

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2016 - 2017

**STANDARDS COMMITTEE
15th MARCH 2017**

**REPORT OF THE MONITORING
OFFICER**

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2	
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COMPLAINT BY A MEMBER UNDER THE COUNCIL'S LOCAL PROTOCOL – STANDARD OF CONDUCT EXPECTED BY MEMBERS

**Author: Mr. Andy Wilkins – Head of Legal – Corporate & Democratic
Services & Deputy Monitoring Officer**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To enable the Committee to consider a complaint made by a Member that another Member has failed to comply with the Local Protocol – Standard of Conduct Expected by Members.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- 2.1 Members adopt the procedure outlined in paragraph 3.9 of this report as to the conduct of the meeting; and
- 2.2 Consider whether or not the Member who is the subject of the complaint has failed to comply with the Local Protocol – Standards of Conduct expected by Members and, if there is basis to the complaint, whether that Member should be censured or that no further action is required.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 On 12th January 2011 Council approved the Local Protocol – Standard of Conduct Expected by Members (the 'Protocol'), a copy of which is appended at Appendix 1 to this report.
- 3.2 A complaint has been made under the Protocol by County Borough Councillor P. Jarman against County Borough Councillor M. Webber.
- 3.3 The basis of Councillor Jarman's complaint relates to the contents of a statement provided to Media Wales by Councillor Webber. This statement also appeared on the 'Rhondda Cynon Taf Labour' Facebook page. The statement relates to the debate at the Council's Cabinet meeting on Thursday 9th February 2017 in connection with the agenda item 'Council Fees & Charges Policy 2017/18'.

3.4 Councillor Jarman contends that Councillor Webber publicly made claims about her that were in breach of standards set out in the Protocol. Councillor Jarman's complaint is set out in her email of 19th February 2017 and is appended to this report at Appendix 2 (together with its original attachments). Please note certain parts of those attachments have been redacted to ensure compliance with Data Protection legislation or have been deemed not relevant to the complaint against Councillor Webber. Councillor Jarman in her complaint confirms she wishes to pursue the complaint against Councillor Webber before the Standards Committee.

3.5 In her complaint Councillor Jarman has specified which parts of the Protocol she alleges Councillor Webber has breached namely:

Paragraph 2.1 - Public Behaviour

Members shall:

- (a) Show respect to each other
- (c) Not publish anything insulting about each other
- (e) Not publish or spread any false information about each other
- (g) Use social media responsibly and in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct and this protocol

3.6 Councillor Webber's response to Councillor Jarman's complaint is appended at Appendix 3 to this report.

3.7 As requested by Councillor Jarman her complaint has now come before this Committee for consideration and determination. Both Councillors have been invited to attend the Committee hearing.

3.8 Councillor Jarman has indicated that she will not be calling any witnesses and Councillor Webber has confirmed she will be calling witnesses, namely County Borough Councillors D.R.Bevan, G.Hopkins and A.Morgan.

3.9 As it is not a formal hearing under the procedures adopted in respect of an alleged breach of the Members Code of Conduct, it is suggested that the following simplified procedure be adopted for hearing this complaint:

- i) Opening address by the Chair;
- ii) Councillor Jarman be invited to address the Committee;
- iii) Questions by Committee Members;
- iv) Councillor Webber be invited to address the Committee;
- v) Questions by Committee Members;
- vi) Witnesses for Councillor Webber;
- vii) Questions by Committee Members;
- viii) Councillor Jarman be invited to address the Committee with any closing remarks;

- ix) Councillor Webber be invited to address the Committee with any closing remarks;
- x) Committee to retire to deliberate in private on the representations and decide whether or not Councillor Webber has failed to comply with the Protocol and what sanction, if any, to impose; and
- xi) Committee to reconvene in public for the Chair to announce the Committee's finding.

N.B. Each of the parties will address the Committee individually and there will be **no cross examination of the parties save for questions asked by Committee Members.**

3.10 The Committee can come to any of the following decisions:

- 1. That there is no basis to the complaint.
- 2. That there is a basis to the complaint but that no further action is required.
- 3. That there is a basis to the complaint and that the Member should be censured.

3.11 In accordance with the Protocol the decision made by the Committee will be minuted.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

15th MARCH 2017

REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

Background Papers: Report to Council, 12th January 2011

APPENDIX 1

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**LOCAL PROTOCOL – STANDARDS OF CONDUCT TO BE FOLLOWED
BY MEMBERS**

1. Introduction

This protocol sets out the standards of conduct to be followed by Members of Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC in dealing with each other. It should be read in conjunction with the Members' Code of Conduct and the Member-Officer protocol. It adds to these documents and does not detract from them.

