

## **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, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale on Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2017 at 5.00 p.m.

### **PRESENT**

County Borough Councillor M.Tegg – Mayor

### **County Borough Councillors**

L.M.Adams	D.Grehan	D.Owen-Jones
D.R.Bevan	M.Griffiths	S.Pickering
J.Bonetto	J.Harries	S.Powderhill
S.A.Bradwick	G.Holmes	S.M.Powell
J.Brencher	L.Hooper	S.Rees
A.Calvert	G.E.Hopkins	S.Rees-Owen
G.Caple	P.Howe	A.Roberts
A.Chapman	G.W.Hughes	J.Rosser
A.G.Cox	J.James	R.W.Smith
A.Crimmings	P.Jarman	G.Stacey
J.L.Cullwick	G.Jones	E.S.Stephens
G.R.Davies	K.L.Jones	G.Thomas
J.R.Davies	W.Jones	W.Treeby
A.Davies-Jones	R.Lewis	L.G.Walker
L.De Vet	W.Lewis	M.O.Weaver
J.Elliott	C.Leyshon	E.Webster
S.Evans	D.Macey	G.D.G.Williams
M.Fidler Jones	A.Morgan	D.H.Williams
M.Forey	S.Morgans	J.Williams
A.S.Fox	M.A.Norris	T.Williams
E.George	W.Owen	R.Yeo

### **Officers in Attendance**

Mr.C.Bradshaw – Chief Executive  
Mr.C.Lee – Group Director, Corporate & Frontline Services  
Mr.G.Isingrini – Group Director, Community & Children's Services  
Mr.C.B.Jones – Director, Legal & Democratic Services  
Mr.T.Wilkins – Director, Human Resources  
Mr.C.Hanagan – Director, Cabinet & Public Relations  
Ms.K.May – Head of Democratic Services

### **Wales Audit Office**

Mr.Colin Davies and Ms.Justine Morgan

## **20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillors H.Boggis, M.Diamond, S.M.Evans-Fear, H.Fychan, L.Jones, K.Morgan, M.J.Powell, R.K.Turner, M.Webber and C.J.Willis.

## **21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**RESOLVED** – to note that in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, County Borough Councillor D.R.Bevan declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item No.6(b) – Members' Questions – "I have a family member who works in Social Services".

## **22 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- (1) The Director, Cabinet & Public Relations informed Members that following testing that was carried out earlier today in preparation for this evening's meeting it was found that the translation equipment was not compatible with the loop system and therefore simultaneous translation would not be provided. The matter was being looked at to ensure that the facility will be provided at future Council meetings.

- (2) The Mayor asked Members to stand as a mark of respect for those who tragically died as a result of the fire at Grenfell Tower, Kensington, London.

She also informed Members that former Councillor Shah Imtiaz had sadly passed away.

Members and Officers stood for a minute's silence as a mark of respect.

- (3) County Borough Councillor P.Jarman drew the Council's attention to the exceptional talents and achievements of Gwynfor Dafydd a quadlingual nineteen year old student from Tonyrefail and son of Councillor Danny Grehan, who is now studying Spanish and German at Jesus College, Cambridge and recently won the very prestigious Chair at this year's Urdd Eisteddfod in Pencoed. Gwynfor Dafydd also won the Chair at last year's Urdd Eisteddfod in Flint where he was the youngest winner ever.

Councillor Jarman further stated that Gwynfor's winning streak as a poet began as a student at Ysgol Llanharri when he won the school Chair four times consecutively, followed by a Chair from Bangor University, the best under 25 poet at the National Eisteddfod in the Vale of Glamorgan and a Christian Aid national poetry competition. He also composed the Cywydd Croeso or Welcome Poem for the Urdd Eisteddfod held in Pencoed.

The Chair of this year's Eisteddfod was awarded to Gwynfor for a poem entitled " Yr Awyr / The Hero " Gwynfor's winning poem was inspired by "I

Daniel Blake" the hard hitting film by the famous social issue film maker Ken Loach.

Gwynfor has been performing in Eisteddfodau from a very young age and had success representing Ysgol Gymraeg Tonyrefail, Ysgol Llanharri and Adran Bro Taf on the Eisteddfod stage in reciting, dancing and instrumental competitions as well as poetry.

