

## **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**Minutes** of the meeting of Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council held at the County Borough Council Offices, The Pavilions, Clydach Vale on Wednesday, 26<sup>th</sup> October, 2016 at 5.00 p.m.

### **PRESENT**

County Borough Councillor R.Lewis – in the Chair

### **County Borough Councillors**

|                   |                 |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| L.M.Adams         | M.Griffiths     | S.Rees          |
| P.Baccara         | P.Griffiths     | S.Rees-Owen     |
| (Mrs.)T.Bates     | (Mrs.)E.Hanagan | (Mrs.)A.Roberts |
| D.R.Bevan         | G.Holmes        | J.Rosser        |
| H.Boggis          | G.E.Hopkins     | R.W.Smith       |
| J.Bonetto         | P.Howe          | G.Stacey        |
| S.A.Bradwick      | J.S.James       | B.Stephens      |
| J.Bunnage         | P.Jarman        | (Mrs.)M.Tegg    |
| P.Cannon,QPM      | (Mrs.)S.J.Jones | R.K.Turner      |
| S.Carter          | W.L.Langford    | G.P.Thomas      |
| (Mrs.)A.Crimmings | (Mrs.)C.Leyshon | L.G.Walker      |
| W.J.David         | C.J.Middle      | (Mrs.)J.S.Ward  |
| A.L.Davies,MBE    | A.Morgan        | M.O.Weaver      |
| (Mrs.)A.Davies    | B.Morgan        | M.Webber        |
| C.Davies          | K.Morgan        | E.Webster       |
| G.R.Davies        | M.A.Norris      | D.H.Williams    |
| (Mrs.)M.E.Davies  | I.Pearce        | C.J.Willis      |
| J.Elliott         | K.A.Privett     | R.Yeo           |
| A.S.Fox           |                 |                 |

### **Officers in Attendance**

Mr.C.Bradsahw – Chief Executive  
Mr.C.Lee – Group Director, Corporate & Frontline Services  
Mr.G.Isingrini – Group Director, Community & Children's Services  
Mr.P.J.Lucas – Director, Legal & Democratic Services  
Mr.T.Wilkins – Director, Human Resources  
Mr.C.Hanagan – Director, Cabinet & Public Relations  
Ms.K.May – Head of Democratic Services

### **57 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillors A.Calvert, (Mrs.)J.Cass, (Mrs.)L.De Vet, S.Evans, S.M.Evans-Fear, S.Pickering, S.Powderhill, M.J.Powell, G.Smith, P.Wasley, M.J.Watts, W.D.Weeks, C.J.Willis and T.Williams.

**58**     **ABERFAN**

The Leader informed Members that the Aberfan Service of Remembrance, which was organised by the Council took place at St.Margaret's Church, Mountain Ash on Friday last, 21<sup>st</sup> October at the exact time that coincided with the Aberfan disaster, 50 years ago on the day and was well attended. As this was the closest Council meeting to the anniversary of the tragedy that took place in Aberfan, at the request of the Leader, Members and Officers stood for a minute's silence as a mark of respect.

**59**     **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**(1)**     **Council Member**

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, County Borough Councillor (Mrs.)E.Hanagan declared a personal and prejudicial interest in respect of Agenda Item 9 – Appointment of Chief Executive – “I am related to a Senior member of staff and I will be leaving the Chamber during consideration of that item”.

**(2)**     **Officers**

The Director, Legal and Democratic Services informed the Council that in respect of Agenda Item 9 – Appointment of Chief Executive, all Chief Officers present at today's meeting would have a personal and pecuniary interest, as on previous occasions and that during consideration of the item, all Chief Officers would leave the meeting save for the Director of Human Resources and himself. The Director of Human Resources would be presenting the report and address any queries Members may have and he would remain in the meeting to assist with any legal queries with regards to the report.

**60**     **PETITIONS**

The following petitions were presented at the meeting:-

**(1)**     From County Borough Councillor S.Rees on behalf of the residents of Llwydcoed calling upon Rhondda Cynon Taf Council to resurface the area at the top of Moriah Place to enable children to walk to school safely as the current walk is hampered by flooding and muddy conditions due to the deterioration in the existing pathway. The path is well used by both children and parents using it as a safe walk to school.

