



## **CABINET**

### **MINUTES OF THE MULTI-LOCATIONAL MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON WEDNESDAY 21ST MAY 2025 AT 1PM**

Councillor S. Morgan – Chair

Councillors:

J. Pritchard (Cabinet Member for Prosperity, Regeneration and Transformation), P. Leonard (Cabinet Member for Planning and Public Protection), E. Stenner (Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance), C. Andrews (Cabinet Member for Education and Communities), and E. Forehead (Cabinet Member for Social Care).

Together with:

R. Edmunds (Chief Executive), M.S. Williams (Executive Director Corporate and Regeneration), R. Hartshorn (Executive Director Education and Social Services), M. Lloyd (Executive Director Housing and Environment).

Also in Attendance:

R. Tranter (Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), L. Lane (Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer), L. Donovan (Director of People Services), S. Harris (Director Financial Services and Section 151 Officer), L. Sykes (Deputy Director Financial Services), B. Winstanley (Director of Assets and Decarbonisation), S. Richards (Director Customer Economy and Regeneration Services), K. Cole (Chief Education Officer), K. Peters (Service Manager, Service Improvement and Partnerships), J. Reynolds (Sports and Facilities Manager), J. Lougher (Sport and Leisure Development Manager), C. Campbell (Transportation Engineering Manager), J. Pearce (Business Improvement Officer), H. Jones (Waste Strategy and Operations Manager), M. Headington (Green Spaces and Transport Services Manager), A. West (Place Shaping and Sustainable Communities for Learning Service Manager), S. Ellis (Lead for Inclusion and ALN), P. Cooke (Transformation Manager, Decarbonisation), J. Williams (Director of Adult Services) and E. Sullivan (Democratic Services Manager)

And Speakers:

K. Dufty.

### **RECORDING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS.**

The Leader reminded those present that the meeting was being live streamed, and a recording would be made available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items. [Click Here To View](#).

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors N. George and S. Cook and from G. Jenkins (Director of Children's Services).

## **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

Councillor E. Forehead declared a personal interest in relation to Agenda Item No. 7 - The Development of Specialist Additional Learning Provision for Children with Additional Learning Needs, as her grandson attends one of the schools mentioned within the report. As this was a personal interest there was no requirement for Councillor Forehead to leave the meeting and she could take a full part in the debate and vote.

Councillor E. Stenner declared a personal interest in relation to Agenda Item No. 8 – Meals Direct, as a family member works in the service. As this was a personal interest there was no requirement for Councillor Stenner to leave the meeting and she could take full part in the debate and vote.

## **3. MINUTES – CABINET 16<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2025**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on the 16<sup>th</sup> April 2025 be approved as a correct record.

## **4. MINUTES – SPECIAL CABINET 30<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2025**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the special Cabinet meeting held on the 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025 be approved as a correct record.

## **5. CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

Cabinet was provided with the Cabinet Forward Work Programme, which detailed the scheduled reports until September 2025.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the Forward Work Programme be noted. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

## **12 COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER PROPOSAL: FORMER RHYMNEY FUNCTION CENTRE**

With the approval of the Chair this item was brought forward on the agenda.

Consideration was given to the report that sought Cabinet approval for the proposal to transfer the former Rhymney Function Centre to JM Fitness Community Interest Company (CIC). Cabinet noted that the proposal included granting a long-term lease to JM Fitness CIC, a local gym constituted as a Community Interest Company (CIC) to continue to provide gym services within the Rhymney area. Cabinet was advised that the Function Centre had previously operated as a commercial kitchen facility and distribution centre, supplying Meals on Wheels Service and other contracts. The kitchen was closed and declared surplus to operational requirements in 2008, and since then the site had been used as an ad hoc storage facility with minimal investments.

Cabinet noted that the condition of the site meant that safety and other essential works needed to be undertaken at part of the proposal, and those indicative costs needed to be taken into consideration as detailed in the Officer's report. It was further noted that the Community Group were currently exploring potential funding options to support the further development of

the building once the lease was secured. The benefits of Community Asset Transfers were outlined and how they could achieve positive outcomes was highlighted.

