

## **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, 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2018 at 5 p.m.

### **PRESENT**

County Borough Councillor S.Powderhill – in the Chair

### **County Borough Councillors**

L.M.Adams	A.S.Fox	D.Owen-Jones
S.Belzak	H.Fychan	M.J.Powell
D.R.Bevan	E.George	S.M.Powell
H.Boggis	D.Grehan	S.Rees
J.Bonetto	M.Griffiths	S.Rees-Owen
S.A.Bradwick	J.Harries	A.Roberts
J.Brencher	G.Holmes	J.Rosser
A.Calvert	L.Hooper	R.Smith
G.Caple	G.E.Hopkins	G.Stacey
A.Chapman	G.W.Hughes	E.Stephens
A.G.Cox	J.James	G.Thomas
A.Crimmings	P.Jarman	W.Treeby
J.L.Cullwick	K.L.Jones	L.G.Walker
G.R.Davies	L.Jones	M.O.Weaver
J.R.Davies	R.Lewis	M.Webber
A.Davies-Jones	W.Lewis	E.Webster
L.De Vet	C.Leyshon	D.H.Williams
M.Diamond	D.Macey	J.Williams
S.Evans	A.Morgan	T.Williams
S.M.Evans	K.Morgan	C.J.Willis
M.Fidler Jones	S.Morgans	R.Yeo
M.Forey	M.Norris	

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

**129 CHAIR**

In the absence of the Mayor, County Borough Councillor M.Tegg, the Deputy Mayor, County Borough Councillor S.Powderhill took the Chair.

**130 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillors J.Elliott,, P.Howe, G.Jones, W.Owen, S.Pickering, M.Tegg, R.K.Turner and G.D.G.Williams

**131 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**RESOLVED** – to note that there were no declarations of interest made at the meeting pertaining to the agenda.

**132 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- (a) County Borough Councillor M.Webber wished to pay tribute to a young basket ball player, Freya Williams who has been selected to play in the Wales under 16 Women's squad in the FIBA European championships. It is the fifth time that Fraya has been selected to represent her country, the first time was when she was aged 11.
- (b) County Borough Councillor A.Davies-Jones wished to congratulate Stuart Davies of Beyond Balloons, Tonyrefail, who took part at the World Balloon convention in San Diego and was awarded `Winning Guest Designer` beating over 100 entries from 52 countries.
- (c) County Borough Councillor M.J.Powell wished to congratulate Kayleigh Powell of Tonyrefail who has been selected to play in the Women's Rugby Sevens Squad which will represent Team Wales at the Commonwealth Youth Games.

**133 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** - to approve as an accurate record the minutes of the Council Meeting held on the 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2018 subject to County Borough Councillors M.Norris and J.Rosser's names being included within the Apologies for Absence.

**134 STATEMENTS**

**RESOLVED** – to note that in accordance with Procedure Rule 2 no statements were made at the meeting by the Leader or Cabinet Members.

## **135 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

### **(a) From County Borough Councillor M.Powell to the Cabinet Member for Environment & Leisure (County Borough Councillor A.Crimmings)**

"What is the reasoning behind the restrictions on using photographic equipment in Council run swimming pools?"

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

"As a general rule, photographs are not allowed to be taken. However, following the completion of the necessary paperwork, photographs can be taken at events such as parties. There is a policy in place and guidance posters distributed in various parts of the leisure centres".

#### **Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor M.Powell**

"I frequent Porth swimming pool with my daughter who is aged 7. On several occasions I have asked if I could take photographs and on one occasion when my aunt was over from America she would've also liked to have taken photographs of my daughter but on every occasion we were told no. I have recently returned from Australia and it is easy to take photographs of children so that families have memories. With regards to a policy, it has never been conveyed to me. I have had emails going back and fore and never been given the policy.

I find it disquieting when the Lido is encouraging tweets and advertising the out-door pool with photographs of children, why is that the case?"

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

"The situation at the Lido is with parental consent. I will arrange for a copy of the policy to be sent to you".

