

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, 1st March, 2017 at 5.00 p.m.

PRESENT

County Borough Councillor R.Lewis – in the Chair

County Borough Councillors

L.M.Adams	M.Forey	G.Smith
(Mrs.)T.A.Bates	(Mrs.)E.Hanagan	R.W.Smith
D.R.Bevan	G.Holmes	G.Stacey
H.Boggis	G.E.Hopkins	B.Stephens
J.Bonetto	P.Howe	R.K.Turner
S.A.Bradwick	J.S.James	G.P.Thomas
J.Bunnage	P.Jarman	L.G.Walker
A.Calvert	(Mrs.)S.J.Jones	(Mrs.)J.S.Ward
(Mrs.)A.Crimmings	(Mrs.)C.Leyshon	M.J.Watts
W.J.David	A.Morgan	M.Weaver
A.L.Davies,MBE	B.Morgan	M.Webber
(Mrs.)A.Davies	K.Morgan	E.Webster
C.Davies	M.A.Norris	C.J.Williams
G.R.Davies	S.Pickering	D.H.Williams
(Mrs.)M.E.Davies	K.A.Privett	T.Williams
J.Elliott	S.Rees	C.J.Willis
S.Evans	(Mrs.)A.Roberts	R.Yeo
	J.Rosser	

Officers in Attendance

Mr.C.Bradshaw – Chief Executive
Mr.C.Lee – Group Director, Corporate & Frontline Services
Mr.G.Isingrini – Group Director, Community & Children's Services
Mr.C.B.Jones – Director, Legal & Democratic Services
Mr.T.Wilkins – Director, Human Resources
Mr.C.Hanagan – Director, Cabinet & Public Relations
Ms.S.Nowell – Head of Transformation
Ms.K.May – Head of Democratic Services

Cwm Taf UHB

Ms.N.Davies – Head of Health & Wellbeing

106 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillors P.Baccara, (Mrs.)J.Cass, (Mrs.)L.De Vet, S.M.Evans-Fear, A.S.Fox,

W.L.Langford, S.Lloyd, C.J.Middle, I.Pearce, S.Powderhill, M.J.Powell, S.Rees-Owen, (Mrs.)M.Tegg, P.Wasley and W.D.Weeks.

107 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Council Members

In accordance with the Code of Conduct, the following declarations of personal interests were made in matters pertaining to the agenda:-

1. County Borough Councillor (Mrs.)T.Bates – Agenda Item 9 – Council Tax Resolution for the Year Ending 31st March, 2018 – “I am a Member of Pontypridd Town Council”.
2. County Borough Councillor S.Bradwick – Agenda Item 8 – The Council’s Three Year Capital Programme 2017/18 – “I am the Chair of Governors at Aberdate Community School which is named in the report”.
3. County Borough Councillor P.Jarman – “I have been granted a dispensation by the Standards Committee to speak and vote on all matters for the duration and adoption of the 2017/18 budget process”.
4. County Borough Councillor (Mrs.)E.Hanagan – Agenda Item 10 – The Council’s 2017/18 Pay Policy Statement – “I am related to an Officer of the Senior Leadership Team, I will be staying in the meeting as I have done in previous years”.
5. County Borough Councillor G.Holmes – Agenda Item 12 – Welsh Government Consultation – White Paper – Reforming Local Government: Resilient and Renewed – “Local Authority Building Control is mentioned in the document and I work in the private sector of building control which are in competition with the public sector”.
6. County Borough Councillor B.Morgan – Agenda Item 9 – Council Tax Resolution for the Year Ending 31st March, 2018 – “I am a Member of Pontypridd Town Council”.
7. County Borough Councillor K.Privett – Agenda Item 8 – The Council’s Three Year Capital Programme 2017/18 – “I am a member of the Governing Body and the transitional Governing Body of Tonypany Community School which is mentioned in the report”.
8. County Borough Councillor G.Smith – Agenda Item 8 – The Council’s Three Year Capital Programme 2017/18 – “I am on the Governing Body of Porth County Community School and the interim Governing Body which is named in the report”.

Council Officers declared personal and pecuniary interests in Agenda Item 10 – The Council’s 2017/18 Pay Policy Statement as shown below:-

1. Mr.T.Wilkins – Director, Human Resources –

“I wish to declare a personal and pecuniary interest in the matter.

In accordance with my duties as Director of Human Resources, I believe I am best placed to present the report and recommendations to Members.

