

**MEETING OF THE COUNCIL 5/12/24**

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**Present:** Councillor Beca Roberts (Chair)  
Councillor Ioan Thomas (Vice-chair).

Councillors:- Craig ab Iago, Menna Baines, Beca Brown, Stephen Churchman, R. Glyn Daniels, Anwen Davies, Elwyn Edwards, Elfed Wyn ap Elwyn, Alan Jones Evans, Gwilym Evans, Dylan Fernley, Delyth Lloyd Griffiths, Jina Gwyrfai, Annwen Hughes, John Brynmor Hughes, Louise Hughes, R. Medwyn Hughes, Iwan Huws, Nia Wyn Jeffreys, Anne Lloyd Jones, Berwyn Parry Jones, Dewi Jones, Elin Walker Jones, Elwyn Jones, Gwilym Jones, Gareth Tudor Jones, Huw Wyn Jones, Linda Ann Jones, June Jones, Eryl Jones-Williams, Cai Larsen, Beth Lawton, Dafydd Meurig, Dilwyn Morgan, Linda Morgan, Dewi Owen, Edgar Wyn Owen, Llio Elenid Owen, Gareth Coj Parry, Nigel Pickavance, Rheinallt Puw, Arwyn Herald Roberts, Elfed P Roberts, John Pughe Roberts, Meryl Roberts, Richard Glyn Roberts, Huw Llwyd Rowlands, Paul Rowlinson, Angela Russell, Dyfrig Siencyn, Peter Thomas, Menna Trenholme, Rhys Tudur, Hefin Underwood, Einir Wyn Williams, Elfed Williams, Gareth Williams, Gruffydd Williams, Sasha Williams and Sian Williams.

**Officers:** Dafydd Gibbard (Chief Executive), Geraint Owen (Corporate Director), Dylan Owen (Corporate Director and Statutory Director of Social Services), Dewi Morgan (Head of Finance), Iwan Evans (Monitoring Officer), Ian Jones (Head of Democracy Services), Carys Fôn Williams (Head of Housing and Property), Gwern ap Rhisiart (Head of Education), Gerwyn Jones (Assistant Head Environment Department - Transport), Vera Jones (Democracy and Language Service Manager), Sion Huws (Propriety and Elections Manager), Emyr Edwards (Research and Information Manager) and Eirian Roberts (Democracy Services Officer).

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Dafydd Owen Davies, Elin Hywel, Dawn Lynne Jones, Gwynfor Owen, John Pughe and Rob Triggs.

**2. MINUTES**

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meetings of the Council held on the following dates as a true record.

3 October, 2024;  
24 October 2024 (Special Meeting)

**3. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST**

The Monitoring Officer referred to a briefing note he had sent in advance to members regarding item 8 - Discretionary Powers to Allow Discounts and / or Raise a Premium 2024-25 and item 9 - Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2025/26.

The Monitoring Officer further noted that, in light of receiving enquiries from members regarding item 13D on the agenda – Notice of Motion by Councillor John Pughe Roberts, he advised that, due to the current multidimensional nature of the Inheritance Tax situation, no change to the taxation system could be theorized to represent an interest at this time.

The following members declared a personal interest in item 8 on the agenda - Discretionary Right to Grant Discounts and/or Charge a Premium 2025/26 for the reasons noted:-

- Councillor Dewi Jones because a family member owns a long-term vacant property following inheritance.
- Councillor Huw Rowlands because a family member has property subject to the Premium.
- Councillor Jina Gwyrfai because she is the co-owner of a vacant property.
- Councillor Gareth Coj Parry because a family member has a vacant property.

The members were of the opinion that they were prejudicial interests, and they withdrew from the meeting during the discussion on the item.

#### **4. THE CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

It was noted that the Council wished to express condolences to everyone within the county's communities who had recently lost loved ones.

The Council stood in silence as a mark of respect and remembrance.

It was noted that several Council members had been ill recently, and they were wished a full and speedy recovery.

