

# WLGA Executive Board



## Cofnodion / Minutes

26<sup>th</sup> Ebrill / April 2024

## **dros / via Teams**

## Present:

WLGA Presiding Officer, Cllr Huw David OBE (Bridgend)

Cyng / Cllr Stephen Thomas (Blaenau Gwent)  
Cyng / Cllr Sean Morgan (Caerphilly)  
Cyng / Cllr Huw Thomas (Cardiff)  
Cyng / Cllr Darren Price (Carmarthenshire)  
Cyng / Cllr Bryan Davies (Ceredigion)  
Cyng / Cllr Charlie McCoubrey (Conwy)  
Cyng / Cllr Dyfrig Siencyn (Gwynedd)  
Cyng / Cllr Llinos Medi (Ynys Mon / Isle of Anglesey)  
Cyng / Cllr Geraint Thomas (Merthyr Tydfil)  
Cyng / Cllr Steve Hunt (Neath Port Talbot)  
Cyng / Cllr Jane Mudd (Newport)  
Cyng / Cllr David Simpson (Pembrokeshire)  
Cyng / Cllr James Gibson-Watt (Powys)  
Cyng / Cllr Andrew Morgan OBE (Rhondda Cynon Taf)  
Cyng / Cllr Rob Stewart (Swansea)  
Cyng / Cllr Anthony Hunt (Torfaen)  
Cyngh Cllr Lis Burnett (Vale of Glamorgan)  
Cyng / Cllr Mark Pritchard (Wrexham)

## Ymddiheuriadau / Apologies

- Cyng / Cllr Jason McLellan (Denbighshire) - substitute Cllr Elen Heaton
  - Cyng / Cllr Ian Roberts (Flintshire) – substitute Cllr Dave Hughes
  - Cyng / Cllr Mary Ann Brocklesby (Monmouthshire)

## Swyddogion

Syllabus

## WI GA Officers:

Chris Llewelyn, Naomi Alleyne, Jon Rae, Tim Peppin, Karen Higgins, Sharon Davies, Jo Hendy, Lindsey Phillips, Evelyn James and Lee Pitt

## **Item 1. Welcome and apologies for absence.**

1. Apologies and substitutes noted as above.

## **Item 2. Minutes of the meeting 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024 – were agreed.**

## **Item 3. WLGA Leader Update & WLGA Workforce Spokesperson CONFIDENTIAL Pay Update**

2. The WLGA Leader, Cllr Morgan, reported he had met with the new First Minister (FM) earlier in the week. It was a very encouraging meeting and the positive working relationship Leaders and the WLGA have with the Welsh Government was discussed. The need for continued engagement and ensuring things are discussed in advance was emphasised. The Leader took the opportunity to raise next year's budget, which based on current projections, would be flatlined and a disaster for local government and made a plea that any extra cash that comes to Wales, from the current or a new UK government, to come to councils. The Leaders made it clear that this year's 3% should be the starting point, not zero in terms of any negotiations, which he felt was recognised by the FM and officials given current pressures and the FM understood that social care is interlinked with health. During the meeting, the Leader emphasised that local government works in partnership with the Welsh Government and is not just its delivery arm and while the Welsh Government make decisions, council make things happen. The FM agreed he would attend both the WLGA Council AGM and Conference at the end of June.
3. The Leader reported he had met with the new Cabinet Secretary for Housing, Local Government and Planning, Julie James, and said it was good to have her back covering local government. A number of areas were covered, in particular the engagement with the WLGA and she also raised CJC's and concerns all were not progressing at the same pace and wanted to discuss further with Leaders. She also highlighted areas where there are issues, such as planning, building control etc and which may be an opportunity for regional working, if councils thought it would benefit services, to ensure there is resilience in the system(s). The fire service reviews were discussed and the Cabinet Secretary is to meet with the SWFRS area Leaders shortly. The Cabinet Secretary is not inclined to have an all-Wales fire service or take it in-house, she still wants councils to oversee fire authorities which maybe mean limited reform. Local government budgets generally, or the lack there of, were raised. The struggles councils are having with staffing and pay could be a pressure in coming years. The Cabinet Secretary wants to be an advocate for local government and is keen to meet regularly with Leaders – possibly every two or three weeks – to discuss pressing issues as they arise but also to plan and prioritise and also bring other Cabinet Secretary(ies) along if needed. This will ensure all parts of the Welsh Government are clear on what is being asked of councils and make it clear that they can't do everything.
4. Workforce Spokesperson, Cllr Anthony Hunt, gave a CONFIDENTIAL Pay Update. The public and all WLGA officers, apart from Chris and Karen, left the meeting due to the sensitivity and confidential nature of the discussions whilst the pay negotiations are ongoing.