**(2)**     From County Borough Councillor G.R.Davies on behalf of the residents of Tynewydd, Blaenrhondda and Blaencwm who were opposing the permanent weight restriction on the New Bridge Tynewydd as it would cause problems of accessibility to bus services and would also divert traffic into a narrow residential street with the consequential loss of amenity for the residents. They also called on the Council to instigate the repair of the bridge as soon as possible.

- (3) With reference to Minute No.46(1) of the Council Meeting held on the 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2016 in respect of the petition handed in by County Borough Councillor Jarman on behalf of the residents of Cefnpennar and Cwmpennar requesting the upgrading of the playground located in The Avenue, Cefnpennar. County Borough Councillor Jarman handed to the Mayor, pictures drawn by children of Cefnpennar and Cwmpennar showing the new facilities they would like to be installed in the park.

## 61 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- (1) The Mayor thanked all those that were involved in turning the Cwm Taf area into pink on Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> October, 2016, in aid of `Giving to Pink`, which is one of his chosen charities. On that day, he together with his Consort, visited various locations such as the Royal Glamorgan Hospital and a walk through Pontypridd. He thanked Members and Officers for donating to `Giving to Pink` and to Councillors C.Leyshon and M.Webber for visiting the Council Offices on the day resulting in donations amounting to £1,555 together with £650 collected through the sale of the pink T.Shirts. The Mayor also thanked Cwm Taf Local Health Board as they also lent their support on the day.
- (2) County Borough Councillor G.Holmes wished to thank Members and the assistance that was provided from the Cabinet Office in supporting the erection of the War Memorial at Llantrisant which is to be unveiled on Armistice Day, 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2016. Tickets were also on sale for a concert that was being held on the same evening to commemorate the event.

## 62 **MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** – to approve as an accurate record the minutes of the Council Meeting held on the 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2016, subject to Minute No.45 (approval of the Minutes) reflecting that the Director, Legal and Democratic Services apologised for the production of the Annual Improvement Report of the Wales Audit Office presented to the Council Meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2016 (Minute No. 39 refers) being in “Draft” format.

## 63 **STATEMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROCEDURE RULE 2**

The Leader reported that following the written statement made by the Cabinet Minister for Local Government and Finance, Mr.Mark Drakeford,AM, earlier this month in respect of rescinding the merging of Councils in Wales in favour of Councils delivering key services on a regional basis. The Minister is to meet with the 22 Leaders of each Welsh Authority on a one-to-one basis to discuss regional working in more detail.

The Leader further stated that as Chair of the City Deal, this matter would also be discussed with the Minister and it was proposed that an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council would be held in the near future, where the Chief Executive and himself would present to Members a progress report on the City Deal.

## **64 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

The Mayor informed Members that in the absence of County Borough Councillors S.Powderhill and M.J.Watts who had both submitted questions at Agenda Items 6(a) and (b) as shown below, no response would be made by the respective Cabinet Members. The remaining questions were responded to as detailed hereunder (c), (d) and (e):-

- (a) **From County Borough Councillor S.Powderhill to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Council Business and Human Resources, County Borough Councillor M.Webber**

“Will the Deputy Leader make a statement about the Council’s use of social media?”

- (b) **From County Borough Councillor M.J.Watts to the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, Equalities and the Welsh Language, County Borough Councillor G.Hopkins**

“Will the Cabinet Member please make a statement on the Council’s work to promote equalities?”

- (c) **From County Borough Councillor C.Davies to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Tourism and Planning, County Borough Councillor R.Bevan**

“What are the threats to county-wide EU funded projects post-Brexit?”

### **Response from County Borough Councillor R.Bevan**

“At this stage it would be impossible to give a full response on the impact and quite irresponsible to speculate on the impact”.

### **Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor C.Davies**

“In the forthcoming Brexit negotiations what would you like Welsh Government to press for on behalf of RCT and other Welsh Authorities and what part do you think Welsh Government should have?”

