

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL COMMUNITY LIAISON COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Community Liaison Committee held on Friday, 22 May 2020 at 10.30 am at the TBC.

County Borough Councillors - Community Liaison Committee Members in attendance:-

Councillor M Webber Councillor R Bevan

Officers in attendance

Christian Hanagan – Service Director Democratic Services and Communication
Sarah Daniel – Senior Democratic Services Officer

Others in attendance

Catherine Kennedy (Llanharan Community Council)
Cllr Brian James, Karyl May (Llantwit Fadre Community Council)
Cllr Margaret Griffiths, Cllr Carole Willis (Pontyclun Community Council)
Cllr Simon Pritchard, Tony Graham (Pontypridd Town Council)
Cllr Stephen Powell, Catherine Craven (Llantrisant Community Council)
Cllr Richard Jones (Hirwaun and Penderyn Community Council)

9 Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed all to the first virtual meeting of the Community Liaison Committee and thanked all for making the effort to attend during the current pandemic

10 Declarations of Interest

None received

11 Verbal Update- Service Director of Democratic Services and Communications

The Service Director of Democratic Services and Communications provided the Committee with a verbal update since the Authority has been working during the COVID19 pandemic and is summarised below as follows:

- Positive feedback had been received on the fortnightly meetings being held with the Community Council clerks to support them through the temporary change in legislation
- The Council has continued to deliver a range of services through the current pandemic including the delivery of 600 meals daily to people that are shielding and contacted over 10,000 residents to offer various support services
- Over 600 staff had been redeployed to deliver frontline services
- Processed over £38million worth of grants to 3000 businesses
- 100% of children that receive free school meals supported with funding
- The authority were also leading along with Merthyr Tydfil CBC and BCBC on the contact tracing
- It was estimate that the current pandemic has an estimated loss of £4.5m per month on loss of income for the Authority but are working closely with Welsh Government and WLGA to access support in the huge challenges

- ahead facing the Authority.
- CRC reopening next week but it is anticipated there will be huge demand.
 - Currently in the process of looking how we can safely reopen libraries
 - Schools will be given three weeks' notice minimum before reopening and likely that it will be on a phased return with social distancing a huge challenge in which the Authority are working with school and governors to come up with a solution
 - The priority in terms of Council meetings would be Cabinet, Council and Planning Committees with a series of mock planning meetings already held to help prepare as the meetings were complex. It was anticipated that in the future there may be a hybrid approach to meetings to ensure public accountability and the democratic process was able to continue.
 - Town centres would also be reviewed to ensure social distancing is encouraged by introducing one way direction of travel and some street furniture moved to discourage gatherings. Assessments would be undertaken for each town centre and this includes considerations for disabilities, elderly and residents with walking
 - Ynysangharad Park remains open with police and security present. If it is deemed that staff and public were at risk it would be closed immediately.

A member was disappointed that she had not received any information or updates from the Council and stated that this should be led by Councillors. She added also that he thought Scrutiny should be made a priority. The Chair responded that information has been disseminated to town and community councils through regular meetings with the clerks and this issue should be taken up with the clerk of her Council if she was not satisfied with the updates.

The Chair also advised that Chairs and Vice Chairs of Overview and Scrutiny were keen to resume the scrutiny process. She paid tribute to all staff in the Authority that have gone over and above their roles to ensure the Authority can still continue to deliver vital support services to residents during the pandemic. She added that the financial loss to the Council due to loss of income from leisure facilities was significant.

A member wished to thank the Democratic Services team for providing support to Town and Community Council Clerks during the pandemic to ensure they were able to adjust to the changes in legislation and hold their meetings virtually.

A member asked how the promotion of Active travel will continue. The Cabinet Member Enterprise Development and Housing stated that this will be considered in detail in the coming weeks and months as the Authority want to continue to contribute to a reduction in CO2 emissions, whilst trying to avoid a 2nd peak of the virus. He added that Social distancing will be hard and we will need individual self-discipline from the public to continue this. He advised that if the Authority needs to put further restrictions in place then they will do so. The Active Travel will continue to be considered whilst taking public safety into account.

The Chair added that the Authority are working in partnership with the Police, putting messages out on Social media and constantly updating the Council's website with updated information so urged all members to check this regularly

and share with their Community Councils and residents. She added that they could keep in touch with the Council via Democratic Services who are on hand to offer support should they need it.

12 Urgent Items

None

**Cllr M Webber
Chairman.**

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