

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, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale on Wednesday, 27th June, 2018 at 5 p.m.

PRESENT

County Borough Councillor S.Powderhill – in the Chair

County Borough Councillors

L.M.Adams	D.Grehan	D.Owen-Jones
D.R.Bevam	M.Griffiths	S.Pickering
H.Boggix	J.Harries	M.J.Powell
J.Bonetto	G.E.Hopkins	S.Rees
S.A.Bradwick	P.Howe	S.Rees-Owen
J.Brencher	G.W.Hughes	A.Roberts
A.Calvert	J.James	J.Rosser
G.Caple	P.Jarman	R.W.Smith
A.Chapman	G.Jones	G.Stacey
A.G.Cox	K.L.Jones	E.Stephens
A.Crimmings	L.Jones	G.Thomas
J.L.Cullwick	R.Lewis	W.Treeby
G.R.Davies	W.Lewis	R.K.Turner
J.R.Davies	C.Leyshon	L.Walker
A.Davies-Jones	D.Macey	M.Webber
L.De Vet	A.Morgan	L.Walker
M.Diamond	K.Morgan	J.Williams
S.Evans	S.Morgans	T.Williams
M.Fidler Jones	M.Norris	C.J.Willis
	W.Owen	R.Yeo

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.R.Evans – Director, Human Resources
Mr.C.Hanagan – Director, Cabinet & Public Relations
Ms.K.May – Head of Democratic Services

20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillors S.M.Evans, M.Forey, A.S.Fox, H.Fychan, E.George, G.Holmes, L.Hooper, S.M.Powell, M.Tegg, M.Weaver, E.Webster, D.H.Williams and G.D.G.Williams.

21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED – That in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, to note that personal interests were made by County Borough Councillors J.Cullwick, J.Harries, G.W.Hughes, D.Owen-Jones, M.J.Powell, S.Rees-Owen and E.Stephens in respect of Agenda Item 8(b) – Notice of Motion as they are members of the Rhondda Tunnel Society.

22 PRESENTATION – TRANSPORT FOR WALES

Members received Mr.J.Colins, Operations Director of Transport for Wales who with the aid of PowerPoint slides gave his observations under the following headings:-

- **What is Transport for Wales?**
 - A not for profit, customer focussed company, wholly owned by the Welsh Government
 - An expert advisor to the Welsh Government and an advocate for transport related matters.
- **Relationship with the Welsh Government**
 - The Welsh Government develops policies for Transport for Wales
 - Transport for Wales provides technical advice and expertise to help the Welsh Government to develop policy
- **Wales and Borders Train Services**
 - Transformation across Wales, not just the Metro area
 - Every train in Wales will be replaced through a £800M investment
 - 95% of journeys will be made on brand new trains
 - More than 50% of those to be assembled in Wales
- **Station Improvement Fund – Nearly £200M will be invested in improvement works across all rail services stations, in addition to the CVL transformation programme, including:-**
 - £40M to upgrade and enhance station facilities including; waiting rooms, shelters, toilets, customer information screens, digital information screens and monitored CCTV to all stations
 - £20M to improve the station catering and retail offer
 - £15M to improve accessibility and provide step free access
 - £15M to provide 1,500 new parking spaces

- £10M fund to provide community space at stations
- £15M for new ticket machines, Smart Ticketing equipment and new gate-lines
- £10M to provide free wi-fi at all stations
- Covered cycle storage at all stations
- A dedicated Art and Green fund
- Plus flagship schemes
- **What is the South Wales Metro and what is Central Metro?**
 - **South Wales Metro** includes the full set of local services around South East Wales:
 - This includes what is currently known as the `Valley Lines`, plus services between Cardiff and Ebbw Vale, Maesteg and extending to the Severn Tunnel junction and beyond.
 - **Central Metro** refers to the sub-set of the South Wales Metro train services which run from Treherbert, Aberdare, Merthyr Tydfil, Radyr, Rhymney and Coryton through Queen Street to Cardiff Bay, Cardiff Central, Penarth, Barry Island and Bridgend.
 - The Central Metro solution avoids the need to change trains to cross Cardiff and integrates the City Line, Penarth, Barry Island and Bridgend with the portions of the Valleys Lines which transfer from NR.
- **A big change in frequency, journey times and capacity**
 - Trains per hour will be increased and journey times will be reduced e.g. Treherbert to Queen Street from 2 per hour currently to 4 per hour in 2023 with the journey time being reduced to 46 minutes from 57 minutes currently.
- **Overview of the Concept Design**
 - Track – 15 sites where track is re-doubled, 1 major junctions remodelled, numerous line speed improvements, new on-street (tramway) section of line at Cardiff Bay to Flourish.
 - Maintenance and Control – new rolling stock maintenance depot and control centre. Upgrades for “tram-train” mixed mode operation.
 - Electrification - `smart` electrification to 25kV AC with permanently earthed sections around restricted structures, saving 55 interventions e.g. rebuilding bridges/no need for wire in Caerphilly tunnel.
 - Civils – 5 new + 1 relocated stations, 13 new platforms, 10 new station footbridges, 3 new road over rail bridges, 6 station accessibility schemes and work at all stations to improve facilities.
- **Over 600 jobs directly created plus 450 Apprenticeships**

