

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, 24 September 2014 at 5.00 p.m.

PRESENT

County Borough Councillor B.Stephens – in the Chair

County Borough Councillors

L.M.Adams	S.Evans-Fear	M.J.Powell
H.Boggis	M.Forey	K.A.Privett
J.Bonetto	A.S.Fox	S.Rees
S.A.Bradwick	M.Griffiths	S.Rees-Owen
J.Bunnage	(Mrs) E.Hanagan	(Mrs) A.Roberts
A.Calvert	G.E.Hopkins	J.Rosser
P.Cannon,QPM	P.Howe	G.Smith
S.Carter	J.S.James	R.W.Smith
A.Crimmings	P.Jarman	G.Stacey
W.J.David	(Mrs) S.J.Jones	R.K.Turner
A.L.Davies,MBE	R.Lewis	L.G.Walker
(Mrs) A.Davies	(Mrs) C.Leyshon	P.Wasley
C.Davies	S.Lloyd	M.O.Weaver
J.Davies	R.B.McDonald	M.Webber
G.R.Davies	C.J.Middle	E.Webster
(Mrs) M.E.Davies	K.Montague	C.J.Williams
(Mrs) L.De Vet	A.Morgan	D.H.Williams
J.Elliott	B.Morgan	C.J.Willis
S.Evans	S.Pickering	

Officers in Attendance

Mr.S.Merritt – Chief Executive
Mr.C.Lee – Group Director, Corporate Services
Mr.G.Isingrini – Group Director, Community & Children’s Services
Mr.C.Bradshaw – Director, Education & Lifelong Learning
Mr.P.J.Lucas – Director, Legal & Democratic Services
Mr.T.Wilkins – Director, Human Resources
Mr.N.Wheeler – Service Director, Streetcare
Mr.C.Hanagan - Head of Strategy and Public Relations

59 CHAIR OF THE MEETING

In the absence of the Mayor (County Borough Councillor M.J.Watts), the Deputy Mayor (County Borough Councillor B.Stephens) took the Chair for the meeting.

60 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillors P.Baccara, D.R.Bevan, (Mrs) J.Cass, P.Griffiths, W.L.Langford, K.Morgan, I.Pearce, S.Powderhill, (Mrs) M.Tegg, G.Thomas, (Mrs) J.S.Ward, M.J.Watts, W.D.Weeks, T.Williams and R.Yeo.

61 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Declaration of Interest by an Elected Member

- (1) County Borough Councillor (Mrs) E.Hanagan in respect of Agenda Item No.9(b) – Notice of Motion –“ I am related to a Council Officer, it is also a prejudicial interest and I will leave the meeting for this item.”

Declarations of Interests by Council Officers in relation to Agenda Item No.9(b) – Notice of Motion

- (1) Mr.P.J.Lucas – “I wish to declared a personal and pecuniary interest in relation to the notice of motion. I will advise only on any matters of clarification regarding procedural matters which may arise in relation to the motion itself”.
- (2) Mr.C.Hanagan – “I wish to declare a personal and pecuniary interest in relation to the notice of motion. I will remain in the meeting during discussion of the motion.”
- (3) Mr.C.Lee – “I wish to declare a personal and pecuniary interest in relation to the notice of motion. I will remain in the meeting during discussion of the motion.”
- (4) Mr.S.Merritt – “I wish to declare a personal and pecuniary interest in relation to the notice of motion. As Head of Paid Services I will answer any relevant questions.”
- (5) Mr.T.Wilkins – “I wish to declare a personal and pecuniary interest in relation to the notice of motion. I will answer any questions, as appropriate.”

- (6) Mr.N.Wheeler – “I wish to declare a personal and pecuniary interest in relation to the notice of motion. I will remain in the meeting during discussion of the motion.”
- (7) Mr.C.Bradshaw – “I wish to declare a personal and pecuniary interest in relation to the notice of motion. I will remain in the meeting during discussion of the motion.”
- (8) Mr.G.Isingrini – “I wish to declare a personal and pecuniary interest in relation to the notice of motion. I will remain in the meeting during discussion of the motion.”

61 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (1) The Deputy Mayor welcomed County Borough Councillor Sheryl Evans to her first meeting of the Council following her election.
- (2) The Deputy Mayor also welcomed Mr.Giovanni Isingrini to his first meeting of the Council as the newly appointed Group Director of Community & Children’s Services.
- (3) The Deputy Mayor was pleased to announce that the Mayor, County Borough Councillor John Watts, was making a good recovery and had indicated he would resuming his role as Mayor next week.
- (4) The Leader of the Council informed the Council that Mr.George Jones, the former Group Director, Environmental Services, was making a steady recovery and wished to convey his thanks to both Members and Officers of the Council for their kind thoughts during his illness. The Council Members conveyed their best wishes to Mr.Jones for the future.
- (5) County Borough Councillor L.G.Walker wished to place on record his personal apology to Mr.R.Jenkins, a Council employee, for any embarrassment and stress that was caused to him following Councillor Walker’s submission of a report that had been written by the employee concerned.

62 MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve as an accurate record, the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 23 July 2014.