2. The standards of conduct

Members shall: -

2.1 Public Behaviour

- (a) Show respect to each other
- (b) Not make personal abusive comments about each other
- (c) Not publish anything insulting about each other
- (d) Not make malicious allegations against each other
- (e) Not publish or spread any false information about each other
- (f) Show respect to diversity and equality
- (g) Use social media responsibly and in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct and this protocol

2.2 Behaviour in Meetings

- (a) Behave with dignity
- (b) Show respect to the Chair and obey his/her decisions and conversely Members can expect the Chair to show mutual respect to Members
- (c) Not use indecent language nor make racial remarks or remarks which prejudice or may be deemed to be offensive to any section of society

2.3 Confidentiality

- (a) Keep the confidentiality of exempt papers and any other documents which are not public
- (b) Not release confidential information to the press or the public
- (c) Not use confidential information for purposes other than intended

2.4 Local Members

- (a) Work with Members of adjoining wards for the benefit of the locality
- (b) If dealing with any matter relating to another ward:
Explain to anyone seeking assistance that he/she is not the local Member and inform the local Member, unless it would lead to a breach of confidentiality

3. Rules of procedure

Rules of Procedure for dealing with complaints under the Local Protocol

- 3.1 Legislation sets out a statutory regime whereby complaints for breaches of the Members' Code of Conduct are referred to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (the Ombudsman).
- 3.2 The Ombudsman has the discretion to decide whether allegations of breaches of the Members' Code of Conduct will be investigated. This protocol is designed to deal effectively with those complaints which are not suitable for reference to the Ombudsman or which would benefit from a local determination.
- 3.3 Allegations by a Member(s) of a breach of one (or more) of the standards of conduct set out in paragraph 2 of the protocol by another Member(s) will be dealt with in accordance with the procedures set out below.
- 3.4 It is important that any allegations made under the protocol are dealt with quickly and effectively with the co-operation of all parties involved. Each party must make themselves available to attend a hearing held thereunder as a matter of priority and within the timescales set out in this protocol.
- 3.5 Should, following commencement of the protocol process, any Member elect at anytime to refer the matter to the Ombudsman for investigation the protocol process will be discontinued and cannot subsequently be resumed.

3.6

Stage One – Making the Complaint and informal resolution

- (i) Any Member who wishes to submit an allegation under the protocol should send the complaint to the Monitoring Officer. The complaint must be submitted to the Monitoring Officer within one month of the event that has given rise to the complaint occurring or; within one month of the substance of the complaint coming to the attention of the Member submitting the allegation.
- (ii) Following receipt of the complaint the Monitoring Officer will advise whether the allegation falls within the protocol or whether the complainant(s) should consider referral to the Ombudsman as an allegation of breach of the Members' Code of Conduct.

- (iii) If there is a formal referral to the Ombudsman then legislation and regulations set out how the Ombudsman may investigate that matter and if appropriate refer the result of any investigation to the Standards Committee so that the Committee may determine that complaint.
- (iv) If the Monitoring Officer determines that the allegation falls within the protocol he/she will seek to try and resolve the matter informally.
- (v) If following Stage One the Monitoring Officer cannot resolve the matter informally between the parties and the Member(s) wishes to proceed with the allegation under the protocol the matter will be referred to a hearing before the Standards Committee under Stage Two.

N.B. The Monitoring Officer may choose not to deal with the allegation at this stage in order to be able to advise the Committee later in the process, in which case the Deputy Monitoring Officer or a Legal Officer will advise the Member complainant(s).

3.7

Stage Two – Standards Committee hearing

- (i) Stage Two is a hearing before the Standards Committee.
- (ii) The Member(s) making the complaint will be asked to re-confirm the substance of the complaint in writing to the Monitoring Officer (including identifying which standard(s) of conduct set out in paragraph 2 above is/are alleged to have been breached) together with all the written evidence they wish to submit for consideration at the hearing within two weeks of notifying the Monitoring Officer they wish the complaint to be dealt with by way of hearing before the Standards Committee.
- (iii) The Member(s) who is the subject of that complaint must provide a written response to that complaint within one month of receipt of notification of it together with all written evidence they wish to submit for consideration at the hearing.
- (iv) The Monitoring Officer if he/she participated in Stage One will notify the deputy monitoring officer or a legal officer of receipt of the complaint who shall thereafter have conduct of the matter (the 'Investigating Officer').
- (v) If the Monitoring Officer chose not to deal with the allegation at Stage One he/she shall be the Investigating Officer.
- (vi) Both the Member(s) making the complaint and the Member(s) against whom the allegation(s) has been made must respond promptly to all correspondence relating to the matter including requests to confirm availability in respect of scheduling the hearing itself. Member(s) will be

given dates within a two month window in which they must confirm a date they are available to attend the hearing.