### **Response from County Borough Councillor R.Bevan**

“That question should be directed at the First Minister. From my perspective access to the single market, what the terms and conditions would be we yet to see. At the end of the day I don’t want to speculate any further. Until we know what the discussions are with the Welsh Government and Westminster, we don’t want to start hares running”.

- (d) **From County Borough Councillor (Mrs.)M.E.Davies to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Leisure and Culture, County Borough Councillor A.Crimmings**

“Can you please make a statement about the investment in leisure services?”

**Response from County Borough Councillor A.Crimmings**

“As part of the investment programme, the leisure centres have had huge investment, which has seen an increase in “Leisure for Life” membership. As part of the portfolio we have invested in 3G pitches and have now got a Leisure Strategy which puts us in a good position with partners in Health”.

**Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor (Mrs.)M.E.Davies**

“You need to be congratulated in the investment as not so long ago Bronwydd was under threat for closure. Will the facilities have a sustainable future?”

**Response from County Borough Councillor A.Crimmings**

“The “Leisure for Life” membership has gone up in Bronwydd and they have come on board with us. We have invested in a gym and it is now more energy efficient with the installation of the air handling unit”.

- (e) **From County Borough Councillor B.Stephens to the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, County Borough Councillor M.A.Norris**

“Can you please provide an update on the Council’s engagement with young people?”

**Response from County Borough Councillor M.A.Norris**

“Our Consultation team have been working closely with Youth Forums and we have a County Wide Forum which is to hold its first meeting later in the year. We are renewing the Wicid website as it is a key engagement tool for young people. I attended the re-launch of the Wicid website in Ystrad where over 200 children came along together with community groups and they were all enthusiastic for the site and getting involved in the What’s App and Twitter; that should bring in useful information for us and the youths that use it.”

**Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor B.Stephens**

“The establishment of Youth Wide Forums is going to work well. How are you going to ensure that the views of young people are going to be heard?”

## **Response from County Borough Councillor M.A.Norris**

“We are also going to be working with schools and the Area Youth Forums and will feed into the County Wide Forum. Officers are also working to include looked after children representatives.”

## **65 STATE OF THE COUNTY BOROUGH DEBATE**

In accordance with paragraph 13.2 of Part 4 of the Council’s Constitution, the Mayor stated that he would invite the Leader to address Council and following that, the Leader would respond to Members’ comments on his Annual Report.

The Leader opened his address by stating that this was an opportunity to showcase some of the things that the Council is doing and it gives the opportunity for all Members to engage in the debate.

He referred to the changes made to the Council’s Scheme of Delegation where such decisions made can now be called-in and which received a positive response from the Wales Audit Office and improvements to the Cabinet Work Programme were amongst many things that had embedded well. Members were working with the new Scrutiny arrangements, which would be an evolving process and were looking at more pre-scrutiny on some of the service changes and strategies.

The Leader stated that the Wales Audit Office sees this Authority as low risk and the reviews undertaken by them last year were very positive and were holding this Authority in high regard as a financial resilient Council.

In terms of Service provision, the Data Unit has highlighted this Authority as being the fastest improving and is about fifth in Wales, this does not reflect all of the services that are being delivered, as some areas were not included in the ranking.

The Leader reported on the investment that had been made in leisure facilities and sports centres which had resulted in a significant increase in usage and “Leisure for Life” membership which was giving more stability to the service and he thanked the Officers for taking the lead in producing a Leisure Strategy.

He also reported on the Investment that had been made in play areas, where during the last financial year, over £1.7M had been invested, which is the most that has been spent on play areas in the last ten years. 3G pitches had also been installed in some areas together with improvements made to changing room facilities.

In respect of the Apprenticeship Scheme, the Leader reported that since this scheme was launched, 75% of the Apprentices gained full time employment with the Authority. A further 11 graduates were taken on this year under the Scheme.