The following were congratulated:-

- Menter Iaith Gwynedd Group on their recent success in the Mentrau Iaith Cymru awards. It was noted that they came out on top and received an excellence award for the work done with the Welsh Language Welcome project - the North Wales Africa Society.
- The Research Team in the Corporate Services Department on reaching the short list across Britain in the annual Local Area Research and Intelligence Association (LARIA) awards for the work undertaken contributing to the Llechen Lân project about the future care needs of older persons.
- The Gwynedd Consultancy Service on receiving High Praise in the Roy Edwards Project of the Year Award at the ICE Wales Cymru Awards 2024 for the Bodfel and Bodefail Boduan Bridges project.
- The family of Cefn Uchaf, Llanbedr following the announcement that their campsite, Rhaeadr Nantcol, has been selected as Britain's best campsite 2024 by Campsites.co.uk.
- Lord Harlech as Glyn Cywarch Talsarnau won the 2024 Historic House Restoration Award, the first house in Wales to do this since the award was established in 2008.
- Elfyn Evans on winning the Japan Rally last week and coming second in the World Rally Championship.
- Wales Women's Football team on their success reaching Euro 2025.

Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn was thanked for his work leading the Council since 2017 and for being a strong and consistent voice for Welsh and rural communities regionally and nationally. He was also thanked for his friendship, experience and firm leadership over the years and it was noted that he would certainly have a further contribution to make to local and national public life in the future.

The Deputy Leader, Cllr Nia Jeffreys, Leader of the Independent Group, Cllr Angela Russell, Leader of the Labour / Liberal Group, Cllr Stephen Churchman and the Chief Executive all gave a word of gratitude to Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn.

#### **5. URGENT ITEMS**

None to note.

6. QUESTIONS

*(The Cabinet Members' written responses to the questions had been published in advance.)*

**(1) Question from Councillor Gruffydd Williams**

Is the Education Department doing everything it can to ensure that all schools comply with the recommendations of the Cass Review?

**Response – Shadow Cabinet Member for Education, Councillor Paul Rowlinson**

Providing appropriate national guidance to schools in Wales to support trans, non-binary and gender-questioning children and young people in education is a commitment of the Welsh Government. Since the consultation in April 2024 no guidance has been published. When it is published the Education Department will do everything that is expected of us to promote it among our schools in line with national guidance.

**Supplementary Question from Councillor Gruffydd Williams**

Given that the Cass Review has been out for many months, what guidance has the Council been using to protect children from social transitioning if we do not use the recommendations of the Cass Review?

**Response – Shadow Cabinet Member for Education, Councillor Paul Rowlinson**

The recommendations of the Cass Report refer to recommendations for the Health Service in England. They make no reference to schools, but the Welsh Government promises guidance for schools in Wales which considers the Cass Report and the views of the stakeholders. When the guidance is published, I can assure you that Gwynedd will ensure that the guidance is followed.

**(2) Question by Councillor Eryl Jones-Williams**

Will Cyngor Gwynedd be making strong representations to Transport for Wales and the Welsh Government over the loss of the last evening train northwards and southwards on the Cambrian Coast line? There are no buses at all late at night between Machynlleth and Fairbourne or between Barmouth and Porthmadog, so alternative public transport is out of the question. This decision will affect workers in the hospitality industry and local supermarket staff and go against the Welsh Government's policy of encouraging less car journeys, even though many people in this area do not have cars.

**Response – Shadow Cabinet Member for Environment, Cllr Craig ab Iago**

Thank you for the question. I don't have much to add to the written answer other than to say that I share your concern about Gwynedd's public transport situation, and I welcome any opportunity to raise awareness about this. Indeed, we have already made the Council's voice heard to the Government.

**Supplementary Question by Councillor Eryl Jones Williams**

I was at a meeting last Friday of the Cambrian Coastal Railway Committee where it was commented that the Welsh Government had introduced changes to the trains without undertaking a disability consultation. Will Cyngor Gwynedd go on to

challenge Transport for Wales and the Government to make sure that the last train here will continue because losing it would have a terrible impact on people who use the train in this area of Gwynedd?

**Response – Shadow Cabinet Member for Environment, Cllr Craig ab Iago**

Yes. I'll pass your comments on to the Department.

**7. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

It was proposed and seconded to appoint Councillor Nia Jeffreys as Leader of the Council for the term of this Council.