- (vii) The papers referred to in paragraph 3.7(ii) and 3.7(iii) will be distributed to the Members of the Committee in accordance with the Council's Access to Information Rules.
- (viii) No additional evidence may be produced without the prior consent of the Chair of the Committee.
- (ix) Each Member must give notification in writing to the Investigating Officer of any witnesses they intend to call to give evidence at the hearing. It is the responsibility of the Member calling the witness to ensure that witness is available to attend on the agreed date.
- (x) If either side wishes not to be present or fails to attend, the hearing may be held in their absence.
- (xi) Should they deem it appropriate the Standards Committee may invite Council officers to attend the hearing to answer any questions they may have any relevant to the matter before it.
- (xii) The proceedings at the Standards Committee hearing itself shall be conducted as follows: -
 - a) Opening address by the Chair;
 - b) Member(s) who submitted the complaint be invited to address the Committee;
 - c) Questions by Committee Members;
 - d) Member(s) who the allegations have been made against be invited to address the Committee;
 - e) Questions by Committee Members;
 - f) Witnesses for Member(s) who submitted the complaint address the Committee
 - g) Questions by Committee Members;
 - h) Witnesses for Member(s) who the allegations have been made against be invited to address the Committee;
 - i) Questions by Committee Members;
 - j) The Member(s) who has made the complaint be invited to address the Committee with any closing remarks;
 - k) The Member(s) who is/are the subject of the complaint be invited to address the Committee with any closing remarks
 - l) Questions by Committee Members (if any) to Council Officers who have been invited to attend by the Committee
 - m) Committee to retire to deliberate in private on the representations and decide whether or not the Member(s) who the allegations have been made against has failed to comply with the protocol and what sanction, if any, to impose;
 - n) Committee to reconvene in public for the Chair to announce the Committee's finding.

N.B. There will be no cross examination of any of the parties save for questions asked by Committee members.

- (xiii) The Investigating Officer will be available to advise the Committee.
- (xiv) The Committee can come to one of three conclusions, namely:-
 - (a) That there is no basis to the complaint.
 - (b) That there is a basis to the complaint but that no further action is required.
 - (c) That there is a basis to the complaint and that the Member should be censured.
- (xv) The conclusion reached by the Committee will be minuted. In addition, the Committee can make recommendations to Council regarding changes to the protocol or taking any further action.

3.8 N.B. The time-limits and deadlines set out in these procedures are subject to there being flexibility in exceptional circumstances as determined by the Chair.

4. Other matters

4.1 The protocol is not designed for use by members of the Public. If there is a complaint by a member of the public against officer conduct or Member conduct, then that should follow normal processes, either through a complaint to the Chief Executive or relevant Chief Officer in respect of an officer or to the Monitoring Officer and/or the Ombudsman in respect of a Member.

Wilkins, Andrew (Legal)

From: Pauline Jarman
Sent: 19 February 2017 19:25
To: Jones, Christopher B (Legal)
Subject: Complaint stage two
Attachments: minutes9feb.docx; screenshot15.png; screenshot13.png; screenshot2.png; screenshot1.png; Email Tom Houghton.rtf

Dear Mr Jones,

Please accept this email as my official complaint against Councillor Maureen Webber under the Local Protocol, Standards of Conduct to be followed by Members, Stage two.

In making this complaint I am of the view that Councillor Webber publicly made claims about me that are in breach of the following standards set out in that protocol.

Para 2.1 (a) 2.1(c)
2.1(e) and 2.1(g)

The basis of my complaint results from published social media statements and statements made to the press with a view to those statements being published.

The statements attributed to Councillor Webber on Social Media as well as those that she was personally seeking further publicity on were issued following the Cabinet Meeting on the 9th February 2017.

Those statements were a distortion of what I said in that Cabinet meeting with one purpose in mind. To bring my reputation into public disrepute. I did not say what Councillor Webber claims I said in relation to the Lido, either relating to the level of entry fee charge or the subsidy over the last two seasons. Those statements are false.

I am attaching copies of the offending posts on social media and the email the press sent me, as well as minutes of the cabinet held on the 9th of February as evidence that I wish to submit for consideration at the hearing.

I consider this matter to be urgent and I would refer you to par 3.4 of the Local protocol that complaints should be dealt with quickly. I trust my early response will enable a Standards Committee to be held before the purdah period commences on the 20th March 2017.

Regards
Councillor Pauline Jarman

Subject to approval at the next meeting of the Cabinet

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL CABINET COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet meeting held on Thursday 9th February, 2017
at 10:30am at the Council Headquarters, Clydach Vale.

County Borough Councillors – Cabinet Members in attendance:-

A.Morgan (Chair),

R.Bevan M.Forey A.Crimmings G. Hopkins
J.Rosser M.Webber E.Hanagan

Other County Borough Councillors in attendance

P Jarman

E Webster

Officers in attendance

Mr C Bradshaw – Chief Executive

Mr C Jones – Director, Legal & Democratic Services

Mr C Hanagan – Director, Cabinet & Public Relations (Secretary to the Cabinet)

Mr C Lee – Group Director, Corporate & Frontline Services

Ms E Thomas – Temporary Director, Education & Lifelong Learning

Mr N Wheeler – Director, Highways & Streetcare Services

Mr B Davies – Director, Financial Services

Mr P Mee – Service Director, Public Health & Protection

Mr R Evans – Head of Human Resources

115 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, County Borough Councillor, P Jarman declared an interest in items 3, 5 & 6 where her dispensation to speak may affect the decision making process.