Mr. K. Dufty on behalf of the Community Group addressed Cabinet and emphasised the importance of a gym for the local community and the positive feedback that they had received from Local Ward Members and residents of the Rhymney area. Mr Dufty spoke passionately about the ways in which the original gym had provided a welcoming, non-judgemental, inclusive and safe environment for individuals seeking to improve their physical and mental well-being, providing a place for social interaction and community engagement. Mr Dufty shared feedback from gym members and the community of Rhymney that illustrated the positive impact of the gym. Testimonials from individuals of various ages which highlighted the gym's role in improving self-esteem were read out, and the way in which the facility had supported individuals with specific needs such as autism was shared. Mr Dufty expressed gratitude for the support and commitment of the Council, Local Ward Members and Volunteers who had been instrumental in the efforts to secure a new location for the gym and concluded his statement by emphasising the eagerness of the community to reopen the gym and continue providing valuable services.

The Leader thanked Mr Dufty for speaking at Cabinet and welcomed the proposal as an excellent illustration of how Community Asset Transfer can have a positive impact.

Clarification was sought as to how new community groups who may not be aware of the process can make initial approaches to the Council to register an interest in Community Asset Transfers. Officers confirmed that the process was accessible through the Council's website and advised that a dedicated Community Asset Transfer Officer, Lesile Edwards, had been appointed and would be available to talk to interested groups. Cabinet acknowledged how invaluable support during the early stages of the process would be and were pleased to note the appointment of a dedicated officer in this role.

Following due consideration and for the reasons given in the Officer's report it was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained therein be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously approved.

RESOLVED that for the reasons given in the Officers report: -

1. The proposed transfer of the former Rhymney Function Centre to JM Fitness, through a long lease agreement at less than best consideration in return for the social value outlined below be approved. The lease terms to be agreed upon and approval be delegated to the Director of Assets and Decarbonisation.
2. The outline investment required to undertake the safety works to make the building safe to transfer be approved.

## **6. PROPOSED CLEANING AND GREENING ENHANCEMENTS FOR THE COUNTY**

Considered by the Housing and Environment Scrutiny Committee at its special meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

Consideration was given to the report which sought Cabinet approval for a proposed programme of Cleaning and Greening enhancements around the County Borough. Cabinet noted that over several years of achieving Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) savings, the Council's programme of cleaning and greening enhancements had been reduced or withdrawn. An additional £1.365m of funding had been identified for 2025/26 from the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for packaging. This programme made it the responsibility of businesses which supply and use packaging to pay for its management when it becomes waste, under the scheme payments would be made to each Local Authority to cover the collection and disposal of packaging waste.

The key enhancements were noted to include the reintroduction of the Ward Cleansing Team, the reintroduction of the Community Response Team, enhanced mechanical sweeping, sign cleaning and vegetation cut-back around signs on a cyclical basis, Weed Removal Team, strategic route cleaning to be scheduled quarterly and Gateway enhancement works.

Cabinet noted the feedback from the Housing and Environment Scrutiny Committee and the strong support for the proposal.

Clarification was sought as to the number of weed spraying application currently being undertaken and how much difference would this investment make to weed growth and clearance. Officers confirmed that there were 2 applications of herbicide treatment made during the growing season and that the additional investment would allow for the removal of dead weeds and detritus, preventing regrowth and complementing the enhanced road sweeping proposed in the report.

Responding to a question as to when works would commence if the report was supported, Officers confirmed that works would start almost immediately after the call-in procedure.

Clarification was then sought on the difference between the Ward Cleansing and Community Response Teams and Officers advised Cabinet that the Ward Cleansing Team would focus on issues such as deep cleaning and reducing fly-tipping waiting times. The Community Response Teams would handle other areas such as fence and railing repairs, painting etc. Further clarification was then sought as to who would decide which weeks were allocated to those two teams and it was noted that a schedule would be shared with Members in advance allowing flexibility to accommodate events and that Members would be contacted in advance of their allocated weeks for suggestions, with unused weeks offered to other Ward Members.

