

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, Clydach Vale on Wednesday, 27 November 2013 at 5.00 p.m.

PRESENT

County Borough Councillor A.Crimmings – in the Chair

County Borough Councillors

P.Baccara	(Mrs) E.Hanagan	S.Rees-Owen
(Mrs) T.A.Bates	G.Holmes	(Mrs) A.Roberts
D.R.Bevan	P.Howe	J.Rosser
H.Boggis	J.S.James	R.W.Smith
J.Bonetto	P.Jarman	G.Stacey
J.Bunnage	(Mrs) S.J.Jones	B.Stephens
A.Calvert	R.Lewis	(Mrs) M.Tegg
P.Cannon,QPM	(Mrs) C.Leyshon	R.K.turner
S.Carter	S.Lloyd	G.P.Thomas
(Mrs) J.Cass	R.B.McDonald	L.G.Walker
A.L.Davies,MBE	C.J.Middle	(Mrs) J.S.Ward
(Mrs) A.Davies	K.Montague	P.Wasley
C.Davies	A.Morgan	M.J.Watts
G.R.Davies	B.Morgan	M.O.Weaver
(Mrs) M.E.Davies	K.Morgan	M.Webber
J.Elliott	M.A.Norris	E.Webster
S.M.Evans-Fear	I.Pearce	W.D.Weeks
M.Forey	S.Pickering	C.J.Williams
A.S.Fox	S.Powderhill	T.Williams
M.Griffiths	M.J.Powell	C.J.Willis
P.Griffiths	K.A.Privett	R.A.Yeo

Officers in Attendance

Mr.K.Griffiths – Chief Executive

Mr.S.Merritt – Group Director, Corporate Services

Mr.G.Jones – Group Director, Environmental Services

Mr.E.Williams – Group Director, Community & Children's Services

Mr.C.Bradshaw – Director, Education & Lifelong Learning

Mr.T.Wilkins – Director, Human Resources

Mr.C.B.Jones – Service Director, Legal & Democratic Services

Mr.C.Hanagan – Head of Strategy, Public Relations & Tourism

79 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillors L.M.Adams, S.A.Bradwick, A.Christopher, W.J.David, J.Davies, (Mrs) L.De Vet, G.E.Hopkins, W.L.Langford, S.Rees, G.Smith and D.H.Williams.

80 PETITIONS

The Mayor was presented with the following petitions:

- (1) from County Borough Councillor P.Wasley on behalf of residents of Tonyrefail and Gilfach Goch protesting against the proposed closure of Tonyrefail Library;
- (2) from County Borough Councillor M.Griffiths on behalf of residents of Miskin, Pontyclun requesting a 7.5 ton weight restriction on Heol Miskin, Pontyclun to prevent lorries from the quarry and lorries delivering to the shops of Pontyclun from using a residential road as a short cut to and from the A4119 and junction 34 of the motorway.
- (3) from County Borough Councillor J.Elliott on behalf of residents of Cwmbach, Aberdare entitled "Stop the Education Cuts in Rhondda Cynon Taf".

81 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of interests by Members

- (1) In accordance with the Code of Conduct, declarations of personal interests were indicated by the under-mentioned County Borough Councillors by a show of hands in relation to Agenda Item No.11 – Budget Reduction Options – Employment Costs – thereby indicating that each of them had a close personal association with a person or persons working for the Council:-

County Borough Councillors:

D.R.Bevan
H.Boggis
P.Cannon,QPM
A.L.Davies,MBE
M.Forey
E.Hanagan
P.Jarman
R.Lewis
I.Pearce
S.Pickering
A.Roberts
P.Wasley
M.Webber
C.J.Willis

Declaration of Interest Forms were then completed by the Councillors listed.

- (2) In accordance with the Code of Conduct, County Borough Councillor (Mrs) E.Hanagan declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 14 – Notice of Motion – "A member of my family is a Senior Officer and I will leave the meeting for this item".

- (3) In accordance with the Code of Conduct, County Borough Councillor C.Middle declared a personal interest in Agenda Item No.9 – Welsh Church Act Fund Annual Report 2012/2013 – “Mid Glamorgan Scouts received funding and I am a member of the Scouting Movement”.
- (4) In accordance with the Code of Conduct, County Borough Councillor A.Morgan declared a personal interest in Agenda Item No.9 – Welsh Church Act Fund Annual Report 2012/2013 – “I am Chairman of Darran Las Environment Group that had a grant last year”.
- (5) In accordance with the Code of Conduct, County Borough Councillor G.R.Davies declared a personal interest in Agenda Item No.9 – Welsh Church Act Fund Annual Report 2012/2013 – “I am Secretary of Blaenycwm Church, Tynewydd which is in receipt of a grant and awaiting funding from a further application”.

