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Date: 19th January 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

A multi-locational meeting of the **Cabinet** will be held in Penallta House, and via Microsoft Teams on **Wednesday, 25th January, 2023 at 1.00 pm** to consider the matters contained in the following agenda. You are welcome to use Welsh at the meeting, a minimum notice period of 3 working days is required should you wish to do so. A simultaneous translation will be provided on request.

Members of the public or Press may attend in person at Penallta House or may view the meeting live via the following link: <https://civico.net/caerphilly>

This meeting will be live-streamed and a recording made available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items. Therefore, the images/audio of those individuals present and/or speaking will be publicly available to all via the recording on the Council website at www.caerphilly.gov.uk

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chrissy', enclosed within a large, loopy, hand-drawn oval shape.

Christina Harrhy
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

AGENDA

| | Pages | |
|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1 | To receive apologies for absence. | |
| 2 | Declarations of Interest. | |

A greener place Man gwyrdach



Councillors and Officers are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest(s) in respect of any item of business on the agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Officers.

To approve and sign the following minutes: -

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|--------|
| 3 | Cabinet held on 30th November 2022. | 1 - 8 |
| 4 | Cabinet held on 14th December 2022. | 9 - 16 |

To note the Cabinet Forward Work Programme.

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|---------|
| 5 | Cabinet Forward Work Programme. | 17 - 20 |
|---|---------------------------------|---------|

To receive and consider the following reports on which executive decisions are required: -

- | | | |
|---|---|---------|
| 6 | Bryn Carno Funding Update. | 21 - 28 |
| 7 | The Future of Islwyn Indoor Bowls Club. | 29 - 32 |
| 8 | Public Interest Test. | |

To receive and consider the following report which in the opinion of the Proper Officer may be discussed when the meeting is not open to the public and first to consider whether the public interest requires that the meeting should be closed to the public for consideration of this item:-

- | | | |
|---|---|---------|
| 9 | Extension To Flexible Retirement Due To Exceptional Circumstances - Corporate Services. | 35 - 38 |
|---|---|---------|

Circulation:

Councillors C. Andrews, S. Cook, E. Forehead, N. George, P. Leonard, S. Morgan, C. Morgan, J. Pritchard, J. Simmonds and E. Stenner

And Appropriate Officers

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Agenda Item 3



CABINET

MINUTES OF THE MULTI-LOCATIONAL MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON WEDNESDAY 30TH NOVEMBER 2022 AT 1PM

PRESENT:

Councillor S. Morgan – Chair

Councillors:

J. Pritchard (Cabinet Member for Prosperity, Regeneration and Climate Change), C. Andrews (Cabinet Member for Education and Communities), S. Cook (Cabinet Member for Housing), E. Forehead (Cabinet Member for Social Care), N. George (Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Property), C. Morgan (Cabinet Member for Waste, Leisure and Green Spaces), Cllr. J. Simmonds (Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation) and E. Stenner (Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance).

Together with:

C. Harryh (Chief Executive), R. Edmunds (Corporate Director Education and Corporate Services) and D. Street (Corporate Director Social Services and Housing).

Also in Attendance:

P. Cooke (Senior Policy Officer), L. Donovan (Head of People Services), I. Evans (Procurement and information Manger), S. Harris (Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer), L. Lucas (Head of Customer and Digital Services), S. Mutch (Early Years Manager), K. Peters (Corporate Policy Manger), R. Roberts (Business Improvement Manager), S. Richards (Head of Education Planning and Strategy) and P. Warren (Strategic Lead for School Improvement) R. Tranter (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer) and J. Thomas (Committee Services Officer).

RECORDING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS

The Leader reminded those present that the meeting was being live streamed, and a recording would be made available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items. [Click Here To View](#).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor P. Leonard (Cabinet Member for Planning and Public Protection) and M.S. Williams (Corporate Director Economy and Environment).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received at the beginning or during the course of the meeting.

3. MINUTES – 16TH NOVEMBER 2022

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 16th November 2022 be approved as a correct record.

4. CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Cabinet was provided with the Cabinet Forward Work Programme, which detailed the scheduled reports until 19th April 2023.

Members were reminded that the Cabinet Forward Work Programme is a working document and thus subject to change. The Leader reminded the Cabinet that that as a live document it would be subject to change.

Cabinet noted the Forward Work Programme.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the Forward Work Programme be noted. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

5. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT 2021/22

Consideration was given to the report which sought to present Cabinet with the Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA) for the year ending 2021/22 a period impacted by both the pandemic response and the pandemic recovery. The Cabinet noted that the CPA forms part of the overall Council 'self-assessment' activity and is submitted to Cabinet for endorsement.

In response to a query raised by a Member, The Corporate Director for Social Services and Housing, Dave Street advised the Cabinet that the are significant issues within Domiciliary Care and assured Members that the Council is doing everything possible in relation to the recruitment and retention fund and are utilising some of the resources currently available to assist with the issue. The Cabinet were advised that any resolution to the current recruitment issue needed to be sustainable. Cabinet noted the recruitment issue is not isolated to Caerphilly and that it was a Nation-wide issue.

Clarification was sought in relation to vacant posts and how Officers were looking to resolve this issue. The Corporate Director advised the Cabinet that a number of key roles were currently out to advert, and proposals will be brought forward in the New Year around market supplements, which will hopefully ease some of the pressure and get a workforce able to tackle some of the challenges going forward.

Cabinet was assured that the situation with recruitment and retention was a priority and that a new agile working policy being brought forward in the coming weeks would provide greater flexibility in terms of work/life balance.

Cabinet queried how agile working has affected sickness levels since the pandemic. The Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services, Richard Edmunds confirmed that sickness levels had worsened. However, this is not unique to Caerphilly, with the vast majority of Local Authorities in Wales in the same position. Currently Officers are working to identify the causes for example, whether this is linked to capacity issues. Cabinet was

assured that once the position has been identified then proposals would be put forward to address the issue.

Lynne Donovan (Head of People Services) addressed the Cabinet and advised that work is currently being undertaken, prior to the implementation of the Recruitment Team. The Officer advised Members that a recruitment campaign within care commences on the 12th December 2022, that will be run into the New Year. There will be adverts on buses, in train stations and in the local cinema. There will also be a lot more advertising on social media.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officer's report: -

1. That the Cabinet noted the comments and challenge of the Council's Corporate Performance 2021/22.
2. That Cabinet endorsed the Corporate Performance Assessment for 2021/22 as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

6. SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR 2021/22

Consideration was given to the report which sought to present Cabinet with the Annual Self-Assessment Report for 2021/22. The report also included an update of the Well-being Objectives for 2021/22. The Cabinet were informed that the Local Government and Election (Wales) Act 2021 required a draft of the self-assessment to be reviewed by Governance and Audit Committee prior to coming to Cabinet. Cabinet noted that the draft attached to the report as (Part 1, Appendix 1) was approved by Governance and Audit Committee on 11 October 2022. The Cabinet also noted that the report was presented to Joint Scrutiny on 10th November 2022 for their scrutiny and challenge.