With regards to unemployment rates in RCT, the Leader indicated that the unemployment rate within RCT was down to 6.6% as of June this year compared to 14.3% in June, 2013. Youth unemployment for 16-24 year olds in June was down to 6.8% compared to 14.5% in June, 2013.

The Leader also reported on the investment that had been made in the following areas:-

- Highways – 17 bridges replaced or refurbished since 2011 Invested heavily in led lighting – the average costs in 2016/17 now at £715,000 a year compared to £1.4M in 2014/15, which was nearly a 50% reduction in energy bills.
- Transport Links – Improvements being made to the A4119 which will take approximately 9 months to complete.
- Over £1M spent on the Rhigos mountain road.
- Since 2012, the Authority has resurfaced 760 carriageways and over 250 footways.
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools

He further reported that funding had been achieved for the Park and Ride at Porth and following a meeting with representatives of Ariva it was proposed that there would be improvements made on the valley lines. The City Deal would also feed into the Metro.

In closing the Leader briefly outlined further achievement over the past year such as 100% of Carers were now offered an assessment; in tackling poverty and housing issues – the time taken to process disabled facility grants was now in the top quartile and approval for the development of the Taff Vale site, Pontypridd was soon to be sought.

The Leader then responded to a variety of questions/comments from Members, such as:-

- Working with other authorities to look at land use and land planning
- The use of the swimming pool by schools at Ystrad Sports Centre as the due to various reasons the facility at Treorchy School was no longer in use, which was causing a problem for members of the public – the Leader indicated that this matter would be investigated without having any adverse effect on the children's swimming lessons.
- Continue to strive towards the opening of a Station at Hirwaun for passengers
- Planned maintenance for cycle paths
- Response to be made by the Director, Legal and Democratic Services in respect of the problems experienced with the electoral forms

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to receive the Leader's Annual Report.

## **REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, CORPORATE AND FRONTLINE SERVICES**

### **66 THE COUNCIL'S 2017/18 REVENUE BUDGET – THE PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT**

In his report, the Group Director, Corporate and Frontline Services provided Members with information in respect of the 2017/18 Provisional Local Government Settlement, which was announced by Mark Drakeford, AM, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government on the 19<sup>th</sup> October, 2016, a copy of the Minister's statement was attached to the report at Appendix 1. With the aid of PowerPoint slides, the Group Director, Corporate and Frontline Services gave his initial comments on its likely implications for the delivery of Council services.

It was reported that the Provisional Settlement provides an increase in revenue funding for the Council of +0.2%, and an increase in capital support of +0.06%.

Following a discussion, it was **RESOLVED –**

1. To note the Provisional 2017/2018 Local Government Settlement announced by the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government on the 19<sup>th</sup> October, 2016;
2. To note that the Final 2017/2018 Local Government Settlement is expected on the 21<sup>st</sup> December, 2016;
3. To note that the general budget strategy consultation, will commence on the 7<sup>th</sup> November, 2016 and will close on the 19<sup>th</sup> December, 2016.



## **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR, HUMAN RESOURCES**

### **67 APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

In his report, the Director, Human Resources reminded Members of the temporary arrangements for the Chief Executive's role as agreed at the Council Meeting held on the 27<sup>th</sup> April, 2016 (Minute No.150 refers) and in light of recent changes to the future direction of Local Government in Wales, it was suggested that a permanent appointment now be made.

Following consideration of this matter, it was **RESOLVED** –

1. In light of the changes to the future direction of Local Government in Wales, the Council agrees to recruit to the post of Chief Executive on a permanent basis;
2. To agree that the Chief Executive role will also assume responsibility for the Council's programme for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools;
3. That the Director of Human Resources be instructed to place an advert for the post of Chief Executive, as soon as practicable;
4. To note that until a permanent appointment is made the previously agreed temporary arrangements will remain in place.

#### **Note:**

Having earlier declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the above matter (Minute No.59(1) refers), County Borough Councillor (Mrs.)E.Hanagan left the meeting for the item. Mr.C.Bradshaw, Mr.C.Lee, Mr.G.Isingrini and Mr.C.Hanagan having also declared personal and pecuniary interest in the above matter (Minute No.59(2) refers) they also left the meeting during consideration of the item.

