



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council meeting held on Wednesday, 19 September 2018 at 5.00 pm at the Council Chamber, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale, Tonypany, CF40 2XX.

County Borough Councillors - Council Members in attendance:-

Councillor S Powderhill (Chair)

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

Officers in attendance

Mr C Bradshaw, Chief Executive
Mr G Isingrini, Group Director Community & Children's Services
Mr C Lee, Group Director Corporate & Frontline Services
Mr C Hanagan, Director of Communications & Interim Head of Democratic Services
Mr R Evans, Director of Human Resources
Mr C Jones, Director, Legal & Democratic Services.

46 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillors S.M.Evans, P.Howe, R.K.Turner and M.Webber.

47 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, County Borough Councillor R Smith made the following declaration of interest pertaining to agenda item 12 – Re-appointment of an independent Member of the standards Committee, and left the meeting when the item was discussed and voted upon:

“The person named within the report is known to me”.

48 ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. The Mayor advised Members that he had taken receipt of an e-petition from local residents requesting that a water park be installed within Ponty Park (Ynysangharad War Memorial Park).
2. County Borough Councillor E Stephens paid tribute to the work of local craftsman Chris Williams, the creator of the 2018 Cardiff National Eisteddfod Chair and spoke highly of his work and the prodigious accolade for both Mr Williams and the County Borough. It was confirmed that Mr Williams would be invited to the Mayors Parlour as an official acknowledgment of his work and success. County Borough Councillor Stephens also took the opportunity to advise of the many talents displayed at this years Eisteddfod in Cardiff Bay during August.
3. County Borough Councillor G Davies handed the Mayor a petition on behalf of local residents, who wished to express their concern at the lack of a crossing patrol for the pupils of Pen-Yr-Englyn Community School at Baglan St Treherbert.
4. County Borough Councillor H Boggis commented upon the achievements of the Penywaun Paraders a Jazz Band within her ward who competed at the world championships during the August Bank holiday weekend. In addition to individual wins, the band were also announced as World Champions. It was noted that the band would be invited to the Mayors Parlour to note their successful achievements.
5. County Borough Councillor G Jones advised Members that the Cwmdare Voices choir had been requested to sing at the Principality stadium, for the Wales v South Africa rugby game on the 24/11/18, and took the opportunity to wish the choir every

success at the occasion.

6. County Borough Councillor T Williams advised Members that she was facilitating a Charity Fashion Show during October, proceeds for which would go towards a young boy within her ward named Toby, who had heart condition problems. Members were advised of a raffle that was also taking place, if Members wished to partake.
7. County Borough Councillor D Owen-Jones acknowledged the musical talents of Miss Ella Thomas, who was also a successful contestant on 'the voice kids'. Members were advised of a recent fundraising event for 'Community defibrillators' that Ella performed at and her recent appearance on a forthcoming S4C programme. In addition, County Borough Councillor Owen-Jones spoke of the positive work undertaken by residents within the Tonyrefail and Gilfach Goch ward in respect of the 'Tonyrefail & Gilfach Goch Community defibrillators' fundraising which has achieved over 28 defibrillator units being available within the community. It was noted that the fundraising group would be invited to the Mayors Parlour to congratulate them on their achievements to date.

49 MINUTES

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 25th July, 2018 as an accurate reflection of the meeting subject to the following amendments:

- County Borough Councillor S Rees-Owen to be named in attendance.

50 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

1. **From Councillor Richard Yeo to the Leader of the Council – Councillor A Morgan.**

“What discussions does the Council have with the Welsh Government around future transport planning?”

Response from County Borough Councillor A Morgan:

The Leader outlined to Members that in his role as the WLGA transport spokesperson and as vice chair of the City Deal transport consortium, along with ten other Authorities, discussions surrounding the future transport planning for Rhondda Cynon Taf were taking place with Welsh Government and the Minister. The Leader continued by adding of the discussions with the Metro, with plans moving forward and the regional transport plan, which he added didn't end with the County Borough but looked at a more joined up approach with neighbouring authorities. The Leader advised of the prominent and lead positions officers of the

authority were in, in respect of transport and City Deal and the co-ordinated works that were being developed, allowing close links with Welsh Government on transport planning.

Supplementary question from County Borough Councillor R Yeo:

“With the South Wales Metro set to be delivered over the coming years, could you please outline what benefits the residents of Beddau and Tyn-Y-Nant can expect from this exciting and much needed improvement to public transport links?”

