Mother of Councillor Chris Evans

The Presiding Member referred with sadness to the recent death of Adeline Evans, mother of Councillor Chris Evans.

All present stood in silence as a mark of sympathy & respect.

b) Swansea Community Review

The Presiding Member stated that the Local Democracy & Boundary Commission for Wales was conducting a review of Swansea's community boundaries. The Initial Consultation Period opened on 25 September 2023 and closes on 19 November 2023. Further information relating to the review is available online at www.ldbc.gov.wales/reviews/09-23/swansea-community-review

Consultation responses should be sent to consultations@boundaries.wales or Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales, Hastings House, Fitzalan Place, Cardiff, CF24 0BL.

c) Polling District & Polling Place Review 2023

The Presiding Member stated that the Returning Officer was conducting a Polling District & Polling Place Review 2023. The Consultation Period opened on 8 November 2023 and closes on 20 December 2023. Further information relating to the review is available online at <https://swansea.gov.uk/article/25356/Review-of-Polling-Districts-and-Polling-PlacesStations-2023>

Consultation responses should be sent to elections@swansea.gov.uk or via an online form <https://online1.snapsurveys.com/pollingdistrictreview>

59. Announcements of the Leader of the Council.

a) Holiday Food Fund

The Leader of the Council stated that towards the end of the summer term the Welsh Government confirmed that they would not be continuing the temporary commitment to free school meals in the summer holidays. The Council quickly responded to the challenge by establishing the Holiday Food Fund to help families struggling with hardship and the Cost-of-Living crisis to provide food for school age children during the summer holiday period.

The Council allocated funding and Officers from the Tackling Poverty Team and Partnerships and Commissioning Team who came together quickly to develop a new fund, launched on 1 August 2023, and targeted over 130 existing internal services, partners and community organisations who worked with families and school age children to help mitigate child food poverty and food insecurity during this year's school summer holiday. The Team was supported by colleagues in the Web Team and Communications to support the digital access to the fund.

The results in such a short space of time were incredible. Through a rolling assessment and approval process, 43 applications were successful through August, resulting in allocation of £140,080.27 for organisations across Swansea communities, including using for food parcels, food for local events, cookery workshops and food vouchers. This equated to over 65,000 meals for school age children during the summer holidays.

This demonstrated our teams excellent collaborative partnerships with community organisations and highlights many departments worked together quickly to ensure this much needed support reached thousands of families and young people.

Building on the success of this approach in the Summer, the same colleagues have recently launched the 'Enabling Communities Fund 2023/24' to provide activities, school holiday food and warm welcoming places in Swansea this winter.

Several Officer from the Teams were present: Anthony Richards, Yvonne Bennett, & Sian Denty (Tackling Poverty Team) and Mark Gosney, Stephen Cable, Spencer Martin & Lisa Evans (Commissioning and Partnerships Team). He thanked those involved with the Holiday Food Fund.

b) Remembrance Day & Current Conflicts

The Leader of the Council stated that Swansea was proud of its status as a City of Sanctuary and being Wales's first Human Rights City. He stated that as we prepare to mark Remembrance weekend, it is a timely opportunity to turn our thoughts to those caught up in conflicts around the world.

We have all been deeply saddened by events in Israel and Gaza. Both Israelis and Palestinians are suffering terribly, and our thoughts are with all those affected by this conflict. In Ukraine, so many lives continue to be lost and countless towns, cities and communities are being shattered.

As representatives of the people of Swansea, we are all thinking of those affected by these conflicts and the many other conflicts taking place around the world. The Guildhall this evening is lit-up in the colours of the World Peace Flag.

We will continue to work together with all our communities and faith groups to support all those affected, and those in our city who are worrying about family and friends.

Everyone stood for a minute's silence for the victims of conflicts, past and present.

c) Together at Christmas

The Leader of the Council stated that the Together at Christmas event will be returning to the Brangwyn Hall on Tuesday, 5 December 2023. He encouraged members to support it and to assist.