### **(b) From County Borough Councillor M.Forey to the Leader of the Council (County Borough Councillor A.Morgan)**

"Will you make a statement on the Council's investment priorities over the course of this Council term in relation to the Corporate Plan?"

#### **Response from County Borough Councillor A.Morgan**

"Clearly the Council's budget still suffers from pressures of continuing austerity, which has been the case since 2011 and during that time we had to reduce our budget by around £11M. If we carry on doing what we were doing in 2011 with the same number of staff and services it would cost £100M more. We have invested strategically over the past number of years, by way of the Corporate Plan. We have invested in our infrastructure and our assets and continued to do that at record levels. In the last financial year we exceeded

£100M in investment in capital projects, it's the first time that has happened since RCT was set up. We have other areas where investment has been made in the Corporate Plan under the three priority areas – People, Place and Economy. Our budget is under pressure and will continue to be under pressure under the Tory Government. There has been big investment in the schools across RCT and new schools are being built in the areas of Rhondda, Cynon Valley and Taff-Ely”.

**Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor M.Forey**

“Can you comment on the investment specifically in Cynon Valley?”

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

“I will run through the investment within the Cynon Valley from the top down. The Heads of the Valley from funding from the Welsh Government has seen the dualing of the Heads of the Valleys. A 3G pitch has been installed at Ysgol Rhydywaun. There has been regeneration around The Boot and the Black Lion where we have partnered with Trivallis. Aberdare School, where Councillor Bradwick is the Chair of Governors - £50M development which includes a new athletic track within the Sports development. A new school in Cwmaman. Right across the Cynon Valley there is investment going in. There is also additional investment in terms of Robertstown Industrial Estate from Welsh Government and European funding and Coedely is securing similar levels of funding.

The list that I have gone through is quite exceptional and I could replicate that for Rhondda and Taff-Ely”.

**(c) From County Borough Councillor K.Morgan to the Cabinet Member for Environment & Leisure (County Borough Councillor A.Crimmings)**

“What plans or specific projects does the Council have in place to improve and increase leisure and tourism activities in the north of the Cynon Valley?”

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

“The Leader has stolen part of my thunder. In terms of leisure, we have Sobell Sports Centre and the Dare Valley Country Park. There are a huge amount of classes taking place. There is a 3G pitch at Sobell and one in Rhyd y Waun. Also investment in pitches and work is being undertaken in the Welfare. Lots of the play areas have also been refurbished.

The Leader has mentioned the Athletic track. Tourism is not in my portfolio but can I suggest that you have a look at the Destination Plan and look at the plans for Tower. There has been a huge investment in the Park and we have got boats back on the lake. There is lots going on there and I recently attended a meeting to look at further proposals.

### **Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor K.Morgan**

Thank you for your response. I am encouraged that there are some plans to address the detrimental impact of heavy industry and low employment industries in the North of the Cynon Valley and look forward to implementation of them.

There is however one area in particular which could increase leisure and tourism activities if improved now.

The length of the Cynon Trail known locally as the Tramway (specifically between Penywaun and Hirwaun) has been crying out for improvements for many years.

Due to lack of maintenance it is referred to by residents and visitors as the dirtiest, most unpleasant part of the trail to walk, run or cycle on.

Aside of the cleanliness and fly tipping issues, the Tramway has been allowed to deteriorate to a point where I fear restorative costs may now prove prohibitive.

Unlike the Taf Trail, I am advised that there is no programme of planned maintenance and cleansing in place for the Tramway.

Will the Cabinet member pledge a commitment to introducing a planned maintenance schedule for the Tramway and if so, by when?"

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

"I will look into it. I work closely with the Cleansing Team and if there is anything that I can do as a Cabinet Member then I will".

### **(d) From County Borough Councillor G.Caple to the Leader of the Council (County Borough Councillor A.Morgan)**

"What discussions has the Council had with Dwr Cymru in respect of its infrastructure works in the Rhondda?"