63 OPEN GOVERNMENT – STATEMENTS

There were no statements made by the Leader of the Council or Cabinet Members on this occasion.

64 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

(1) From County Borough Councillor L.Walker to the Cabinet Member for Safer Communities, Tourism and Heritage (County Borough Councillor P.Cannon,QPM)

“Could the Cabinet Member for Tourism outline the Authority’s policy for 2015 to promote tourism in Rhondda Cynon Taf and through what medium will it be carried out?”

Response from County Borough Councillor P.Cannon,QPM

“I refer you to the Destination Management Plan considered by Cabinet in March of this year. The adopted version of this Strategy with shortly be published and I have asked Officers to provide you with a copy of this document which details our approach to these matters.”

Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor Walker:

“Would you agree with me that as Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council is close to us, we invoke a policy to get together to produce a document like other bodies and authorities. I ask you, can we liaise with Merthyr to publish something and save on costs.”

Response from County Borough Councillor Cannon:

“Yes, I think we should work with them as they are our closest neighbour and we will consult with them as we move forward.”

(2) From County Borough Councillor P.Jarman to the Leader of the Council (County Borough Councillor A.Morgan)

“What factors did you take into account when appointing Members to your Cabinet?”

Response from County Borough Councillor A.Morgan:

“When appointing to my reduced number Cabinet, I sought the right balance of experience, knowledge and fresh ideas, to support me as a

new Leader of the Council in taking the Council forward and I have a mix of Members from Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor Jarman:

“I understand that initially you sought CVs from your membership before you offered appointments and I wondered is it you view that you have the cream of the crop or do you anticipate having a re-shuffle soon?”

Response from County Borough Councillor A.Morgan:

“Whilst I am Leader of this Group it is at my discretion to re-shuffle the Cabinet and this can be done at any time. A number of Members came forward with CVs and I am lucky to have talent within my Group which helps me choose my Cabinet Members. Unfortunately, I don't think you have the same ability.”

(3) From County Borough Councillor C.Davies to the Cabinet Member for Children's Social Services & Equalities (County Borough Councillor G.E.Hopkins)

“Will you make a statement on the promotion of the Welsh Language in the County Borough?”

Response from County Borough Councillor G.E.Hopkins:

“First of all, I would like to thank Councillor Davies for his question. I am extremely pleased that I have been given Cabinet responsibility for the Welsh Language. I look forward to working within the Council and with other partners in the third sector to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language in the County Borough and to ensure that as much as possible Welsh speakers within the Council have confidence to use the language more in their daily work.

Until recently the co-ordination of the Council's policies and operations to support the Welsh Language has been conducted by the Welsh Language Task Force – Tasglu – a group I know that in the past Councillor Davies has been a member of, as indeed have I and my colleagues Councillor Margaret Davies and, of course, Councillor Eudine Hanagan and Councillor Graham Thomas, both of whom served as the Group's Chair.

We have decided to replace the Tasglu and instead will create a new Welsh Language Cabinet Sub-Committee which I shall be very

pleased to Chair. The establishment of a formal Cabinet Sub-Committee will I think give Welsh Language added status and will ensure we meet the enhanced statutory obligations placed upon us by the Welsh Language Measure 2011. It is important that the Sub-Committee will serve to trumpet Welsh in this Council.

I would like this evening to extend the invitation of the Leader for Councillor Cennard Davies to be a Member of the Sub-Committee. I hope very much that he will accept the invitation as this will be the first time a member of the opposition parties has been a member of a Committee under the Leader's Scheme of Delegation. I hope this demonstrates our commitment to promoting the Welsh Language even further moving forward."

Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor C.Davies:

"What steps are you going to take to involve Members of the opposition parties and back bench Members of your own party as well to take part in the Sub-Committee?"

Response from County Borough Councillor G.E.Hopkins:

"I have been meeting with various Welsh Language Groups around Rhondda Cynon Taf, Medi Meithrin and I toured around the County Borough last week including Taffs Well, Porth and Wattstown and that was really good. In a couple of weeks time, I shall be meeting with RHAG Campaign Group for Welsh Language Education. I look forward to working with all Groups to try and drive forward this initiative. Involvement with Members is a good idea and the sort of issue the Cabinet Sub-Committee can consider when it meets. I hope the new Sub-Committee will meet before the end of the year, if possible."

(4) From County Borough Councillor G.R.Davies to the Cabinet Member for Service Delivery, Communities and Housing (County Borough Councillor K.Montague)

"Will you make a statement on eliminating poverty and improving social justice in Rhondda Cynon Taf?"

Response from County Borough Councillor K.Montague:

"I am always happy to promote this Authority's commitment to tackling poverty and improve social justice in the County Borough and this is reflected in the day to day work of Communities First and Flying Start.

They deal with complex issues and poverty on the ground. Also, I feel we have strategic leadership in terms of core principles of the Single Integrated Plan to move things forward”

Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor Davies:

“You will be aware the Welsh Government’s plans to cut grant support for skills training which the National Federation of Wales say will lead to 9,000 fewer apprenticeships in Wales. As one of the Council’s representatives on RCT Homes, what effect would this have on the social housing sector like RCT Homes in creating and retaining apprenticeships for 16-24 year olds to reduce youth unemployment?”