I would remind members that the making of the annual Pay Policy Statement is distinct from the Council's contractual and statutory obligations as employers and the process of making the statement, therefore, can have no effect on existing terms and conditions applying to individual employees.

I will be able to advise Members in respect of queries they have in relation to the report following its presentation”.

2. Mr.C.B.Jones – Director, Legal & Democratic Services

“I wish to declare a personal and pecuniary interest in the matter. I will remain in the meeting whilst the item is presented and will be able to advise Members in respect of procedural matters arising from the report”.

3. Mr.C.Bradshaw – Chief Executive

“I wish to declare a personal and pecuniary interest in the matter. I will remain in the meeting whilst the item is presented and during subsequent discussion on the item”.

4. Mr.C.Lee – Group Director, Corporate & Frontline Services

“I wish to declare a personal and pecuniary interest in the matter. I will remain in the meeting whilst the item is presented and during subsequent discussion on the item”.

5. Mr.C.Hanagan – Director, Cabinet & Public Relations

“I wish to declare a personal and pecuniary interest in the matter. I will remain in the meeting whilst the item is presented and during subsequent discussion on the item”.

6. Mr.G.Isingrini – Group Director, Community & Children's Services

“I wish to declare a personal and pecuniary interest in the matter. I will remain in the meeting whilst the item is presented and during subsequent discussion on the item”.

7. Ms.S.Nowell – Head of Transformation

“I wish to declare a personal and pecuniary interest in the matter. I will remain in the meeting whilst the item is presented and during subsequent discussion on the item”.

108 ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor thanked Members and Officers who had bought raffle tickets for the St.David's Day draw which had raised over £500 which would be contributed to his chosen charities.

109 PETITIONS

The following petitions were handed to the Mayor at the meeting:-

1. By County Borough Councillor (Mrs.)A.Davies on behalf of the residents of Ferndale in respect of "excessive dog fouling and not cleaning up the mess after. In particular, the lanes of Wilson Place and Maerdy Road can only be considered as unfit for the hundreds of children using the lanes daily to and from the school. Pot holes and fragmentation of small pieces of tarmac covers the road surface hiding the numerous holes causing the children to fall and hurt themselves. The area is certainly a hazard and requires immediate action to clean it up".
2. By County Borough Councillor J.Elliott on behalf of the residents of Cwmbach in requesting that the Council provides a one-way system at Bridge Road, Cwmbach.
3. By County Borough Councillor (Mrs.)T.Bates on behalf of the residents of Hawthorn requesting the installation of a pedestrian crossing between Alexon Way and the Dog Track as it was believed would improve public safety.

110 MINUTES

RESOLVED – to approve as accurate records the minutes of the meetings of the Council held on the 11th January and the 25th January, 2017, subject to Minute No.90 of the meeting held on the 11th January being amended to read that County Borough Councillor G.R.Davies declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 8 – "I am a member of Blaencwm Baptist Church and Rhondda Lawn Tennis Club".

111 STATEMENTS

- (1) The Leader of the Council made a statement on the recent announcement of job losses at the Ford Engine Plant, Bridgend.

He stated that many hundreds of RCT residents are employed at this factory and in addition many local businesses form part of the huge local supply chain which support the Plant, one such supplier is based in Clydach Vale. Officers of the Council had today, been in contact with the Unite Union to offer the support of this Council in their representations to Ford.

The Leader also took the opportunity at a meeting held earlier today with Welsh Government officials to raise concerns on this issue. The Welsh Government and Trade Unions were also actively seeking to do all they could

to protect and secure the jobs and it was hoped by the Leader that the UK Government would do likewise and provide the same level of support as with Nissan.

- (2) County Borough Councillor G.Hopkins, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Equalities and the Welsh Language reported that the Council is working in partnership with the Welsh Charity, Menter Iaith to organise and run the one day festival - `Parti Ponty` on the 15th July, 2017, which he hoped would be supported by Members.

112 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

- (a) **From County Borough Councillor P.Jarman to the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A.Morgan**

"What is the definition of a pothole?"

Response from County Borough Councillor A.Morgan

"There is an interventions criteria below or above 30 mm, 50 mm or 70 mm and the depth will determine the response time to intervene".

Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor P.Jarman

"As I understand it there is no national definition of a pothole, so claims for damage to a car are made, I presume, according to the local definition as well as other factors like the statutory defence that the Council cannot be liable because the pothole hasn't been reported or picked up under the Council's inspection regime. There is also a professional view that patchwork repairs cause equal damage to vehicles. The Association of British Insurers are on the record as saying, when asked to define a pothole, as having no idea, they are a bit like elephants, hard to define but easy to recognise, I am tempted to ask how many elephants there are in RCT but that would be an easy question to answer. So my supplementary question is how many cases of claims for pothole damage have been rejected by the Council in the last 12 months?"

Response from County Borough Councillor A.Morgan

"I haven't got that answer. However, we do have an intervention criteria and have invested a substantial amount in the last six to seven years in our highways and infrastructure. Significant progress has been made resulting in the number of potholes being reduced. Because of the complete resurfacing schemes that have been undertaken, Categories 1 and 2 defects are done within seven days.

- (b) **From County Borough Councillor S.Rees-Owen to the Cabinet Member for Council Business & Human Resources, County Borough Councillor M.Webber**

“What attempt has the Council made to make an instantaneous translation facility available in this Chamber?”

Note: As County Borough Councillor S.Rees-Owen had submitted her apologies for absence at this meeting, the question was not responded to.

- (c) **From County Borough Councillor B.Stephens to the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A.Morgan**

“Will the Leader make a statement on Vision Products please?”

Response from County Borough Councillor A.Morgan

“This has not been an area within my portfolio and I have not had much to do with Vision Products. When Remploy closed, Vision Products took on some of the staff. I recently visited Vision Products with the Chief Executive and had a tour of the plant. I was extremely impressed with how it is run and it was pleasing to see the way it has developed. It is a part of the Council that is a supported business. Many people are employed there 2/3rds of which have a disability. Vision Products offers apprenticeships, volunteering and work placement opportunities. The business has grown substantially with a £1.75M turnover and looking at further options to expand that”.

Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor B.Stephens

“Are there any further commercial opportunities that can be explored?”

Response from County Borough Councillor A.Morgan

“We are looking to see if we can expand Vision Products more commercially e.g. they do a lot of adaptations, hoist support and maintenance. We have looked at other parts of the local authority where we have generated income, one of which is Rhondda Heritage Park. Another area where we invested money and generated more income is in leisure, so much so that Councillor Crimmings and I wrote to the staff commending them for their work as we are now approaching 10,000 members which is a 30% increase in membership”.

- (d) **From County Borough Councillor G.Stacey to the Cabinet Member for Council Business & Human Resources, County Borough Councillor M.Webber**

“Can the Deputy Leader, in her capacity as the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Council Business, please provide an update on paperless Cabinet?”

Response from County Borough Councillor M.Webber

“Paperless Cabinet continues to go very well with the technology provided to Members and Officers contributing to effective and efficient conduct of Cabinet business. Not only this but when you consider the last Cabinet Meeting agenda was over 500 pages and before the introduction of a paperless approach, papers would have been printed for all Cabinet Members and Senior Officers. This is another area where we have thought innovatively to deliver efficiencies contributing to the protection of frontline services”.

Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor G.Stacey

“Given the substantial amount of paper that is printed for meetings of the Development Control Committee, I am sure this approach would be welcomed by the vast majority of Committee Members?”

Response from County Borough Councillor M.Webber

“It is something that we can do in the future and I am glad that you can see the benefits of a paperless approach. We could look at it for Members of the Development Control Committee in the future and maybe it could be rolled out for other Committees – Scrutiny and Licensing and the necessary training would be provided”.

(e) **From County Borough Councillor A.Roberts to the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A.Morgan**

“Could the Leader please provide an update on the Cardiff Region City Deal?”

Response from County Borough Councillor A.Morgan

“Following the unanimous vote that was taken at the last Council Meeting, all ten authorities have now voted in favour of the Cardiff Region City Deal. I attended an event this morning at Cardiff Airport and the official document has now been signed. Whilst we have an election, there is a huge amount of work going on in the background by Officers. We are coming out of `Shadow` and are working with the private sector.

Who knows what will come forward with innovation, some of these things won't be known about. It could be something developed in 2 years time which partners will wish to invest some funding, such projects will be put in the public arena for scrutiny”.

Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor A.Roberts

“I would like to applaud you on the role that you have taken as Chair of the Shadow Cabinet. Now that the deal has been signed can you outline the next steps and share with us how the communities will benefit?”

