

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY, COMMUNITIES & PROSPERITY SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting held at the Council Headquarters, The Pavilions, Clydach
Vale on Monday, 6th July 2015, 2015 at 5.00 p.m.

PRESENT

County Borough Councillor G.R.Davies – in the Chair

County Borough Councillors

J. Bonetto	(Mrs) A. Davies
S Bradwick	L. Langford
J. Bunnage	(Mrs) A. Roberts
S. Carter	R. Yeo

Officers

Mr N. Wheeler – Director, Highways & Streetcare Services
Mrs J. Cook – Director, Regeneration & Planning
Mr P. Griffiths – Service Director, Performance & Improvement
Mr P. Lucas – Director, Legal & Democratic Services
Ms K. May – Head of Democratic Services
Mr A. Evans – Town Centre Strategy Manager

Also in Attendance

County Borough Councillor L. M. Adams
County Borough Councillor M.J. Watts

Cabinet Member

County Borough Councillor R. Bevan

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillors (Mrs) L. De Vet, G. Holmes, P. Howe, (Mrs) S. Pickering, M. Weaver, D. Weeks and T. Williams

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with the Code of Conduct, there were no personal declarations of interests made, pertaining to the agenda

3. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Chairman introduced Councillor L. M. Adams, Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee who presented to Members by means of Power Point some areas for consideration which would assist them in drafting their respective work programme for the 2015/16 municipal year. Members were reminded that the new scrutiny structure, which was formally adopted at the Council's AGM on the 20th May 2015, would help develop a more thematic approach to scrutiny within Rhondda Cynon Taf. The Chair of Overview & Scrutiny emphasised the importance of a new scrutiny process which is more effective and prioritised and for it to be a whole inclusive committee approach.

The Service Director, Performance and Improvement outlined the process for identifying a shortlist of topic areas from the long list of potential topics which fall within the remit of this scrutiny committee measured against a suggested criteria and Members were asked to consider the impact the scrutiny committee is likely to have in the areas they have selected. He informed committee that more detailed work would be undertaken throughout the summer months in order that the updated information can be considered by the Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee at its September meeting.

The Head of Democratic Services referred Members to the proposed long list of potential topics within a matrix attached at Appendix 1, which had been produced as a guide following a meeting between the Chair and Vice Chair of this Committee and respective officers but emphasised that this was not an exhaustive list and could be added to as Members considered appropriate.

As the Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee is the Council's designated Crime and Disorder Committee (under sections 19 and 20 of the Police and Justice Act, 2006) Members were also asked to give due consideration to the topics relating particularly to the Crime and Disorder Committee.

It was RESOLVED :-

1. To agree its approach as set out in the report to facilitate the Committee's work programme for 2015/16;
2. That the following be included as part of the long list of proposed topics to scrutinise:-

Recycling

Libraries

Economic Development - Local Development Order

Customer Feedback/Complaints

Communities 1st

Procurement

Crime & Disorder

- Community Safety & Crime Reduction
 - Anti Social Behaviour
 - Domestic Abuse
 - Substance Misuse
3. That officers undertake a more detailed review of the long list of proposed topics, as shown above, with a view to producing a shortlist of topics at the September meeting of the Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee.

4. BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Through the aid of a Power Point presentation the Town Centre Strategy Manager provided the Committee with an overview of the Business Improvement District (BID). A BID is a defined area, in this case Pontypridd town centre, where businesses lead on developing initiatives to benefit the area, which are funded via a levy on the business rate payers. Of the 200 bids UK wide there are 3 established in Wales; Newport, Swansea and Merthyr Tydfil. Rhondda Cynon Taf successfully applied to the Welsh Government BID development fund and Pontypridd is one of 9 towns across Wales that receive support to allow businesses to work towards establishing a BID.

In respect of the BID process, the Town Centre Strategy Manager explained that setting up a BID involves establishing a steering group to devise a business plan, one which will best make an impact and make a town centre more viable. The ballot which is administered by the Local Authority needs 51% of the turnout to vote 'yes' and requires 51% of the rateable value of turnout to also be 'Yes'.

In Pontypridd the feasibility work has been completed with 90 businesses initially consulted. A BID Steering Group has been established which will lead the way and guide the process to the ballot. The Town Centre Strategy Manager informed Committee of the boundary within which the Pontypridd BID will function and provided a breakdown of what the levy payable by businesses could be excluding those businesses that are paying business rates below a certain threshold and those non retail charities, who would be exempt.

The Business Plan specifically developed for Pontypridd by businesses is about promoting the town, having a voice and building links with organisations such as the University of South Wales, tackling empty shops and attracting additional funding. The Pontypridd BID Brand has been created following a successful tender process involving two local designers.

In response to several questions the Town Centre Strategy Manager confirmed that the Pontypridd Market businesses are also involved with the BID process. The Director of Regeneration and Planning added that one of the key benefits of the BID is that the business community in Pontypridd can be responsible for improving their own trading environment and the BID process represents a sustainable way of dealing with issues across our town centres. It was confirmed that the business led Focus on Pontypridd group are very involved in the process and following a successful ballot every business is liable to pay the levy. The local Member for Pontypridd conveyed his thanks to officers involved in the BID process which he considered a positive step forward in boosting prosperity in the town.

It was **RESOLVED** that the information contained within the presentation would inform the development of the Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee work programme.

5. RECYCLING

The Director, Highways and Streetcare Services updated Members of the Committee with information concerning the recycling rates from 2012/13 to 2014/15 and provided a further breakdown of the rates for each quarter within those periods. Committee was informed that in 2012/13 there was no legislative target. In 2013/14 the targets set by Welsh Government were above those reached by this Council. In 2014/15 the Council achieved 54.11% above the target of 52% due to the implementation of certain initiatives which impacted positively upon the figures.

The Director announced some recent changes such as fortnightly collections, the increasing trend for residents using their local Community Recycling Centres and the nappy scheme collection which is now being used by over 7,500 residents and has surpassed all expectations. In 2015/16 the recycling target is 58% and fines could be issued to Local Authorities should they not, however the Committee was assured that decisions have been taken recently which will positively impact on our recycling targets and the figures produced to date show that this Council is on track to meet if not, exceed this target. For information the Director provided Committee with details of the targets for the following periods:-

2016/17 – 62%
2017/18 – 70%

Performance figures for the Community Recycling Centres across the County Borough were provided, which served to demonstrate that their usage has increased year on year due to the upgrades and improvements which have been made to them. It was confirmed that in 2013/14 the community recycling centre performance reached 76% which was the highest figure in Wales. It was reported that the new development site in Llantrisant would be unique in its design with an anticipated completion date later this year.

In conclusion the Director, Highways and Streetcare Services responded to several questions posed by Members of the Committee following his address and it was **RESOLVED** that the presentation would inform the development of the Committee work programme.

The meeting closed at 6.20pm

G. R. Davies
Chairman