Following the presentation, many questions were asked by Members which were duly responded to by Mr.Colins. The Mayor thanked Mr.Colins for his in depth address to Council and Mr.Colins then left the meeting.

23 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (1) County Borough Councillors R.Lewis and S.Rees-Owen paid tributes to Frank Vickery who recently passed away following a short illness.
- (2) County Borough Councillor A.Chapman handed a petition to the Mayor on behalf of residents of Treorchy requesting traffic calming measures be put in place at High Street, Treorchy due to number of road traffic accidents that have occurred in the area.
- (3) County Borough Councillor J.Brencher stated that following the announcement that she made at the Council Meeting held on the 28th March, 2018 (Minute No.113(2) refers) in respect of the Partnership Overseas Network Trust (PONT), leaflets were available at the meeting providing Members with further information on PONT.
- (4) County Borough Councillor J.Williams informed Members that a sponsorship form was being circulated in the Chamber in aid of `Taithsteffanlewiswalk` for Velindre Cancer Centre.
- (5) County Borough Councillor S.Pickering informed Members that a sponsorship form was being circulated in the Chamber in aid of the Ynysybwll festival, which was now in its fifth year and going from strength to strength.

24 MINUTES

RESOLVED – to approve as accurate records, the minutes of the following meetings:-

- Council – 25th April, 2018
- Annual Meeting of the Council – 23rd May, 2018

25 STATEMENTS

The Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A.Morgan stated that an event is to be organised to take place in September, 2018 in respect of the role of Universal Credit. Various organisations including third Sector groups will be invited to this event to ascertain what they are putting in place in preparation for Universal Credit and the huge impact this will have on families.

An invitation will also be extended to all Councillors.

26 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

(a) From County Borough Councillor E.Stephens to the Cabinet Member for Adult Community Services & Welsh Language (County Borough Councillor G.Hopkins)

“Will you make a statement on the provision of respite services for Carers of vulnerable adults please?”

Response from County Borough Councillor G.Hopkins

“There is a lot of important work going on in this area. The Council commissions respite care and support services based on assessed needs on a case by case basis.

We currently have a provision of 22 in-house respite beds for older people in our Care Homes throughout RCT. This resource allows individuals an opportunity to plan frequent stays in an environment which is safe and able to meet specific care needs and requirements”.

Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor E.Stephens

“I have several Carers in my Ward who take care of vulnerable adults, they need respite care. Treorchy was full and it wasn't suitable for one of my constituents to go outside of the Rhondda for various reasons, one being it's not easy to reach places using public transport. By 2037, Carers UK predicts a huge increase, so is there going to be an increase in these places to meet this demand. Could the relevant Committee look into this?”

Response from County Borough Councillor G.Hopkins

“First of all, from time to time, especially around public and summer holidays, there is a greater demand on our services. The Council, of course, recognises that we need larger capacity in the system for the next couple of years and as part of the process of change, the services for elderly people and their families will be invested in”.

(b) From County Borough Councillor G.Hughes to the Leader of the Council (County Borough Councillor A.Morgan)

“What steps is the Council taking to improve Active Travel opportunities across the County Borough?”

