

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL CABINET

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet meeting held on Thursday, 25 January 2018 at 10.30 am at the Council Chamber, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale, Tonypany, CF40 2XX.

County Borough Councillors - Cabinet Members in attendance:-

Councillor A Morgan (Chair)

Councillor M Webber
Councillor M Norris

Councillor R Bevan
Councillor J Rosser

Councillor A Crimmings
Councillor R Lewis

Councillor G Hopkins
Councillor C Leyshon

Officers in attendance

Mr C Bradshaw, Chief Executive
Mr C Jones, Director, Legal & Democratic Services
Mr C Hanagan, Service Director of Cabinet & Public Relations
Mr C Lee, Group Director Corporate & Frontline Services
Mr G Isingrini, Group Director Community & Children's Services
Ms E Thomas, Director of Education & Lifelong Learning
Mr N Wheeler, Director of Highways & Streetcare Services
Bow, Head of Service - Accommodation
Ms A Richards, Head of 21st Century Schools

Others in attendance

Councillor S Bradwick

95 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, there were no declarations made pertaining to the agenda.

96 MINUTES

The Cabinet **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 19th December 2017 as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

97 INCREASING RECYCLING PERFORMANCE - PRE SCRUTINY

The Secretary to the Cabinet advised Members of the scrutiny arrangements in place in respect of the 'Increasing Recycling Performance' report. It was explained that the report was the second of two which had resulted directly from a conversation with the Chair, highlighting the good work between Cabinet and Scrutiny. Members were advised that the report would be pre-scrutinised by the Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Committee that evening and would be brought back to Cabinet for a decision in the near future.

The Director, Highways & Streetcare Services provided the Cabinet with information in respect of the proposal. It was explained that the Council has statutory targets to meet on recycling and failing to do so, would result in significant fines. With the current provision failing to meet targets, the following was proposed:

- **Rhondda** – the current 4 bag allowance per fortnight be reduced to 2 bags;

- **Cynon & Taf** – a ‘no side waste’ policy is brought in regardless of bin size, with the provision that the bin lid has to be closed.

The Director assured Members that the proposal would not have any adverse affect on those residents who correctly recycle but would, instead, target the few who do not.

The Leader of the Council added that following the pre-scrutiny of the proposal, it would clarify any misinformation such as the penalty process for the residents who incorrectly recycle. It was explained that there would be stages in place with warnings to ensure residents properly understand the service change, prior to inheriting any fines.

The Leader also added that unlike other Authorities, Rhondda Cynon Taf would not reduce the frequency of residential collection to less than fortnightly as it would penalise residents.

The Deputy Leader praised the use of Pre Scrutiny, commenting that it would ensure all Members fully understand the proposals prior to any decision and engagement with the public.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the arrangements in place in respect of Pre-scrutiny of the ‘Increasing Recycling Performance’ report (as attached at Appendix 1).
2. To consider the above mentioned report at a future meeting following pre scrutiny by the Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee.

Note: With the permission of the Chair, County Borough Councillor S Bradwick spoke on this item.

98 INCREASE OF THE FIXED PENALTY NOTICE

The Director, Highways & Streetcare Services provided the Cabinet with a report seeking authority to increase the current Fixed Penalty notice of £75 to £100. The Director made reference to the recently established Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) Fixed Penalty Notice of £100 to strengthen dog controls in Rhondda Cynon Taf, explaining that it if the fines were to be aligned, it would save confusion for the residents.

The Cabinet Member for Environment & Leisure spoke positive of the proposal, explaining that it was one of the Council’s Corporate Plan priorities to create neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work and that this would be a further deterrent to those who fail to dispose of their waste correctly.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the overwhelming public support given to the introduction of the Public Spaces Protection Order and to the prohibitions and requirements in relation to the control of dogs introduced there in.
2. To approve the increase of the current Fixed Penalty Notice of £75 to £100 (in doing so generating additional annual income estimated to be

£20,000 in 2018/19) from April 1st 2018 in order to align it to the PSPO and avoid any confusion to the general public, for the following issues:-

- Littering
- Contamination of Recycling
- Fly Tipping
- Fly Posting
- Graffiti
- Bins on the Highway

99 KEY STAGE 4 AND 5 EXAMINATION RESULTS AND PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL CATEGORISATION FOR 2018

The Director, Education & Lifelong Learning provided the Members with the final confirmation of the Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 examination results for 2016-17 and the Welsh Government Primary and Secondary School Categorisation for 2017-2018.

The Director explained that the Key Stage 4 curriculum had changed significantly in 2017 and the results were therefore incomparable with those from previous years. Cabinet Members were referred to a table at 5.7 of the report, where it was evident that the method of calculating the key performance indicators suggested a decrease in educational performance in RCT.

Members were referred to Section 6 of the report where the Key Stage 5 progress was outlined, and were pleased to hear that RCT had performed well against the National Level 3 threshold indicator.

Lastly, the Members were referred to Section 7 of the report where the primary and secondary school categorisations were outlined. Members were pleased to hear that all schools were given sufficient support and those in the red category were working with the Council to ensure their progression in the coming years.