A member noted that he had two questions on a point of order regarding the nomination. In response, the Monitoring Officer indicated that he would advise that the Council first complete the process of inviting nominations for the Leadership appointment process.

The member proposed to appoint Councillor Beca Brown as Leader of the Council for the Council's term. The proposal was seconded.

No further nominations were received.

The member asked for clarity on the two matters of order, namely: -

- Although it was not usual to have a discussion in Council on the issue of appointing a Leader, there was nothing in the Constitution which prevented the Council from discussing the matter. Was it therefore possible for the Council to have a discussion on this?
- How many nominations can one member make?

In response to these questions, the Monitoring Officer stated: -

- That the motion before them was to appoint an individual as Leader of the Council, and not the process etc, and although there was nothing in the Constitution preventing the Council from having a discussion, that was not the norm, and the context of any discussion would have to be given deep consideration.
- As far as the Council's arrangements are concerned, there were two appropriate proposals before us. It was therefore not clear what the significance of the question was about nominations as the Council deals with proposals, regardless of the background to those proposals.

The member further noted that four members of the Cabinet, namely Councillors Beca Brown, Dafydd Meurig, Berwyn Parry Jones and Elin Walker Jones, had recently resigned on a matter of principle and the former Leader, Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn, had also done the honourable thing, and had resigned. However, it was unclear where the remaining members of the current Cabinet stood, including the Deputy Leader, on the divisive issue of apologising to Foden's victims and holding a public inquiry into the matter. Accordingly, if Cllr Beca Brown was unwilling to put her name forward to become Leader of the Council, he would call on Councillor Dafydd Meurig to do so, and so on.

Councillor Beca Brown indicated she did not want her name to go forward.

With the consent of the seconder, the member withdrew his motion stating that he wanted to propose the appointment of Councillor Dafydd Meurig as Leader of the Council for the Council's term.

The Chair noted that a member could not put forward more than one motion.

**RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Nia Jeffreys as Leader of the Council for the term of this Council.**

The Leader gave a short address and stressed that she, and all members, stood together with Foden's victims. She indicated that she wished to send a message to those victims stating that she apologised from the bottom of her heart for what had happened to them, and pledged to leave no stone unturned to prevent such a situation from happening again. She also noted that, on behalf of all members of the Plaid Cymru Group, she was calling again for a public inquiry into what had happened.

**8. COUNCIL TAX - DISCRETIONARY POWERS TO ALLOW DISCOUNTS AND / OR CHARGE A PREMIUM ON SECOND HOMES AND LONG-TERM EMPTY DWELLINGS 2025-26**

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Paul Rowlinson, submitted a report asking the Council to reach a decision on the Premium level set on second homes and long-term empty properties for 2025/26.

The Head of Finance then referred to the detailed research work completed by the Research and Information Team to analyse the impact of the Premium on Gwynedd communities in the context of several other changes, such as the thresholds on self-catering accommodation and the potential impact of Article 4.

Members were given an opportunity to make observations and ask questions.

The Cabinet Member for Housing referred to the Housing Action Plan projects to highlight how the Premium finance was supporting local people to stay in their communities: -

- £68m had been spent creating 757 new units, with £10m of the amount coming from the Premium.
- Tŷ Gwynedd (affordable housing being built by the Council) – 3 on the way to Llanberis, 10 in Coed Mawr, Bangor, 9 in Morfa Nefyn and 5 in Llanystumdwy, with other sites in Tywyn, Bala and Llanfachreth also under consideration.
- New site for 5 local homeless individuals in Dolgellau (that shortlisted for Inside Housing's Best Supported Housing award).
- The purchase of the former Government building in Penrallt, Caernarfon in the hope of housing over 37 people.
- Various developments in Bangor, with at least 15 people housed.
- Housing Lease Scheme - 27 private houses leased to the Council for housing local people, and a further 17 on the way.
- House Purchase Scheme – 37 houses across the county purchased by the Council for gradual renting to local people – 3 in Aberdyfi, 2 in Abersoch, 2 in Barmouth, 6 in Caernarfon, 1 in Ederne, 1 in Felinheli, 1 in Penrhyndeudraeth, 3 in Porthmadog, 3 in Pwllheli and 3 in Tywyn, with more on the way.
- Social housing – 346 houses built and more than 100 on the way (with Cyngor Gwynedd receiving national recognition from the Welsh Government for the good collaboration with the housing associations).
- Empty Housing Grants – 85 applications granted and another 20 on the way.
- Gwynedd Home Purchase Scheme – Tai Teg – 42 households have been able to buy houses through the support of the scheme with a further 35 on the way, more than were granted in the previous 5 years.