Declarations of Interests by Council Officers

- (6) In relation to Agenda Item No.11 – Budget Reduction Options – Employment Costs – Mr.K.Griffiths as the Head of Paid Service declared a personal and pecuniary interest in the matter stating “In accordance with legal advice the Council has received, my duties as Head of Paid Service and the fact that the contents of the report will impact on the whole of the paid service, I believe that I am best placed to present the report and recommendations to Members. I will remain in the meeting during subsequent discussion on the item. However, other Officers present will address any queries Members may have in relation to the report itself.”
- (7) In relation to Agenda Item No.11 - Budget Reduction Options – Employment Costs – each of the under-mentioned Officers declared a personal and pecuniary interest in this matter stating “I will remain in the meeting while the item is presented and during subsequent discussion on the item. As stated by the Head of Paid Service, I will also be able to advise Members in respect of queries they have in relation to the report”:-

Mr.S.Meritt – Group Director, Corporate Services

Mr.E.Williams – Group Director, Community & Children’s Services

Mr.G.Jones – Group Director, Environmental Services

Mr.C.Bradshaw – Director, Education & Lifelong Learning

Mr.T.Wilkins – Director, Human Resources

Mr.C.Hanagan – Head of Public Relations, Strategy and Tourism

- (8) In relation to Agenda Item No.11 – Budget Reduction Options – Employment Costs – Mr.C.B.Jones, Service Director, Legal & Democratic Services declared a personal and pecuniary interest in the matter stating “I will remain in the meeting while the item is presented and during subsequent discussion on the item. As stated by the Head of Paid Service, I will also be able to advise Members in respect of queries they have in relation to the report.”

- (9) In relation to Agenda Item No.14 – Notice of Motion – Mr.K.Griffiths, Head of Paid Service, declared a personal and pecuniary interest in the matter stating “I will remain in the meeting during discussion of the Motion”.
- (10) In relation to Agenda Item No.14 – Notice of Motion – each of the under-mentioned Officers declared a personal and pecuniary interest in this matter stating “I will remain in the meeting during discussion of the Motion”:-

Mr.S.Meritt – Group Director, Corporate Services

Mr.E.Williams – Group Director, Community & Children’s Services

Mr.G.Jones – Group Director, Environmental Services

Mr.C.Bradshaw – Director, Education & Lifelong Learning

Mr.T.Wilkins – Director, Human Resources

Mr.C.Hanagan – Head of Public Relations, Strategy and Tourism

- (11) In relation to Agenda Item No.14 – Notice of Motion – Mr.C.B.Jones, Service Director, Legal & Democratic Services declared a personal and pecuniary interest in the matter stating “ I will advise on any matters of clarification regarding procedural matters which may arise in relation to the Motion itself”.

82 ANNOUNCEMENT

The Deputy Leader informed the Council that the Leader was continuing to recover from his recent operation and wished to thank all who had enquired as to his well-being.

83 MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve as an accurate record, the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 30 October 2013.

OPEN GOVERNMENT

84 STATEMENTS

There were no statements from the Deputy Leader of the Council or Cabinet Portfolio Holders on this occasion.

85 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- (1) **From Mr.Stanely Beynon of Abernant to the Deputy Leader of the Council (County Borough Councillor P.Cannon,QPM)**

Why is the Council making these tough decisions on spending cuts and services?

It was **noted** that Mr.Beynon was not present at the meeting to ask his question in person and, therefore, in accordance with adopted procedures he

would receive a written response from the Deputy Leader of the Council following the meeting.

(2) From Ms.Catherine Powell of Llanharry to the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning (County Borough Councillor (Mrs) E.Hanagan)

Would the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning make a statement on the legality of removing the current full-time school provision for 3 year olds without providing an alternative for those affected?

Response from County Borough Councillor (Mrs) E.Hanagan

Our current school admission arrangements for nursery aged children are in excess of the Welsh Government's minimum required level of provision and are above what most other authorities across Wales provide. Because we face a £70M budget gap over the next four years we have no alternative other than to consider this area.