Response from County Borough Councillor A Morgan:

The Leader of the Council commented on the wider metro element, with the additional trains to be provided on an hourly basis and spoke of the southern element provision of potentially 12 trains per hour each way, South of Pontypridd adding that such transport links would be key to jobs and prosperity for both the North and South of the County Borough.

The Leader referenced the Beddau and Tyn- Y-Nant transport provision, commenting on the current lack of rail links in place but spoke of the future phased approach and the links with the Cardiff North LDP. The Leader also referenced the study undertaken by the Welsh Government in respect of the A4119, the bus connection works looking to be taken forward, the development of Park & Ride from Junction 34 with a station on the mainline for local services. He advised of the aspirations for the South of the County in respect of transport provision and the package of measures that would need to be taken forward that would assist with transport demands in the future.

2. Question from Councillor Mark Adams to the Deputy Leader of the council and Cabinet Member for Council Business - Cllr M Webber:

“ Will the Cabinet Member make a statement on the Council’s Member’s Charter?”

Note: The Mayor informed Members that in the absence of Councillor M Webber a response would be made in writing.

3. Question from Councillor Jayne Brencher to Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development & Housing – Cllr R Bevan:

“Will the Cabinet Member make a statement on Town Centre Regeneration?”

Response from County Borough Councillor R Bevan:

The Cabinet Member commented upon the hard work undertaken by the labour administration and officers to ensure that the Council are regenerating its town centres in an ambitious way whilst at the same time using sound judgement and market analysis to inform its decisions so that they work for communities. Members were referred to the work undertaken within Pontypridd with the Taff Vale redevelopment, which is already acting as a catalyst to further investment in the region.

The Cabinet Member continued by adding that over the years the Taff Vale site had been mired in failed regeneration attempts, but with direct intervention from this administration along with strong leadership, the prospects of the Taff Vale site has been transformed into an already successful project, with one of the buildings fully let to long-term tenants and interest from other parties, which can only invest further within the area.

Supplementary question from County Borough Councillor J Brencher:

Councillor Brencher took the opportunity to positively comment on the Taff Vale project, following which asked 'would the Cabinet Member give an update on the progress on the new bridge that will link Taff Vale with Ynysangharad War Memorial Park?'

Response from County Borough Councillor R Bevan:

The Cabinet Members advised that the application would shortly be coming forward to Planning & Development Committee, adding that the bridge would offer direct access to Ynysangharad War Memorial Park from the Taff Vale site and significantly improve access for that section of town.

4. Question from Councillor Gareth Hughes to Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development & Housing – Cllr R Bevan:

“ How can the Council build upon the significant support already provided to Town Centres?”

Response from County Borough Councillor R Bevan:

The Cabinet Member responded to the question by highlighting the recent launch of the Hop, Shop, Save initiative in partnership with Stagecoach and other partners within Town Centres. The Cabinet Member advised that Businesses would be promoted on board in

return for them providing Stagecoach passengers with a discount on products and/or services upon the production of a valid bus ticket. The scheme is predicted to bring benefits such as boosting footfall across towns, improving the customer offer, boosting business takings and subsequently boosting the local economy.

Supplementary question from County Borough Councillor G Hughes:

Could you provide us with details of what the Council plans to do to support the regeneration of Tonypanyd once the highways works are finished in the Town Centre?

Response from County Borough Councillor R Bevan:

The Cabinet Member responded by advising that once the highways project was complete, monitoring would be undertaken along with traders footfall in the town to measure how successful the project has been and whether it has helped to increase the amount of people within the town centre. In addition he added that as the Council would be looking at potentially working with traders and landlords to transform underutilised space above shops into homes, which has been very successful in Pontypridd, allowing people to live in the town centres and close to public transport networks and amenities, and something that we hope to emulate elsewhere. The Cabinet Member commented that over 100 expressions of interest had been received in respect of the town centre grant project scheme with 50 projects approved to date.

Concluding his response the Cabinet Member spoke of the implementation of the South Wales Metro and at how this can be exploited to its full potential in Tonypanyd as well as the Rhondda as a whole to attract inward investment as well as increase job creation to spread wealth across the region.

5. Question from Councillor Joshua Davies to Cabinet Member Environment, Leisure & Heritage Services - Councillor A Crimmings:

“Will the cabinet member, please make a statement on Home To School Transport issues within Rhondda Cynon Taf Schools”

Response from County Borough Councillor A Crimmings:

The Cabinet Member advised Members that the Council operates one of the most generous school transport policies in Wales, serving around 12,500 learners each day and costing more than £10.2 million a year. She added that the Councils policy exceeds the Welsh Government’s statutory provision, with transport being

provided for primary school learners who live more than 1.5 miles from their nearest or catchment school as opposed to the 2 mile limit, and more than 2 miles for secondary school learners as opposed to the 3 mile limit for secondary school learners, adding that the provision continues to compare favourably to other Local Authorities in Wales.