Subject to approval at the next meeting of the Cabinet

116 MINUTES

The Cabinet **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 18th January, 2017 as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

117 COUNCIL FEES & CHARGES POLICY 2017/18

The Group Director, Corporate & Frontline Services provided the Cabinet with a report, setting out the proposed revisions to Council fees and charges levels for the financial year 2017/18, all to be effective from 1st April 2017 or as soon as is practicable thereafter.

Members were reminded of the decision made at Council on the 26th February 2014, where the budget strategy for 2014/15 was agreed. Part of the strategy was to increase fees and charges, in total, by an average of 3% above the Retail Prices Index (RPI) per annum for 2014/15 and for each subsequent year to 2017/18.

The officer referred Cabinet Members to section 5 of the report where the review and proposed changes was outlined. It was explained that the latest RPI level, announced in January 2017 was 2.5% and if all income was included, it would mean an increase of 5.5% but in order to protect residents from such a high increase, the increases had been capped at a flat rate of 2.25%.

The officer went on to propose that a nominal charge be applied to adult users of the Pontypridd Lido. It was explained that the online booking system used in 2016 was successful but due to the lack of charge, some visitors booked slots but did not attend on the day. It was suggested that applying a nominal charge would not only contribute further income to the facility but it would also seek to address 'non attendance' by committing users to pay a small charge of £1. It was advised that based on a prudent estimate of potential adult users, additional income of £30k is projected for 2017/18 and would be built into the budget strategy proposals for the next financial year.

The Leader of the Council spoke positively on the report, commenting that the proposals outlined were affordable and would enable the Council to take a more positive settlement from the Welsh Government in its proposed 2017/18 budget strategy. The Leader referred to the Cabinet's previous decision to freeze Meals on Wheels and School Meals charges, commenting that this could only benefit the residents of RCT.

The Leader made reference to section 5.7 of the report, stating that the proposed nominal charge of £1 to adult users of the Pontypridd Lido wasn't considered substantial and therefore would not affect the amount of users or

Subject to approval at the next meeting of the Cabinet

income generated. This would add to income generated from the sponsorship deal, cafe and pool activities within the Lido.

The Deputy Leader added that it was pleasing to see that users under the age of 16 would continue to access the Lido for free.

With the agreement of the Chairman, County Borough Councillor and Leader of the Plaid Cymru Group, P Jarman spoke on this item.

Following further discussions, it was **RESOLVED**:

- a) To approve the proposed revised levels for all areas of the Council's fees and charges as set out at Appendix 1 of the report.
- b) To implement a nominal £1 per adult user charge (under 16 users remain free) for the Pontypridd Lido.
- c) To build the net budgetary impact (£525K for 2017/18) into budget strategy proposals for consideration by Cabinet and Council as appropriate.

118 THE COUNCIL'S 2017/18 REVENUE BUDGET

The Group Director, Corporate & Frontline Services provided the Cabinet with information in respect of the 2017/18 local government settlement, the outcomes of the general budget consultation exercise and feedback from the pre-scrutiny activity undertaken by the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee, to assist with its deliberations, prior to constructing the revenue budget strategy for the financial year ending 31st March 2018, which it will recommend to Council for approval.

Members were referred to Appendix A of the report, where it was explained that the Council's Senior Leadership Team had met on many occasions to discuss budget issues and had consolidated their thoughts on the impact of the local government settlement, which had been released by the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government, on the 21st December 2016.

Members were referred to section 2 of the report where the Council's overall financial position was outlined. The officer explained that the starting point for the Medium Term Financial Planning and Service Transformation Reserve as at the 31st March 2016 was £4.901M and that as part of the ongoing strategy, savings had been identified meaning that there is an increase in the level of transitional funding available and the latest position is that this reserve has now increased to £6.693M (additional in year savings to date of £1.792M).

Members were also reminded of their decision to increase Council Tax for 2016/17 by 2.75% and that the 2017/18 proposal was to increase the level by 2.25%, below the 2.5% modelled in initial budget cap calculations.

Subject to approval at the next meeting of the Cabinet

The officer referred Cabinet Members to section 4 of the report where the budget assumptions used in compiling the 'Base Budget' were outlined. It was explained that a number of adjustments had been identified that would impact on the estimated budget requirement for 2017/18 such as:

- The Local Government Pension Scheme
- Changes to the Council's car park charging regime, agreed by Cabinet on the 18th January 2017.
- The City Deal, agreed by Council on the 25th January, 2017
- Bridge Inspections, where an additional revenue budget allocation totalling £0.310M was agreed by Cabinet on the 24th November, 2016
- Living Wage Foundation, where the Council moved to the rate of £8.25 per hour in October, 2016.
- Fees & Charges
- Energy Costs where the financial impact of these increases had been estimated to be £0.642M for 2017/18.
- Homelessness Prevention

The Leader referred to section 6 of the report, commenting that it was pleasing to see that whilst Welsh Government hadn't made school protection a priority for 2017/18, there was a proposal for a 1.5% increase for schools included in the strategy. The Leader added that it was still vital for schools to remain efficient and make their own internal savings where possible.