Our statutory obligation is to provide all children with 10 hours of nursery education per week from the term following their 3rd birthday.

It is not compulsory for children to start school until the term following their 5th birthday. Therefore, attendance between the age of 3 to the term following the child's 5th birthday is optional to parents. I refer you to Section 8 of the 1996 Education Act.

However, the proposals out for consultation proposes to exceed the minimum provision by approaching 50% and still offer significantly over and above what the majority of the other Welsh local authorities offer.

Can I stress once again these are only proposals and we welcome constructive engagement from the public before we come to any final decision on this matter.

Supplementary Question from Ms.Powell:

In relation to my original question regarding the legality of removing full-time provision, please will Councillor Hanagan comment on the following:

The School Admissions Code makes no differentiation for those outside of compulsory school age. Section 2.3 of the School Admissions Code states that School admission arrangements must be consulted on and set by 15 April of the school year beginning two years before the school year in which the arrangements will apply, therefore, any proposals being consulted on now could not take place until the academic 2016/17 and not April 2014 as proposed.

2.20 of the Code states that admission arrangements may only be varied in limited circumstances none of which apply to the current consultation.

Clause 3.4 of the Code prohibits the withdrawal of school places once a child has started school.

With regard to the proposed cuts to the provision of free school transport, RCT's Welsh Education Scheme clause 12.1.2 with regards to nursery education states that 'if part time attendance is at the behest of the school and/or authority, then free transport is provided both ways'. It states that this service ensures that social deprivation or location of the child's home does not limit choice.

Response from County Borough Councillor Hanagan

Can I say again as someone who has grandchildren and will be directly affected by the changes, I completely sympathise with comments and concerns being expressed by residents, however, again I would repeat that these are only proposals and your comments will be taken into consideration as part of the consultation. I will write to you with a detailed response on all the points you have just made.

(3) From Mr.Karl Evans of Tonypandy to the Cabinet Member for Education Skills and Lifelong Learning (County Borough Councillor (Mrs) E.Hangan

I was pleased to hear at the last Cabinet meeting the encouraging news that attainment levels in RCT were "over and above" expectations in the foundation phase.

Would the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning set out how the Council plans to continue to deliver improvements in attainment at the foundation phase and later key stages if the proposed cuts to nursery education are implemented?

Response from County Borough Councillor (Mrs) E.Hanagan:

Thank you for your question.

In the past year we have made good progress in improving our foundation phase, Key Stage 2, 3 & 4 results, all improving faster than the Welsh average.

This has been achieved by improving the quality of the education provision provided. I emphasise the word quality.

We have sought to improve the quality of leadership and teaching in our schools, addressing underperformance. This has been complimented by a rigorous focus on tracking the progress of individual pupils and ensuring all pupils make sufficient progress. The proposed changes to nursery provision will not change this approach.

Supplementary Question from Mr.Evans:

If the proposed cuts are implemented, each Primary School will be forced to cut its budget and our children will lose 600 hours of education. Would you outline how far quality improvements will go towards closing any gap that will arise from a significant reduction in Primary School pay funding and teaching ourselves.

Response from County Borough Councillor Hanagan:

If you compare our performance in the past against Councils with similar demographics, the level of provision offered does not affect attainment levels by those local authorities. The issues you raise will be addressed before we come to conclusions on these matters. These are only proposals and the whole reason for consulting on these matters is to understand the views and concerns of everyone.

(4) From Ms.Jane Massey of Tonypandy to the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning (County Borough Councillor (Mrs) E.Hanagan)

What impact do you think the loss of free transport will have on the intake into Welsh Schools and subsequently the Welsh language within RCT?

Response from County Borough Councillor (Mrs) E.Hanagan:

Thank you for your question.

I completely appreciate that for some parents the availability of free home to school transport may be a factor behind their choice of school whether that is English medium, Welsh medium or faith.

Parents also have a choice whether they opt to educate their nursery aged child or not. We have a duty to provide part-time nursery education for those parents that choose this provision for their child. We have no obligation to provide home to school transport for nursery aged children, this is ultimately a responsibility of the parent. Clearly, the loss of free transport may, and I emphasise may, have an impact on all schools.