**Item 4. Compliance with aspects of the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 EXEMPT**

5. In accordance with the WLGA Constitution, Section 20.7, this item is EXEMPT.

6. **Resolved:**

6.1 **Members noted the contents of the report.**

6.2 **Members agreed to ask to request a meeting with the Cabinet Secretary for Housing, Local Government and Planning to discuss the issues raised.**

**Item 5. Discussion in advance of the meeting with the Cabinet Secretary for Housing, Local Government and Planning**

7. Due to the previous item overrunning, there was no time for discussion before the Cabinet Secretary joined the meeting.

**Item 6. Social Care Update**

8. The item updated members and sought their views on a number of issues in relation to social care, including Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS), changes to the maximum charge for non-residential care, Right Care, Right Person and the upcoming Health and Social Care (Wales) Bill.

9. **Maximum charge for non-residential care** – members agreed the cost of providing care is eye watering and is impacting councils' ability to provide other services. It was felt that an increase to £125 would help with fragile council budgets and go some way to help mitigate the impact of wage inflation in social care.

10. **WCCIS** – the case management system used by some councils will close on in January 2026 and is now on their Corporate Risk Registers'. Members were concerned that if a suitable solution is not found then it will give rise to safeguarding issues and councils will be blamed if things go wrong.

11. **Right Care, Right Person** – members were concerned that this would have a big impact on councils and health services as they do not have the staff or resources to address the demand. Members were worried there could be incidences where people fell through the net and suffered harm as a result.

12. **Health and Social Care (Wales) Bill** – members supported the principle of taking profit out of providing care but acknowledged it will mean significant implications for service delivery.

13. Naomi reported that the WLGA Digital Team is putting together a detailed briefing on WCCIS which will be shared with the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care together with a letter summarising issues and concerns.

**14. Resolved:**

- 14.1 Members considered and discussed the content of the report,**
- 14.2 Members discussed the proposed key messages in response to the consultation on the increase to the maximum weekly charge for non-residential services and agreed an increase to £125 is still the preferred option; and**
- 14.3 Share any intelligence or information in relation to WCCIS and the Right Care, Right Person approach to help inform discussions with key partners on potential implications and next steps.**

**Item 7. WLGA Governance Arrangements**

- 15. This item sought members views on proposals to make revisions to the WLGA governance and decision-making arrangements following the feedback provided by leaders during the Senior Management Review undertaken in 2023.
- 16. The Chief Executive reported that a review and updating of the WLGA governance arrangements offers an opportunity to revise how the WLGA operates and its decision-making mechanisms to ensure it remains fit for purpose and has the correct powers to undertake and deliver the work required by the Association's membership.
- 17. Chris also explained the current governance arrangements are set out in the WLGA Constitution and now may be the appropriate time to fill in any gaps.

**18. Resolved:**

- 18.1 Members noted the contents of the report;**
- 18.2 Members considered the specific issues raised in paragraph 13 and the proposals included in paragraph 14;**
- 18.3 Members tasked WLGA officers to review and propose amendments to the WLGA Constitution; and**
- 18.4 Members agreed to review the current roles and responsibilities of Spokespeople, including a comparison to the new Welsh Government portfolios. An update report will be provided to the next Executive Board Meeting (24<sup>th</sup> May), containing any proposed changes which will then be presented to the WLGA Council AGM at the end of June.**

**Item 8. Any other Business**

Members noted this it was the last meeting for Cllr David, Cllr Mudd and Cllr Simpson and thanked them for their contribution, commitment and dedication to local government over the years.