



## **MINUTES**

Of a meeting of the Association held on  
**Friday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2026 at 10.30am**  
by Zoom

### **Present were:**

Cllr Norma Davies Vice Chair	Flint Town Council
Cllr Joan Butterfield President	Rhyl Town Council
Cllr Janet Axworthy	Hawarden Town Council
Cllr Vivienne Blondek	Buckley Town Council
Cllr Michael Davies	Beaumaris Town Council
Cllr Patrick Heeson	Mostyn Community Council
Cllr. Egryn Lewis	Llangefni Town Council
Cllr Doreen Mackie	Shotton Town Council
Cllr Alan Manship	Connah's Quay Town Council
Cllr Debbie Owen	Connah's Quay Town Council
Cllr Lorraine Rathbone	Buckley Town Council
Cllr Helen Roberts	Conwy Town Council
Cllr Vickie Roberts	Rhyl Town Council
Cllr Jackie Webster	Conwy Town Council
Cllr Andrew Wood	Abergele Town Council
Robert Robinson Secretary	Llanfair Caereinion Town Council

### **Apologies received from:**

Cllr S L Connolly	Rhyl Town Council
Cllr Lynette Edwards	Caersw Community Council
Cllr Lynda Griffiths	Towyn & Kinmell Bay Town Council
Cllr Ian Hodge	Chair Holywell Town Council
Cllr Carol Holiday	Prestatyn Town Council
Cllr Shirley Jones Roberts	Abergele Town Council
Cllr J Kenney	Rhyl Town Council
Cllr Bernise McLoughlin	Towyn & Kinmell Bay Town Council
Cllr Peter Morgan	City of St Asaph Council

### **1. Welcome by the chair**

The meeting received a welcome from the chair.

### **2. Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest recorded at the meeting..

### **4. Minutes of the last**

The meeting considered and **approved** the minutes of the last meeting held in January 2026.

### **5. Actions taken since last meeting**

The meeting noted the actions taken forward from the last meeting.

## **6. Finance and governance**

To consider the following:

### **6.1 Financial report**

The secretary gave a short report on the finances with the current bank balances confirmed as £4,302.

### **6.2 Membership**

The meeting was updated on membership matters. The meeting welcomed Cllr. Egryn Lewis Llangefni Town Council

## **7. Welsh Government consultation on unpaid carers**

The meeting considered the Welsh Government consultation with regards unpaid carers including the eight priorities set out below:

There was general support for the areas identified in the consultation paper.

**1. Recognition and awareness** – This means we want to make sure more people know about unpaid carers.

**2. Access to services** – Unpaid carers need support too. They need to know their rights and are assessed for their needs.

**3. Young carers** – they need support through education and community services. They also need regular assessments for support.

**4. Financial hardship** – this means unpaid carers often don't have enough money. They need support to access benefits.

**5. Paid employment** – unpaid carers need support to stay in work and return to work. Employers need to support unpaid carers.

**6. Respite and breaks from caring** – respite means taking a break. There needs to be more options to support people.

**7. Mental health and wellbeing** – check services and support groups work well.

**8. Carers and care planning** – make sure carers are fully involved in having a say about those they care for. For example, care planning and leaving hospital

There was a strong feeling that all care services should be run by local authorities and not within the private sector.

There was also a view that all unpaid carers should be given concessions with regard to local council services such as gym, swimming, public transport etc.

In addition, the following are to be included in a letter in response to the consultation (a copy of which is to be sent to members for final comments before issue):

It was suggested that all member councils should respond to the consultation individually as well as through the Association. The link to the consultation is [Draft national strategy for unpaid carers 2026 | GOV.WALES](#)

## **8. A55 and meeting with Welsh Government Highways**

To discuss any matters arising from the zoom meeting with Welsh Government at the last quarterly meeting. There was still concern expressed as follows:

- a) The red route proposal is the only one which is considered acceptable.
- b) The construction of the red route is urgent.

Continued....

- c) The effect of fumes on those living in the area is not acceptable.
- d) The whole design of the A494 is poor.
- e) The bridge is now 2 lane with provision for a third lane; this could be constructed but does not solve the issues on its own.

A letter is to be sent to the Welsh Government containing the Association concerns and also a further meeting to be sought with Welsh Government highways is to be held via Zoom/Teams with Cllr Norma Davies and the secretary in attendance. The letter to have as an appendix the issues raised in appendix A.

### **9. Concerns of residents in north and mid Wales**

The members decided that as the decision on the location of the Air Ambulance for Mid and North Wales had been made that the Association should not express any further views.