The Cabinet Member for Education recognised that the Key Stage 4 results shown could not be compared to those of previous years but added that they would act as a benchmark for the future. The Member advised that she had attended the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee that took place the previous evening, and that robust discussions had taken place in respect of the changes and that Members were pleased to see that support was given by subject, not just by school.

Cabinet Members **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the information contained within the report
2. To note the action taken to date and the action planned to be taken by the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning in partnership with the Central South Consortium to support those primary and secondary schools in Categories Amber and Red.

100 CWM TAF YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE

The Group Director, Community & Children's Services provided Members with the report of the findings and outcomes of the full Joint Inspection of Cwm Taf

Youth Offending Service (YOS), which took place in March 2017, the findings of which were published in July 2017, and to highlight the work being done to address areas for improvement.

Members were referred to Section 6 of the report where the findings were detailed. The officer explained that the findings were balanced and showed that the Youth Offending Service was ahead of schedule in terms of delivery and that Scrutiny were continuing to monitor the action plan.

The Director referred to the lowest result received which was 'Governance and Partnerships'. It was advised that this was likely due to the newly formed partnership between RCT and Merthyr Tydfil Councils where skills were still being developed.

The Deputy Cabinet Member for Children & Young People was pleased with the report, commenting that even with changes, the service remained resilient.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

1. To acknowledge the findings and outcomes of the full Joint Inspection of Cwm Taf YOS;
2. To note the information contained within this report and the actions being taken to address areas of further improvement.

101 NATIONAL ADOPTION ANNUAL REPORT

The Group Director, Community & Children's Services provided Cabinet Members with the National Adoption Service Wales Annual Report 2016-17 which was attached at Appendix 1 of the report. The officer advised that it was a requirement that the report was brought to Cabinet's attention and that he was happy to take any questions.

The Deputy Cabinet Member for Children & Young People added that she was a new Member of the Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Regional Adoption Collaborative Joint Committee and was interested to learn more from the meetings.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the contents of the report

102 OPERATIONAL CHANGES TO THE COMMUNITY MEALS SERVICE AND PROPOSAL TO CLOSE ST GEORGE'S DAY CENTRE AND TRANSFER THE OPEN ACCESS DAY CENTRE PROVISION TO GILFACH GOCH DAY CENTRE

The Head of 21st Century Schools provided the Cabinet Members with a report inclusive of the following proposals:

- To maintain the existing Community Meals Service but change the operational arrangements to improve the efficiency of this service; and;
- To initiate a consultation to close St. George's Day Centre, Tonyrefail and transfer open access day services to Gilfach Goch Day Centre.

The officer explained that the Community Meals service had served adults for many years, but due to the introduction of the National Living Wage, the increase in food prices and rising energy costs, the Council must provide a subsidy to the high production, delivery, packaging and staff costs. It was added that the demand for the service had fallen with the weekday service reducing its numbers by 20% and the weekend service by 66% during the last 5 years.

It was explained that the below proposal would seek to continue to offer a community based service that is efficient and effective and represents good value for money:

- Continue to deliver freshly cooked meals on weekdays;
- Deliver frozen meals on the weekend rather than blast chilled meals;
- Reduce the number of production kitchens from 3 to 1;
- Have one production kitchen, in Ynyshir;
- Retain the open access service to clients;
- Transfer the management of St Mair's and Mountain Ash Day Centres to Community Services;
- Close St George's Day Centre and transfer the open access day service to Gilfach Goch Day Centre.

The officer assured Members that frozen meals had been delivered in the past to clients with no complaints to the service and that it was recommended that this be excluded from the consultation.

Members learned of the poor condition of the current St George's Day Centre, and that feedback received suggested a significant number of the users of Gilfach Goch Day Centre live in Tonyrefail but prefer to travel to Gilfach for the better environment and greater opportunities to undertake social activities.

The Leader thanked the officer for the report and clarified that if the proposal were approved, the Council would strive to avoid redundancies as many of the staff had previously expressed an interest in voluntary early redundancy and there would be an opportunity for the remainder to find redeployment elsewhere in the Council. The Leader explained that approximately half of all Local Authorities in Wales failed to provide the Community Meals service due to austerity; however, this proposal would still offer an effective service for the users. It was advised that the vast majority of clients would be able to travel to the new facility in Gilfach Goch Day Centre and that it was pleasing to see contingency plans put in place should there be adverse weather conditions or a power cut etc.

The Leader raised a query in respect of the users of the service and whether a cross referencing exercise had been undertaken to ensure that all clients have access to freezers and microwaves for the frozen weekend meals and whether staff were satisfied that all were fully able to independently do this themselves. It was reassured that the correct process had been undertaken and that should they find users who require additional support, they would be directed to the correct avenue of care.

The Cabinet Member for Education spoke positive of the report, commenting that the change to the delivery of the Community Meals service would be operational and would therefore, maintain existing high standards. The Cabinet Member supported the proposal of an eight week consultation in respect of the transfer of St George's to Gilfach Goch, commenting on the current quality of the building, cost of essential works and the lack of users.