Responding to a question as to whether there would be a communications campaign to support the plan, Officers confirmed that there would be a very proactive campaign throughout the process to illustrate the good work being done by these teams.

Following due consideration of the report it was moved and seconded that subject to an amendment to recommendation 3.1 of the Officer's report to read 'Support the proposed cleaning and greening enhancement programme for the 2025/26 financial year to be funded from the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) fund' and the additional recommendation that Cabinet endorse a recommendation to Council as part of the 2026/27 budget setting process that the cleaning and greening programme should be funded on an ongoing basis should the EPR fund be sustained the report be approved.

RESOLVED that for reasons contained within the Officers report: -

1. The proposed cleaning and greening enhancement programme for the 2025/26 financial year to be funded from the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) fund be approved.
2. RECOMMEND to Council as part of the 2026/27 Budget Setting Process the cleaning and greening programme be funded on an ongoing basis should the EPR fund be sustained.

## **7. DEVELOPMENT OF SPECIALIST ADDITIONAL LEARNING PROVISION FOR CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS**

Considered by the Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2025.

Consideration was given to the report which sought Cabinet endorsement to proceed to consultation on the expansion of specialist resource bases (SRBs) for children with additional learning needs across the County Borough.

Cabinet noted that the Local Authority had a statutory responsibility to keep the provision for additional learning needs under review. Current demand for specialist placements within SRBs outweighed the capacity, particularly for children with complex needs and autistic spectrum disorders, without additional provision there was a risk that children would not have their needs met locally and out of county provision would be required. Cabinet recognised that whilst many children would have their needs met in mainstream settings, the demand for specialist provision for some children was increasing at a faster rate than predicted. Cabinet further noted that the consultation proposed within the report would focus on increased capacity for specialist provision for children with ALN, to best meet the needs of vulnerable learners.

Cabinet noted the two proposals for Welsh Medium Schools and assurances were sought that there was enough Welsh-speaking staff available to meet the additional ALN needs provision. Officers confirmed that Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni was already successful at meeting the needs of learners with ALN, the proposal would formalise the development of a Specialist Resource Base for pupils through the medium of Welsh at the secondary school, with existing staff likely to work within the provision.

Clarification was sought as to whether the strategy would future proof ALN provision and whether there was a greater need for such provision in the Upper Rhymney Valley as Cabinet noted that Idris Davies School was earmarked for 3 bases over 2 years. Officers confirmed that the proposals were designed to meet current and emerging needs, however there might be a requirement to review the provision for the future in the context of the new ALN Act. In reference to the bases at Idris Davies, Officers confirmed that the location of the bases supports the needs of children across the county borough. The Idris Davies location did not imply that the needs were greater in the Rhymney Valley, however, it was recognised that historically there had been less provision in this area of the local authority, and there was an emerging level of need from schools in the upper Rhymney Valley. Cabinet noted that Officers had worked with the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors, and the school can accommodate the three classes over a two-year period, meeting the needs across the whole area.

Responding to a question about additional funding to meeting ALN pressures, Cabinet was advised that no additional funding would be received. It was anticipated that the additional £1.244m funding required would be met through the school's funding formula and this would also add an additional £500,000 of funding pressures for home to school transport.

Responding to a question on staff training, Officers confirmed that any professional learning requirements would be identified to ensure staff had the appropriate skills and expertise needed. The Inclusion Team and the Caerphilly Autistic Spectrum Service offered comprehensive training. Parent support would mirror existing support and be tailored to individual needs.

Following due consideration and for the reasons given in the Officer's report it was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained therein be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously approved.

RESOLVED that: -

1. The information contained in the report be considered.
2. To proceed to formal consultation in partnership with each Governing Body in respect of the development of specialist resources base provision across the Borough as need determines be endorsed.

3. The significant ongoing financial implications of the report be considered.

## **8. MEALS DIRECT**

Considered by Education Social Services Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2025.

Consideration was given to the report which sought Cabinet approval on the removal of the lower subsidised rate of £4.18 per day currently applied to 79% of recipients of the Meals Direct service, with all recipients paying the higher rate of £6.89 per day effective from the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2025. Cabinet noted that this would be the first step in making Meals Direct a sustainable service.