Other local authorities that offer part-time provision perform to a high standard both in terms of the number of pupils opting for Welsh medium and their educational performance. For example, this is supported by the fact that for the Foundation Phase indicator that focuses on language, literacy and communication, in Caerphilly, which has similar level of free school meals as us, and only provides part-time nursery provision, 91% of the year 2 pupils achieve the required literacy levels compared to 84% in RCT.

The point I am making is that we will need to take into account a whole range of information when we consider the findings of the consultation.

Supplementary Question from Ms.Massey:

The Council have a policy in place its the Welsh Education Scheme 2010 - 2015. I refer to point 12.1.2 on page 24 it states the policy ensures provision of free transport for children the term following their 3rd birthday. For pupils who attend part time at the behest of the school or authority then free transport is provided both ways. It clearly states this service ensures that social deprivation or the location of a child's home does not limit the parents choice in favour of Welsh medium education.

Point 18.1 page 45 states and I quote "There is a statutory duty for the authority to provide pupils with free transport if they reside beyond walking distance" for anyone who isn't aware by law walking distance is 2 miles. Point 18.2 states and I quote again "All pupils receiving a Welsh medium education who live in excess of those distances from their nearest Welsh medium school are provided with free transport".

Can you please explain how you can consider cutting the transport when you have this policy in place and why it has been taken off the council web site in recent weeks and replaced with a document dated 2008- 2013 in the view of the consultation ending on Monday can you give me a definitive answer tonight.

Response from County Borough Councillor (Mrs) E.Hanagan:

I have to emphasise yet again that what we are proposing is no different to what is being offered by other local authorities in Wales. I will give you a full comprehensive answer in writing to all of the points you have made.

(5) From Miss Marie Lloyd of Cwmaman, Aberdare to the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning (County Borough Councillor (Mrs) E.Hanagan)

Under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child Act which Wales is signed up to, why has no children's rights impact assessment been done on Proposal 1 education cuts?

Response from County Borough Councillor (Mrs) E.Hanagan:

Thank you Miss Lloyd for your question

Article 4 of the Rights of Child focuses on the protection of a child's rights. Article 4 states that Governments have a responsibility to take all available measures to make sure children's rights are respected, protected and fulfilled.

When countries ratify the Convention, they agree to review their laws relating to children. This involves assessing their social services, legal, health and educational systems, as well as levels of funding for these services. Governments are then obliged to take all necessary steps to ensure that the minimum standards set by the Convention in these areas are being met.

The Welsh Government, in signing up to the Convention, set the minimum standard of nursery provision to be part-time for a minimum of 10 hours. The Council is proposing to exceed this minimum standard by approaching 50%. The Council's proposals meet all of the 42 rights of the child.

Supplementary Question from Miss Lloyd:

Do you feel that Rhondda Cynon Taf has adhered to core aims as set out by the Welsh Government?

Response from County Borough Councillor Hanagan:

Yes I do, however, all of these issues will be considered and we as a Council are trying to do the best for our nursery children. You will have a written response to the points you have made.

(6) From Mrs.Kate Evans of Church Village to the Deputy Leader of the Council (County Borough Councillor P.Cannon,QPM)

In Section 5.12 of the report by the Corporate Management Team (author Steve Merritt) it states "There does not appear to be any evidence to show that our current arrangements are having a positive impact upon attainment levels.

I would like to ask what evidence there is to show the current arrangements are having no impact or a negative impact upon attainment levels, particularly in light of Mr.Bradshaw's Educational Performance report dated 11th September 2013 which states that "For four of the five foundation phase indicators, the rate of improvement is faster than the Welsh average"?

Response from County Borough Councillor P.Cannon:

Other local authorities with similar demographics and high levels of deprivation that already provide a part-time provision do better at Key Stage 4 than RCT.

The factor that has the greatest impact on children's outcomes is not the quantity of provision but the quality. As a previous question highlighted, the focus in Rhondda Cynon Taf over the past few years has been on improving the quality of leadership and teaching in our schools and this is the factor that is having the greatest impact on improving standards, coupled with a specific focus on measuring the progress of individual pupils and as rightly pointed out in a previous question this approach is delivering.

If this focus is maintained, with or without the proposals we are currently consulting upon, I see no reason why education standards in the County Borough will not continue to rise.

Supplementary Question from Mrs.Evans:

Has any evaluation been done on RCT's current approach?