### **68 NOTICE OF MOTION**

Members **RESOLVED** – that in view of the Secunder of the Notice of Motion, County Borough Councillor G.Holmes having earlier left the meeting, Standing Orders be suspended in order that the under-mentioned Notice of Motion standing in the names of County Borough Councillors C.Middle, G.Holmes, L.M.Adams, T.Bates, R.Bevan, H.Boggis, J.Bonetto, S.Bradwick, J.Bunnage, A.Calvert, P.Cannon, S.Carter, J.Cass, A.Crimmings, W.J.David, A.Davies,MBE, A.Davies, J.Davies, M.Davies, L.De Vet. J.Elliott, S.Evans, M.Forey, A.S.Fox, M.Griffiths, P.Griffiths, E.Hanagan, G.Hopkins, S.Jones, L.Langford, R.Lewis, C.Leyshon, S.Lloyd, R.B.McDonald, K.Montague, A.Morgan, B.Morgan, M.A.Norris, S.Pickering, S.Powderhill, K.Privett, S.Rees, A.Roberts, J.Rosser, G.Smith, R.Smith, G.Stacey, B.Stephens,

M.Tegg, G.Thomas, R.K.Turner, J.S.Ward, M.J.Watts, M.Webber, D.Weeks, C.Williams, D.H.Williams, T.Williams, C.J.Willis and R.Yeo be considered:-

“This Council notes:

1. The obligation it owes to the Armed Forces community with Rhondda Cynon Taf as enshrined in the Armed Forces Covenant; that the Armed Forces community should not face disadvantage in the provision of services and that special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given the most.
2. The absence of definitive and comprehensive statistics on the size or demographics of the Armed Forces community within Rhondda Cynon Taf. This includes serving Regular and Reserve personnel, veterans and their families.
3. That the availability of such data would greatly assist the Council, local partner agencies, the voluntary sector and national Government in the planning and provision of services to address the unique needs of the Armed Forces community within Rhondda Cynon Taf.

In light of the above, this Council, moves to support and promote The Royal British Legion’s call to include a new topic in the 2021 census that concerns military service and membership of the Armed Forces community. We further call upon the UK Parliament, which will approve the final census questionnaire through legislation in 2019 to ensure that the 2021 census includes questions concerning our Armed Forces community”.

Following consideration of the matter, it was **FURTHER RESOLVED** – to adopt the Notice of Motion.

## **69 NOTICE OF MOTION**

The following Notice of Motion standing in the names of County Borough Councillors A.S.Fox, B.Morgan, L.M.Adams, T.Bates, R.Bevan, H.Boggis, J.Bonetto, S.Bradwick, J.Bunnage, A.Calvert, P.Cannon, S.Carter, J.Cass, A.Crimmings, W.J.David, A.Davies, MBE, A.Davies, J.Davies, M.Davies, L.De Vet, J.Elliott, S.Evans, M.Forey, M.Griffiths, P.Griffiths, E.Hanagan, G.Holmes, G.Hopkins, S.Jones, L.Langford, R.Lewis, C.Leyshon, S.Llod, R.B.McDonald, C.Middle, K.Mongague, A.Morgan, M.A.Norris, S.Pickering, S.Powderhill, K.Privett, S.Rees, A.Roberts, J.Rosser, G.Smith, R.Smith, G.Stacey, B.Stephens, M.Tegg, G.Thomas, R.K.Turner, J.S.Ward, M.J.Watts, M.Webber, D.Weeks, C.Williams, D.H.Williams, T.Williams, C.J.Willis and R.Yeo was considered:-

“This Council supports the work of the All Party Parliamentary Group seeking to address the issues associated with fixed odds betting terminals and calls on the UK Government to further regulate their use”.

These minutes are subject to approval at the next meeting

Following consideration of the matter, it was **RESOLVED** – to adopt the Notice of Motion.

**R.LEWIS  
MAYOR**

**The meeting closed at 7.30 p.m.**