Clarification was sought as to whether full cost recovery would be achieved with the removal of the subsidy, how eligibility for the subsidy was assessed and if it was income related. Officers confirmed that the removal of the subsidy would not achieve full cost recovery immediately, the pathway to this model was still being determined as it needed to consider factors like energy bills, non-domestic rates and staffing costs, however it would make the service more financially sustainable. In terms of the subsidy assessment this was carried out over the phone and was based on a few simple questions about the individual's ability to prepare a meal and access to other options, it was not income related.

Cabinet expressed their commitment to continue the service, recognising its importance to the community.

Following due consideration and for the reasons given in the Officer's report it was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained therein be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously approved.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained within the Officers report the removal of the lower subsidy of £4.18 per day currently applied to Meals Direct as of the 1st July 2025 and all recipients of the Meals Direct service to pay the higher rate of £6.89 per day, an increase of £2.38 per day be endorsed.

## **9. INFORMATION GOVERNANCE AND CYBER SECURITY UPDATE**

Considered by Corporate and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

Consideration was given to the report which provided Cabinet with a status update in relation to Information Governance and Cyber Security and highlighted the Council's approach to access, risk, records management and corporate complaints and the Council's Cyber Security Strategy and Associated Action Plan.

Cabinet requested a walk through of the potential impact should the Council fall victim to a cyber-attack. Officers outlined the potentially catastrophic consequences for the Council's various operations and community services. Operational disruption whereby a cyber attack could disrupt or halt essential services including internal communications, telephony, intranet and the public website. Financial losses due to recovery and mitigation costs, lost productivity and potential fines and penalties related to data breaches. Reputational damage to the public trust and negative media attention. Legal implications in terms of liabilities and penalties for non-compliance with data protection regulations. The impact on residents and communities where essential services could be disrupted, it could also lead to potential identity theft and increased risk of exposure for our most vulnerable residents. The potential impact on staff wellbeing was also highlighted, in terms of morale and potential burn out due to the efforts required to recover after such an attack.

Following due consideration and for the reasons given in the Officer's report it was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained therein be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously approved.

RESOLVED that for the reasons given in the Officers report the status update and progress made in relation to Information Governance and Cyber Security be noted.

## **10. CAERPHILLY LOCAL AREA ENERGY PLAN**

Considered by the Housing and Environment Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

Consideration was given to the report which presented and sought the endorsement of Cabinet for the Local Area Energy Plan developed for Caerphilly County Borough. Cabinet noted that the Local Area Energy Plan was a partnership rather than a Council document and provided a means of enabling local areas to translate Net Zero Carbon targets into actions within the local energy system using data driven, evidence-based approaches, identifying the changes needed to transition the local energy system to Net Zero.

Between March 2023 and October 2024, Carbon Trust, ARUP and Afallen developed a Local Area Energy Plan for Caerphilly County Borough. This process included data collection, stakeholder engagement, modelling and developing actions, priorities and priority projects culminating in the production of the LAEP. Cabinet was advised that the propositions chosen for the Caerphilly LAEP were, getting buildings zero carbon ready, making journeys more sustainable, increasing renewable generation, net zero businesses and decarbonise energy networks.

Cabinet queried how partnership commitment to the LAEP would be maintained and Officers explained that as it was partnership document, and all partners had signed up to it, each organisation would follow its own processes to fulfil their commitments. This Council can lead by example, being a significant factor in the local energy system, and influence other partners through its actions.

Cabinet acknowledged the support for Net Zero across the Chamber but queried how the public could be brought along on this journey. Officer emphasised how important it was that the Council continued to highlight the LAEP with residents, businesses and partners and though its own actions in terms of reducing energy use and moving to more sustainable energy types set an example. Furthermore, as a major employer the Council by encouraging its employees to adopt net-zero practices have a significant impact. The Council's actions and decision making would play a crucial role in achieving net-zero targets and the LAEP was noted as fundamental to fulfilling the Council's 2050 strategy.

Following due consideration and for the reasons given in the Officer's report it was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained therein be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously approved.