Response from County Borough Councillor P.Cannon:

Yes continued evaluation is taking place and it will form part of the consultation process which is coming to an end and evaluation will be part of that consultation.

86 MEMBERS QUESTIONS

(1) From County Borough Councillor S.Rees-Owen to the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Lifelong (County Borough Councillor (Mrs) E.Hanagan

Will you make a statement on the responsibilities of the Central South Consortium?

Response from County Borough Councillor (Mrs) E.Hanagan:

The Central South Consortium is the school improvement service for the five local authorities of Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and the Vale of Glamorgan.

Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor S.Rees-Owen:

I note from the 2012/13 audited accounts of the Central South Consortium which you and Councillor Forey are members of, that there are general reserve balances in excess of half a million pounds to be distributed and that for the seven months to March 2013 no employees' salary exceeded £60k albeit interviews will be held on the 4th December to appoint someone to the recently advertised £100k Managing Director post. Will RCT's share of the half a million pounds reserves be returned to the Education Budget of this Council.

Response from County Borough Councillor Hanagan:

That decision will be made by the Board, however, following the recommendations of the Minister in relation to collaborative improvements, we are awaiting further information on all of these matters.

(2) From County Borough Councillor G.R.Davies to the Deputy Leader of the Council (County Borough Councillor P.Cannon,QPM)

Will you make a statement on the work of the Local Service Board?

Response from County Borough Councillor P.Cannon:

I refer you to the Single Integrated Plan which outlines the priorities of the Local Service Board and its public sector partners.

Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor G.R.Davies:

What discussions have been held between the Council and the Cwm Taf Local Health Board as key partners for LSB on commitments to jointly fund any threatened services relating to health and social care that may otherwise be at risk as a result of austerity measures.

Response from County Borough Councillor Cannon:

I will provide you with an appropriate answer in writing in due course.

(3) From County Borough Councillor P.Jarman to the Chairman of the Corporate Governance & Constitution Committee (County Borough Councillor R.Lewis)

Will you make a statement on the Terms of Reference of the Corporate Governance and Constitution Committee?

Response from County Borough Councillor R.Lewis:

Thank you Councillor, I refer you to the report considered by Council on 22nd May when it agreed to the formation of this Committee. As you are aware the remit of this Committee was fully debated at that meeting.

Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor P.Jarman:

The Constitution commits the Council to create a powerful and effective means of holding decision makers to public account. It seeks to regulate the behaviour of individuals through Codes of Conduct, Protocols and Rules of Procedure.

On 29 January this year, you voted against a Plaid Cymru Motion asking that the Constitution, as written, be strictly observed and adhered to by everyone, without exception and in all circumstances, in pursuance of Council business.

As you are now Chair of the Corporate Governance and Constituion Committee, do you regret not supporting that Motion?

Response from County Borough Councillor R.Lewis:

In my view there is certainly no democratic dark areas with this Committee and accountability is quite clear in recommendations made by the Committee are presented for consideration to full Council.

I think the questions asked tonight have been put at the Committee. I know the Leader of the Opposition, who is appointed to the Committee, has not been able to attend the two previous meetings but I would urge her and her Group to engage fully in this Committee. It is a Committee undertaking what I regard as very important work to encourage participation and open government when it comes to the Council's Constitution and I would urge her to take a full and active part in that.

(4) From County Borough Councillor C.Davies to the Cabinet Member for Children's Social Services (County Borough Councillor A.Davies)

As Children's Champion, will you make a statement on the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child?

Response from County Borough Councillor A.Davies:

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is an international human rights treaty that grants all children and young people (aged 17 and under) a comprehensive set of rights. We endorse this approach.

Welsh Government has placed children's rights at the heart of this policy and legislation in Rhondda Cynon Taf . We endorse this approach believing that every child and young person is important. Each one should have the best start in life, the best possible chance to grow up free from poverty or harm and with support their need to reach their full potential. However, with wide UK policy, it has changed dramatically over the past year and the welfare policy of the UK Government has had a high impact on children and young people in RCT

Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor C.Davies:

Article 3 of the Convention states that the best interest of the child must be top priority. Article 12 gives children the right to say what they think in all matters affecting them and to have their views taken seriously. Article 30 give every child the right to learn and use any customs and religions of their family whether or not they shared by the majority of people in the country where they live. Are you as Children's Champion concerned that these rights have not been observed in relation to proposals to reduce part time education to 3 & 4 year olds and will you tell us whether RCT will conduct a Child Impact Assessment before going ahead with the suggested changes.