### **Response from County Borough Councillor A.Morgan**

"There have been lots of conversations. Ian Christie who is the Managing Director is scheduled to come and meet with me next week as a follow up. I have requested a number of things that they can do to inform the public of what's going on e.g. a news letter. They have also agreed to fund a number of aspects such as a section of the highways. There is a post and this person deals with the utilities and a number of points have been raised with that individual, Dwr Cymru are also funding Enforcement Officers on a short term basis. They also made a contribution to Porth Carnival. We have raised concerns on the impact the works are having in Porth, one of which is the closure of the one-way street

The discussions have been extensive, our Officers meet with Welsh Water on a weekly basis and are pro-active and we do tell them what their obligations are”.

### **Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor G.Caple**

“Are you able to assure businesses that Welsh Water have a plan in place and are addressing the concerns of both residents and businesses in the area?”

### **Response from County Borough Councillor A.Morgan**

“They have appointed a Liaison Officer for this project to try and speak to as many people as possible. The “How to Claim” process has been published and we have asked the Regional Team with Welsh Water to make a further visit so that everyone is absolutely clear that there is a set process for compensation. If they do have an impact – it is comparing this year’s takings to last year’s to see if there is a variance with income levels. There is a process in place for shop owners to follow”.

### **(e) From County Borough Councillor J.Harries to the Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Council Business (County Borough Councillor M.Webber)**

“Will the Deputy Leader please outline what employment opportunities the Council provides to young people in Rhondda Cynon Taf?”

### **Response from County Borough Councillor M.Webber**

“The Council provides a number of key employment opportunities to young people in the County Borough. Our award winning Apprentice Programme and graduates programme offer two year programmes for successful applicants which has had tremendous success over recent years.

Since 2012 we have taken on 163 Apprentices with over 90% securing employment and continuing to progress. Since the commencement of the scheme in 2004, 16 of those have secured employment via this route and a number of them now hold senior management positions.

The intention is to provide at least 150 of those opportunities over the course of this Council term.

We are also continuing to offer opportunities through schemes such as Care 2 Work (care leavers) and Step in the right Direction (young people).

We look wherever possible to provide employment opportunities through the procurement process – procurement contracts awarded to local businesses, where possible, with the postcodes CF, NP or SA as part of our efforts to boost the local economy. This also includes some cases where there is a

local operation supporting the economy but payments are made to a centralised UK address. The percentage of such payments for the 2017/18 financial year was 93.32%. An example of a local large scale procurement scheme was the Church Village Bypass.

We are working closely with the Unions and are looking at an Apprentice Charter”..

### **Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor J.Harries**

“I have not got a supplementary question but would like to thank Councillor Webber for her response and I am grateful for what the Council is doing in this area”.

## **JOINT REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR CABINET & PUBLIC RELATIONS AND THE DIRECTOR, LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

### **136 WELSH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION – GREEN PAPER – “STRENGTHENING LOCAL GOVERNMENT: DELIVERING FOR PEOPLE”**

Pursuant to Minute No124 of the meeting of Council held on the 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2018, the Director, Cabinet & Public Relation and the Director, Legal & Democratic Services, in their joint report outlined the views of Members at meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Cabinet Working Group held on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> April respectively, in respect of the above Welsh Government Consultation document which were detailed in Appendices A and B to the report.

At the meeting, the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A.Morgan spoke to the Council’s draft response, copies of which were circulated prior to the commencement of the meeting and which encompassed the views expressed at the afore-mentioned meetings.

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

1. To note the comments of the Members made at the meetings held on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> April as outlined in Appendices A and B to the report;
2. To agree the draft response as reported at the meeting and presented by the Leader of the Council which is to be submitted to Welsh Government by the deadline of the 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2018, subject to the word **only** being inserted, in the last paragraph of the response – *“In this Council’s view, reorganising local government is not the **only** answer to providing better services.....”*.

## **REPORT OF THE SECRETARY TO THE CABINET**

### **137 URGENT EXECUTIVE DECISIONS TAKEN FORWARD**

In accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules 17.2(a), the Secretary to the Cabinet reported on an urgent decision that was taken forward by the Cabinet on the 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2018 in respect of Council Fees and Charges; and it was **RESOLVED** – to note the information contained in the report.