RESOLVED that for the reasons given in the Officers report the Caerphilly Local Area Energy Plan developed for the whole of Caerphilly County Borough be endorsed.

## **11. IMPROVING RECYCLING BEHAVIOUR THROUGH FURTHER USE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT 1990**

Considered by the Housing and Environment Scrutiny Committee on the 29<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

Consideration was given to the report which sought Cabinet approval for a proposal to refine and enhance current approaches to public engagement and enforcement through further use of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 Section 46.

Cabinet noted that as part of the development of the Waste and Recycling Strategy an approach to tackle recyclables and food being placed in the residual waste stream and the contamination of recycling containers was implemented in February 2024, this education and enforcement initiative focused on engagement with residents who needed additional support with proper bin usage.

Cabinet queried how successful the Section 46 process had been in reducing contamination from recycling bins. Officers confirmed that since the introduction of the initiative the Recycling Advisory Team had engaged with several thousand residents to raise awareness of proper recycling, and the quality of recycling had improved as a result. In 2024-2025 an additional 858 tonnes of food waste was collected that would otherwise have been placed in residual containers.

Cabinet sought clarification as to the importance of removing recycling material from the residual waste bin and how much improvement could be made with recycling performance. Officer advised that residents in Caerphilly produced more residual waste per household compared to the national average. A compositional analysis indicated that 59% of what was being placed in these bins was in fact recyclable. Diverting food waste and recyclable materials from the residual waste stream would significantly impact on recycling performance and result in financial savings due to lower disposal costs associated with anaerobic digestion disposal of food waste specifically.

Responding to a question as to the number of fixed penalty notices issued, Officers advised that 23 had been issued to date with 10 referred to Magistrates Court for non-payment. It was emphasised that this was out of 27,500 occurrences of contamination, clearly demonstrating the effectiveness of the education and engagement process and the proposals within the report would build on this improvement.

Following due consideration and for the reasons given in the Officer's report it was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained therein be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously approved.

RESOLVED that for the reasons given in the Officer's report: -

1. The implementation of an enhanced education and engagement process that incorporates the option to serve legal notices and in certain circumstances, where deemed necessary, the issue of fixed penalty notices to persistent offenders relating to placing recyclable materials within the residual waste bins be approved.
2. The Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) is set at £70 reducing to £35 if paid within 14 days be approved.
3. A specific communication campaign be undertaken in advance of implementing the enhanced process.
4. The appointment of 6 additional recycling advisory wardens to be funded from projected savings in disposal costs from diverting, in particular food waste from the residual waste stream be approved.

### **13. ACTIVE GWENT REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP**

Consideration was given to the report which sought Cabinet approval for the Council's Sport Caerphilly Team to enter a formal partnership with Sport Wales (Gwent Region) alongside the other four Gwent Local Authorities, with Newport City Council as host authority for the new Gwent Sports Partnership.



Cabinet noted that Sport Wales provided funding for Sports Development to all Local Authority areas in Wales, however there is now a national directive from them to move towards a regional model of sports governance and delivery, with the aim of better supporting the national Vision for Sport in Wales.

Clarification was sought regarding the delay in establishing the Gwent Regional Sports Partnership. Officers confirmed that Gwent Local Authorities had been collaborating informally for over a decade, leading efforts in collaborating working and sharing best practices. It was now deemed appropriate to formalise this partnership, with Newport City Council acting as the host authority.

Clarification was sought as to whether this approach would impact the Council's ability to deliver on its own Sport and Active Recreation Strategy. Officers confirmed that there would be no impact on the strategy and that local needs would continue to be prioritised to ensure that Caerphilly's strategic outcomes were achieved.

Following due consideration and for the reasons given in the Officer's report it was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained therein be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously approved.

RESOLVED that for the reasons given in the Officers report: -

1. The Council's Sport Caerphilly team entering into a formal partnership (the Gwent Sports Partnership) in the Gwent region with Sport Wales and the other four Gwent Local Authorities be approved.
2. That Newport City Council be approved to act as the host authority for the new Gwent Sports Partnership for the first five years of the partnership.
3. That Newport City Council's Head of Regeneration and Economic Development, Head of Finance, Head of Law and Standards be approved to have delegated authority to action the creation of the sports partnership preparing the required legal agreements, funding and finance management, and operational tasks relating to the host role.