Response of County Borough Councillor A.Davies:

All the points you have raised will be addressed when the Cabinet considers the matter after consultation but I would add that in RCT we do more than other authorities to protect the children.

(5) From County Borough Councillor E.Webster to the Cabinet Member for Council Business and Public Relations (County Borough Councillor M.Webber)

As the Open Government Champion, will you make a statement on the Council's communications strategy?

Response from County Borough Councillor M.Webber:

This Council is absolutely committed to communicating important information of the Council to all residents throughout the County Borough and we do it through a wide variety of mechanisms.

Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor E.Webster:

You will, I am sure, agree that in presenting public information it should be informative and meaningful if it is to add value to the process.

You are aware that maps of proposed and current library provision are out to consultation which Shows how near Ferndale is to Penrhiwceiber, although separated by mountains and forests, and likewise how near Ynyshir is to Ynysybwl - as the crow flies that is. The public could be forgiven for being confused and give up trying to make sense of these appendices because they are presented in a messy and confusing manner. This map is meaningless. Will you make more suitable maps and better indicators available so that people can be better informed, even at this late stage of the consultation?

Response from County Borough Councillor M.Webber:

I take on board your comments and I am sure that this is something we can look at because we want to ensure that all members of the public engaged with us and we have made it clear that every form of engagement has equal status. I will give you that assurance that we will review it and look at this.

87 WALES AUDIT OFFICE – IMPROVEMENT ASSESSMENT LETTER

The Council received the Wales Audit Office – Improvement Assessment Letter dated 16 October 2013 which summarised the comments of the Auditor General for Wales on:

- whether the Council has discharged its statutory duties in respect of improvement planning;
- the Council's compliance with requirements to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement based on work undertaken to date by the Wales Audit Office;

- further proposals for improvement; and
- updates to the Wales audit Office work plan and timetable for delivery Improvement Assessment Work.

Following consideration of the Letter, it was **RESOLVED** to note the information contained therein.

REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, CORPORATE SERVICES

88 THE COUNCIL'S 2014/15 REVENUE BUDGET – THE PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT

In his report, the Group Director, Corporate Services provided the Council with information in respect of the 2014/15 provisional local government settlement and initial comments on its likely implications for the delivery of Council services. Important information for use in respect of this year's general budget strategy consultation exercise was also provided.

The Group Director, Corporate Services presented an overview of the Council's current financial situation including the funding shortfall and following a discussion, it was **RESOLVED** -

- (1) Note the provisional 2014/2015 local government settlement, announced by the Minister for Local Government and Government Business, on the 16th October 2013.
- (2) Note that the final 2014/2015 local government settlement is expected on the 11th December 2013.
- (3) Note that in response to the Minister's request for local authorities' comments, as part of her local government settlement consultation process, this Council's response includes the following:

This Council understands that there are limited resources available to the Welsh Government (WG) as a result of the cuts imposed on them from the Coalition Government in London. We are though still disappointed with the overall level of settlement and have significant concerns on the ability we have to plan effectively into the medium term given the lack of robust forecasts of future settlement levels.

The decision to provide a damping / floor adjustment is we feel an equitable approach and we continue to argue that during this period of funding uncertainty and volatility, that formula changes should be kept to a minimum.

We are concerned that we face a funding shortfall in 2014/15 as a consequence of no additional resources being made available to support

the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and that we as a Council take the full financial impact of any Council tax increase as well as increases in demand as Welfare Reform measures and the general economic situation impacts. .

In order to fully assess the impact on the Council of the settlement, we would also ask that the detail on outstanding specific grants is provided as soon as possible. We also await with interest the review commissioned by the minister on specific grants.

- (4) Note that the initial general budget strategy consultation exercise will begin at the start of December 2013.

89 WELSH CHURCH ACT FUND ANNUAL REPORT 2012/2013

In his report, the Group Director, Corporate Services presented the Welsh Church Act Fund Statement of Accounts for 2012/201 to ensure that the Council complied with the requirements relating to the production and approval of the Accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2013.

Following consideration of the report, it was **RESOLVED** –

- (1) To approve and note the Welsh Church Act Fund Statement of Accounts for the financial year 2012/2013 (Appendix 1).
- (2) To approve and note the Letter of Representation relating to the Welsh Church Act Fund (Appendix 2).
- (3) To note the External Auditor Report (Appendix 3).