### **138 NOTICE OF MOTION**

The following Notice of Motion standing in the names of County Borough Councillors S.Belzak and J.James was considered:-

#### **(a) Notice of Motion**

“In this centenary year of the granting of votes to women, and in light of the contribution of feminism to such landmark legislative reforms as the Equal Pay Act 1970, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and others:-

- (1) Council notes with deep regret the decision of the Welsh Government to remove the topic of feminism (and additionally, multiculturalism) from the Welsh syllabus for Government and Politics at A-Level commencing September, 2018;
- (2) Further notes that the outcome of a similar review undertaken by the Westminster Government resulted in a decision to retain feminism on the syllabus in England;
- (3) Further notes that while it is theoretically open to schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf and indeed, in Wales as a whole, to opt to pursue syllabuses of Examination Boards based in England, such a decision would not, under the present policies of the Welsh Government attract funding.

This Council therefore **RESOLVES** to:

Contact the Welsh Government directly as a matter of urgency requesting that it review its decision, and to also make this Council's views known indirectly by way of locally elected Assembly Members and through appropriate forums such as the Welsh Local Government Association”.

#### **(b) 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 (amendments shown in bold) to the Notice of Motion standing in the names of County Borough Councillors P.Jarman, G.Davies, E.Stephens L.Jones. S.Rees-Owen, M.Weaver, J.Williams, A.Cox, H.Fychan, J.Davies, J.Cullwick, E.Webster, S.Evans, A.Chapman, K.Morgan, D.Grehan and D.Macey:-



“In this centenary year of the granting of votes to women, and in light of the contribution of feminism to such landmark legislative reforms as the Equal Pay Act 1970, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and others:-

- (1) Council notes with deep regret the decision of **Qualifications Wales** to remove the topic of feminism (and additionally, multiculturalism) from the Welsh syllabus for Government and Politics at A-Level commencing September 2018;
- (2) Further notes that the outcome of a similar review undertaken by the **Independent Regulator** resulted in a decision to retain feminism on the syllabus in England;
- (3) Further notes that while it is theoretically open to schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf and indeed, in Wales as a whole, to opt to pursue syllabuses of Examination Boards base in England, such a decision would not, under the present policies of the Welsh Government attract funding.

This Council therefore RESOLVES to:

Contact the **Qualifications Wales** directly as a matter of urgency requesting that it review its decision, and to also make this Council's views known **to all** Assembly Members **who represent our County** and through appropriate forums such as the Welsh Local Government Association”.

Following consideration of the Amendment to the Notice of Motion, the Proposer of the Motion, County Borough Councillor S.Belzak responded to the Amendment and a vote was taken which was cast in favour of the **MOTION.**

### **(c) Amendment to the Notice of Motion**

Consideration was then given to the following Amendment (amendments shown in bold) that was received in accordance with paragraph 10.4.1 of Part 4 of the Council's Constitution to the Notice of Motion standing in the names of County Borough Councillors A.Morgan and M.Webber:-

“In this centenary year of granting of votes to women, and in light of the contribution of feminism to such landmark legislative reforms as the Equal Pay Act 1970, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and others:-

Council notes with deep regret the decision of the Welsh Government to remove the topic of feminism (and additionally, multiculturalism) from the Welsh syllabus for Government and Politics at A-Level commencing September 2018;

Further notes that the outcome of a similar review undertaken by the Westminster Government resulted in a decision to retain feminism on the syllabus in England;

Further notes that while it is theoretically open to schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf and indeed, in Wales as a whole, to opt to pursue syllabuses of Examination Boards based in England, such a decision would not, under the present policies of the Welsh Government attract funding.