Following the announcement made by Councillor Jarman, Members also conveyed their congratulations to Gwynfor and the Mayor indicated that she would extend an invitation for him to visit the Mayor's Parlour in the very near future in order that his exceptional achievement as a literary scholar can be acknowledged further.

## **23 PETITIONS**

The following Members handed to the Mayor the petitions as detailed below:-

- (1) From County Borough Councillor J.Harries on behalf of the residents of Maerdy Road, Maerdy requesting that the Council repairs the pavement between the location of the old Maerdy Hotel and the Sion Chapel.
- (2) From County Borough Councillor D.H.Williams on behalf of the residents of Clydach Close, Glyncoch requesting that the Council look at the traffic problems with delivery and refuse vehicles having to use the pavement because of the width of the road and parents and staff using the Flying Start provision at the Community Centre.
- (3) From County Borough Councillor P.Howe on behalf of the residents of Ferndale protesting about the speeding of vehicles up and down Rhondda Road, Ferndale and requesting the Council (with Partners) look into this matter and that either sleeping policemen be put in the area and or speed cameras.

## **24 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** – to approve as an accurate record the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on the 17<sup>th</sup> May, 2017 subject to Minute No.13(13) stating that the Civic salary is payable where the Mayor and Deputy Mayor remain in post until a successor is appointed at the Annual Meeting of the Council following the election

## **25 STATEMENTS**

- (1) The Leader of the Council informed Members of the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act and he reported on the work that is undertaken with the Police and this Council to ensure that emergency plans are in place for any unexpected tragic events. The Leader wished to place on record the

Council's thanks to the Fire, Ambulance and Police Authorities in the outstanding works undertaken in the recent terrorism and the Grenfell Tower disaster. He also urged Members to attend the 'Emergency Planning' training that is delivered by the Council on an annual basis.

- (2) The Leader of the Council informed Members that the Maerdy Mountain Road is to be closed as from the 10<sup>th</sup> July and for the duration of the school holidays in order for landsliding works to be carried out involving stabilisation, repairs to stone retaining walls, drainage (including flood prevention), crash barriers (removal and installation), resurfacing of the road from one valley to another. The cost of the works have been partly funded by the Welsh Government under the Road Safety grant.
- (3) County Borough Councillor D.R.Bevan, Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development and Housing stated that following the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower, the Council sought reassurances from Social Landlords operating in Rhondda Cynon Taf regarding fire safety precautions and procedures. The Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) who had already responded confirmed that annual fire risk assessments had been undertaken at their schemes and all are up to date, they had also confirmed that they had not used the PE type cladding system used at Grenfell Tower. RSLs were making further investigations into the safety of the products used on their properties to provide their tenants with reassurance.

Councillor Bevan further reported that the Leader of the Council had been in direct contact with Trivallis to ensure they are doing all they can to reassure their residents. An urgent report in respect of this matter is being considered by Cabinet at its meeting being held tomorrow (22<sup>nd</sup> June, 2017) and in addition to this report being discussed at Cabinet, the matter is to be monitored by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

- (4) County Borough Councillor A.Crimmings, Cabinet Member for Environment, Culture and Leisure reported on the positive progress that is being made in investment in leisure with the installation of 3G pitches in many areas within Rhondda Cynon Taf and improvements that had been undertaken in Leisure Centres resulting in more people signing up for membership. She wished to thank Officers within the Council's Public Relations and Marketing Section for their assistance in achieving the increase in membership.

## **26 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

- (a) **From County Borough Councillor J.Cullwick to the Leader of the Council (County Borough Councillor A.Morgan)**

"Please will you make a statement on traffic calming schemes and their effect throughout the Council?"

### **Response from Councillor A.Morgan**

“We do benefit from various grant funding streams. Traffic calming can take many forms and is just one of a variety of tools available to the Council that may be deployed in order to help achieve the aims of the Road Safety framework. Research undertaken by the Department of Transport recognises that road engineering measures such as road humps, chicanes etc are the most effective method of reducing vehicular speeds in urban areas and therefore the Council often proposes the use of such measures at locations where there is a documented history of speed related collisions resulting in injury to those involved and there are grants available for higher risk areas. We also use some of our own resources in the region of approximately £200,000.