The view was expressed that the imposition of a 150% Council Tax Premium coupled with the introduction of Article 4 has had a negative impact on tourism resulting in more guest houses for sale in our communities. It was also noted that it was understood that

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£17.2m was currently standing in the Premium fund, with more money coming in by March next year, and it was asked whether the money was being adequately spent by the Council. In response, it was noted: -

- That the fund had increased over the years as the Housing Action Plan was a long-term plan.
- With houses for sale exempt from paying the Premium for 12 months, that could be an incentive for second home owners to put their houses on the market to see what happens.
- That research would continue by looking at the trends to see if they are permanent, and the number of houses coming on the market and what happens to them would also be part of the research.

It was noted that there was concern locally that the policy of charging a Premium on second homes was pushing Welsh-speaking natives to let go of their inheritance, and also turning holiday homes, which had hardly any direct linguistic impact, into English-speaking households, which has a direct impact on the linguistic profile of areas. It was suggested that the Premium level be reduced to 50%, which would mark a house as a second-house, but not impose a disproportionate burden on the indigenous population with a second-house for whatever reason. In response, it was noted: -

- When a 50% Premium was imposed on second homes, there was initially a trend for more houses to return to being the main home rather than vice versa, but the research clearly showed that this effect had been very short-term.
- In raising the Premium level to 100%, and then to 150%, the research showed that the trend for more housing to return to the principal home continued, which was thought to justify keeping the level at 150%.
- That the research looked at who was moving into the houses and their language, but people moved for many reasons, and possibly there was more movement among some cohorts than others. The pattern was complex and the research addressed questions like this.

It was noted that there was now a sense that visitors were not welcome in Gwynedd and that builders, etc., who are dependent on business from second homeowners, were concerned about having to lay off staff. On this basis, the following amendment was proposed for the second clause of the decision sought in the report: -

- That Cyngor Gwynedd allows NO discount and CHARGES a 100% PREMIUM on class B second homes, in accordance with Section 12B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

The amendment was seconded.

It was pointed out that the amendment was not disputed, but that it was believed that the matter should be referred to scrutiny following this meeting for consideration:-

- Premium fund trajectory, i.e., was there a danger of the fund growing above what could be spent?
- Was it possible to reduce the fund?
- Are there other ways to spend the money that would benefit our communities?
- Can our communities cope with the pace of change?

In response, it was noted: -

- In terms of the pace of changes, that the proposal before them was not to change anything this year and to keep the Premium at the same level as last year and the previous year.
- Not all of the Premium money went into the fund as the Council previously decided to put £3m of it into the revenue budget each year to deal with the pressures in the homelessness field.

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- If the Council decided at some point to reduce the Premium to 100%, that £3m would have to be found elsewhere, whether through cuts or increasing Council Tax or reducing the Housing Action Plan.
- That the suggestion to refer the matter to scrutiny following the decision was sensible, and the Cabinet Member would undoubtedly wish to take this up in due course.

It was noted that keeping the Premium level at 150% was supported until all young people in Gwynedd have a home.

It was asked how quickly we could respond to the situation of co-operatives that deserve to be exempt from paying the Premium, such as Menter y Plu, which uses a former chapel as holiday accommodation. In response, it was noted that it was not possible to provide an estimate of the timeframe as the Finance Department would have to formulate a policy, in consultation with the Legal Department. The Chief Executive added that he wished to know more about the specific case in question, and suggested that he should have a conversation with the member outside the meeting.

The amendment to grant NO discount and CHARGE A 100% PREMIUM ON CLASS B second homes, in accordance with Section 12B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 was voted upon. The amendment fell.