Response from County Borough Councillor A.Morgan

“Consultation was carried out not long ago. Looking at various areas to improve the network. There was a lot of feedback from residents as part of that process. All the 22 Welsh Authorities had to send in their submissions

and some didn't have theirs signed off and had them returned. Ours was signed off and we can now bid for funding for those areas, welcome additional funding from Welsh Government and new money has been announced - a further £10M this year, further money next year and the year after to come up to £60M".

Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor G.Hughes

"Has consideration been given to the potential opening of Rhondda Tunnel?"

Response from County Borough Councillor A.Morgan

"The Welsh Government are aware of it. Later on in the meeting we will be dealing with the Notice of Motion. It is about commuting and people wanting to cycle, talking of leisure and tourism and lots of opportunities for active travel and we will be bidding for money".

(c) From County Borough Councillor L.Jones to the Leader of the Council (County Borough Councillor A.Morgan)

"What is the Council's protocol for notifying local Members of Council arranged events, activities and investments in their Wards?"

Response from County Borough Councillor A.Morgan

"Your question is in three parts. Events and Activities – these are widely publicised on our website and events such as, for example, Armed Forces Day, emails were sent out on behalf of the Mayor.

In terms of investment, it depends on what type of investment, for example, there are dozens and dozens of schemes, whether it be street lighting which comes out of a massive Capital Programme budget. These are published so that Members are aware of what is in the Capital Programme".

Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor L.Jones

"There are major roadworks in Ystrad and as local Members we were not informed until it was published by the press and works commenced the following day. Roads were closed and side streets were blocked off resulting in problems with parking. There is a large project going ahead in our Ward – replacement of Bridge which went out to public consultation last week and we were only informed two days before. On the Friday evening I knocked everybody's door to inform residents as it would cause major upheaval. Why were we not informed?"

Response from County Borough Councillor A.Morgan

“I will deal with the second issue first, local Members were not informed because of the short notice. The bridge works was an exhibition not a consultation. Because of the problems that were being experienced, I asked that it be published immediately which was on the Wednesday night. The following day an email was sent to the local Members and I was copied in.

In terms of Ystrad, there is major resurfacing works and the contractors concerned will no longer be working for us again. It should have been completed in 10 to 14 days and it has taken a month. We had extreme difficulties with them. Press release was made ten days before works started and site notices were placed on lamp-posts seven days before. We don't notify Members of resurfacing.

In terms of investment, there is a huge Highways budget and there are 15 major projects this year, for example we have a drainage budget of £3.5M and staff are doing a good job under immense pressure. Members can look at the website and social media”.

(d) From County Borough Councillor J.James to the Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development and Housing (County Borough Councillor D.R.Bevan)

“Will the Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development and Housing make a statement on TAN1 and joint housing land availability studies?”

Response from County Borough Councillor D.R.Bevan

“Recently the Welsh Government undertook a consultation process in respect of amendments to TAN1. The Council has responded to the consultation which was dealt by way of a delegated decision which was sent on the 14th June, 2018 and was published on the same day. The closing date was the 20th June, 2018”.

Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor J.James

“If Welsh Government goes ahead with the application, what weight will be given to planning applications that are outside of the LDP?”

Response from County Borough Councillor D.R.Bevan

“All applications will be treated in the same light, whether inside or outside of the LDP. The Future Generations Act allows Councils to determine applications and can demonstrate their sustainability. We are the only local authority in Wales that has a Development Forum and that issue was raised there. They have to demonstrate that the proposals they bring forward in the

future will be sustainable. It will be for the Committee to decide whether to approve or refuse applications through the democratic process”.

(e) From County Borough Councillor J.Bonetto to the Leader of the Council (County Borough Councillor A.Morgan)

“Following the announcement that the new depot for the South Wales Metro will be developed in Taffs Well, can the Leader please outline the next steps for the delivery of the scheme?”

Response from County Borough Councillor A.Morgan

“A planning application has been submitted to the Council by Transport for Wales which seeks planning permission to establish a new rolling stock depot and maintenance workshop on the Garth Works site in Taffs Well. In addition the application also includes proposals to increase park and ride spaces, together with highways and rail infrastructure improvements and modifications to Taffs Well Station.

The application will shortly be presented to the Planning Committee for Members consideration and determination.