The Cabinet Member further commented that with such a generous transport policy and provision there were of course issues resulting from school timetabling, parking, emergency road works and assured Members that the Council were working with the Police, Schools and the enforcement team to address the matters that have been identified and will continue to do so, to ensure the professional running of the service.

Supplementary question from County Borough Councillor J Davies:

Can you advise that when the Home To School transport contracts are awarded that the contractor has sufficient vehicles in place for both pick ups and drop off as set out in the contract from day one.

Response from County Borough Councillor A Crimmings:

The Cabinet Member confirmed that a rigorous procurement process was adhered to with scoring factored into each new contract awarded. The Member advised of the audit process also undertaken commenting that the process was a scrupulous exercise. She continued by adding that the Councils code of conduct also sets out parameters that should be adhered to, with the Council applying penalty points against contractors for non compliance. The cabinet Member referred to the officer involved with Home to School Transport provision and the work undertaken with the schools and contractors to ensure that the home to school transport provision provided is reliable and fit for purpose. The Cabinet Member concluded by advising that the Council can terminate a contract if necessary.

REPORTS OF THE EXTERNAL AUDITOR

51 AUDIT OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS -RHONDDA CYNON TAF CBC AND RHONDDA CYNON TAF PENSION FUND

Mr R Harris, Lead Officer, Wales Audit Office presented members with the Audit of financial statements 2017-18 for RCTCBC and RCT Pension Fund through the aid of a PowerPoint presentation.

Mr Harris commented that the process for the audit of accounts had worked well, with the Council completing the audits a month earlier than the statutory deadline, without sacrificing the quality of the financial statements produced. Members were reminded that once the financial

statements had been signed the Auditor General would give his opinion and certificate.

Members thanked officers for the work undertaken in respect of the completion of the financial statements and the timelines achieved, which would assist with the required timelines going forward.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the contents of the presentation.

52 ANNUAL IMPROVEMENT AUDIT

Ms J Morgan, Wales Audit Office presented Members with the Annual Improvement Audit Report 2017-18 for Rhondda Cynon Taf Council. Members were reminded that the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (the Measure) requires the Auditor General to undertake a forward-looking annual improvement assessment, and to publish an annual improvement report, for each improvement authority in Wales. Ms Morgan confirmed that the Council is meeting its statutory requirements in relation to continuous improvement.

Following a discussion and to a number of queries that were clarified by Ms Morgan and the Director of Communications and interim Head of Democratic Services in respect of scrutiny within the Authority, it was **RESOLVED** to note the contents of the report.

COUNCIL WORK PROGRAMME

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The Director of Communications & Interim Head of Democratic Services provided Members with a brief update in respect of the Council Work Programme. Members were advised that the Leaders Annual Debate scheduled for October would now take place in November, with the work programme be amending to reflect the changes accordingly.

REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, CORPORATE & FRONTLINE SERVICES

54 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2017-18.

The Group Director, Corporate & Frontline Services presented the Council with the Statement of Accounts for the financial year ended 31st March 2018 and following consideration thereof, it was **RESOLVED** –

1. To approve and note the Statement of Accounts for the financial year 2017/2018 (as attached at Appendix 1) and associated Letters of Representation of the Authority (as attached at Appendix 2) and Pension Fund (as attached at Appendix 3);

2. To approve and note the audited final out-turn position for the Council with regard to the financial year 2017/2018 and the level of General Fund Balances (paragraph 7.4 of the report); and
3. To note the considerations and comments of the 12th July Audit Committee as required by the Local Government Measure (paragraphs 10.1 and 10.2 of the report).

JOINT REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR, LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS & INTERIM HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES.

55 LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES

The Director, Legal & Democratic Services presented a report to Members which provided details of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Working Group's discussions at its meeting on the 3rd September in respect to the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales review. The Director advised that the Committees recommendations to Council were that the Officer proposals in respect of the review of the Council's electoral arrangements be subject to a period of stakeholder engagement prior to further consideration by Council at its meeting on 24th October 2018.