The report sought that the Cabinet approve the Self-assessment Report (including Well-being Objectives) 2021/22 (Appendix 1) as a final position on organisational performance for the year 2021/2022, following the reports being scrutinised by Governance and Audit and Joint Scrutiny Committee.

The Chief Executive addressed the Cabinet to emphasize the importance of the report which captures the performance of the organisation. The Chief Executive confirmed that there was a need for the organisation to be reframed and remobilised but believed that the Council has a very solid foundation to meet challenges that will present themselves.

A Cabinet Member expressed how proud they were to see that the Council have supported over 4000 council tenants, by generating more than £3m in savings minimising the effect on welfare reform. The Member requested further information on whether extra resources will be used for staffing to increase the savings now that the time of hardship will worsen.

The Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer, Steven Harris advised the Cabinet that significant funding has been set aside for the Caerphilly Cares Team. This as well as other priorities will be looked at when determining budgets over the coming months.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officer's report: -

1. That Cabinet approved the Self-assessment Report (including well-being Objectives) 2021/22(Appendix 1) as a final position on organisational performance for the year 2021/2022.

7. UPDATE ON DECARBONISATION OF FLEET VEHICLES AND RELATED POLICIES

Consideration was given to the report which sought to update Cabinet on the work to review the Council's vehicle fleet and the transition to ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEV). The report also sought to seek Cabinet approval to develop a policy for employees and visitors to be able to use the electric vehicle charging infrastructure for their own vehicles, at cost and to seek approval to implement the actions identified as the next steps to reduce carbon emissions from our fleet.

Following a query raised by Cabinet the Senior Policy Officer, Paul Cooke confirmed that there is currently an issue with lead times on electric vehicles, which vary but they can be between 9 to 12 months. The Authority have not yet placed any orders for the new vehicles as the infrastructure hasn't been in place. However, this would be completed in the very near future and at this point the order will take place. The Officer advised the Cabinet that the new electric vehicles will initially be managed and maintained by the manufacturer as the current workforce wouldn't have the necessary skills to maintain them. However, in the future it will become more economically viable to do so as an Authority, but that would involve a significant change in the way that the Council currently operates.

The Leader was pleased to note that Council is rolling out the decarbonisation of the fleet and the introduction of charging points.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officer's report: -

1. That the Cabinet noted the progress made to date as part of the fleet review and transition to ultra-low emission vehicles work.
2. That Cabinet approved the principle that employees and visitors should be allowed to use the vehicle charging infrastructure for their personal vehicles, and for a policy to developed to that effect.
3. That Cabinet approved he proposed actions set out in this report to continue the transition to ultra-low emission vehicles.

8. CYBER SECURITY STRATEGY 2022-2025

Cabinet noted that the report had been considered by the Governance and Audit Scrutiny Committee as its meeting on the 14 June 2022.

Consideration was given to the report which sought to update Cabinet on the draft Caerphilly CBC ('Council') Cyber Security Strategy 2022 – 2025 ('Strategy') and for Cabinet to approve the endorsement and implementation of the Strategy.

Cabinet noted that the Council works closely with an external company to protect the Council against cyber-attacks. The Council has recently undertaken its annual IT Health check, part of this health checks looks at the security procedures that are in place such as passwords for Staff and Members. The health check had identified that there were a significant number of passwords that could be easily compromised.

Following a query from a Member, the Officers advised Cabinet that due to the serious risk to the Council, mandatory training would be put in place for all staff and Members to raise awareness and this could be achieved internally through online training or through training by external bodies. The Leader agreed that this was something he would endorse.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officer's report: -

1. That the Cabinet approved the Cyber Security Strategy 2022-2025 be endorsed and implemented.

9. UPDATE ON THE PROCUREMENT REFORM AGENDA AND TO EXTEND THE COUNCIL'S PROGRAMME FOR PROCUREMENT (STRATEGY) FOR A PERIOD OF UP TO EIGHTEEN (18) MONTHS

Cabinet noted that the report had been considered by the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 8 November 2022.

Consideration was given to the report which sought to update Cabinet on the UK Central Government and Welsh Government Procurement reform agenda via The Procurement Bill and the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Bill. Cabinet was also asked to endorse the recommendation to extend the Council's Programme for Procurement ('Strategy'), for a period of up to eighteen (18) months to allow the future Strategy to incorporate the requirements of The Procurement Bill and Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Bill.

Clarification was sought on whether following Brexit there are any immediate changes in relation to going from the European Legislation to the British Legislation. Ian Evan the Procurement and Information Manager advised the Cabinet that EU Procurement Directives flow down to the UK Public Procurement Law. Therefore, there will be certain aspects that the UK have never adopted in terms of the EU Directives. However, the Cabinet were advised that in terms of the Procurement Professional and Practitioner there will be significant changes in relation to the number of procedures and flexibility around the rules going forward.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officer's report: -

1. That Cabinet noted the current status of The Procurement Bill and the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Bill.
2. That Cabinet endorsed the recommendation to extend the Council's existing Procurement Strategy for a period of up to eighteen (18) months.

10. EDUCATION STRATEGY

Cabinet noted that the report had been considered by the Education Scrutiny Committee 19th October 2022.

Consideration was given to the report which updated Cabinet on the revised Education Strategy

2022-2025 building on the successes of the Shared Ambitions Strategy which shifted decision-making from short-term to long-term and school improvement approaches from 'challenge' to 'support'. The report also sought Cabinet approval to formally adopt and subsequently launch the new Education Strategy.

Clarification was sought on what support was being provided to schools within the area, that have Ukrainian children that may have limited English language skills and may also be suffering PTSD. The Early Years Manager Sarah Mutch advised the Cabinet that a weekly meeting takes place to look at the children coming into the Borough and the level of support they may require. An Education Psychologist forms part of this group to ensure the correct support is being given. Schools do receive extra funding to assist in this area.

Paul Warren the Strategic Lead for School Improvement advised the Cabinet that the Education Advisory Service (EAS) were involved with the development of the Education Strategy from the start and will stay involved going forward. The Officer informed the Members that there was a large piece of work included within the strategy which focuses on the learner's journey. The EAS worked with curriculum teams to identify what the self-evaluation journey should look like. The work that was carried out by the EAS was then QA'd with a group of Headteachers within the Authority to see if it fitted within the model of working. The work has focused on strengthening the working partnership between the Local Authority and the EAS.

Clarification was sought on how the strategy provides mental health support provisions for young adults. The Early Years Manager advised the Cabinet that Youth Services provides a Youth Forum which works with young people across the Borough. Youth Workers have all been trained in Mental Health First Aid and there has been a significant push around school-based counselling with the schools themselves doing a lot of work around well-being.