The Cabinet Member for Education & Lifelong Learning praised this, adding that Education remained a key area within the Council.

The Cabinet Member for Health & Adult Social Services thanked officers for their hard work, commenting that the financial management was credible despite the pressures faced.

It was **RESOLVED**:

- a) To note that the procedures relating to revenue budget construction, the budget consultation process, and reporting to Council, are laid down in the "Budget and Policy Framework", contained within the Council's Constitution;
- b) To adopt the draft 2017/2018 revenue budget strategy, detailed in the Discussion Paper 'Appendix A', as the basis of the revenue budget strategy for the financial year ending the 31st March 2018, that it would wish to recommend to Council, subject to consideration of the results of the general budget consultation exercise and feedback from pre scrutiny by the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee.
- c) To agree the draft timetable for setting the 2017/2018 revenue budget, reproduced at Appendix A2.

Subject to approval at the next meeting of the Cabinet

- d) To agree that the Council continues to support the medium term financial strategy aimed at maximising ongoing efficiency in service delivery, targeted service transformation and other changes that maintain the financial integrity of the Council whilst still aiming as much as possible to protect jobs and key services.

119 PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDERS (DOG CONTROLS)

The Director, Highways & Streetcare Services and the Service Director, Public Health & Protection presented a joint report, seeking authority to consult on the proposal to make a Public Spaces Protection Order to introduce dog controls in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The officer explained that although the majority of dog owners in the area are responsible, dog fouling still remains a significant concern for the Council with many complaints being received annually.

It was explained that dog fouling is unsightly and can cause toxocariasis in humans, meaning some of the authority's playing fields have to be checked prior to usage.

The officer went on to explain that a Public Spaces Protection Order would allow the Council to introduce a range of reasonable and proportionate restrictions on the use of publicly accessible land across the County Borough that would better control the harmful activities of irresponsible dog owners whilst allowing responsible dog owners to continue to exercise their dogs without undue restrictions.

The officer highlighted the importance of finding a balance between access to dog-free areas and areas where dogs are kept under strict control, and the need for those in charge of dogs to have access to areas where they can exercise their dogs without undue restrictions and referred Members to section 5 of the report where the proposed consultation was outlined:

It is proposed that the Council undertake a comprehensive consultation exercise with the public, relevant bodies and other interested parties on proposals to introduce a PSPO in the following areas, introducing prohibitions and requirements in relation to the control of dogs:

- a) Dog Fouling – applicable to all public places in the county borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf;
- b) Dogs on Leads – applicable to all cemeteries and play grounds owned and/or maintained by the Council;
- c) Dogs on Leads by Direction - applicable to all public places in the county borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf;
- d) Dog Exclusions - applied to all schools and marked sports pitches under local authority control.

Subject to approval at the next meeting of the Cabinet

The officer advised that if agreed, the consultation would last for four weeks instead of the suggested period of eight weeks due to the pre-election period,

The Cabinet Member for Prosperity, Well-being and Communities spoke positively on the proposals, commenting that the requirements and prohibitions contained within the report would be reasonable for any responsible dog owner.

The Cabinet Member for Environment, Leisure & Culture added that as the portfolio holder for 'sport', it was pleasing to see the proposal to ban dogs in playing fields as often, it is left to the individuals to check the playing fields for dog fouling prior to using it.

The Leader explained that discussions had been underway for some time in respect of improving the issue of dog fouling within RCT, explaining that a meeting was held in 2016 with sports clubs who would welcome the proposals.

With the agreement of the Chairman, County Borough Councillor P Jarman spoke on this item and questioned a number of aspects.

The Leader confirmed for members information that the proposals contained within the report had been worked on for a number of months. It was added that RCT was the first local authority in Wales to have introduced proposals of this extent in respect of dog fouling issues and that if agreed, it would be accompanied by a hard hitting marketing campaign to promote these efforts.

Following further discussions, it was **RESOLVED**:

- a) To undertake a 4 week public consultation exercise on the proposal to make a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) to introduce dog controls in Rhondda Cynon Taf as detailed in section 5 of the report, specifically:
 - The prohibition of dog fouling in all public places,
 - A requirement that dogs are kept on leads in play grounds & cemeteries owned/maintained by the Council,
 - A requirement to carry bags or other suitable means for the disposal of dog faeces,
 - A requirement allowing authorised officers to give a direction that a dog be put and kept on a lead if necessary,
 - A prohibition excluding dogs from all schools and marked sports pitches owned/maintained by the Council, and
 - Increasing the fixed penalty fine to the maximum permitted of £100
- b) To receive a further report detailing the responses to the public consultation and any recommendations for amendments to the proposed PSPO.