### **10. What are the current issues for Welsh government and local councils in north and mid Wales?**

The members confirmed that they did wish to make representations to each political party standing at the Senedd Elections regarding and also to communicate with the Chief Executives of each county council as follows:

#### **Funding Pressures Facing Councils in North and Mid Wales**

Local authorities across North and Mid Wales are facing severe and escalating financial pressures that threaten the sustainability of essential public services. The situation reflects long-term structural challenges as well as immediate budgetary constraints.

#### **Under-investment**

Years of sustained under-investment have left councils struggling to deliver the level and quality of services that residents expect. This cumulative funding gap has reduced resilience within local government and limited the ability to respond effectively to growing demand.

#### **Funding Challenges**

Councils in Mid and North Wales are operating “on the edge of a precipice,” having received below-average funding increases compared to other areas. This has forced authorities to confront extremely difficult decisions, including potential service reductions and significant council tax increases.

#### **Extraordinary Financial Pressures**

Councils face estimated budget pressures of approximately £559 million next year alone. Education accounts for nearly £120 million of that total, reflecting rising costs, increasing demand, and statutory obligations that leave limited flexibility within budgets.

#### **Health and Social Care Imbalance**

There remains a structural imbalance between health and social care funding. Insufficient investment in social care shifts pressure onto local authorities, which are required to absorb rising costs to protect vulnerable residents and maintain statutory services.

### **Public Health Responsibilities**

While there is broad agreement that public health responsibilities should be more closely integrated with local authority decision-making, meaningful reform cannot succeed without substantial additional investment from central government. Without this support, structural changes alone will have limited impact on outcomes for communities.

### **Revision of long-distance trains for Wales**

To bring forward replacement trains to the class 197 along lines where they have a tourism base (i.e. Cambrian and North Coast) in 2033 – trains with windows which give visibility for tourists to enjoy the landscape).

### **Road improvements A55 Aston Hill**

To seek an action plan and implement in the next electoral period improvements to Aston Hill.

### **Funding overall**

The members were particularly concerned about the 'Barnet formula' still used for funding to local authorities. The members were of the view that is system was out of date by decades and that a fairer distribution of funding is necessary.

It was also agreed to invite Cllr Charlie McCoubrey to address the Association on this subject.

A copy of the proposed letter to be sent to all member councils for comment before it is sent.

### **11. The Senedd elections in May 2026**

The secretary outlined the method of elections for the Senedd elections. A copy of the presentation is to be circulated to members.

### **12. Audit Wales Warns of Governance and Financial Failures in Community and Town Councils**

The meeting noted the report from the Wales Audit Office.

### **13. Date of next meeting**

The meeting noted the dates of future meetings as follows:

Annual meeting at Connah's Quay in person as by zoom – Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July 2026

Quarterly meeting in person and by zoom – Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July 2026

Executive meeting by zoom – Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2026

North Coast Rail meeting by zoom – Friday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2026

Joint Cambrian/North Coast Rail meeting by zoom – Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2026

All meetings start at 10.30am

## 14. Actions to be taken forward

The following actions are to be taken forward:

Ref	Subject	Actions
1	Governance	Issue minutes and post on website
2	Elections	Circulate Senedd election details
3	Consultation	Letter in response to carers consultation.
4	Highways	Meeting and letter to the Senedd regarding highways.
5	Funding	Letter to Chief Executives and Political parties regarding issues of concern and in particular funding.
6	Funding	to invite Cllr Charlie McCoubrey to address the Association on the subject of funding formula.

## APPENDIX A

### Visiting representative from the Senedd regarding North Wales

To receive a visiting speaker from the Trunk Road Agency for North Wales. The main points raised are set out overleaf.

#### **A494 Bridge replacement**

Details of the replacement bridge have been published. It is hoped that this scheme can progress without the need for a public inquiry.

**Wrexham western gateway Improvements** are planned for the Ruthin – Wrexham junction to improve capacity.

#### **Brittania Bridge**

The repairs to this bridge are almost complete. It is hoped that this will improve resilience. Consideration is being given to wind deflectors to aid the effects of the weather. Welsh Government is working with Network rail on a survey of the bridge. Variable speed limits are used on this bridge as required. Network rail own the bridge and it is also listed.

**Transport A55/A494/A483** - review Work is being done to see what the needs of these roads are along with looking at the assets supporting this. This will take around 6 months and the results considered by the next Welsh Government.

#### **Aston Hill**

There are plans for more improvements and new drainage.

#### **Red route A494 – A55 (River Dee crossing)**

It was pointed out that 2 lanes were not enough for this area of road. It was confirmed that the road is wide enough to take 3 lanes in the future. The question was asked 'why not now' as the need is acknowledged. The review will include this item.

Better use of the Flintshire Bridge would be an option to aid the traffic congestion. Accidents on the A55 The number of accidents on the A55 on a daily basis was highlighted.

This is also to be part of the review. Members felt this situation should be considered urgently.