The Corporate Director Education and Corporate Services thanked Keri Cole, Paul Warren and all of their teams for the huge amount of work involved in putting the strategy together.

Following consideration and discussion it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officer's report: -

1. That Cabinet approved the publication of the new Education Strategy 2022-2025.

11. CHRISTMAS CLOSEDOWN ARRANGEMENTS

Consideration was given to the report which sought Cabinet approval for the Christmas closedown arrangements for 2022 and for the years thereafter.

Cabinet noted in previous years the Council implemented a closedown for offices over the Christmas period. Cabinet also noted the report only applies to Council Staff employed under Section 112 of the Local Government Act 1972 and for whom the Council has the power 'to appoint and manage staff on such reasonable terms and conditions as the Authority thinks fit'. The report does not apply to School appointed staff for whom the Council does not hold this power.

Cabinet noted that Trade Unions had been consulted on the report and supported the recommendations.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officer's report: -

1. That Cabinet approved that the Corporate Offices close at 12noon on Friday 23rd December 2022 and reopen on Tuesday 3rd January 2023.
2. That Cabinet approved all staff receive 2 hours' credit for Friday 23rd December 2022 as per the arrangements detailed in paragraph 5.5 of this report.
3. That Cabinet approved this principle of Christmas shutdown and the 2 hours credit for future years; the dates affected will be agreed by the Leader and the Chief Executive.

The Chief Executive and The Leader took the opportunity to put on record they're thanks to all the staff across the workforce for their hard work.

The meeting closed at 2.18p.m.

Approved and signed as a correct record subject to any corrections made at the meeting held on 25th January 2023.

CHAIR

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Agenda Item 4



CABINET

MINUTES OF THE MULTI-LOCATIONAL MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON WEDNESDAY 14TH DECEMBER 2022 AT 1PM

PRESENT:

Councillor S. Morgan – Chair

Councillors:

J. Pritchard (Cabinet Member for Prosperity, Regeneration and Climate Change), C. Andrews (Cabinet Member for Education and Communities), S. Cook (Cabinet Member for Housing), N. George (Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Property), P. Leonard (Cabinet Member for Planning and Public Protection), C. Morgan (Cabinet Member for Waste, Leisure and Green Spaces), Cllr. J. Simmonds (Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation) and E. Stenner (Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance).

Also Present:

Councillor G. Johnston (Chair Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee)

Together with:

C. Harry (Chief Executive), R. Edmunds (Corporate Director Education and Corporate Services), D. Street (Corporate Director Social Services and Housing), M.S. Williams (Corporate Director Economy and Environment).

Also in Attendance:

L. Donovan (Head of People Services), S. Harris (Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer), R. Tranter (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), N. Taylor-Williams (Head of Housing), M. Lloyd (Head of Infrastructure), M. Jennings (Principal Housing Strategy Officer), L. Allen (Principal Group Accountant, Housing), S. O'Donnell (Principal Council Tax and NNDR Officer), C. Campbell (Transport Engineering Manager) S. Hughes (Committee Services Officer) and E. Sullivan (Senior Committee Services Officer).

RECORDING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS

The Leader reminded those present that the meeting was being live streamed, and a recording would be made available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items. [Click Here To View](#).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from E. Forehead (Cabinet Member for Social Care)

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor C. Andrews declared a personal interest only in relation to Agenda Item No. 4 – Agile Policies in that her husband works for the local authority.

Whilst a decision for the member, the Monitoring Officer advised that as these were county borough wide policies covering all employees and were not specific to Councillor Andrews husband, declaring a personal interest would be sufficient and therefore there was no requirement for her to leave the meeting and she could take a full part in the debate and vote.

Councillor C. Andrews declared a personal interest only in relation to Agenda Item No. 6 – Housing Revenue Account Charges – 2023-24 in that her father is a Council tenant.

Councillor E. Stenner declared a personal interest only in relation to Agenda Item No. 6 – Housing Revenue Account Charges – 2023-24 in that her brother-in-law rents a Council garage.

Councillor N. George declared a personal interest only in relation to Agenda Item No. 6 – Housing Revenue Account Charges – 2023-24 in that he rents a Council garage.

Councillor J. Pritchard declared a personal interest only in relation to Agenda Item No. 6 – Housing Account Charges – 2023-24 in that his grandmother and aunt are Council tenants.

Whilst a decision for each member, the Monitoring Officer advised that as the matter related to the setting of the rents for all county borough properties including its garages and did not relate to any specific individual or property then declaring a personal interest was appropriate, and therefore the aforementioned Members could take a full part in the debate and vote.

The Head of People Services in relation to Agenda Item No. 4 – Agile Policies felt it important to note that although the policies are of interest to all Officers present because they relate to all, the policies applied equally to all non-school employed staff of the local authority and as the Officers present were not the decision makers and could not vote on this matter there was no declaration of interest to be made and the Officers could remain in the meeting whilst the report was considered. The Monitoring Officer agreed with the comments made by the Head of People Services and pointed out that as the policies related to all employees of this Council and not just the Officers present in the Chamber no declaration was required.

3. CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME – TO NOTE

Cabinet was provided with the Cabinet Forward Work Programme, which detailed the scheduled reports until 19th April 2023.

The Leader was pleased to see that the Forward Work Programme had been populated to so far in advance and reminded the Cabinet that that as a live document it would be subject to change. Given the unprecedented budgetary challenges to come he anticipated that the work programme would only increase as those challenges came forward.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the Forward Work Programme be noted. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

4. AGILE POLICIES

Cabinet noted that the report had been considered by the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on the 12th December 2022 and a verbal update was given on their comments and it was noted that the Scrutiny Committee had unanimously supported the four draft policies and had recommended their approval to Cabinet.

Consideration was given to the report which sought Cabinet agreement in relation to 4 policies that support agile working, the Agile Working Policy, Flexible Working Hours Scheme, Mileage Scheme and Annual Leave Policy. Cabinet noted that discussions had taken place with GMB, Unison and Unite Trade Unions and their feedback was noted in Appendix 5 and 6 of the Officer's report.

The Agile Working Policy provided the framework that emphasises the importance of economic growth, decarbonisation and the health and wellbeing of employees allowing staff to work smarter, remove barriers to working efficiently and by introducing this new model of working wherever possible in the Council improve service delivery. Although Cabinet noted that not all services can accommodate flexible/agile working and the needs of the service being of primary and paramount importance.

The Annual Leave Policy proposed six days additional leave, which included the agreed additional 1 day as part of the National Joint Council Pay Award for 2022/23. Cabinet noted that the estimated additional annual cost would be £2.459m and if endorsed would require Council approval for the growth bid as part of the 2023/24 Budget Proposals.