Subject to approval at the next meeting of the Cabinet

120 THE USE OF AGENCY WORKERS

The Head of Human Resources provided Cabinet with details of agency worker engagement across the Council.

Members were reminded of the Leader's request for further information to be provided in respect of the use of agency workers and arrangements in place to cover absences across the Local Authority. As part of the process, a thorough review of the contractual strategy was undertaken by the Corporate Procurement Unit and Human Resources. The review was carried out in accordance with principles of the Supply Chain Efficiency Project in order to produce a strategy which encouraged a positive market response and reduction in cost (both direct and indirect cost).

The officer referred Members to Section 5 of the report where details on the use of agency staff in terms of agency numbers, service area usage and cost for the last three financial years were outlined.

The Deputy Leader was pleased with the contents contained within the report, noting that Internal Audit and HMRC were satisfied. The Cabinet Member added that a pro-active approach was being undertaken to reduce the use of agency workers through flexible working opportunities, workforce management and improving sickness absence.

The Leader of the Council commented that it was useful to have a better understanding of the use of agency workers as they are a vital component to the running of the authority, especially in frontline services.

With the agreement of the Chairman, County Borough Councillor P Jarman spoke on this item.

In response to questions from County Borough Councillor P Jarman, The Leader went on to explain that the vast majority of staff left the authority on Voluntary Early Redundancy, with the Deputy Leader assuring that the Council's HR department works closely with the Trade Unions regularly to ensure fair treatment to agency workers and that staff exit interviews include questions in respect of stress and work overload.

It was **RESOLVED:**

- a) To note the information in respect of the use of agency workers within the Council.

The meeting closed at 11:20am

Cllr A Morgan

Chair

Hi [REDACTED],

Further to our chat this is my response.

I have today contacted the Council's Monitoring Officer to notify him that I am officially complaining about Councillor Webber's conduct in this matter.

She has sought to bring my reputation into disrepute by distorting what I said at the meeting. I did not say the things she claims I said. To make amends, I have asked for the statement to be withdrawn and that Councillor Webber makes a public apology.

Thanks,

Pauline

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@trinitymirror.com>

To: paulinejarman <paulinejarman@[REDACTED]>

Sent: Mon, Feb 13, 2017 10:48 am

Subject: Fwd: Cabinet Business

Hi Pauline,

It's this story here. Could we get a comment/reaction/Plaid's side of the story please?

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>

Date: 10 February 2017 at 16:01

Subject: Fwd: Cabinet Business

To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@mediawales.co.uk>

Hi mate - this will make you a good one. Basically, it's a follow up to this story
<http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/local-news/1-entrance-fee-adults-could-12551124>.

Apparently the opposition Plaid group were calling for a bigger, £4 charge - but you'll need to put that claim to the leader of the opposition group - Pauline Jarman.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED], Media Wales news reporter [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@trinitymirror.com

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Webber, Maureen (Councillor) <Maureen.Webber@rctcbc.gov.uk>

Date: 9 February 2017 at 12:15

Subject: Cabinet Business

To: "[REDACTED]@walesonline.co.uk" <[REDACTED]@walesonline.co.uk>

Dear [REDACTED]

I am keen to draw attention to the debate which took place at this morning's Cabinet in respect of the Lido. I know you have already covered this matter but I find the suggest to introduce a regular charge for all users astounding.

Kind regards,

Maureen

The Deputy Leader of RCT Council has criticised Plaid Cymru comments that suggested hiking Lido charges to almost £4 in line with sports centre swimming charges. The Labour Cabinet today agreed to continue with free access for under 16s and to introduce a nominal £1 charge to manage the significant demand to enjoy the facility which occurs during peak times.

Councillor Maureen Webber said:

"Our decision to introduce a nominal charge for adults attending the Lido is in response to feedback we have received. It is a strange and somewhat unique circumstance for a politician to receive requests from the public to introduce a charge.

"The decision makes operational sense but we have been keen not to move away from the principle that this should be a facility for all RCT residents to enjoy which also acts as a key tourism and visitor attraction.

"At today's Council meeting Plaid's Group Leader seemed to argue against the low level of charge questioning why the £3.75? Leisure Centre charge was not being adopted for all users of the Lido. Cllr Jarman also criticised the subsidy of the facility. Very clearly Plaid Cymru want to hit the pocket of the many families and their young children who enjoy summer fun at the National Lido of Wales.

"Despite being told lower charges and the higher number attending meant more income through activities income and the cafe franchise, plus how the Council has secured a 5 year sponsorship deal for the Lido, Plaid continued to suggest hiking the charges.

"The Lido is the jewel in the crown of Pontypridd and acts a visitor destination for all RCT residents who can enjoy a facility which is the envy of Wales and one we are incredibly fortunate to have on the door steps of all of the county's residents. The notional £1 charge, for over 16s only, which was proposed by Cabinet today seeks to manage the huge demand the facility receives.