Following discussions surrounding the proposed stakeholder engagement and the potential of holding a fourth engagement event within the Rhondda Fawr area it was **RESOLVED:**

1. To notes the Officer proposals relating to the review of the Council's electoral arrangements by the Boundary Commission as outlined in Appendix A to this report;
2. To Acknowledges the comments and input of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Working Group made at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 3rd September 2018 and which are detailed in the draft minutes of this meeting attached at Appendix B to this report;
3. That in accordance with the recommendation of the Overview and Scrutiny Working Group agrees that the Officer proposals outlined in Appendix A of this report be subject to a period of stakeholder engagement as detailed in section 5 of this report; and with the addition of a fourth event within the Rhondda Fawr area.
4. That the feedback from the stakeholder engagement be presented to the October Council meeting for consideration, prior to submission of any final Council proposal to the Boundary Commission by 5p.m. on the 26th October 2018.

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS & INTERIM HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

56 CHANGE OF MEMBERSHIP

In accordance with Minute No.10 of the Council meeting held on the 23rd May, 2018, the Director of Communications & Interim Head of Democratic Services advised Members that he had received notification from both the Labour and Conservative Group of a change to its membership for the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee, and a Labour Group change to the membership of Audit Committee. Details were also provided in respect of a change to the Cwm Taf Public Services Board Joint Scrutiny Committee, as in accordance with Minute 10(2) of the Council meeting held on the 23rd May, 2018.

In addition to the above the Director advised of the need to amend the membership of the Trivallis Board due to changes in legislation, taking effect from December, 2018, with a reduction in Membership from four to two Members. The Director commented that he had been advised from the Company Secretary to the Board of the intention to undertake a wider governance review of the Trivallis Board which may impact the membership at a future date, which would be reported back to Council accordingly.

It was **RESOLVED:-**

1. To note that County Borough Councillor J Elliott is to be nominated in place of County Borough Councillor G Hughes on the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee.
2. To note that County Borough Councillor L Hooper is to be nominated in place of County Borough Councillor M Diamond on the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee.
3. To note that County Borough Councillor J Elliott is to be nominated in place of County Borough Councillor G Thomas on the Audit Committee.
4. To replace County Borough Councillor M Adams from the Cwm Taf Public Services Board Joint Scrutiny Committee membership and that a new Member is nominated from the membership of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
5. To note that the Authority's nominated representatives on the Trivallis Board going forward will be County Borough Councillor M Griffiths and officer representative Mr P Mee, Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services.
6. That correspondence be sent to Merthyr Tydfil Council advising them of the membership change once a new member is

nominated.

7. That correspondence be sent to Trivallis advising them of the Authority's nominated representatives to the Board.

57 SUPPORTING THE WORK OF MEMBERS - TELEPHONE AND EMAIL FACILITIES AND ELECTRONIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION

The Director of Communications & Interim Head of Democratic Services presented Members with his report which advised of the decision taken forward by the Democratic Services Committee meeting on the 23rd July, 2018 in respect of the IRP recommendation surrounding supporting the work of Members.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the agreed way forward by the Democratic Services Committee that that all Elected Members receive a payment of £37 per month (before tax and national insurance deductions) as a contribution toward the cost of home broadband for a period of 6 months when the proposal will be reviewed by the Committee.

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR, LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

58 RE-APPOINTMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT MEMBER OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

In accordance with Regulations the Director of Legal & Democratic Services provided Members with details regarding the proposed re-appointment of one of the Independent Members of the Standards Committee for a further term.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. To re-appoint Mr. Mel Jehu as an Independent Member of the Standards Committee for a period of four years from 18th October 2018.

(**N.B.** County Borough Councillor Smith left the meeting when this item was discussed and voted upon, as noted in Minute 47)

59 NOTICE OF MOTION

The following Notice of Motion standing in the names of County Borough Councillors P.Jarman, S.Rees Owen, G.Davies, M.Weaver, E.Webster, D.Grehan, H.Fychan, D.Macey, A.Cox, J.Williams, K.Morgan, J.Davies, J.Cullwick, E.Stephens, L.Jones, A.Chapman and S.Evans was considered:

“That this Council, as part of its emergency planning responsibilities introduces a scheme of voluntary Snow Wardens to

assist in snow clearance in the community during heavy snowfall. The snow wardens will be registered with the Council and be properly trained and equipped to undertake snow clearance in their locality.”

Following discussions it was **RESOLVED** to refer the Notice of Motion to the Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee for further consideration.

This meeting closed at 7.10 pm

**Cllr S Powderhill
Chairman.**