The Flexible Working Scheme was outlined in Section 5.8 of the Officer's report and Cabinet were referred to the table at 5.8.4 which detailed the main differences between the current and proposed scheme. The Mileage Policy was outlined in Section 5.9 of the Officer's report and noted the principles and rules for claiming travel costs incurred on Council business in accordance with categorisation of staff outlined in the Agile Working Policy.

Cabinet welcomed the comments of the Trade Unions and the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and placed on record their thanks to the Head of People Services and her Team for all the hard work required in the preparations of these policies.

Reference was made to DSE Assessments and if these were being carried out in order to ensure staff health and safety when working from home. The Head of People Services explained the assessment process and confirmed that this was not new to Managers and Staff and that reference resources for Managers were being regularly refreshed and included a video.

Clarification was sought with regard to flexible working and how this would work in terms of contacting Officers during non-working periods. The Head of People Services confirmed that working patterns would need to be agreed with Line Managers who would ensure that they have the staffing required to support service needs. For example, if the service need did not support staff working in the evenings, then unfortunately Managers would not be able to support those requests. However, if staff need to pop out perhaps to the Dentist for example, they advise their Line Manager accordingly and that way if someone was trying to make contact, they would be aware, ensure cover and so avoid unnecessary complaints. The Head of People Services confirmed that it was good managerial practice for managers to know where staff are, whether they were homeworking, out in the community, or in an office building, whilst providing flexibility for staff. These policies support staff and most importantly the provision of services to the residents of the borough.

Cabinet referenced HMRC Payments for homeworking and queried if staff were aware that these claims could be made. The Head of People Services confirmed that although HMRC had made these payments during the Pandemic they were no longer available, however there was still an opportunity to make retrospective claims if staff so wished.

Clarification was then sought on the 7-day working week referenced and whether this could be mandated. The Head of People Services advised that there could be no change to working patterns without consultation with staff and the trade unions.

Cabinet then requested an update on the progress of the new telephony system. The Corporate Director for Education and Corporate Services confirmed that work was progressing to make telephony more seamless and hoped to be able to pilot the new system shortly.

The Chief Executive placed on record her thanks for the efforts of the Head of People Services and her Team in getting these policies ready and saw the documents under consideration as a significant step forward. Supporting staff flexibility and first and foremost the needs of the service. Cabinet noted that the Chief Executive had been in direct contact with staff whilst working through the development of the policies and they had been warmly welcomed.

Cabinet referenced the Mileage Scheme, and it was proposed that this should be reviewed after a 12-month period to establish if any problematic areas had resulted from its implementation. Officers welcomed the proposal and the Head of People Services confirmed that Senior Officers and Cabinet Members met regularly with Trade Unions and hoped that should any concerns become apparent they would be raised earlier than the 12-month review via these already established mechanisms.

Subject to an additional recommendation 3.1(5) to read that the Mileage Scheme Policy be reviewed after a period of 12 months it was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained within the Officer's report be approved.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officer's report: -

1. The Agile Working Policy attached at Appendix 1 be agreed.
2. The Flexible Scheme Policy attached at Appendix 3 be agreed.
3. The Mileage Scheme Policy at Appendix 4 be agreed.
4. Subject to Council agreeing the £2.459m funding required to support the policy, as part of the 2023/24 Budget Setting Process the Annual Leave Policy at Appendix 2 be agreed.
5. The Mileage Scheme Policy be reviewed after a period of 12 months.

5. LOW COST HOME OWNERSHIP POLICY

Cabinet noted that the report had been considered by the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on the 29th November 2022.

Consideration was given to the report which sought Cabinet approval to formally adopt and subsequently launch the new Low Cost Home Ownership Policy as attached at Appendix 1 of the Officers report.

Cabinet noted that data from the Office of National Statistics showed that the cost of home owning is becoming increasingly more expensive, with house price inflation outstripping growth in income. The policy would help people who are unable to purchase 100% of a property on the open market, help to reduce the numbers of people currently on the common housing register and supported the Council in its ambitions to create balanced and sustainable communities as outlined in the recently approved Local Housing Strategy.

Clarification was sought as to whether the qualifying household income criteria threshold would be updated on annual basis. The Head of Housing advised that the most sensible way to track and review this would be using wage inflation and data from the Office of National Statistics. The Member then sought further information as to the estimated number of people

who could be interested in the scheme and if they did pursue the scheme would this ease the pressure on existing housing stock.

The Officer advised that one of the key benefits of this was that it would allow aspiring homeowners on the current housing register that weren't able to go into full ownership to take on part rent/part ownership and relieve pressure on the register. The Cabinet Member was advised that although the data requested wasn't formally collated at the moment, as the Council did not have a product to offer, there were in excess of 1000 residents who had expressed an interest in entering into this type of product offered by other housing associations partners.

Clarification was then sought on the difference between this policy and tenant buying their own Council homes.

The Officer confirmed that this was completely different to right to buy as it was not about existing contract holders acquiring shares in their existing property but about new properties that will be built by Caerphilly Homes. Building a new additional supply into the County Borough and giving those who are eligible within the criteria access to that product, getting them on the first rung of the home ownership ladder.

Reference was made to the Armed Forces and further detail was sought as to how they would be supported by this policy. The Office confirmed that our Armed Forces received the highest level of priority under this policy and had dispensations from some of the residency criteria.

A Member queried whether a contract holder could lose their investment if they were to fall into rent arrears. The Officer advised that as a Social Landlord, Caerphilly Homes would look at rent arrears on a case-by-case basis and work with that individual. However, it would be different for the mortgage element of the product as this would be a matter for the mortgage provider or bank who would then take a view on whether they had defaulted on their mortgage and any subsequent action.

In relation to home improvements and home maintenance a Members queried if it was possible under this scheme for contract holders to make home improvements and who would be responsible for maintenance and repairs. The Head of Housing confirmed that minor home improvements would be permissible but major improvements such as extensions etc would require permission. In terms of property maintenance that would be the responsibility of the contract holder.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officer's report he introduction and publication of the new Low Cost Home Ownership Policy be approved.

6. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT CHARGES – 2023/2024

Consideration was given to the report which sought Cabinet approval to increase rent charges on council houses and garages.

Cabinet noted that the preparation of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget was separate to the work involved in setting the General Fund Budget and Council Tax. The HRA is funded by rental income received from Council Tenants, rather than the Council Taxpayer. Whilst there was a clear separation of these funds, most of the proportion of council tenants

rent is funded from financial support in the form of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit, which is derived from the taxpayers' purse, therefore value for money must always be sought.

Cabinet was advised that inflationary increases on providing all aspects of the housing service including material costs, the commitment to Net Carbon Zero and the building of new Council housing all come at a price and an increase to Council rents was required in order to ensure there are adequate resources to effectively manage and maintain our housing stock. Cabinet was asked to note that the Council was continually supporting tenants and had already helped to secure £3.2m of additional benefits, 800 successful applications for discretionary housing payments and helped over 1000 residents with a £200 winter fuel grant.