The main elements of the scheme includes –

- demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment of the eastern part of the site into the Taffs Well Depot for the South Wales Metro, comprising stabling and maintenance facilities for rolling stock, associated workshop and offices, car parking and electrical substation.
- Extension of one platform and a new railway station footbridge at the existing Taffs Well station and reconfiguration of the station’s access and parking areas.
- Construction of new rail links to connect the Taffs Well Depot with the Cardiff to Merthyr railway line.
- Construction of elevated sections of access road to bridge over the new rail links to the depot and maintain road access between the site and Cardiff Road”.

Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor J.Bonetto

“People are approaching me and asking what will be the benefits of the new developments at both ends of Taffs Well and the new rail depot bring to the community?”

Response from County Borough Councillor A.Morgan

“One of the big benefits will be the number of jobs that will be created because the size of the fleet is to be increased. There is a significant training

opportunity as we offer the only rail training facility in Wales which is in the local college. In addition to the jobs out of the new Franchise there will be several apprenticeships every year.

It is important that we see as many people from RCT benefiting from these schemes”.

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR, CABINET & PUBLIC RELATIONS

27 COUNCIL WORK PROGRAMME

The Director, Cabinet & Public Relations sought Members’ approval to the draft Work Programme on the proposed list of matters requiring consideration by Council over the 2018-19 Municipal Year which was attached to his report at Appendix 1.

Following a discussion, it was **RESOLVED** – to approve the Work Programme for the 2018-19 Municipal Year and that further updates be presented to future meetings of the Council, as and when appropriate.

28 NOTICE OF MOTION

The following Notice of Motion standing in the names of County Borough Councillors A.Calvert, L.M.Adams, D.R.Bevan, H.Boggis, J.Bonetto, S.Bradwick, J.Brencher, G.Caple, A.Crimmings, A.Davies-Jones, L.De.Vet, S.Evans, M.Fidler Jones, M.Forey, A.Fox, E.George, M.Griffiths, J.Harries, G.Holmes, G.Hopkins, G.W.Hughes, G.Jones, R.Lewis. W.Lewis, C.Leyshon, A.Morgan, S.Morgans, M.A.Norris, D.Owen-Jones, S.Pickering, S.Powderhill, S.M.Powell, S.Rees, A.Roberts, J.Rosser, R.W.Smith, G.Stacey, M.Tegg, G.Thomas, W.Treeby, R.K.Turner, M.Webber, D.H.Williams, C.J.Willis and R.Yeo was considered:-

“This Council recognises the serious dangers posed by Sepsis, which claims the lives of 44,000 people in the UK every year.

Known as the `silent killer`, it is the leading cause of avoidable death in the UK and occurs when the body violently responds to an infection by attacking its own organs.

The Council recognises the steps taken by the Welsh Government in becoming the first country in the World to introduce a system of early escalation of deteriorating patients, and the work done through the 1,000 Lives Programme which raises awareness of Sepsis within the NHS.

Also acknowledges the need to increase awareness amongst the public, particularly in light of the often seemingly flu-like symptoms.

This Council therefore RESOLVES to:

Support the call for the Welsh Government to undertake a Sepsis Public Awareness Campaign to improve outcomes for survivors and those affected.

Take steps to promote education and awareness of the symptoms of Sepsis across the County Borough including the Council's staff network".

A discussion ensued, when tributes were made to the parents of Chloe Christopher who had died at such a young age with Sepsis.

RESOLVED - to adopt the Notice of Motion.

29 NOTICE OF MOTION

The following Notice of Motion standing in the names of County Borough Councillors G.W.Hughes, S.Bradwick, L.M.Adams, D.R.Bevan, H.Boggis, J.Bonetto, J.Brencher, A.Calvert, G.Caple, A.Crimmings, A.Davies-Jones, L.De Vet, J.Harries, G.Holmes, G.Hopkins, G.Jones, R.Lewis, W.Lewis, C.Leyshon, A.Morgan, S.Morgans, M.A.Norris, D.Owen-Jones, S.Pickering, S.Powderhill, S.M.Powell, S.Rees, A.Roberts, J.Rosser, R.W.Smith, G.Stacey, M.Tegg, G.Thomas, W.Treeby, R.K.Turner, M.Webber, D.H.Williams, C.J.Willis and R.Yeo was considered:-

"This Council supports the opening of both the Rhondda Tunnel between Blaencwm and Blaengwyfi and the Abernant Tunnel that links Aberdare with Merthyr. The Council applauds the significant efforts of the Rhondda Tunnel Society and also those involved in the campaign to reopen the Abernant Tunnel.