This Council therefore RESOLVES to:

**Make representation to the Cabinet Secretary for Education to raise this matter and requests the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee to consider this important aspect of citizenship and political education at all levels of education as part of their future work programme".**

Following consideration of the Amendment a vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED** – to adopt the following Amendment to the Notice of Motion:-

“In this centenary year of granting of votes to women, and in light of the contribution of feminism to such landmark legislative reforms as the Equal Pay Act 1970, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and others:-

Council notes with deep regret the decision of the Welsh Government to remove the topic of feminism (and additionally, multiculturalism) from the Welsh syllabus for Government and Politics at A-Level commencing September 2018;

Further notes that the outcome of a similar review undertaken by the Westminster Government resulted in a decision to retain feminism on the syllabus in England;

Further notes that while it is theoretically open to schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf and indeed, in Wales as a whole, to opt to pursue syllabuses of Examination Boards based in England, such a decision would not, under the present policies of the Welsh Government attract funding.

This Council therefore RESOLVES to:

Make representation to the Cabinet Secretary for Education to raise this matter and requests the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee to consider this important aspect of citizenship and political education at all levels of education as part of their future work programme".

## **139 NOTICE OF MOTION**

The following Notice of Motion standing in the names of County Borough Councillors M.Powell and L.Walker was considered:-

### **(a) Notice of Motion**

“Council notes the many glaring discrepancies in the Councillor to elector/ratio of many wards that make up RCTCBC.

Members also notes that with the ability to use more advanced communication technology the number of representatives elected to RCTCBC can be reduced considerably thus freeing up much needed resources to be put into frontline services such as education.

With these points in mind Members will now direct the Officer responsible for elections to produce a report for Members on how the county wards can be realigned to provide a more fair and equitable Councillor to elector/resident balance via a Working Group of the responsible Scrutiny Committee”.

### **(b) 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 (amendments shown in bold) to the Notice of Motion which was submitted by County Borough Councillors P.Jarman, G.Davies, E.Stephens L.Jones. S.Rees-Owen, M.Weaver, J.Williams, A.Cox, H.Fychan, J.Davies, J.Cullwick, E.Webster, S.Evans, A.Chapman, K.Morgan, D.Grehan and D.Macey:-

“Council notes the many glaring discrepancies in the Councillor to elector/resident ratio of many wards that make up RCTCBC.

Members also notes that with the ability to use more advanced communication technology the number of representatives elected to RCTCBC can be reduced considerably thus freeing up much needed resources to be put into frontline services such as education.

With these points in mind Members **subject to the Welsh Government adopting the proposals in the Green Paper entitled Strengthening Local Government, Delivering for People, in whole or in part** will direct the Officer responsible for elections to produce a report for Members on how the county wards can be realigned to provide a more fair and equitable Councillor to elector/resident balance via a Working Group of the responsible Scrutiny Committee **to form the basis of this Council’s representation to the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales on any new arrangements that may emerge”.**

Following consideration of the Amendment to the Notice of Motion, the Proposer of the Motion, County Borough Councillor M.Powell responded to

the Amendment and a vote was taken which was cast in favour of the Amendment to the Notice of Motion which became the **SUBSTANTIVE MOTION**, it was therefore **RESOLVED** – to adopt the following Amendment to the Notice of Motion which became the Substantive Motion:-

“Council notes the many glaring discrepancies in the Councillor to elector/resident ratio of many wards that make up RCTCBC.

Members also notes that with the ability to use more advanced communication technology the number of representatives elected to RCTCBC can be reduced considerably thus freeing up much needed resources to be put into frontline services such as education.

With these points in mind Members subject to the Welsh Government adopting the proposals in the Green Paper entitled Strengthening Local Government, Delivering for People, in whole or in part will direct the Officer responsible for elections to produce a report for Members on how the county wards can be realigned to provide a more fair and equitable Councillor to elector/resident balance via a Working Group of the responsible Scrutiny Committee to form the basis of this Council's representation to the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales on any new arrangements that may emerge”.

It was **FURTHER RESOLVED** – To note that the Amendment that was submitted in accordance with Paragraph 10.4.1 of Part 4 of the Council's Constitution standing in the names of County Borough Councillors A.Morgan and M.Webber in respect of the Notice of Motion as outlined in Minute 139(a) and shown on the Agenda as item 9(b)above was withdrawn.

**S.POWDERHILL  
DEPUTY MAYOR**

**The meeting closed at 6.47 p.m.**