90 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID YEAR REVIEW 2013/14

In his report, the Group Director, Corporate Services provided Members with information relating to the Council's Treasury Management activity during the first six months of 2013/14 and Prudential and Treasury Indicators for the same period.

Following consideration of the matter, it was **RESOLVED** to note the content of the report.

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

91 BUDGET REDUCTION OPTIONS – EMPLOYMENT COSTS

The Council's approval was sought to give the Chief Executive, as Head of Paid Service, delegated authority to implement the budget reduction options set out in the report, as commended to Council by Cabinet, in respect of employment costs.

A lengthy discussion ensued on the options put forward for consideration and it was **RESOLVED** following the commendation by Cabinet to give the chief Executive, as Head of Paid Service, delegated authority to implement the options identified in paragraph 4 of the report as soon as practicable.

(**Note:** The following lost amendment to the motion was moved by County Borough Councillor P.Jarman and seconded by County Borough Councillor G.R.Davies:

“Following commendation by Cabinet, it is recommended that the Council implement the options identified in paragraph 4 of the report subject to the negotiations with the Trade Unions ending”)

(**Note:** County Borough Councillor K.Morgan wished to have recorded that she voted in favour of the lost amendment to the motion).

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR, LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

92 CHANGE TO MEMBERSHIP OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

In his report, the Director, Legal & Democratic Services advised the Council of a change to the Plaid Cymru Group representation on the Environmental Services Scrutiny Committee owing to the resignation of County Borough Councillor S.Rees-Owen.

RESOLVED to note that County Borough Council M.O.Weaver will replace County Borough S.Rees-Owen on the Environmental Services Scrutiny Committee with immediate effect.

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR, HUMAN RESOURCES

93 REVIEW OF THE CORPORATE SERVICES GROUP'S SENIOR FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

In his report, the Director, Human Resources sought ratification of the recommendations of the Appointments Committee in respect of the review of the Corporate Services Group's Senior Financial Management Team.

Following consideration of the matter, it was **RESOLVED** to ratify the recommendations of the Appointments Committee held on 19th November 2013 as follows:

- (1) that Mr.Christopher Lee be appointed to the post of Group Director, Corporate Services and designated as the Council's Section 151 Officer with effect from 25 March 2014;
- (2) that Mr.Barrie Davies be appointed to the post of Director of Financial Services – Director Level 2 – with effect from 25 March 2014;
- (3) to approve the deletion of the post of Service Director – Financial Management and Accounting with effect from 25 March 2014.

(**Note:** County Borough Councillor M.O.Weaver wished to have recorded that she abstained from voting on the above matter)

94 NOTICE OF MOTION

(Note: Having earlier declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this matter (Minute No.81(2) refers), County Borough Councillor (Mrs) E.Hanagan left the meeting for the item).

The following Notice of Motion standing in the names of County Borough Councillors M.J.Powell and J.S.James was moved and seconded:

“With due regard to the current financial circumstances the Council finds itself in and its proposed cuts to services and staff it will decrease the responsibilities of the Chief Executive and as the post is salaried based on responsibility this Council will reduce the salary by 10% following the necessary human resources and contractual procedures”

It was **RESOLVED** not to adopt the above-mentioned motion.

(**Note:** County Borough Councillor M.J.Powell wished to have recorded that he voted in favour of adopting the above motion).

(**Note:** The following lost amendment to the motion received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10.4.1., standing in the names of County Borough Councillors P.Jarman, G.R.Davies, K.Morgan, I.Pearce, S.Rees-Owen, M.Weaver, C.Davies, S.Evans-Fear and E.Webster was moved and seconded:

“On 1st June 2011, this Council transferred employees to new contracts of employment for those employed under the National Joint Council for Local Government Services National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service (Green Book) to a new 15 point pay scale.

Members have not evaluation staff terms, pay and conditions for employees who are paid above Grade 15 since that date.

As a consequence of a predicted £70 million budget reduction over the next four years, this Council as a minimum will reduce the salary of the post of Chief Executive by 10% following the necessary human resource and contractual procedure rules.

Any cascading effect on the salaries of other Chief Officers and Senior Staff above Grade 15, as a consequence of a 10% cut in the salary of the post of Chief Executive, will be the subject of a further report to Members for their consideration.”)