The Leader also referred to safe routes and communities and the relationship/link with schools”.

### **Supplementary Question from Councillor J.Cullwick**

“Can we have 20 mph limits placed outside all schools?”

### **Response from Councillor A.Morgan**

“We have looked at this and can have variable speed limits, the Broadway is one example, you have to have the necessary signage to show different times, if implementing a 20 mph zone then traffic calming has to be installed to slow down traffic. Each individual Traffic Order costs in the region of £5,000. The Council is always looking at ways to access various funding streams to assist in such schemes. I am not against what you are suggesting but need to roll out the programme”.

- (b) **From County Borough Councillor G.R.Davies to the Cabinet Member for Adult and Children’s Community Services (County Borough Councillor G.Hopkins)**

“Will you make a statement on Home Care Services?”

### **Response from Councillor G.Hopkins**

“Home Care Services in Rhondda Cynon Taf are provided by both an in-house council team and by a number of independent sector providers, which have been awarded contracts by the council. All services provide practical support and personal care to people with an assessed need to support them in their choice to live as independently as they can at home. In addition, the Council’s in-house Team also provides the specialist intermediate care and reablement service.

On average 17,200 hours of support (including reablement) is provided each week to adults right across Rhondda Cynon Taf”.

### **Supplementary Question from Councillor G.R.Davies**

“I have had a number of complaints quite often about Carers not turning up to undertake their duties. This is unacceptable as the people are not getting the care they should get and sometimes don't get the medication they should get at the proper time. They often change the Carers and this causes confusion to the elderly especially people suffering from dementia. Are you happy with the situation at the present time. I am not criticising individual Carers, they are often on zero hours contracts and very little time to do their work and get from call to call, it is the way it is organised which is not the fault of the Carers”.

### **Response from Councillor G.Hopkins**

“I am not happy with any instance where someone has missed a call when someone should've been there; each instance is important to the person and is not acceptable to us. We do have meetings with the Providers and we do take complaints up with them. There are very few complaints, the number of missed calls or late calls are fortunately very low. We expect very high standards and will be taking them up with the Provider, if you have individual complaints then please bring them to my attention or use the Council's Complaints Procedure.

With regards to medication, a piece of work is being undertaken with the various agencies, Pharmacists and the Health Board”.

(c) **From County Borough Councillor E.Webster to the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services (County Borough Councillor M.A.Norris)**

“Would you kindly update me on the progress/success of the roll-out of free public WiFi in all public areas of Council buildings?”

### **Response from Councillor M.A.Norris**

To underpin our digital ambitions we need a first class, sustainable digital infrastructure. It needs to be flexible and adaptable to respond to the changing needs of our residents, businesses, learners, workers and visitors.

As technology use is increasing in society, connectivity is crucial for supporting the day-to-day needs of residents and staff members.

As part of our digital improvements, we have installed public and staff accessible Wi-Fi at Council buildings throughout the authority and we will continue to build on the network going forward.

Typically we have two types of WiFi available which are di-wifi and thecloud (SKY)

The corporate Wi-Fi allows RCT staff members e.g. a Social Worker to access any resources such as files, folders and drives they have available to them remotely, as though they were sat at their desk. Corporate Wi-Fi differentiates from public Wi-Fi as access is only granted to specific users & devices (e.g. laptops / tablets / phones) registered to the councils' network – without both a corporate username and password *and* a device registration provisioned by ICT, access cannot be granted. Control and access is managed by the Council and is subject to all standard security controls.

The Sky Cloud public access WiFi is available at many sites including the Parc and Dare Theatre and Treorchy Library. It can be used by anyone i.e. Officer or a member of the public where access to the internet is the only requirement. SKY WiFi can be accessed by anyone who registers as a user with SKY and via any device that allows internet use.

Sky Cloud Wi-Fi requires users to register a device *once* – following this, connection will be automatically established when said device is in range, no matter at what site. Control and access is managed by SKY Cloud.

