

**Mae'r cofnodion hyn yn amodol ar gymeradwyaeth yng nghyfarfod priodol
nesaf y Pwyllgor**

**These Minutes are subject to approval at the next appropriate meeting of the
Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at the County Borough Council Offices, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale on Wednesday, 18th April, 2018 at 5 p.m.

PRESENT

County Borough Councillor L.M.Adams – in the Chair

County Borough Councillors

| | |
|-----------|------------|
| H.Boggis | P.Jarman |
| J.Bonetto | E.Stephens |
| E.George | G.Thomas |
| J.Harries | |

In Attendance

County Borough Councillor M.Webber – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for
Council Business

County Borough Councillor R.Yeo – Chair of Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee
Mr.J.Fish – Elected Parent/Governor Representative

Officers in Attendance

Mr.C.B.Jones – Director, Legal & Democratic Services
Mr.R.Evans – Director, Human Resources
Mr.C.Hanagan – Director, Cabinet & Public Relations
Mr.D.Powell – Service Director, Corporate Design & Maintenance
Mr.M.Murphy – Health & Safety Advisor
Ms.K.May – Head of Democratic Services

49 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillor L.Walker and Mr.R.Hull (Lay Member and Chair of the Audit Committee).

50 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED – that in accordance with the Members’ Code of Conduct, County Borough Councillor E.Stephens declared the following personal interests in Agenda Item 5 – Fire Risk Assessments Review:

- Former pupil of Ysgol Gyfwm Cwm Rhondda and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg, Ynyswen Schools and have also got friends who teach in both schools.
- Governor of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Bodringallt
- Membership of Leisure for Life and Rhondda Sports Centre is the preferred centre.

51 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED – to approve as accurate records the minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 22nd January, 2018 and the 14th February, 2018.

52 **CABINET AND SCRUTINY ENGAGEMENT SESSION**

Pursuant to Minute No.39(1) of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 22nd January, 2018, Members received County Borough Councillor M.Webber, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Council Business, who, complimentary to the report presented to Members gave a detailed account of the areas of responsibility within her portfolio as shown below:-

- Democratic Services
- Electoral Services
- Coroner
- Communications & Marketing
 - Social Media
 - Events
- Human Resources
- Apprentices & Graduates
- Equalities
- Armed Forces

Councillor Webber reported that currently there are no Performance Indicators falling under the remit of her portfolio and in keeping with the role of the Democratic Services Committee the work of the Scrutiny Committees will continue to be promoted.

A Member asked the Deputy Leader if she would expand on one of her areas of responsibility i.e. Electoral Services, when it was reported by Councillor Webber that she meets with the Director, Legal & Democratic Services on a weekly basis to ensure that the areas as outlined above that come within Legal & Democratic Services are discharged effectively, especially Elections as the Director, Legal & Democratic Services has a statutory obligation in his role as `Returning Officer`. The Director, Legal & Democratic Services stated

that during the County Borough Elections in May, 2017 and the `snap` General Election that followed, the Council was monitored by the Electoral Commission. He was pleased to report that the findings of the Electoral Commission was that the processes that were followed were first class and this was confirmed in writing to the Director.

In response to a further query that was raised at the meeting by a Member in relation to the cost of social media, the Director, Cabinet & Public Relations reported that, to date, there has been no cost as the Council is much `smarter` in the way that information is targeted through social media and the Authority has also made savings through the non production and distribution of the Newsletter formally titled `Rapidly Changing Times` and subsequently `Outlook`.

Councillor Stephens welcomed the work that was being undertaken in respect of Equalities and her final query was in relation to individuals that have disabilities, when it was reported by Councillor Webber that she is the Chair of the Disability Forum which is well attended and that she works very closely with Officers within Human Resources and the Trade Unions and look at areas such as Disabled Parking, the Blue Badge scheme.

A Member raised concern on the relocation of the Coroner Service which was done via an operational decision and therefore could not be `called in`. In response the Deputy Leader of the Council reported that this Council is the statutory designated `Relevant Authority` (Host Authority) for the South Wales Coroner Area and that the move to a single centralised location at the Council Offices at Courthouse Street, Pontypridd is imminent. The Senior Coroner who she has met on a number of occasions is of the view that the co-location of the eight Officers and support staff is an opportunity to create resilience and an efficiency which can serve only to improve the effectiveness of the Coroner Service. Councillor Webber extended an invitation to the Members of the Committee to view the offices in Courthouse Street where Electoral Services have also been relocated in a separate part of the building.

Following a discussion, where Councillor Webber responded to further queries raised by Members such as sickness absence and the £130,000 that had been identified to support the ongoing work to minimise the impact this has on service delivery, when it was reported that the strategy is about supporting individuals to stay in work and to identify illnesses they may have early and working with them to manage those illnesses.

The Chair thanked Councillor Webber for her attendance at today's meeting and it was **RESOLVED** - to accept the information as presented and clarified at the meeting.

JOINT REPORT OF THE SECRETARY TO THE CABINET AND THE DIRECTOR, LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

53 CONSULTATION – PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION

In their joint report, the Secretary of the Cabinet and the Director, Legal & Democratic Services sought the Members' views as consultees on the proposed amendments to the Council's Constitution, in advance of its consideration by the Corporate Governance & Constitution Committee and Full Council at the Annual General meeting in May, 2018.

In conjunction with the proposals contained within the report, the Director, Cabinet & Public Relations, with the aid of PowerPoint slides gave his observations on the following headings:-

- How the Council Works
- The Council's Constitution
- Scheme of Delegation
- Section 13 – Local Government Act, 2000
 - Executive Functions/Council Functions
 - Local Choice
- Suggested Items to be taken Forward
 - Streamline of Call-in Procedure
 - Consistency in reporting of information (template)
 - Work Programmes – Cabinet, Council and Scrutiny (Dedicated Web Page)

Following a discussion, it was **RESOLVED –**

1. To commend the adoption of the proposed amendments in respect of the Council's Constitution to the Corporate Governance & Constitution Committee and Full Council at its AGM in May, 2018;
2. To instruct the Council's Monitoring Officer and Secretary to the Cabinet to compile a joint report to be presented to the Corporate Governance & Constitution Committee and at the Council's 2018 AGM in respect of the proposed amendments;

REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, CORPORATE & FRONTLINE SERVICES

54 `FIRE RISK ASSESSMENTS` A REVIEW OF PROCEDURES FOR COUNCIL OWNED/OCCUPIED BUILDINGS

In accordance with Minute No.40 of the meeting of this Committee held on the 22nd January, 2018, the Service Director, Corporate Design & Maintenance presented the report in respect of the review of the Council's Fire Safety Arrangements.

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

1. That a further report be presented to a meeting of this Committee in six months time in order that Members can monitor the situation;

2. That the appropriate Cabinet Member be requested to implement the following:-

- To re-establish the `Fire Safety Officer Working Group` to review sites where all Service Groups are represented.
- To review the schedule of buildings against the Council's property asset list.
- To review/update the list of `Responsible Persons` for each property.
- To continue with the quarterly review of fire risk assessments and present to the `Fire Safety Working Group` for monitoring of task implementation.
- To provide a targeted approach to `Responsible Persons` and provide specific instructions to reinforce their `site level` duties.
- That the Health and Safety team continue to undertake a rolling programme of `Fire Safety` audits, prioritised on a risk basis.

**L.M.ADAMS
CHAIR**

The meeting closed at 6.40 p.m.