In his closing remarks, the Cabinet Member reminded members that voting against the original motion meant: -

- Not charging any Premium at all which meant there would be no money available for the Housing Action Plan or homelessness.
- Giving a discount to people with second homes and empty houses thereby creating a huge hole in Council funding.

The original motion was voted upon, namely that the Council make no change to the Council Tax Premium for 2025/26, and this was carried.

**RESOLVED that the Council makes no change to Council Tax Premium for 2025/26. That is, for the financial Year 2025/26: -**

- **Cyngor Gwynedd allows NO discount on class A second homes, in accordance with Section 12 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.**
- **Cyngor Gwynedd allows NO discount and CHARGES A PREMIUM OF 150% on class B second homes, in accordance with Section 12B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.**
- **Cyngor Gwynedd allows NO discount on homes that have been empty for 6 months or more and CHARGES A PREMIUM OF 100% on homes that have been empty for 12 months or more, in accordance with Section 12A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.**

### 9. COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2025-26

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Paul Rowlinson, submitted a report requesting the Council to confirm the continuation of the current Local Scheme to provide assistance towards paying Council Tax for the year commencing 1 April 2025.

#### **RESOLVED**

1. **That Cyngor Gwynedd's Local Scheme for the year commencing 1 April 2025 continues as it was during 2024/25. Therefore, the following conditions (a - c below) regarding the continuation of the discretionary elements would continue:**

- a) To apply a 100% disregard for war disablement pensions, war widows' pensions and war widowers' pensions, for both pensioners and working age claimants.
  - b) Not to increase the extended reduction periods for pensioners and working age claimants from the standard four weeks in the Prescribed Scheme.
  - c) Not to increase the backdated period for pensioners and working age claimants from the standard three months contained within the Prescribed Scheme.
2. Where appropriate, to delegate powers to the Head of Finance Department, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, to make minor amendments to the scheme for 2025/26, on condition that it will not change the substance of the scheme.

## 10. REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report inviting the Council to adopt changes to the Delegation Plan listed in Appendix 1 to the report and to receive the information about delegated changes to the Constitution in Appendices 2 and 3 in light of legislative developments or a review of arrangements, particularly in the licensing area.

### RESOLVED

1. That the Council adopts the amendments to the Delegation Scheme listed in Appendix 1 of the report.
2. That the Council accepts the information on delegated amendments to the Constitution in Annex 2 and 3 of the report.

## 11. REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES

The Cabinet Member for Corporate and Legal Services, Councillor Menna Trenholme, submitted a report inviting the Council to approve the results of the review of voting classes and polling places in the parliamentary constituencies of Dwyfor Meirionnydd and Bangor Aberconwy (insofar as they are within Gwynedd) within Gwynedd, following a consultation period.

**RESOLVED to approve the results of the review of voting classes and polling places in the parliamentary constituencies of Dwyfor Meirionnydd and Bangor Aberconwy (to the extent they are within Gwynedd) within Gwynedd, following a consultation period.**

## 12. REQUEST TO CHANGE THE NAME OF LLANAELHAEARN COMMUNITY

The Cabinet Member for Corporate and Legal Services, Councillor Menna Trenholme, submitted a report asking the Council to approve Llanaelhaearn Community Council's request to change the name of the Community from Llanaelhaearn to Trefor and Llanaelhaearn in accordance with Section 76 of the Local Government Act 1972.

**RESOLVED to approve the change of the name of the Community of Llanaelhaearn to Trefor and Llanaelhaearn in accordance with section 76 of the Local Government Act 1972.**

## 13. NOTICES OF MOTION

- (A) Submitted - the following notice of motion by Councillor Delyth Lloyd Griffiths under Section 4.19 of the Constitution, and it was seconded: -



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In order to satisfy the need for local housing, this Council brings pressure to bear on the Welsh Government for the practice of exchanging social housing to cease immediately, unless the house is exchanged [other than] within the local authority, or close to the county's boundary.