The Cloud content is controlled and utilises an industry standard content filtering system configured to the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) block list.

#### **Supplementary Question from Councillor E.Webster**

“I welcome the provision of free WiFi especially in town centres. A report is to be considered by Cabinet tomorrow in respect of Digital RCT `Our 2020 Digital Vision`, I would like to have assurance that Treorchy will be identified?”

#### **Response from Councillor M.A.Norris**

“Part of our manifesto was to roll out WiFi in town centres and we will continue to work with partners to ensure that there will be improved availability and enhancement of superfast broadband to achieve better coverage within certain areas. There is a digital strategy which is going to Cabinet and we are looking to pilot a couple of town centres to see how best suits each area and what works well and it will include Treorchy.”

## **27 WALES AUDIT OFFICE REPORTS**

The Chief Executive reported that as part of the Audit of the Council for the financial year 2016/17, the Wales Audit Office had undertaken a number of projects to enable them to form a view on the robustness of the corporate effectiveness of the Council.

During the four month period to June, 2017, the following reports were published by the Wales Audit Office and were attached to the report of the Chief Executive at Appendices 1-5:-

- The Annual Improvement Report 2016/17;
- WAO risk-based assessment of corporate arrangements: improvements and performance;
- WAO risk-based assessment of corporate arrangements: collaboration and partnerships;
- Savings Planning; and
- WAO risk-based assessment of corporate arrangements: financial and service planning

The Chief Executive reported that the above reports were positive and reflected the fact that the Council has robust financial, service and performance management arrangements in place. Nevertheless, there were opportunities to improve these arrangements and the WAO had made a number of proposals for improvement across the reports. He stated that action is being taken to address the proposals for improvement, and the progress made against these actions will be reported to the Audit Committee in due course.

Members received Mr. Colin Davies of the WAO who gave his observations on the above reports and in particular the Annual Improvement Report 2016/17 where he stated that the Council continues to meet its statutory requirements in relation to continuous improvement and based on, and limited to, the work carried out by the WAO and relevant regulators, the Auditor General believes that the Council is likely to comply with the requirements of the Local Government Measure (2009) during 2017/18.

Mr. Davies reported on the proposals for improvement which had been made and were to be monitored by the WAO as part of their improvement assessment work.

Mr. Davies referred the Council to Appendix 3 to the Annual Improvement Report in respect of national report recommendations and he asked that these be looked at as there could be some that could have an impact on RCT.

Following the observations made by Mr. Davies, a lengthy discussion ensued and it was **RESOLVED** – To note the contents of the reports of the Wales Audit Office and that the proposals for improvement and the progress made against these actions be reported to the Audit Committee and the respective Scrutiny Committee(s), if felt appropriate.

## **28 CHANGE IN MEMBERSHIP OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

In accordance with Minute No2(2.2) of the Annual Meeting of Council held on the 17<sup>th</sup> May, 2017, the Director, Legal & Democratic Services advised Members that he had received notification from the Labour Group of a change to its membership of the Planning and Development Committee, and it was **RESOLVED** – that County Borough Councillor S. Powell replace County Borough Councillor C.J. Willis on the Planning and Development Committee.



**29     WITHDRAWAL OF URGENT NOTICE OF MOTION**

**RESOLVED** – to note that the Urgent Notice of Motion submitted in accordance with paragraphs 10.5.1 – 10.5.4 of the Council Procedure Rules, standing in the names of County Borough Councillors P.Jarman, G.Davies, E.Webster, S.Rees-Owen, M.Weaver, W.Jones, A.Chapman, S.Evans-Fear, D.Grehan, K.Morgan, J.Williams, A.Cox, D.Macey, H.Fychan, J.Davies, J.Cullwick, L.Jones and E.Stephens had been withdrawn by the aforementioned Members. The reason for its withdrawal – *“the Ministerial statement that was made yesterday (20<sup>th</sup> June) by Carl Sergeant giving reassurances at a national level regarding cladding and the setting up of an All Wales professional task team”*.

**M.TEGG  
MAYOR**

**The meeting closed at 6.43 p.m.**

These minutes are subject to approval at the next appropriate Council meeting