"The success of the Lido has been acknowledged by traders for providing an additional boost in footfall for their business, but it seems Plaid want to damage the footfall and hurt those business in Pontypridd by suggesting a massive hike in charges for the facility. Such a move would undermine our recent decision to reduce car parking charges in Pontypridd to support our local high street."

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**Rhondda Cynon Taf Labour**

Thursday at 14:30 · 🌐

Full Statement:

The Deputy Leader of RCT Council has criticised comments made by Plaid Cymru that have suggest hiking Lido charges to almost £4 in line with sports centre swimming charges.

The Labour Cabinet today agreed to continue with free access for under 16s and to introduce a nominal £1 charge to manage the significant demand to make use of the facility during peak times.

Councillor Maureen Webber said:

"Our decision to introduce a nominal charge for adults attending the Lido is in response to feedback we have received. It is a strange and somewhat unique circumstance for a politician to receive requests from the public to introduce a charge.

"The decision makes operational sense, but we have been keen not to move away from the principle that this should be a facility for all RCT residents to enjoy, and it also acts as a key tourism and visitor attraction.

"At today's Council meeting Plaid's Group Leader seemed to argue against the low level of charge by questioning why the £3.75 Leisure Centre charge was not being adopted for all users of the Lido. Councillor Jarman also criticised the subsidy of the facility. Very clearly Plaid Cymru want to hit the pocket of the many families and their young children who enjoy summer fun at the National Lido of Wales.

"Despite being told that lower charges and the higher number attending meant more income through activities income and the cafe franchise, plus how the Council has secured a 5 year sponsorship deal for the Lido, Plaid continued to suggest hiking the charges.

"The Lido is the jewel in the crown of Pontypridd and acts a visitor destination for all RCT residents who can enjoy a facility which is the envy of Wales and one we are incredibly fortunate to have on the doorstep of all of the County's residents. The notional £1 charge, for over 16s only, which was proposed by Cabinet today seeks to manage the huge demand the facility receives.



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27 comments 6 shares



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Rhondda Cynon Taf Labour

Thursday at 14:18 · 🌐

Deputy Leader of RCT Council criticises Plaid Cymru calls to increase the price of using the Lido in Pontypridd.

Councillor Pauline Jarman has questioned the decision to introduce a



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...the decision makes operational sense, but we have been keen not to move away from the principle that this should be a facility for all RCT residents.

"At the time of the local authority charges, I also hit the summer

"Despite the means how to continue

"The destination of Wales of the was a facility

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Like

Deputy price

Councillor Pauline Jarman has questioned the decision to introduce a nominal £1 charge for over 16's as opposed to the £3.75 charged in other sports centres. Plaid seemingly want to hit the pockets of families and

Comments

Done

8



Pauline Jarman

What I had to say I said at the meeting. I made no case to hike the charges at the lido. For the record this is what I said. " Can I be advised how the adult entry fee of £1 for the Lido was arrived at ? My reason for asking is that an adult swim in our local sports centres is £3.35p and concessions and children's swims are £2. Entry to the splashpool in the Lido is free to children but there is a £4.10p charge at the local Bronwydd splashpool in Porth. I hope I have illustrated the need to have a answer on how this £1 entry fee was determined when local charges seem inflated in comparison "

Friday at 21:20 · Like · 6 · Reply



Pauline Jarman

As well as not suggesting hiking the charge for the Lido I never criticised the subsidy of the Lido either. I only deal in facts and said the following " You will be aware that over the two seasons since the Lido opened, expenditure on it has been £628,811 and income has been, up to end of August, £99,549. This means there has been a subsidy to the tune of £529,262 over two seasons. The estimated income for introducing the £1 adult charge will generate £30k annually so it will still be a subsidised service." All of those figures are from official Council records and I just quoted them as a matter of fact. I will now expect Councillor Webber, as the Cabinet Member for Members Services, to tell her spindoctor to start telling the truth if he wrote this post. If Councillor Webber was the author I look forward to her apology

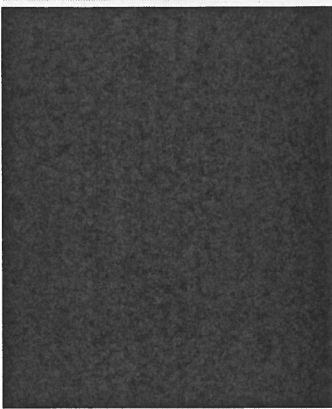
Friday at 21:57 · Like · 4 · Reply



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Ton and Pentre Labour Party shared Rhondda Cynon Taf Labour's post.
9 February at 13:14 · 🌐



Rhondda Cynon Taf Labour

9 February at 06:18 · 🌐

Deputy Leader of RCT Council criticises Plaid Cymru calls to increase the price of using the Lido in Pontypridd.

Councillor Pauline Jarman has questioned the decision to introduce a nominal £1 charge for over 16's as opposed to the £3.75 charged in other sports centres. Plaid seemingly want to hit the pockets of families and their young children who are looking to participate in low cost activity.



