

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee held at the County Borough Council Offices, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale on Monday, 17th October, 2016 at 5 p.m.

PRESENT

County Borough Councillor – (Mrs)J.S.Ward Vice Chair

County Borough Councillors

G.R.Davies	(Mrs) S.Rees	C.J.Willis
S.Evans	R.W.Smith	R.Yeo
P.Griffiths	P.Wasley	
(Mrs) C.Leyshon	E.Webster	

Also in Attendance

Mr.J.Fish – Elected Parent/Governor Representative
County Borough Councillor G.Smith – Vice Chair of Overview and Scrutiny
Committee
County Borough Councillor C.Davies – Vice Chair of Audit Committee

Officers in Attendance

Mr.P.J.Lucas – Director, Legal & Democratic Services
Mr.B.Davies – Director of Financial Services
Mr.P.Griffiths – Service Director, Performance & Improvement
Ms.S.Davies – Head of Finance – Education and Financial Reporting
Ms.K.May – Head of Democratic Services
Mr.M.Jones – Democratic Services Officer

20. CHAIR

In the absence of the Chair, County Borough Councillor M.J.Watts, (Mrs) J.S.Ward took the Chair.

21. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillors S.Bradwick, B.Stephens, M.J.Watts (Chair) and Mr.R.Hull (Chair of Audit Committee).

22. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED – to note that in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct there were no declarations of interest made at the meeting pertaining to the agenda.

23. TRAINING – TREASURY MANAGEMENT

With the aid of PowerPoint slides, Mr.D.Blake of Arlingclose Ltd. (the Council's appointed treasury advisors) provided Members with training in respect of Treasury Management and gave his observations under the following headings:

- Key Questions to ask on Treasury Management;
- Treasury Management at RCT;
- Financial Markets and RCT;
- Benchmarking performance; and
- Any other business.

Members posed a number of questions to Mr. Blake including who sets the Council's borrowing limits and can the Council borrow more to support capital projects? Mr. Blake responded to confirm the Council approves its own borrowing limits and although it could borrow more in line with the approved limits set, it would need to ensure it could afford to re-pay the amount borrowed i.e. is it prudent, affordable and sustainable?

Following the responses made by Mr.D.Blake, the Chair thanked him for his attendance and for answering the questions raised by Members, and he left the meeting.

RESOLVED – that the PowerPoint slides used in the training session be emailed to Members of the Committee.

24. MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve as an accurate record, the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee held on 19th September, 2016 subject to County Borough Councillor (Mrs) J.S.Ward's (Vice Chair) name being added to the list of apologies for absence.

Matters Arising – Minute No. 19

The Committee was informed that a date had been convened for a Special Meeting of the Committee to take place on Wednesday 16th November, 2016 at 5.00 pm to receive updates on the service change evaluations of the Youth Service and the Meals on Wheels Service.

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR, LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

25. QUARTER 1 COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Director of Financial Services provided Members with details of the Council's performance for the period 1st April 2016 – 30th June 2016 in relation to Revenue and Capital Budgets, Treasury Management Prudential Indicators

and Corporate Plan priority action plans (that include performance indicator information).

The Director of Financial Services sought the Committee's views with regard to the new Executive Summary style of reporting and added that the approach aimed to further improve the meaningfulness of the report, enable the reader to quickly identify key issues and that the format was more conducive to on-line viewing to take advantage of electronic links to additional information. Members fed back that they considered the revised format to be a positive development and felt the inclusion of electronic links to more detailed information was useful.

At this juncture, the Director, Legal & Democratic Services advised Members that the revised format of the report could also lend itself to a 'paperless approach' as is currently being piloted for Cabinet meetings. The Director added that further to completion of the pilot, consideration would be given to the benefits / costs of rolling out a paperless approach to other committees.

The Director of Financial Services continued his up date and indicated that the report focuses, from an operational performance perspective, on the progress the Council is making toward the deliver of the three Corporate Plan priorities: People, Place and Economy. The Director added each Corporate Plan priority is underpinned by an action plan that has been subject to 'pre-scrutiny' and the outcome of this process supported a more meaningful and smaller suite of performance indicators (from 195 reported at year end 2015/16 to 84 to be reported at year end 2016/17).

The Director of Financial Services up dated Members that out of 20 performance indicators measured and reported during quarter 1, four did not meet the target by more than 5%, namely;

- The rate of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons per 1,000 population aged 75 and over – Target = 4.83 compared to Actual Performance of 7.15;
- Number of visits to local authority sports and leisure centres per 1,000 population where the visitor will be participating in physical activity – Target = 2,100 compared to Actual Performance of 1,846;
- Number of Children Looked After - Target of 592 compared to Actual Performance of 633; and
- Percentage of re-registrations of children on the local authority child protection register – Target = 8% compared to Actual Performance of 9.7%.

A discussion ensued and the following questions were raised by Members:-

- Could more information be provided in relation to the '*Divert Project*', which aims to reduce offending and prevent re-offending in the 18 – 25 age category?
- A Member relayed that he had been receiving feedback from constituents that it was difficult to access the pool at Ystrad during weekdays due to it primarily being booked for school swimming and requested if an up date on this position could be provided?
- A Member asked for an update on what investment will be happening in relation to Treorchy as referred to in the Economy Corporate Plan priority action plan (against the backdrop of Brexit / the current climate)?
- A Member noted the 3 Syrian refugee families that have been resettled within Rhondda Cynon Taf and requested that an up date be included as part of the quarter 2 Performance Report around how the families are settling in together with what support is being provided?

In response, the Service Director, Performance & Improvement advised Members that responses to the above would be provided by appropriate Officers direct to the respective Members and with regard to the resettled Syrian refugee families, an up date would be included within the Council's quarter 2 Performance Report.

Following a discussion it was **RESOLVED** to note the report and Members agreed that they were satisfied with the new Executive Summary style format for presenting the Council's quarterly Performance Reports.

**J.S. WARD
VICE CHAIR**

The meeting closed at 6.25 p.m.