Cabinet acknowledge that Caerphilly rents were one of the lowest but queried how these rents compared to the private sector. The Officer confirmed that a 3-bed private house rental is around £134 per week (48-week rental period) and in Caerphilly its about £108.80 per week/48-week period. For a 2-bed house in the private sector its about £124 per week with Caerphilly its £101, which equated to around 20% cheaper.

Members asked if a tenant survey had been carried out in relation to the rent increase. The Head of Housing confirmed that Caerphilly Homes carried out regular surveys with tenants and rents had given rise to some very interesting responses, with both positive and negative feedback. However, the overriding majority of contract holders recognised that in order for Caerphilly as a Landlord to continue to provide this level of service delivery an increase in rents was necessary.

Clarification was then sort as to whether any type of affordability modelling had taken place on the 6.5% increase and the Head of Housing advised that the Joseph Rowntree (JR) Matrix had been used and had shown the increase to be well within the affordability threshold under that model. Even an 8% increase had been shown to be 100% below the JR Matrix.

Cabinet welcomed the use of the JR Model and queried whether there had been cross party support for the increase when it had been considered by the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee. The Officer confirmed that 85% had agreed with 15% abstaining.

Cabinet noted the considerable efforts being made by the Caerphilly Homes and Caerphilly Cares Teams to assist residents and tenants in terms of the cost of living crisis particularly help and advice on benefit maximisation and although the majority of Council tenants would be in receipt of Housing Benefit, Cabinet were very mindful of the impact of the proposed increase on self-payers and welcomed the comments of the Head of Housing in relation to sustaining tenancies and tenancy support.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officer's report: -

Cabinet considered and noted the recommendations of the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee.

1. Rent be increased per property to a maximum permitted as per the WG rent policy which is 6.5%. (Increasing the current average rent by £6.10 per week from £93.80 to £99.90 per week over 52 weeks)
2. The level of rent for garages from April 2023 be increased by 5.5% to £8.85 per week.

7. COUNCIL TAX BASE

Consideration was given to the report which provided details of the Council Tax base for tax setting purposes and the collection percentage to be applied and sought Cabinet agreement for the calculation of the Council Tax Base for the 2023/24 financial year.

Cabinet sought clarification as to why the Council Tax base was set on Band D properties and the Officer confirmed that this was required by Welsh Government and was identified as the middle band when Council Tax was first introduced.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officer's report: -

1. The Council Tax collection rate be maintained at 97.50% for the 2023/24 financial year.
2. The Council Tax Base for to 2023/24 be 61,135.13, with the Council Tax Base for each Community Council Area being outlined in paragraph 5.6.

8. PUBLIC INTEREST TEST

Members considered the Public Interest Test and concluded that on balance the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information and it was: -

RESOLVED that in accordance with Section 100(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting because of the likely disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 14 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

9. A468/B4600 BEDWAS BRIDGE ROUNDABOUT IMPROVEMENT

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officer's report the recommendation at 3.1 and 3.2 of the Officer's report be approved.

The meeting closed at 2.15p.m.

Approved and signed as a correct record subject to any corrections made at the meeting held on 25th January 2023

CHAIR

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Cabinet Forward Work Programme – 17th January 2023

| Meeting date: | Report title: | Key issue: | Report author: | Cabinet Member: |
|---------------------|--|---|--------------------------------|---|
| 18/01/2023 13:00 | Heating Plant Replacement – Ty Penallta | To update Cabinet in relation to works required to the heating plant at Ty Penallta, to outline the costs and work programme involved and to seek Cabinet approval for the works to be funded from the Council’s Capital reserve. | Ben Winstanley; Mark Faulkner; | Cllr. Nigel George; |
| 18/01/2023 13:10 | Draft Budget Proposals for 2023/24 and Updated Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) | To present Cabinet with details of the draft budget proposals for the 2023/24 financial year and an updated MTFP, to allow for a period of consultation prior to final decision by Council on the 28th February 2023. | Stephen Harris; | Cllr. Eluned Stenner; |
| 25/01/2023 13:00 | Pontllanfraith Indoor Bowls | To provide an update on the management of the Islwyn Indoor Bowls Centre and to recommend a revised approach moving forward. | Mark S Williams; | Cllr. Chris Morgan;/Cllr. Nigel George; |
| 25/01/2023 13:10 | Bryn Carno funding update | To provide Cabinet with a funding update regarding the remedial works to address issues associated with failed external wall insulation to both Caerphilly Homes’ and private residential properties at Bryn Carno, Rhymney. | Nick Taylor-Williams; | Cllr. Shayne Cook; |
| 25/01/2023 13:20 | Extension of Flexible retirement - Exempt Item | To agree a flexible retirement extension for 1 year. | Dave Roberts; | Cllr. Eluned Stenner; |

Cabinet Forward Work Programme – 17th January 2023

| Meeting date: | Report title: | Key issue: | Report author: | Cabinet Member: |
|---------------------|---|--|---|-----------------------|
| 22/02/2023 13:00 | Budget Proposals for 2023/24 and Updated Medium -Term Financial Plan (MTFP) | Following the public Consultation, Cabinet to consider the outcome and endorse the 2023/24 budget proposals prior to final determination by Council on the 28th February 2023, and to note the updated MTFP. | Stephen Harris; | Cllr. Eluned Stenner; |
| 22/02/2023 13:10 | Private Finance Initiative (PFI) | To receive and consider a report on a review of the council's Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contracts. | Stephen Harris; | Cllr. Eluned Stenner; |
| 22/02/2023 13:20 | Welsh Government Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme | To provide details of the new 'Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme' offered by WG for 2023/24 which the Authority must formally adopt. | John Carpenter; | Cllr. Eluned Stenner; |
| 22/02/2023 13:30 | Empty Property Grant Approval | For Cabinet to consider the new Welsh Government National Empty Property Grant Programme. | Nick Taylor-Williams; Claire Davies; | Cllr. Shayne Cook; |
| 08/03/2023 13:00 | Biodiversity and Grass Cutting Regimes | To seek Cabinet approval in relation to proposals to enhance and promote biodiversity in our grass cutting regimes across the county borough and following consultation with local members. | Mike Headington; | Cllr. Chris Morgan; |
| 08/03/2023 13:10 | Empty Homes Strategy | To seek Cabinet approval of the proposed strategy. | Claire Davies; Mark Jennings; | Cllr. Shayne Cook; |