95 NOTICE OF MOTION

The following Notice of Motion standing in the names of County Borough Councillors P.Cannon,QPM, M.Forey, A.Christopher, R.Bevan, A.Davies, E.Hanagan, C.Middle, A.Morgan, M.Webber, C.Willis, L.M.Adams, T.Bates, H.Boggis, J.Bonetto, S.Bradwick, J.Bunnage, A.Calvert, S.Carter, J.Cass, A.Crimmings, W.J.David, A.L.Davies,MBE, J.Davies, M.Davies, L.De Vet, J.Elliott, A.Fox, M.Griffiths, P.Griffiths, G.Holmes, G.Hopkins, S.Jones, L.Langford, R.Lewis, C.Leyshon, S.Lloyd, R.McDonald, K.Montague, B.Morgan, M.Norris, S.Pickering, S.Powderhill, K.Privett, S.Rees, A.Roberts, J.Rosser, G.Smith, R.Smith, G.Stacey, B.Stephens, M.Tegg, G.Thomas, R.Turner, J.Ward, M.J.Watts, W.D.Weeks, C.Williams, D.Williams, T.Williams and R.Yeo was moved and seconded:

“It is proposed that each Member of this local authority personally instruct the Property Officer of their intention to forgo the one per cent pay increased

proposed to be awarded to all Councillors in Wales by the Independent Remuneration Panel for the 2014/2015 Financial Year”

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the above-mentioned motion.

(**Note:** The following lost amendment to the motion received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10.4.1., standing in the names of County Borough Councillors P.Jarman, G.R.Davies, K.Morgan, I.Pearce, S.Rees-Owen, M.Weaver, C.Davies, S.Evans-Fear and E.Webster was moved and seconded:

“It is proposed that each Member of this local authority personally instruct the Proper Officer of their intention to forgo not less than 5% of their present level of remuneration in addition to the one per cent pay increase proposed to be awarded to all Councillors in Wales by the Independent Remuneration Panel for the 2014/2015 Financial Year.”

96 **FOR INFORMATION**
URGENT DECISIONS OF CABINET EXCLUDED FROM “CALL IN”
(PARAGRAPH 17.2(a) OF PART 4 OF THE CONSTITUTION)

The Council was provided with details of the urgent decisions of the Executive, 18 November 2013, for information in accordance with paragraph 17.2(a) of the Constitution, namely:

CARDIFF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN – DEPOSIT DRAFT

The Council was provided with details of the urgent decision of the Executive, 18 November 2013, for information in accordance with paragraph 17.2(a) of the Constitution, namely:

AGREED

- To support the aims of the Cardiff LDP to provide a framework for future growth for the benefit of the region.
- Object to the Plan itself as the transport impacts of significant strategic allocations in the Northwest of Cardiff are not fully assessed or mitigated.
- To encourage further dialogue with Cardiff with a view to resolving the issues.
- That this matter be not the subject to the scrutiny call-in procedures as the deadline for submission to Cardiff City Council is the 26th November 2013.

REASON FOR URGENCY

The need for representations to be made by the deadline of the 26 November 2013.

WELSH GOVERNMENT VIBRANT AND VIABLE PLACES REGENERATION FRAMEWORK – TARGETED REGENERATION INVESTMENT

AGREED

- To submit a Stage 2 application to the Welsh Government.
- To authorize the Director, Regeneration and Planning to amend and revise the programme providing that it does not fundamentally alter its composition or impact in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Community Safety.
- That this matter will not be subject to the scrutiny call-in procedure rules as the deadline for submission to the Welsh Government is 25 November 2013.

REASON FOR URGENCY

The need for submissions to be made to the Welsh Government by the 25 November 2013.

THE POTENTIAL ESTABLISHMENT OF BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS (BIDs) IN RHONDDA CYNON TAF TOWN CENTRES

AGREED

- That Pontypridd be nominated as a pilot town centre for Business Improvement District (BID) development fund.
- That an application be submitted to the Welsh Government BID development fund.
- That this matter be not the subject to the scrutiny call-in procedure rules as the deadline for submission to the Welsh Government is the 29 November 2013.

REASON FOR URGENCY

The deadline for submissions to the Welsh Government is the 29 November 2013.

**A.CRIMMINGS
MAYOR**

The meeting terminated at 8.20 p.m.