The Cabinet Member for Adult & Community Children's Services commented that the changes outlined within the proposal were sensible and would ensure that the delivery would be of a good quality for the residents.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

1. To maintain the existing levels of service provided by the Community Meals Service;
2. To change the method of preserving weekend meals from a "blast chilled" method to a "frozen" method;
3. To reduce the number of Community Meals production kitchens from three to one (retaining the Ynyshir kitchen), and to reconfigure the staffing and delivery rounds, saving £258,000 per annum, for a one-off capital cost of £180,000, the capital funding for which will be secured from existing resources;
4. That the Council undertakes an eight week public consultation in respect of the proposal to close St George's Day Centre, Tonyrefail, and transfer the open access day service to Gilfach Goch Day Centre; and
5. To receive a further report summarising the results and feedback from the consultation process prior to any decision being made in relation to the proposal to close St George's Day Centre.

103 DELIVERING THE CORPORATE PLAN - "THE WAY AHEAD" - INVESTING FOR THE FUTURE

The Chief Executive provided the Cabinet with the report which set out the strategic capital investment priorities that the Council would commit to over the next three to five years, over and above its recurring annual capital programme, to deliver its Corporate Plan – "the Way Ahead".

The Chief Executive referred to the Council's Corporate Plan and its key priorities which were approved by Council in February 2016:

- **ECONOMY** - Building a strong economy;
- **PEOPLE** - Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone;
- **PLACE** - Creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work.

It was explained that in order to deliver these priorities and to move with the changing times, the Council would need to continue to secure investment to ensure the public services are of a standard which makes RCT a thriving community and one which residents are proud to live in.

The Leader thanked the Chief Executive for such a positive report, commenting that in times of austerity, it was very rare for a Local Authority to propose such ambitious and creative plans in terms of investment which are over and above the capital investment programme. It was explained that in order to have more housing opportunities in the County Borough, transport infrastructure would need to be improved hence schemes such as the Aberdare Bypass and the A4119 Dual Carriage Way. The Leader alluded to the improvement of green spaces and Ynysangharad Park and the vast improvement to play areas over the past few years. Members were pleased to learn that out of all of the renewed play areas in Wales, RCT covered almost 50% of them and that these plans would see no area further than 3 miles away from a 3G pitch.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Community & Children's Services acknowledged that he had never seen investment proposals quite like those before him and was particularly pleased with the investment in extra care facilities, ensuring older residents receive the care they deserve.

The Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development & Planning praised the report, commenting that RCT would set a precedent for other Local Authorities and would continue developing, particularly for young people and their opportunities.

The Deputy Leader thanked officers for the report, commenting that it was a shame opposition Members had not attended the meeting to hear of the ambitious plan.

The Leader added that a Sport Wales representative had previously commented that RCT were different to other Local Authorities in Wales due to the ongoing investment and activity and that he was confident the plan would continue to deliver.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. To agree in principle to a strategic outline capital investment programme of in excess of £300m over the next 5 years over and above its recurring annual capital programme, recognising the Council's ambition and that additional funding will be required from the Council, Welsh Government and public and private sector partners over the life of the programme.
2. That regular reports are presented to Cabinet and full Council (as appropriate) bringing forward business plans and funding requirements, for the respective projects, in order to deliver the ambition of the Corporate Plan.

104 EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC

"That the press and public be excluded from the meeting under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act (as amended) for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of the exempt information as defined in paragraph 14 of Part 4 of the Schedule 12A of the Act".

105 SUPPORTED LIVING ACCOMMODATION DEVELOPMENT FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH A LEARNING DISABILITY - PENLLEW COURT, ABERDARE

The Group Director, Community & Children's Services provided Cabinet with the exempt report, seeking approval to support the conversion of Penllew Court, sheltered housing scheme for older people in Aberdare, owned by Cynon Taf Housing Association, into new supported living accommodation for people with a learning disability.

Following discussions, it was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the Council would contribute a one off (capital) funding of £1m, to convert Penllew Court, an existing sheltered housing scheme for older people in Aberdare, owned by Cynon Taf Housing Association, into new supported living accommodation for people with a learning disability.
2. To include the scheme within the updated 3 year Capital Programme that will be reported to Members shortly.
3. To commission the ongoing care and support at the new Supported Living Scheme from an existing independent sector provider from the Council's Supported Living Framework that has been established to provide care and support for individuals with a learning disability.
4. To authorise the Group Director, Community and Children's Services, to take all necessary steps to give effect to the above decisions.

106 UPDATED LEADERS SCHEME OF DELEGATION TO REFLECT THE RECENT CHANGES TO SLT.

The Secretary to the Cabinet advised of an update which had been made to the Leader's Scheme of Delegation in respect of the Strategic Culture and Arts Steering Group. It was explained that an advert had been publicised for an independent representative to sit on the Group and that Expressions of Interest would be collated.

This meeting closed at 11.25 am

**Cllr A Morgan
Chairman.**