Response from County Borough Councillor A.Morgan

“It is no longer a Shadow Cabinet, it is now the City Region Cabinet. Thank you for the compliments but this has been a team effort and I would like to pay credit to four Officers in this Authority, namely Jane Cook, Roger Waters, Chris Lee and our Chief Executive, Mr.Chris Bradshaw. This City Deal is the largest City Deal of its kind with £1,2bn worth of investment and has been the fastest to progress, which has been done in 16 months whereas some deals take two years and they are still not where we are. The term that other Leaders are using that it very much a City Deal and not about village politics, it doesn't mean that every Ward is going to get something.

There are four key areas for the City Deal in going forward:-

Transport/Infrastructure is in need of investment including rail investment and frequency etc. Need to make sure that bus services join up with other networks.

Need to address the housing element especially in the Upper Valleys.

Skills and training, there is a need to get colleges together and deal with them collectively – Apprenticeship Hub - Graduates; and

Business Support”.

REPORTS OF THE CABINET

113 THE COUNCIL'S 2017/18 REVENUE BUDGET STRATEGY

The Group Director, Corporate & Frontline Services presented the report in respect of the Council's 2017/2018 Revenue Budget Strategy on behalf of the Cabinet.

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

1. To note the written statement from the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government (Mark Drakeford AM) and the table on the 2017/2018 local government settlement, reproduced at Appendix 1 to the report;
2. To note the base budget adjustments impacting in 2017/18 as summarised in Table 1 of the report;
3. To approve the budget strategy proposals as summarised in Table 2 of the report, including:-
 - i. An agreed additional efficiency sum of £0.584M (over and above the £6M agreed at `Provisional Settlement` stage in October 2016) for 2017/18;
 - ii. A reduction in the budget allowance for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme of £1.600M;

- iii. Use of the `Medium Term Financial Planning & Service Transformation Reserve` as transitional funding totalling £1.433M for 2017/18;
4. To approve Tables 3 and 4 in Section 10 of the report as the basis of allocating resources to the Individual Schools Budget (ISB), to other Council Services, and to meet its corporate financing requirements;
5. To agree the Council Tax increase for the financial year ending the 31st March, 2018 at 2.25%;
6. To agree the Council's overall budget for 2017/2018, in order to set the Council Tax for the forthcoming year by the statutory deadline of the 11th March, 2017.

Note: County Borough Councillor J.James wished to have recorded the fact that he voted against the above motion.

114 THE COUNCIL'S THREE YEAR CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2017/18 – 2019/20

On behalf of the Cabinet the Group Director, Corporate & Frontline Services presented the proposed Capital Programme for 2017/18 to 2019/20, following confirmation of the local government settlement 2017/18.

Following consideration of the report, it was **RESOLVED** –

1. To note the detail of the final 2017/18 local government settlement for capital expenditure, as reproduced at Appendix 1;
2. To agree the release of the Earmarked Reserve balances as detailed in paragraph 5.3 of the report;
3. To agree to allocate the funding released from Earmarked Reserves to the investment priorities as detailed in paragraph 5.7 of the report;
4. To agree the proposed `core` three year programme as detailed at Appendix 2 to the report;
5. To agree the proposed total three year Capital Programme, detailed at Appendix 3 to the report, which includes the following non core capital funding:-
 - Prudential borrowing to support 21st Century School Schemes;
 - Capital grants for specific schemes;
 - Third party contributions;
 - Additional Council resources previously allocated to support existing schemes and Corporate Plan investment priorities;
 - The investment priorities detailed in paragraph 5.7 of the report which are funded by the release of Earmarked Reserves as detailed in paragraph 5.3 of the report.

REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, CORPORATE & FRONTLINE SERVICES

115 COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH, 2018

The Group Director, Corporate & Frontline Services provided Members with details of the calculation of the Authority's Council Tax for the financial year ending 31st March, 2018 prior to passing the necessary statutory resolutions.

RESOLVED –

1. To note the level of the precept from the Police & Crime Commissioner for South Wales;
2. To note the level of the Community Council Precepts, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report;
3. To pass the formal Council Tax resolutions for the financial year ending 31st March, 2018, as shown at Appendix 2 to the report;
4. To note the comments of the Group Director, Corporate & Frontline Services upon the robustness of the estimates and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves as detailed in paragraph 9.2 of the report.

Note: County Borough Councillor J.James wished to have recorded the fact that he voted against the above motion.