Like



Comment



Chronological ▾



Pauline Jarman Please refer to my responses on Rhondda Cynon Taf Labour page. Perhaps you would be good enough to post them on this page to make amends for the false statements you may have inadvertently published or else consider removing the post. Many thanks

👤 1 · 10 February at 15:15



Well did you say it or not or is it a case of yet more selective memory from Plaid what are your views on the pricing of the lido.

Put up or shut up pauline jarman

Yesterday at 08:05 · Edited



Pauline Jarman I have issued a full factual response on Rhondda Cynon Taf Labour page which I respectfully asked Ton and Pentre Labour Party to post on this page.

👤 5 · 19 hrs



Ton and Pentre Labour Party added 3 new photos.

9 February at 06:31 · 🌐



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Thank you for the opportunity of responding to the complaint which you have received from Cllr Jarman.

I was somewhat surprised and disappointed to see that a complaint had been submitted in connection with the press release that emanated from the Cabinet meeting on the 9th of February 2017.

The comments which the complaint relates to were based upon my understanding of the comments made by Cllr Jarman at the Cabinet meeting. I offered these comments in response to a media enquiry in respect of the outcome of the agended item on Lido charges.

All elected members are aware that the provision to address Cabinet is at the discretion of the Chairperson. There is no requirement or direction within the Council's constitution for members outside the Cabinet to be afforded this opportunity.

Non Executive members, at the discretion of the Chairperson, may attend and comment but not question as the Scrutiny function and full Council afford this opportunity.

On perusal of previous Cabinet meeting papers I know that until the 9th of February Cllr Jarman had not attended a Cabinet meeting for at least six months previous.

Her tone and demeanour in the meeting on that morning led the Chairperson on more than one occasion to ask her to refrain from speaking, to stop heckling, and at one point asking for the microphone to be turned off, because her interruptions were interfering with the continuation of Cabinet business. This can be substantiated by persons present.

I raise these points purely to demonstrate that the contributions by Cllr Jarman on Lido Charges were not observations.

There was categorical clear criticism of the level of charge being proposed for the Lido, in relation to current charges for Bronwydd pool and other leisure facilities throughout the Borough.

Cllr Jarman asked if the proposed charge of one pound had been plucked from thin air, and also implied that we were discriminating against residents from the Rhondda by considering introducing this charge.



I spoke on the item pointing out that the facility couldn't be compared with other swim facilities, as its open for a window of time, and had different usage to that of other swim facilities. As a Trustee of Ynysangharad War Memorial Park, and having been involved in the bid for Heritage Lottery Funding for the Lido, I'm extremely proud that we are able to offer the Lido facility at an affordable price. There was rationale and financial reasoning into why that charge was reached which was contained in the report. That was available to Cllr Jarman but she chose to make assumptions which were not correct.

As there were supporters of Cllr Jarmans political group in the public gallery on the morning of the meeting, it could be assumed that her comments and contributions were made to political point score, which is a fact of life in the environment of local politics.

I would argue that my comments to the press have no way brought Cllr Jarmans name to disrepute.

Having been an elected member for twenty years I pride myself on the fact I treat all political persuasions with due respect and courtesy and it is on this basis that I would also like to draw attention to the social media comments made by Cllr Jarman about myself and this matter. I include them in my submission as they again seek to score political points around this complaint. I would say that the choice of words used by Cllr Jarman would appear to be far more detrimental to my reputation than anything that I said in the press statement, but because I accept the principles identified by the Calver case, and I accept that political exchange is part of the rough and tumble of holding elected office and have accordingly developed a thick skin.

I have always afforded Cllr Jarman the respect her position deserves, and have for some years worked alongside her as Vice Chair of the Democratic Services Committee, of which she is Chairperson.

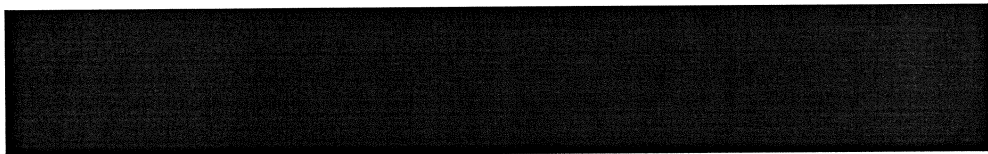
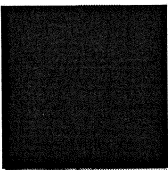
M. Webber.



Pauline Jarman

Well, Coun. Webber should have known that she was picking on the wrong one this time. I had to take legal action against the RCT Labour Group when I was Leader of the Council because they made claims about me that were seriously untrue. They made an out of Court settlement with me. They had to make a public statement that all the claims were untrue and apologised unreservedly they had to cover my legal costs and make me a donation for my favourite charity. I donated it to the Donkey Sanctuary in Sidmouth because although I never voted Labour I have a particular passion for donkeys.

10 Feb at 22:56 • Like •  7



11 Feb at 06:18 • Like

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