60. Public Questions.

There were no Public Questions asked.

61. Annual Review of Performance 2022/23.

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance submitted a report that outlined a draft of the Council's Annual Review of Performance 2022-2023. The report meets the statutory requirement to publish an annual self-assessment and annual well-being report under Part 6 of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 respectively.

Resolved that the Annual Review of Performance 2022-2023 be approved for publication.

62. Proposal to Pass a New Resolution Not To Issue Casino Licences and Proposed Amendments to the Council's Gambling Policy.

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance submitted a report that sought consideration of the outcome of the consultation in respect of a proposal to pass a new resolution not to issue casino premises licences; and proposed amendments to the City and County of Swansea's Statement of Principles (Gambling Policy). The report also sought a decision regarding passing a new resolution not to issue casino premises licences.

Resolved that:

- 1) The outcome of the consultation in respect of a proposal to pass a new resolution not to issue casino premises licences and proposed amendments to the City and County of Swansea's Statement of Principles (Gambling Policy) be considered.
- 2) The matters identified in Paragraph 4 of the report be considered and a new resolution not to issue casino premises licences be agreed.
- 3) The proposed amendments to the Gambling Policy be approved for publication and 7 December 2023 be specified as the date on which the resolution takes effect.

Note: The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance stated that he would arrange a Councillors Seminar to outline the work of Licensing and the Licensing Committee.

63. Councillors ICT Allowances Policy - May 2022 & Beyond.

The Presiding Member, Monitoring Officer and Head of Democratic Services jointly submitted a report that sought to amend the Councillors ICT Allowances Policy - May 2022 & Beyond. The proposal being to allow Councillors & Statutory Co-opted Members to claim their ICT Allowance directly from the Council in advance of the item(s) being purchased. This proposal aims to prevent financial hardship giving equality for all.

The report also proposed to add a section, suggesting Councillors & Statutory Co-opted Members insure their ICT equipment against damage.

Resolved that:

- 1) The amendments to Paragraphs 6.2, 6.6, 9.3 and Appendix 1 of the Councillors ICT Allowances Policy - May 2022 & Beyond as outlined in the report together with any other consequential changes be approved.
- 2) The amended version be published on the Council's website and shared with all Councillors & Statutory Co-opted Members.

64. Amendments to the Council Constitution - Petitions Committee.

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

The amendments related to a decision of Council on 7 September 2023 which resolved to amend the Petitions Scheme, create a Petitions Committee. The report sought to establish the Petitions Committee, setting out its size, membership, and terms of reference. It also amends the Petitions Scheme.

Resolved that:

- 1) A Petitions Committee be created comprising 9 Councillors in line with Committee proportionality.
- 2) Councillors be allocated to serve on Council Bodies in line with the nominations received from the Political Groups. The Councillors being: P M Black, O G James, D H Jenkins, S E Keeton, A J O'Connor, S Pritchard, S J Rice, M S Tribe & T M White.
- 3) The Petitions Committee Terms of Reference be approved as outlined:

“Petitions Committee

1. *To receive and consider Petitions which meet the criteria in the Council's Petitions Scheme (other than Petitions which must be referred direct to another body under the Scheme).*
 2. *To make a report outlining conclusions, comments, recommendations etc. relating to the Petition to the relevant Cabinet Member, Cabinet or Officer.*
 3. *To identify and invite representative(s) from other Organisations to attend the Petitions Committee as and when necessary to offer information or advise / address the Committee on issues of concern.*
 4. *Frequency of meetings is a matter for the Chair of the Petitions Committee depending on workload; however, it is anticipated that the Committee shall be held as required to consider Petitions.”*
- 4) Section 10 of the Petitions Scheme be deleted in its entirety and replaced with:

“10. What happens at the Petitions Committee?