Response from County Borough Councillor K.Montague:

“I think in RCT we will maintain a commitment to services. In RCT Homes, they are looking to invest money in their planned programmes. I think this is something we have taken forward already in the housing area but I am keen to look at future cohesion in bringing things together through housing or our other parameters but joining all the dots will be key and I welcome any further discussion on that issue.”

(5) From County Borough Councillor K.Morgan to the Cabinet Member for Council Business and Corporate Affairs (County Borough Councillor M.Webber)

It was noted that County Borough Councillor K.Morgan was not in attendance to ask her question “Will you make a statement on the Council’s Communications and Marketing Strategy?” to the relevant Cabinet Member.

REPORTS OF THE EXTERNAL AUDITOR

- 65** **STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2013-14**
(1) AUDIT OF ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS – RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
(2) AUDIT OF ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS – RHONDDA CYNON TAF PENSION FUND

Mr.Jeremy Saunders of the Wales Audit Office presented the above-mentioned reports to the Council and following consideration thereof, it was **RESOLVED** to receive and note the contents of the two reports.

REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, CORPORATE SERVICES

66 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2013-14

The Group Director, Corporate Services presented the Council with the Statement of Accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2014 and following consideration thereof, it was **RESOLVED** –

- (1) To approve and note the Statement of Accounts for the financial year 2013/2014 (Appendix 1) and associated Letters of Representation of the Authority (Appendix 2) and Pension Fund (Appendix 3).
- (2) To approve and note the audited final out-turn position for the Council with regard to the financial year 2013/2014 and the level of General Fund Balances.
- (3) To note the considerations and comments of the Audit Committee on 15 September as required by the Local Government Measure.

REPORTS OF THE DIRECTOR, LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

67 CHANGE TO THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

In his report, the Director, Legal & Democratic Services advised the Council of a change to the Labour Group representation on the Community & Children's Services Scrutiny Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** to note that County Borough Councillor S.Evans will replace County Borough Councillor K.Privett on the Community & Children's Services Scrutiny Committee with immediate effect.

68 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND OFFICER EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURE RULES

In his report, the Director, Legal & Democratic Services outlined proposed amendments to the Constitution required as a result of changes to the Local Authorities (Standing Order) (Wales) Regulations 2006 dealing with senior officer appointments and dismissals.

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

- (1) To note the amendments made to the Standing Orders Regulations.
- (2) To approve the amendments to:

- (i) the Officer Employment Procedure Rules as set out in Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (ii) the terms of reference of the Appointments Committee as set out in Appendix 2 to the report;

in order to reflect the legislative amendments to the Standing Orders Regulations.

(Note: County Borough Councillors M.J.Powell and P.Wasley wished to have recorded that they voted against the motion as set out in the above resolution).

69 NOTICES OF MOTIONS

- (a) The following Notice of Motion standing in the names of County Borough Councillors P.Jarman, G.Davies, K.Morgan, I.Pearce, M.Weaver, S.Rees-Owen, C.Davies, E.Webster and S.Evans-Fear was moved and seconded:

“That the following proposed amendment to the Council’s Constitution be forwarded to the Corporate Governance and Constitution Committee for consideration or else be considered and adopted by this meeting in the interest of efficiency:

Amend Part 4 Rules of Procedure Para 10.3.1 relating to matters that can be considered by way of Notices of Motions to read:

‘Subject to Rule 10.3.2 motions for which notice may be given under rule 10.1 must be about matters for which the Council has a responsibility. Other matters which the Council could influence, that are the responsibilities of other Governments but which substantially affect the well being of the administrative area of the Council, will also be allowed in the wider public interest’.”

Following a discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to defer consideration of the Motion to the Corporate Governance and Constitution Committee.

- (b) The following Notice of Motion standing in the names of County Borough Councillors P.Jarman, G.Davies, K.Morgan, I.Pearce, M.Waver, S.Rees-Owen, C.Davies, E.Webster and S.Evans-Fear 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 evaluated staff terms pay and conditions for employees who are paid above Grade 15 since that date.

As a consequence of the predicted £30 million budget reduction next year, this Council, as a minimum, will reduce the salary of the post of the Chief Executive by 10%. Any cascading effect on salaries of other Chief Officers and Senior Staff above Grade 15 will make a significant contribution to the predicted budget gap.

In the interest of fair play and equality, any future increases in Senior salaries should not exceed the 1% increase on offer to all other staff employed by the Council”.

Following a discussion, it was **RESOLVED** not to adopt the above-mentioned Motion.

(Note: Having previously declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the above-mentioned matter (Minute No.61(1) refers, County Borough Councillor (Mrs) E.Hanagan left the meeting for the item).

(Note: County Borough Councillors G.R.Davies, J.S.James, P.Jarman, M.J.Powell and S.Rees-Owen wished to have recorded that they voted in favour of adopting the above-mentioned Motion).

**B.STEPHENS
DEPUTY MAYOR**

The meeting terminated at 6.55 p.m.