Cabinet Forward Work Programme – 17th January 2023

| Meeting date: | Report title: | Key issue: | Report author: | Cabinet Member: |
|---------------------|---|--|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 08/03/2023 13:20 | Council Participation strategy 2023-2027 | To seek approval of the revised participation strategy that captures the new requirements of the local government and elections act. | Hayley Lancaster; Rob Tranter; | Cllr. Nigel George; |
| 22/03/2023 13:00 | Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2022/23 | To seek Cabinet approval of the Housing Business Plan position in advance of submitting the plan to Welsh Government by 31st March 2023. | Nick Taylor-Williams;/Lesley Allen; | Cllr. Shayne Cook; |
| 22/03/2023 13:10 | Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2021-2022 | For Cabinet to consider and approve the Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2021-2022 prior to publication on the Council's website. | Kath Peters; Anwen Cullinane; | Cllr. Nigel George; |
| 22/03/2023 13:20 | Caerphilly Homes Task Group | To agree that the Caerphilly Homes Task Group (CHTG) ceases as the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) Programme has been completed. | Nick Taylor-Williams | Cllr. Shayne Cook; |
| 22/03/2023 13:30 | Gender Pay Gap | To agree the Gender Pay Gap report which has to be published by 31st March 2023. | Lynne Donovan | Cllr. Nigel George; |
| 05/04/2023 13:00 | Draft Waste Strategy | For Cabinet to agree the draft Waste Strategy | Marcus Lloyd; Hayley Jones; | Cllr. Chris Morgan; |
| 19/04/2023 13:10 | Workforce Development Strategy 2021-24 - 6 month update | To provide Cabinet with a 6 month update with the progress against the Workforce Development Strategy. | Lynne Donovan; | Cllr. Nigel George; |
| 19/04/2023 13:20 | Employee Wellbeing Strategy 2021-24 - 6 monthly update | To provide Cabinet with a 6 month update with the progress against the Employee Wellbeing Strategy. | Lynne Donovan; | Cllr. Nigel George; |

Cabinet Forward Work Programme – 17th January 2023

| Meeting date: | Report title: | Key issue: | Report author: | Cabinet Member: |
|---------------------|--|--|--|-------------------------|
| 19/04/2023 13:00 | Review of the Local Public Convenience Strategy | To seek Cabinet approval for the Council's updated Local Public Convenience Strategy following a review and public consultation. | Rob Hartshorn; | Cllr. Philippa Leonard; |
| 03/05/2023 13:00 | No items currently scheduled | | | |
| 17/05/2023 13:00 | Waste Strategy | For Cabinet to consider the outcome of the public Consultation and approve the final Waste Strategy. | Marcus Lloyd; Hayley Jones; | Cllr. Nigel George; |
| 31/05/2023 13:00 | No items currently scheduled | | | |
| 14/06/2023 13:00 | No items currently scheduled | | | |
| 28/06/2023 13:00 | Local Housing Market Assessment | The Delivery Plan sits underneath the Local housing Strategy which was approved in October 2021. The report seeks Cabinet approval of a number of key actions designed to take forward the objectives of the strategy. | Nick Taylor-Williams;;/Jane Roberts-Waite; | Cllr. Shayne Cook; |
| 12/07/2023 13:00 | No items currently scheduled | | | |
| 26/07/2023 13:00 | Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report plus the Annual Safeguarding Management Information Report. | To seek approval of the Annual Safeguarding reports. | Gareth Jenkins; | Cllr. Elaine Forehead; |
| 26/07/2023 13:10 | Day Services | For Cabinet to consider and approve the new proposed Day Services Model. | Jo Williams; | Cllr. Elaine Forehead; |



CABINET – 25TH JANUARY 2023

SUBJECT: BRYN CARNO FUNDING UPDATE

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update members of Welsh Government’s final decision on the funding settlement for the failed external wall insulation scheme on 86 properties at the Bryn Carno estate Rhymney. Caerphilly Homes submitted a refinancing grant funding business case to Welsh Government in February 2022. Cabinet is asked to note Welsh Government’s decision and agree to increase the match funding that Caerphilly Homes will contribute towards the project costs from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 In 2012 the Welsh Government funded ARBED 1 scheme approved an application submitted by United Welsh Housing Association, in agreement with Caerphilly CBC for energy saving external wall insulation (EWI) to be installed at Bryn Carno in Rhymney. This project was managed by United Welsh Housing Association as the Government agent for the ARBED 1 scheme and completed in early 2013.
- 2.2 Between 2016 and 2018 it became apparent that the EWI was defective exhibiting significant signs of water ingress and penetrating damp in the homes of the private owners, leaseholders and the Caerphilly Homes properties, that were part of the scheme.
- 2.3 Welsh Government were engaged regarding a resolution to the failed scheme and an investigation and report into the failed insulation was commissioned. This concluded that there should be a replacement scheme delivered to remedy the inherent design weaknesses of the scheme and aspects of poor workmanship and reinsulate the homes. This would ensure the original objective of energy saving was achieved, particularly important now that so many households face fuel poverty in the coming months and years.
- 2.4 After many months of debate about who was responsible and who should take forward the replacement scheme, as Caerphilly Homes owns 36 of the 86 properties, has detailed knowledge of this estate and a good relationship with the residents, it was proposed that Caerphilly Homes undertake a tenure neutral scheme which includes all properties within Bryn Carno.
- 2.5 Welsh Government wrote to the council and the local MP outlining that in principle they

will part fund the replacement scheme agreeing an in-principle award of £1.05million pending further details and have requested that a detailed five case business model is submitted to set out the funding required and how the scheme will be delivered.

- 2.6 After the business case was submitted Caerphilly Homes met Welsh Government to discuss their initial feedback. Amendments were made following this feedback and a revised business plan was submitted.
- 2.7 Caerphilly are committed to contributing to this remediation project, due to the significant impact of the failed EWI for tenants and residents and our housing stock, even though not responsible for the design and scheme management of the original project and therefore are seeking funding to remedy the situation within our stock.
- 2.8 Welsh Government officers wrote to the Head of Housing on 8th November 22 and subsequently sent a formal grant award letter on the 22nd of December to inform that the Minister for Climate Change has made a decision on the business case. However, the decision was to award funding of £1.903m which is only in relation to the remedial work on the 50 owner occupier properties affected in Bryn Carno. This therefore means that the Caerphilly Homes contribution needs to increase by £563,100 with a total contribution to the project of £1,195,800.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That cabinet note the update and decision by Welsh Government.
- 3.2 Approve the revised scheme, costs, delivery timeline and additional match funding contribution from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) in respect of Council owned properties, to deliver the tenure neutral scheme by Caerphilly Homes.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The failed EWI is having a significant impact on both the properties and residents, so the remediation works are essential to protect the health and wellbeing of residents and to secure the future integrity of the housing stock. Caerphilly Homes are best placed to deliver this scheme, procure the specialist advice and contractors to deliver the project for all the properties affected across the estate.
- 4.2 The grant award of £1,903,000 by Welsh Government covers the estimated works costs for all the affected private homes on the estate and the procurement of a PAS2035 consultant. The increased Caerphilly Homes match funding contribution will be made by the HRA and solely contribute towards the works on the Caerphilly Homes properties.