#### **14. OUTDOOR FACILITIES FEES 2025/26**

Consideration was given to the report which sought Cabinet approval for a revised schedule of Outdoor Sports Facilities fees for the 2025/26 financial year.

Cabinet noted that as part of the 2025/26 budget setting report a 75% increase in sports fees was agreed at Council on the 27<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Subsequently a significant amount of feedback from residents, sports clubs and other stakeholders was received and so the increase was paused whilst alternative options were considered. The report set out the proposed schedule of Outdoor Sports Facilities fees for the 2025/26 financial year as at Appendix 1 of the Officer's report. The revised proposal included a smaller increase in fees and explored potential opportunities for sports clubs to enter into self-management agreements to reduce Council costs.

Cabinet requested an overview of the £1.6m cost to deliver the outdoor facilities service and were advised that these were two fold with £1m related to maintenance of the 116 grass sports pitches in the County Borough, including grass cutting, spiking, marking and other maintenance activities and the remaining £600k used to cover the costs of opening, closing and cleaning the pavilions as well as routine maintenance.

In noting the proposed increase of 15% for junior and youth fees, Cabinet queried where Caerphilly was placed in terms of costs when compared to other authorities and Officers

confirmed that even with the 15% increase Caerphilly was well below the average when compared to neighbouring local authorities.

Clarification was then sought on the benefits to the Council and Clubs of self-management agreements. Cabinet was advised that the self-management model helped to reduce Council costs and it was confirmed that the approach had been a success in other local authorities acting as a pathway to Community Asset Transfer, an example of this being the self-management agreement with the Bowls Club in 2016/17 which allowed the Council to make savings and has been a success for the club.

Further detail was then provided on the Community Asset Transfer process and the support and guidance provided to clubs through existing frameworks.

Following due consideration and for the reasons given in the Officer's report it was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained therein be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously approved.

RESOLVED that for the reasons given in the Officers report: -

1. The proposed schedule of Outdoor Sports Facilities fees for the 2025/26 financial year set out at Appendix 1 be approved.
2. The shortfall in income of £50k from the revised Outdoor Sports Facilities fees, be covered in 2025/26 from one off use of MTFP contingency reserve and addressed in future years through the budget setting process be approved.
3. An additional workstream for the Parks Review Group, including potential pilot arrangements, to consider whether sports clubs could enter into self-management agreements to manage the pavilion (changing rooms) themselves and thus reduce the Council's expenditure in this area be endorsed.

#### **15. UPGRADING THE AUDIO/VISUAL EQUIPMENT AND HARDWARE IN TY PENALLTA TO SUPPORT HYBRID MEETINGS**

Consideration was given to the report which sought Cabinet approval for a proposed use of reserves totalling £146, 848.00 to fund a partial refit of the Council Chamber together with the reconfiguration of the hardware in the Chamber and Sirhowy Room to support hybrid meetings and the provision of in-house livestreaming of meetings. It was noted that the contract procured in 2021 was for a three-year period and included the provision of hardware and the ability to live stream via a platform provided by a third-party contractor. Officer had been exploring a variation of the existing contract with the incumbent supplier to enable the live streaming function to be managed in-house together with the replacement of the Chamber microphones.

Cabinet noted that the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 required Local Authorities to make and publish arrangements for the purpose of ensuring that meetings can be held on a multi-locational/hybrid basis that enables person who are not in the same place to attending meetings.

Following due consideration and for the reasons given in the Officer's report it was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained therein be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously approved.

RESOLVED that for the reasons given in the Officers report: -

1. The variation of the contract to facilitate the works required to the Council Chamber and Sirhowy Room be approved.

2. The proposal to fund the £146, 848 one-off cost for the hardware installation and associated support and maintenance for a further 3-year term from the Members Services reserve be approved.

The meeting closed at 14.31 p.m.

Approved and signed as a correct record subject to any corrections made at the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2025.

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Chair