The member set out the context to her motion, noting:

- That a house in a rural village in her ward had been swapped twice in the past two years with people from outside Wales, and advertised again online this week.
- Adra reported that 50 of their houses have been swapped in the last year, with only 4 swapped with people from outside Gwynedd. The other housing associations also reported low figures. However, if this was a national pattern, it meant that 88 houses had been transferred in the last year to tenants who are not on any waiting list for a house in Wales.
- Cyngor Gwynedd's allocations policy was being undermined every time a house was swapped while local people remained on the waiting list for long periods of time without being able to secure a home.

During the discussion, the following observations were made: -

It was suggested that the ability to exchange social housing was a means of solving problems or improving the situation of individuals or families, and enabled people to stay in their communities. However, this required better management. It was noted that the proposer, in submitting her motion, had stated that the practice of social housing exchanges should be ended unless the house was exchanged within the local authority, or very close to the county boundary. However, as the original proposal as it appeared on this meeting's agenda did not contain the words 'or very close to the county boundary', and the wish was to propose a formal amendment to this end. Concern was raised about restricting exchanges to Gwynedd only as some communities close to the county border had close contact with communities in a neighbouring county.

The Monitoring Officer noted that as the proposer had recited the words '*or very close to the county boundary*', that she could, with the meeting's consent, modify the motion without proceeding to have a formal amendment.

The proposer agreed to modify her proposal and the meeting consented to that.

It was asked what 'very close' meant. In response, the Monitoring Officer noted that there was no legal term for 'close' and that it would not be appropriate for the Council to attempt to produce a precise definition of that. The motion asked the Council to write to the Welsh Government with a request to change the law and that this was the place to have that detailed discussion.

It was suggested that the proposal was almost irrelevant as the numbers of exchanges involved were very small and everyone's circumstances were different. The housing associations also had tight procedures in terms of allowing swaps, including debt checks, etc. It was also noted that it was not understood why we were trying to restrict people's movements if they have a good reason to move to another part of the country.

It was noted that some areas were not popular, and if housing exchanges were not allowed, we could be left with empty houses. It was noted that some people may wish to move out of the area due to family commitments or job opportunities, and it was up to the housing associations to decide whether to allow them to swap their houses. It was also suggested that the proposal should be aimed at the housing associations, rather than the Government, and that the Council should be in discussion with the housing associations to try and work out a solution for this. In response, the Chief Executive noted that these conversations regularly occur with the housing associations through the

Housing Partnership, but in this particular case, it was a legislative right that was entirely beyond the powers of the housing associations.

It was noted that the motion involved a marginal issue, and it was suggested that there were more central issues in social housing, e.g. housing associations appealing against decisions to refuse planning permission to build estates in places such as Botwnnog. However, it was noted that the proposal should be supported accepting that this was one aspect of a much larger problem.

It was noted that the Council was not thought to be effectively monitoring the linguistic impact that movements in social housing occupancy were having, and that it was inevitable that the housing exchanges would have a detrimental linguistic impact.

It was noted that the exchange system needed to be controlled, and that the housing associations themselves were also asking for more control. It was suggested that Gwynedd Social Housing Options, the Council's Housing Department and the housing associations should lobby the Government to change the rules so that local people do not fall victim to the wishes of people wanting to move here and there. It was noted that full consideration could be given to worthy applications to exchange, ensuring that we do not lose Welsh speakers. However, the regime was currently ad-hoc and undermined the hard efforts to get housing to Gwynedd families.

It was suggested that local councillors should have input to who moves into social housing in their area.

In her closing comments, the proposer stated: -

- That neither housing associations nor the Council's housing officers had any control over the situation at all.
- Unlike the towns, a low number of housing exchanges have a large impact in rural areas.
- That all social housing in the county should be for people on the housing list in Gwynedd.

**RESOLVED to adopt the motion, namely: -**

**In order to satisfy the need for local housing, this Council brings pressure to bear on the Welsh Government for the practice of exchanging social housing to cease immediately, unless the house is exchanged [other than] within the local authority, or close to the county's boundary.**

(B) Submitted - the following notice of motion by Councillor Huw Rowlands in accordance with Section 4.19 of the Constitution, and it was seconded: -

- Cyngor Gwynedd asks the UK Government to allocate a fair share of the spending on the HS2 rail line in England to Wales.
- The Welsh Government is also asked to continue to bring pressure to bear on the UK Government to ensure this.