5. THE REPORT

Background

- 5.1 In the early 2000's, whilst Rhymney was a designated Renewal Area, the properties in Bryn Carno estate benefitted from a group repair scheme whereby the properties in private ownership were offered financial assistance to renew their main roofs and re-line the finlock gutters. The Council owned properties, under a planned maintenance programme funded by the HRA, also benefitted from roof renewal, window replacement and gutter re-lining.

- 5.2 During November 2012, United Welsh Housing Association, the scheme managers for Welsh Government scheme ARBED 1, sought areas within the Caerphilly County Borough that would benefit from energy saving measures such as external wall insulation (EWI). Bryn Carno estate was identified as one which would benefit, and the subsequent ARBED funding bid was successful, on condition that the scheme of works was completed by the end of March 2013. The EWI systems, using a Rockwool product, were installed to private and Caerphilly Homes' properties between January and March 2013 during periods of cold and wet weather using six different contractors.
- 5.3 During 2016, complaints were received from several residents and the local ward member that the render coat to several properties had started to de-laminate, flake and come away from base coat. Meetings were held between Caerphilly County Borough Council, United Welsh, and Rockwool to consider why the EWI had failed and possible rectification measures.
- 5.4 As Welsh Government had part funded ARBED, it was brought to their attention to establish a way forward. Welsh Government decided that all parties involved in the project needed to collaborate to determine how and why the EWI system had failed and establish a solution, following which, in March 2021 Curtin's were engaged by Caerphilly County Borough Council.
- 5.5 The Curtin's report identified several issues that contributed to the delamination of the EWI system, such as lack of a perforated base channel, the finlock gutters and not extending the rooflines which would have provided additional protection to the EWI rather than relying on finishing trims and sealants. To ensure both existing moisture and future water ingress are eliminated from the EWI system, it has been recommended that the defective EWI systems are removed in their entirety, along with the existing finlock gutters, to be replaced with new rainwater goods and EWI system respectively.
- 5.6 Following the report it was concluded that, in total, 68 houses would require comprehensive EWI replacement scheme along with 14 bungalows, with a further 4 properties potentially requiring a first EWI installation and associated works. The 36 Caerphilly Homes properties all require EWI replacement.

Delivery

- 5.7 As Caerphilly Homes owns a significant proportion of the properties in Bryn Carno, has detailed knowledge of this estate and has a good relationship with the residents, it is proposed that Caerphilly Homes undertake a tenure neutral scheme which includes all properties within Bryn Carno.
- 5.8 The scheme will be run by the Council's in-house grant agency service and maintenance and repairs teams, which would run the project in its entirety, including production of the tenders, selection of contractors, and oversight and supervision of to ensure works are carried out to an acceptable standard, and in line with technical guidance and specifications. A fee of 15% of the cost of works for this service has been included in the business case submission.
- 5.9 The scheme will be delivered in accordance with PAS2035, a specification for whole house or whole building retrofit. This is an approach to the installation of energy efficiency measures (EEMs) which considers the requirement of the entire building, both from a technical standpoint and considering factors like occupancy comfort. The

cost of this retrofit coordinator have been funded by Welsh Government in their final grant award letter.

- 5.10 It is recognised that costs are fluctuating significantly due to shortages and escalating costs of building materials and the limited availability of suitable contractors. The cost of procuring a specialist retrofit consultancy will be assumed within the shared service arrangement that the HRA pays for with regards to a corporate procurement function.
- 5.11 It was originally anticipated that the scheme could be delivered over two financial years. As the works to the properties were not possible in the wetter colder autumn and winter months, works would need to be carried out in the warmer summer months. The delay to decision making from when the original business case was submitted means that the final iteration of the business case requested the funding to be drawn down over three financial years.
- 5.12 The funding award states that it relates to the period 2022/2023 to 2024/25 and must be claimed in full by 31 March 2025 otherwise any unclaimed part of the funding will cease to be available. This enables the works to be carried out over two summers as requested.
- 5.13 In accepting the funding by signing and retuning the award letter, the council are also signing up to the funding conditions, quarterly draw down timetable and targets for completion of the works to the 50 owner occupier properties. As much as it is the intention to deliver a tenure neutral scheme concurrently, if there are delivery pressures following the tender and programming there will have to be a prioritisation on works to the owner occupier properties in advance of the Caerphilly Homes properties to mitigate this target risk. This will be avoided with a detailed risk management approach as all properties should be able to be delivered on the same timeframe.

Funding Bid

- 5.14 Caerphilly County Borough Council were asked by Welsh Government to submit a five-case business plan setting out the strategic, economic, commercial, financial and management cases for funding.
- 5.15 Caerphilly Homes submitted the case in February 2022 seeking funding of £1,849,000 for the remediation of the privately owned properties in anticipation of the need to renew the roofs of the properties to satisfactorily complete the project, and £54,000 to procure a specialist retrofit consultant in accordance with PAS2035.
- 5.16 Whilst funding of £632,700 was originally made available by Caerphilly Homes through the Housing Revenue Account for associated works to the council owned properties significant additional funding is required to fund the EWI replacement to the council properties. Funding of £563,100 was therefore also being sought for the replacement of the EWI to the Council owned properties and the associated internal remediation works from Welsh Government.
- 5.17 This has not been supporting by Welsh Government and this contribution that was sought from Welsh Government will now need to be made by Caerphilly Homes from the Housing Revenue Account.
- 5.18 These estimated costs remain subject to change as the scheme is yet to be subject to a comprehensive tendering exercise and the market remains volatile. An assumed contingency of approximately 20% was included within the costs for this project which

is part of the financial risk mitigation given the significant increase in materials and labour costs that the building industry has experienced in recent years.

5.19 Although a tender process needs to be completed for these works, our benchmarking information on materials from Caerphilly Homes single source supply partner have provided for us some accurate up to date market intelligence. This has enabled us to be confident that although far higher than last year we have a good estimate of the price for the works required.

5.20 Final funding summary and conditions

5.21 Welsh Government officers wrote to the Head of Housing on 8th November 22 and subsequently sent a formal grant award letter on the 22nd of December to inform that the Minister for Climate Change has made a decision on the Caerphilly Homes Bryn Carno business case. However, the decision was to award funding of £1.903m which is only in relation to the remedial work on the 50 owner occupier properties affected. This therefore means that the Caerphilly Homes contribution needs to increase by £563,100 with a total cost to the Housing revenue Account (HRA) of £1,195,800.

