

REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR HEULWEN D HULME – RHIWCYNON WARD

NOVEMBER 2023

COUNTY FARMS 8.11.23

A meeting of 9 County Councillors met with the Chief Executive and the County Solicitor.

The County Councillors raised the following concerns:

Underhanded dealings with a contractor of the authority.

The Scrutiny Committee overseeing this were ill advised and had the opportunity to take this back to Cabinet for further consideration.

Lack of consideration and thought for the tenant farmer and his investment

One valuation from a company from Cardiff when Welshpool has one of the largest agricultural agents in Wales. This was challenged.

Confidentially clause – why when it is a public asset.

Reputational damage of PCC.

Advice and guidance to the Cabinet was fundamentally flawed.

Public Assets of this nature should be a matter for full council not just 11 members of cabinet to dispose of.

Backhanders?

The Chief Executive fully understood our concerns, anger, frustrations. She confirmed that the sale had not gone through but it was well advanced and too far in the process.

She noted that the process is not clear and transparent and the policy for the disposal of County Farms is fundamentally flawed and has requested a complete review before any further sales go ahead.

She has agreed to hold a briefing to full Council on the County Farm Estate and this is currently being pulled together.

BUDGET UPDATE 22.11.23

FOLLOWING the second financial quarter of the year, Powys County Council is set to report a predicted surplus of £2.85 million at the end of March 2024.

This is £880,000 less than the surplus position of £3.73 million that was being reported at the end of June. This is against its base budget of £326.621 million for 2023/2024.

The report will be presented to councillors at a meeting of the Finance Panel on Monday, 13 November for discussion, ahead of a Cabinet meeting later this month.

The report explains that the cause of the “deterioration” of the position over the summer is down to an expected “significant increase of employee costs.”

This is down to the Welsh Government agreeing to increase the pay offer for teachers and headteachers by five per cent from September.

The report said: “The budget set by council back in March is not sufficient to meet our actual salary costs with the councils forecast surplus position reported in September 2023 now being eroded as a consequence.

“Whilst the council is managing its budget position this year, we cannot underestimate the challenge the council faces in maintaining a balanced budget next year and over the medium term.

LLAIS 10.11.23

Update on the North Powys Wellbeing Clinic – currently working on an updated model. It will go out to public engagement again in December. The funding for this comes from Welsh Government and not the Health Board. Capital funds are ring fenced and cannot be vired. We need to ensure the business case stacks up and the engagement is well attended with local input.

DAY CENTRE ENGAGEMENT EVENTS.

32 locations have been identified and all residents are encouraged to part take in these events which will be held in all key towns in the County. It is important that the service continues to provide a service to our ageing population but most likely in a different format.

CAEREINION MEDICAL CENTRE.

I have asked for an update as this project appears to have gone off the radar.

STROKE PATIENTS

Stroke patients are know longer 'red' calls and has now been downgraded from 'red' to 'amber' and the ambulance crew cannot administer the all important drug until a CT scan has been done.

POWYS TEACHING HEALTH BOARD

The board is forecasting a £33.5m deficit and are currently under enhanced monitoring by the Welsh Gov. Because a lot of residents access health care over the boarder and in particular at the Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt, Gobowen, the board reported there is now approximately a 2 year waiting list for surgery. The board continue to plan towards the strategic goals of Wellbeing, Early Help & support, Tackling the big 4 – cancer, circulatory, respiratory and mental health. The North Powys Wellbeing facility – there is a public meeting in Ladywell House on 13 December 12 – 2.30pm with Shrewsbury & Telford Hospital and the transformation team. The board are drafting a communication report on the next steps for the new Caereinion Medical Centre shortly.

PLANNING IN THE RHIWCYNON WARD

- ABERHAFESP PLANNING
- 23/0740/FUL – Erection of a chalet, improved access and assoc drainage – Tyn Y Coed Field, BYF SY16 3JA
- 23/0636/FUL – Conversion of agricultural outbuilding into an annex – Bwlchcaehaidd, BYF SY16 3JB

- DWYRIW PLANNING
- 22/2217/FUL – Lateral extension to extraction area at Tan Y Foel Quarry, Cefn Coch, SY21 0AN
- 23/1171/OUT – Erection of Agricultural dwelling & installation of Septic tank and assoc. works – Argae field, New Mills SY16 3NG
- 23/1612/FUL – Demolition of existing dwelling & replace with new & assoc works & new septic tank. Tyn Y Celyn, Adfa SY16 3DD
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- MANAFON PLANNING
- OPDE/22/0160 – Brynteg, New Mills, SY16 3NQ – **case closed but re-opened.**

- TREGYNON PLANNING
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Contact details: cllr.heulwen.hulme@powys.gov.uk 01686 650182 or 07976 927487