JOINT REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR, HUMAN RESOURCES AND THE DIRECTOR LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

116 THE COUNCIL'S 2017/18 PAY POLICY STATEMENT

In his report, the Director, Human Resources, provided Members with information in respect of the Council's 2017/18 Pay Policy Statement and it was **RESOLVED** – to approve the Pay Policy Statement 2017/18 as shown at Appendix A to the report.

JOINT REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND THE GROUP DIRECTOR CORPORATE & FRONTLINE SERVICES

117 SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING ACT: IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMME UNDERSTANDING OUR COMMUNITIES : THE POPULATION ASSESSMENT

In their Joint Report, the Group Director, Community & Children's Services and the Group Director, Corporate & Frontline Services provided Members with an update from the Cwm Taf multi agency workstream tasked with producing the Population Assessment required under Part 2 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act together with information in respect of the development of the Well-being Assessment required under the Well-Being of Future Generations Act.

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

1. To note the progress made;
2. To approve the draft Cwm Taf Population Assessment and associated briefing documents;
3. To note the Population Assessment which is to be presented and approved by the Cwm Taf Social Services and Well-being Partnership Board on the 9th March, 2017;
4. To note for information the Cwm Taf Well-being Assessment, which was approved (subject to some minor changes) by the Cwm Taf Public Services Board on the 14th February, 2017.

REPORTS OF THE DIRECTOR, LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

118 WELSH GOVERNMENT – CONSULTATION DOCUMENT WHITE PAPER – “REFORMING LOCAL GOVERNMENT: RESILIENT AND RENEWED”

The Director, Legal & Democratic Services appended to his report, the Welsh Government’s White Paper “Reforming Local Government: Resilient and Renewed” which was published on the 31st January, 2017 for consultation until the 11th April, 2017.

RESOLVED –

1. That a Working Group comprising 10 Members (5 Labour, 2 Plaid Cymru, 1 Independent, 1 Democratic Alliance (DAG) and County Borough Councillor P.Baccara (Unallocated) be set up to consider the consultation document published by the Welsh Government in relation to the White Paper – Reforming Local Government: Resilient and Renewed; and
2. That the meeting of the Working Group be held on Monday, 6th March, 2017 in order that the Council can receive comments from Members of the Working Group at the Council Meeting to be held on the 15th March, 2017 which would form the basis of the Council’s response to be submitted by the consultation closing date of the 11th April, 2017.

119 THE RHONDDA CYNON TAF (COMMUNITIES) ORDER 2016

In his report, the Director, Legal & Democratic Services sought the Council’s confirmation to the making by Welsh Ministers of the Rhondda Cynon Taf (Communities) Order 2016 on the 25th November, 2016 which came into force on the 1st December, 2016.

RESOLVED –

1. To note the effect of the Agreement by Welsh Ministers to endorse, without modification, the proposals of the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission regarding community boundaries for the County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

2. To note that all required consequential amendments to maps and electoral registers have been duly made and can be inspected at the Council's Election Office, Maritime Industrial Estate, Pontypridd.

120 NOTICES OF MOTION

- (1) **RESOLVED** – That as the Proposer and Seconder to the Notice of Motion standing in the names of County Borough Councillors P.Baccara and P.Griffiths were absent the Notice of Motion could not be considered.
- (2) The following Notice of Motion standing in the names of County Borough Councillors P.Jarman, G.Davies, S.Rees-Owen, M.Weaver, C.Davies, E.Webster, K.Morgan, S.Evans-Fear and I.Pearce was considered:-

“We are proud to live in a diverse and tolerant society. Racism, xenophobia and hate crimes have no place in our country.

This Council condemns racism xenophobia and hate crime unequivocally and will not allow hate to be tolerated or to become acceptable.

All people living in the County are valued members of society and as a Council we will fight such prejudice, wherever it manifests itself”.

RESOLVED – to adopt the Notice of Motion.

120 FOR INFORMATION URGENT CABINET/KEY OFFICER DELEGATED DECISIONS EXCLUDED FROM “CALL-IN”

RESOLVED – to note for information, the following Cabinet decision and two Key Officer Delegated decisions which were excluded from “Call-In”:-

Cabinet Decision

Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017-2020
Key Officer Delegated Decisions

- Ministry of Defence Education Support Fund Application
- Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking and Refugee Children

**R.LEWIS
MAYOR**

The meeting closed at 7 p.m.