The member set out the context to his motion, and noted: -

- That the proposal relates to the undisputed unfairness that Wales receives no consequential funding following the construction of the HS2 rail line, and that Wales is once again treated as inferior to Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- That the Westminster Government's argument is that Wales benefits from HS2, even though the line no longer even goes to Crewe. That argument is based on the fact that rail infrastructure is not devolved to Wales, which is an irrational argument, and it is believed that the situation is completely unjust, and a situation that neither Scotland nor Northern Ireland would accept.

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- That we are being trampled on and insulted by the Westminster Government and treated inferiorly to the other parts of the United Kingdom, not only in the context of HS2, but also because of a general lack of funding and a lack of devolution of specific powers to Wales.

The proposal was supported, and it was stated that the £4bn of rail funding owed to Wales could have been invested for the start of rebuilding some of our networks, such as the Afon Wen railway.

**RESOLVED to adopt the motion, namely: -**

- **Cyngor Gwynedd asks the UK Government to allocate a fair share of the spending on the HS2 rail line in England to Wales.**
- **The Welsh Government is also asked to continue to bring pressure to bear on the UK Government to ensure this.**

- (C) Submitted - the following notice of motion by Councillor June Jones, under Section 4.19 of the Constitution, and it was seconded: -

Following the horrific accident on the A4085 road near the village of Garreg, Llanfrothen in November 2023 which saw four young lads lose their lives, that Cyngor Gwynedd corresponds with the Westminster Government's Department for Transport asking them to look at updating the rules to obtain a graduated driving licence where young drivers cannot carry other young passengers without having had six months' driving experience after passing their test.

The member set out the context to her motion, noting that the survey published this week noted that there were more road accidents in the rural areas of Wales than in any other part of the UK.

The proposal was supported, and it was noted that the introduction of a graduated licence for motorcycle driving 30 years ago had made a big difference to the statistics.

**RESOLVED to adopt the motion, namely: -**

**Following the horrific accident on the A4085 road near the village of Garreg, Llanfrothen in November 2023 which saw four young lads lose their lives, that Cyngor Gwynedd corresponds with the Westminster Government's Department for Transport asking them to look at updating the rules to obtain a graduated driving licence where young drivers cannot carry other young passengers without having had six months' driving experience after passing their test.**

- (D) Submitted - the following notice of motion by Councillor John Pughe Roberts under Section 4.19 of the Constitution, and it was seconded: -

That Cyngor Gwynedd asks the Welsh Government to reconsider their support for the Labour Party in Westminster and that the Welsh Government calls on the Westminster Government to re-establish the Agricultural Property Relief.

The member set out the context to his motion, and noted: -

- That changes by the Westminster Labour Government on agricultural inheritance tax have transformed Agricultural Property Support (APR) so that all farms worth over a million pounds now have to pay inheritance tax.
- With the industry under severe pressure and hedge fund managers looking for carbon offsets through a system of re-wilding and planting trees and therefore raising the value of agricultural land, 100 acres of land reaching the threshold or a self-provisioning farmhouse and cottage worth over a million pounds.

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- This meant that the majority of Gwynedd and Wales farms will have to pay huge amounts of tax with some going bankrupt or having to sell land which would leave the farms unable to continue to farm.

The motion was supported based on concern about the future of farming in Wales and concern that large companies will come together and buy these farms.

**RESOLVED to adopt the motion, namely: -**

**That Cyngor Gwynedd asks the Welsh Government to reconsider their support for the Labour Party in Westminster and that the Welsh Government calls on the Westminster Government to re-establish the Agricultural Property Relief.**

- (E) The following notice of motion was submitted by Councillor Elin Walker Jones, in accordance with Section 4.19 of the Constitution and it was seconded.

That the Council supports the campaign to establish a School of Dentistry at Bangor University, to write to our elected representatives in the Senedd to lobby the Welsh Government to consider the economic and public health case for the establishment of a school of dentistry in Bangor based on the key findings presented in the Filling the Gap report.

