

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the special meeting of the Education and Lifelong Learning Services Scrutiny Committee held at the County Borough Council Offices, The Pavilions, Clydach Vale on Monday 20th January, 2014 at 10.00 am.

Present:

County Borough Councillor (Mrs) C Leyshon – in the Chair

County Borough Councillors:

(Mrs) J Bunnage	A L Davies MBE	(Mrs) A Calvert	J Elliott
M Griffiths	P Jarman	(Mrs) S Jones	R Lewis
B Morgan	B Stephens	L G Walker	C Williams

Co-opted Members:-

Mr J Fish – Parent Governor
Mr J Horton – Parent Governor
Mrs S Sevany – Parent Governor
Ms C Jones – National Union of Teachers and Teachers' Panel
Mr C Jones - GMB

Members making the Call in:-

County Borough Councillors;
C Davies
G R Davies
P Wasley

Cabinet Members:-

P Cannon
(Mrs) E Hanagan

In attendance as Observers

P Howe	K Morgan	S Rhys Owen	I Pearce
M Powell	M Weaver	(Mrs) M Webber	
E Webster	C Willis		

Officers in Attendance:

Mr K Griffiths – Chief Executive
Mr S Merritt – Group Director, Corporate Services
Mr P J Lucas – Director of Legal and Democratic Services
Mr C Bradshaw – Director of Education
Mr C Hanagan – Head of Strategy, Public Relations and Tourism
Mrs A Edwards – Scrutiny Support Officer

45 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillors M Adams, S Evans Fear and G Thomas.

46 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with the Code of Conduct, the following declaration of personal interest was made in relation to Agenda Item 2;

County Borough Councillor – R Lewis – “A relative known to me works in the education environment.”

47. WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the special meeting of the Committee and in particular, welcomed the two new co-opted members representing parent governors ie Mr J Fish and Mrs S Sevany. She also welcomed County Borough Councillors C Davies, G R Davies and P Wasley who had made the Call in.

For the benefit of the members of the public in attendance, the Chairman explained that composition of the Committee and those eligible to vote. She also outlined the context of the meeting and explained that she had granted the request of both the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with responsibility for Education, Skills & Lifelong Learning to address the Committee.

48. CALL IN OF CABINET DECISION: MEDIUM TERM SERVICE PLANNING – SERVICE CHANGE PROPOSALS PHASE 1 – SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services explained that before commencing the debate it was important to agree the procedure to be adopted and he drew Members’ attention to pages 1 and 2 of the report which outlined the recommended procedure to be followed and the issues to be taken into account in considering the decision taken by Cabinet on the 8th January 2014 in respect of School Admission Arrangements.

Members were advised of the information before them, namely,

- Appendix A – Copy of the report presented to Cabinet on the 8th January, 2014 – Medium Term Financial Planning – Service Change Proposals (Phase1);
- Appendix B –Decision Notice of Cabinet;
- Appendix C – Extract from the Council’s Constitution of Scrutiny Procedure Rules re: Call-In.
- Appendix D - Copy of prescribed Call-In form duly completed by three Scrutiny Members.

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services highlighted the reasons given by the three Members in requesting the Call in, at Appendix D and which were reproduced for ease of reference at paragraph 2.7 of his report. He also reminded Members that the Call in procedures had been amended at the last Annual General Meeting of the Council in May 2013 which enabled any three scrutiny Members the opportunity to Call in a decision. He informed the Committee that he wished to outline an amendment to the proposed

procedure explaining that in the past the 3 members requesting a Call in had to be members of the scrutiny committee in question, whereas in this instance the three members were not members of the Education & Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee. With reference to paragraph 2.8 of the report he proposed that it be changed to read that one of the three Members be given the right to make a final address to the Committee membership immediately before a vote is taken on the proposal.

Following a discussion on the procedures to be used for this meeting, it was **RESOLVED** –To adopt the procedure as set out at paragraphs 2.6 to 2.10 of the report subject to the amendment to 2.8 as set out above, for determining the matter to be called-in.

(**Note:** County Borough Councillor L G Walker wished to have recorded that he voted against the above motion.)

The Chairman provided the three Members who had called-in the decision namely County Borough Councillors C Davies, G Davies and P Wasley with the opportunity to address the Committee and they proceeded to outline their reasons for the Call-in. During the address the Chairman asked the Director of Legal and Democratic Services to clarify the reasons for the Call in as set out in the Call in form which were:-

- The report considered by Cabinet failed to address factors relating to linguistic effects of this policy;
- There was no consultation with children;
- There was no consideration of the emotional effect of this policy on 3 year olds
- There was not consideration of the wider economic effect on families.

Following the address by the three scrutiny Members the Director of Education, the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills & Lifelong Learning; and the Deputy Leader outlined their reasons why they thought the Cabinet decision should stand.

Having heard the arguments from those Members who had made the Call in and the responses from Director of Education and Cabinet Members, the Committee questioned the Cabinet Members and both the Director of Education and Group Director for Corporate Services.

Before asking Members of the Committee to vote on the matter, the Chairman invited County Borough Councillor C Davies to sum up the argument in favour of referring the Cabinet decision in relation to the school admission arrangements back to the Cabinet for re-consideration.

Following consideration of the issues and in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny procedure rules it was **RESOLVED** that the matter not be referred back to the Cabinet for reconsideration and that the decision taken on

the 8th January, 2014 take effect as from the date of this meeting i.e. 20th January, 2014.

C Leyshon
Chairman

The meeting closed at 11.33 am,