10.1 *Once your petition has been approved, a Committee date will be allocated. This will depend both on the workload of the Committee and the time taken to complete the validation process.*

10.2 *The following may be invited to the Petitions Committee:*

- i) *The Lead Petitioner and approximately two supporters.*
- ii) *The Local Ward Councillor(s).*
- iii) *The relevant Cabinet Portfolio Holder,*
- iv) *The relevant Officers.*

Note: *The Chair of the Petitions Committee reserves the right to amend those invited as they deem appropriate.*

10.3 *Who may speak at the Petitions Committee:*

- i) *The Lead Petitioner or one of the Petition Supporters may speak in relation to the Petition.*
- ii) *The Local Ward Councillor(s)*
- iii) *The relevant Cabinet Portfolio Holder.*

- iv) *The Lead Petitioner or one of the Petition Supports, the relevant Officer and the relevant Cabinet Portfolio Holder, have a final right to sum up at the end of the debate on the matter. This would normally, be no longer than **2 minutes** each.*

Note: *The Chair of the Petitions Committee has absolute discretion relating to length of speeches.*

- 10.4 *Councillors on the Petitions Committee may ask questions relating to the issue(s) raised in the Petition.*
- 10.5 *Following the consideration of a Petition, the Petitions Committee will take a decision on action to be taken as follows:*
- i) *Agree the issue(s) raised deserves further action and agree to refer the Petition to the relevant Cabinet Member, Cabinet, relevant Council Body, or Officer.*
- ii) *Agree the issue(s) raised do not merit further action.*
- 10.6 *You will be advised of the committee's decision in writing within 10 clear working days of the Petition Committee meeting."*

65. Amendments to the Council Constitution - Planning Matters.

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

The information report updated the Council Constitution relating to changes to legislation.

66. Councillors' Questions.

1) Part A 'Supplementary Questions'

Fifteen (15) Part A 'Supplementary Questions' were submitted. The relevant Cabinet Member(s) responded by way of written answers contained in the Council Summons.

Those supplementary questions required a written response are listed below.

Question 1

Councillor W G Thomas asked, "What was the cost to the Council for the pilot scheme of using Electric Refuse Collection Vehicle?"

The Leader of the Council stated that a written response would be provided.

Question 4

Councillor E W Fitzgerald asked, "Why isn't the Council asking Welsh Government to address inconsistencies between its legislation and its Planning Policies and Guidance? These contradictions need to be addressed."

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

2) Part B 'Questions not requiring Supplementary Questions'

Nine (9) Part B 'Questions not requiring Supplementary Questions' were submitted.

67. Notion of Motion - Bus Cuts.

The original Notice of Motion is outlined below.

"We ask the Welsh Government to work closely with local councils in Wales to set up our own bus companies.

We need to understand service cuts have an impact on the vital services for everyone across Wales, for people to get to work, and health care that the services support.

We regret the current round of cuts implemented by private bus operators which will affect the most disadvantaged in our society.

We ask the Leader of the Council to write in support to the First Minister."

Prior to the Meeting, the Labour Group submitted an amended Motion, which was accepted by the original movers. The motion below was the substantive motion.

Proposed by Councillor C A Holley and Seconded by Councillor R C Stewart.

"We note the forthcoming Welsh Governments Bus Bill. We ask the Welsh Government to work closely with local councils in Wales to set up our own bus companies.

We need to understand service cuts have an impact on the vital services for everyone across Wales, for people to get to work, and health care that the services support.

We regret the current round of cuts implemented by private bus operators which will affect the most disadvantaged in our society.

We call on the U.K. Government to provide consequential funding to Wales, as they have to Scotland and Northern Ireland, from the HS2 project. This will allow the Welsh Government to invest in transport infrastructure and services in Wales and work with local authorities to deliver better transport services."

Resolved that the amendment Notice of Motion outlined above be adopted.

The meeting ended at 6.50 pm

Chair