The member set out the context to her motion, noting that:

- Sian Gwenllian, Member of the Senedd, had commissioned a report "Filling the Gap: Dentistry in Arfon" to find out exactly where dental services are in the area, identifying the challenges and offering solutions.
- There is a significant shortage of NHS and all types of dental services in Gwynedd, and in North Wales, which means that the dental health of Gwynedd's children and adults is poor. There was therefore a strong case for the establishment of a Dental School in Bangor.
- That Sian Gwenllian has been campaigning to establish a Dental School at Bangor University and that the Welsh Government agreed that more dentists need to be trained in Wales.
- That a new dental school in Bangor could play a key role in training more dentists locally, offering a better chance of retaining the dental workforce in the region and providing essential services locally.
- That the establishment of a dental school in Bangor would provide quality new jobs and attract investment to the local economy, supporting Bangor as a centre of excellence in health, alongside the new medical school. In addition, the school of dentistry could augment the provision of Welsh and bilingual dental services, improving access to healthcare for local Welsh-speaking communities.
- That the establishment of a Bangor Dental School would give our young people new opportunities to train and get good jobs locally, and provide staff for dental services, increase the workforce and services and thereby improve the dental health of our children and adults. This, in turn, would put less pressure on our hospitals' emergency services, and improve overall public health.

**RESOLVED to adopt the motion, namely: -**

**That the Council supports the campaign to establish a School of Dentistry at Bangor University, to write to our elected representatives in the Senedd to lobby the Welsh Government to consider the economic and public health case for the establishment of a school of dentistry in Bangor based on the key findings presented in the Filling the Gap report.**

- (F) Submitted - the following notice of motion by Councillor Rhys Tudur in accordance with Section 4.19 of the Constitution, and it was seconded: -

Given

- That the Welsh Government has conducted a consultation on varying the Land Transaction Tax
- That varying the tax would give the Council the opportunity to tackle effectively the rate at which second homes are purchased
- That varying the tax would open the door for this Council to bring pressure to bear on the Government to give its fair share of the revenue derived from land tax

This Council calls on the Welsh Government to give Gwynedd a greater role in being able to decide on variations for the Land Transaction Tax.

The member set out the context to his motion, and noted: -

- That the Land Transaction Tax is the most potent tool we have to tackle the summer housing problem and effectively manage second house sales over time, without producing side effects as bad as with other taxation tools, such as the Council Tax Premium.
- That the Welsh Government consider exercising more powers to vary the Land Transaction Tax so that it is even higher on second houses, while also devolving some forces to the councils to vary the Land Transaction Tax on second houses within their counties.
- That the motion asks the Government to give Cyngor Gwynedd a greater role to be able to decide on ranges for Land Transaction Tax on second houses, as Gwynedd has the highest number of second houses in Wales.
- That here in Gwynedd the highest revenue was raised from Land Tax on second houses throughout Wales, but rather than coming back to us, the money currently went to central Government. As such, it was hoped that varying the tax would open the door for the Council to receive a fair share of the revenue derived from Land Tax to help fill the financial gap facing the Council.

**RESOLVED to adopt the motion, namely: -**

**Given**

- **That the Welsh Government has conducted a consultation on varying the Land Transaction Tax**
- **That varying the tax would give the Council the opportunity to tackle effectively the rate at which second homes are purchased**
- **That varying the tax would open the door for this Council to bring pressure to bear on the Government to give its fair share of the revenue derived from land tax**

**This Council calls on the Welsh Government to give Gwynedd a greater role in being able to decide on variations for the Land Transaction Tax.**

#### **14. RESPONSES / UPDATES TO PREVIOUS NOTICES OF MOTION**

Submitted, for information: -

- (1) A letter from the Welsh Government in response to a notice of motion by Councillor Gwynfor Owen to the Council on 9 May 2024 regarding the frequency of trains on the Cambrian Coast Railway.
- (2) A letter from the UK Government in response to Councillor Elwyn Edwards' notice of motion to the Council 3 October 2024 regarding the designation of St David's Day as an official national holiday in Wales.

The meeting commenced at 1.30 p.m. and concluded at 4.30p.m.

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CHAIR