Members will note the huge success of the Two Tunnels Greenway project in Bath, which attracts thousands of visitors every year and recently held the annual Two Tunnels half marathon races.

The re-opening of both tunnels could act as a major catalyst for improving Active Travel, leisure and tourism opportunities across the County Borough and therefore aligns with the Council's commitment to creating a healthy and active RCT.

This Council therefore RESOLVES to:

- Support the campaigns to re-open both of the tunnels in recognition of the huge potential they hold for improving tourism and Active Travel and also for improving the local economy.
- Continues to liaise with the Welsh Government and the relevant neighbouring local authorities, namely: Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council to realise the ambitions of both of these projects".

Amendment to the Notice of Motion

In accordance with paragraph 10.4.1 of Part 4 of the Council's Constitution, Members gave consideration to the following Amendment to the Notice of Motion which was submitted by County Borough Councillors G.R.Davies, E Stephens, P Jarman, A Chapman, A G Cox, J Cullwick, J Davies, S.M.Evans, H Fychan, D Grehan, L Jones, D Macey, K Morgan, S Rees Owen, M O Weaver, E Webster and J Williams:-

"The Council recognises the importance of a comprehensive cycle path network for the success of these projects. It will ensure that such a network will be in place to coincide with the opening of the tunnels for cyclists and pedestrians thus maximising the potential of these projects for tourists and local residents alike.

To be inserted as a bullet point after the first bullet point but before the second bullet point under the words "This Council resolves to"

Following a lengthy discussion on this matter and following a vote in respect of the Amendment to the Notice of Motion which was `lost`; a vote was then taken on the original Motion and, it was **RESOLVED** – to adopt the Notice of Motion as shown below:-

"This Council supports the opening of both the Rhondda Tunnel between Blaencwm and Blaengwyfi and the Abernant Tunnel that links Aberdare with Merthyr. The Council applauds the significant efforts of the Rhondda Tunnel Society and also those involved in the campaign to reopen the Abernant Tunnel.

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- Continues to liaise with the Welsh Government and the relevant neighbouring local authorities, namely: Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council to realise the ambitions of both of these projects".

URGENT ITEM

With the permission of the Mayor, the following item was considered as a matter of urgency.

30 REVIEW OF ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS BY THE LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES

In their joint report, the Director, Legal & Democratic Services and the Director, Cabinet & Public Relations sought Member's comments and approval upon a suggested methodology for ensuring that the views of this Council's Members and other stakeholders regarding proposals for prospective revised electoral arrangements for this Authority are comprehensively recorded and communicated to the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales ("the Commission") within the applicable timetable and in accordance with the expressed wishes of Council.

Reference was made in the report to Minute No. 139 of the Council meeting held on the 25th April, 2018 where it was resolved to direct the Electoral Registration Officer ("ERO") to produce a report as to how County Borough wards could be realigned to provide a more equitable Councillor to elector/resident balance via a Working Group of the responsible Scrutiny Committee. This would, in turn, form the basis of this Council's representations to the Commission upon any emerging new arrangements.

On 19th June 2018 the Commission met with Senior Officers and Political Group Leaders to set out their programmed review of electoral arrangements for this Authority pursuant to the provisions of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 ("the Act") which contains prescribed duties upon the Commission which seek to ensure effective and convenient Local Government. Section 21 imposes a duty upon the Commission to review electoral arrangements for each principal area at least once every ten years.

It was further reported that whilst the Commission will be addressing the Council at its meeting scheduled for 25th July 2018, they have agreed that it would be appropriate, given the timetabling requirements as set out in the report for Members to have the matter referred to them at this Council meeting to make best use of the time available to facilitate consultation.

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

1. That the appropriate dialogue and consultation regarding electoral arrangements be undertaken in accordance with mechanisms and the timetable set out in this report.
2. That in accordance with Minute No.139 of the Council Meeting held on the 25th April, 2018 that commentary upon a review of electoral arrangements include a Working Group comprising all Members of the

Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an invitation being extended to all Members.

S.POWDERHILL

MAYOR

The meeting closed at 6.50 p.m.