- Total scheme cost £3,098,800
- Caerphilly Homes properties - £1,195,800
- Private properties - £1,849,000
- £54,000 consultancy for PAS2035
- Funding from WG - £1,903,000
- Council contribution from HRA - £1,195,800

5.22 Before any draw down of funding over 9 quarters starting January 2023 to March 2025, there are several pre-conditions to be met. Most notably the completion of the assurance statement. There are also requirements during the project, such as quarterly reporting and that the PAS2035 retrofit coordinator confirm the project is delivered in accordance with PAS2035 requirements and specifications for the exact works are met.

5.23 A warranty will also need to be provided to safeguard residents of any future failure and there will need to be a household maintenance handover pack on completion of the works for the residents. A copy of which should be sent to Welsh Government before issue to ensure it is suitably comprehensive and easy to understand.

5.24 These conditions will be met but have a cost implication that wasn't considered previously. The 20% contingency should be sufficient to cover these costs, if there aren't any significant cost overruns.

6. Conclusion

6.1 The failed EWI is having a significant impact on both the properties and residents, so the proposed remediation works are essential to protect the health and wellbeing of residents and to ensure the integrity of the housing stock. Caerphilly Homes is best placed to procure and carry out the works for this project given the history and knowledge of the estate and the management of a large proportion of the estate.

6.2 Ultimately, the bid for funding was not supported in full and the HRA will now need to contribute additional capital to deliver the works to the Caerphilly Homes properties.

There is no other alternative available to ensure that these properties have the energy saving and fuel cost saving insulation works that both the owner occupiers and Caerphilly Homes contract holders were promised some years ago. This is the quickest way to ensure that the significant water ingress issues experienced is finally remediated.

7. ASSUMPTIONS

- 7.1 The estimated assumed costs remain subject to change as the scheme is yet to be subject to a comprehensive tendering exercise and the market remains volatile. An assumed contingency of approximately 20% within the costs for this project which is part of our financial risk mitigation.
- 7.2 It is assumed in advance of any consultation with the private owners that they will be willing to have these works carried out to their properties. If they don't then some of the works could be compromised as properties are semi-detached.
- 7.3 An assumed fee of 15% of the cost of works for this service has been included in the business case submission for the in-house grant agency team that will project manage the full process, similar to the private sector grant and loans for works carried by the Private Sector Housing Team and some Caerphilly Homes planned maintenance work.
- 7.4 Although the bid is pre-tender for these works, benchmarking information on materials from Caerphilly Homes' single source supplier partner have provided for us some accurate up to date market intelligence. This has enabled us to be confident that although far higher than last year we have a good estimate of the price for the works required.
- 7.5 Should there be any further cost overruns going forward the council will commit to covering cost overruns from the contingency. Only in the instance that costs increase beyond all benchmark trends analysis will a conversation be had with WG on additional funding for the project.

8. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 There was a specific request to bid to Welsh Government for funding and the strategic case and impact is specific to the residents within the Bryn Carno estate therefore no wider IIA has been required for this project.
- 8.2 As the report proposes that 100% assistance be offered with no post completion conditions imposed regarding repayment an Integrated Impact Assessment is not required.
- 8.3 If the proposal is approved a comprehensive engagement exercise will be undertaken with the residents of Bryn Carno regarding the proposals, and consent sought from the individual private owners to proceed with the proposed scheme of works.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The financial implications of this business case grant submission to the council and namely the ringfenced Housing Revenue Account have been articulated within the paper.

9.2 The total scheme cost is currently £3,098,800 with an estimated contribution from the HRA of £1,195,800. Given discussions have been ongoing for some time the HRA has currently already allowed for the original contribution of £632,700 in its capital budget. The additional £563,000 has been allocated to the HRA capital budget and has been funded from HRA balances.

10. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no implications here as the project will be managed by the existing Caerphilly Homes team.

11. CONSULTATIONS

11.1 All consultee responses have been included in this report.

12. STATUTORY POWER

12.1 Local Government Act 1972, Housing Wales Act 2014

Author: Nick Taylor-Williams, Head of Housing, taylon1@caerphilly.gov.uk

| | | |
|-------------|-----------------------|--|
| Consultees: | Cllr Shayne Cook | - Cabinet Member for Housing |
| | Cllr Andrew Whitcombe | - Chair Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee |
| | Cllr Patricia Cook | - Vice Chair Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee |
| | Cllr Carl Cuss | - Local Ward Member |
| | Christina Harrhy | - Chief Executive |
| | Dave Street | - Corporate Director Social Services and Housing |
| | Mark S Williams | - Corporate Director Environment and Economy |
| | Richard Edmunds | - Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services |
| | Robert Tranter | - Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer |
| | Stephen Harris | - Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer |
| | Lesley Allen | - Principal Group Accountant - Housing |
| | Fiona Wilkins | - Housing Service Manager |
| | Claire Davies | - Private Sector Housing Manager |
| | Alan Edmunds | - PAMS Manager |

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CABINET – 25TH JANUARY 2023

SUBJECT: THE FUTURE OF ISLWYN INDOOR BOWLS CLUB

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Cabinet on the latest position in relation to Islwyn Indoor Bowls Club (IIBC).
- 1.2 To outline the opportunities and constraints for the Council at present as there is not currently a lease in place with Islwyn Indoor Bowls Club.
- 1.3 To seek approval for progressing a procurement process to secure a commercial operator for the management of the facility and enter into an appropriate agreement .

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Since the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020 Islwyn Indoor Bowls club (IIBC) has not been able to deliver full provision, i.e. Bowls and Hospitality. All activities were closed during periods of lockdown and the Club lost all of their paid staff. When Welsh Government Covid restrictions were lifted indoor activities were one of the last activities to start back and by this time the IIBC committee made up of club volunteers were running the operational duties of opening and closing the club and keeping the bowls section going.
- 2.2 This report seeks Cabinet approval for Officers to procure a commercial operator and implement an appropriate commercial agreement on behalf of the Council, so it can act as the catalyst for investment at IIBC to fulfil the potential of the facility within the community and reduce the risk to the Council.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Cabinet:
 - (i) Authorise Officers to progress a procurement process to secure a commercial offer for the management of the facility, with a new agreement to be entered into with the successful provider for a period of 10 years (with options to extend) commencing at the start of the 2023 indoor bowls season (September 2023).

- (ii) Approve that the commercial agreement ensures that the Bowls section is to remain as the primary focus of the facility and this element continues to be organised by the Islwyn Indoor Bowls Committee.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To support the continuation of the Islwyn Indoor Bowls Club and ensure a sustainable future for the facility going forward.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 Officers from the Council's Sport and Leisure Service provided support and assistance to Islwyn Indoor Bowls Club after all paid staff left the organisation during the Covid-19 pandemic. Officers and the Sport's Governing Body, Bowls Wales, worked with the Club to advise on Welsh Government guidance and prepare them for the return to indoor sport.
- 5.2 Over the course of several meetings between officers and local ward members with the Club's committee it was clear that running the club was becoming more challenging for the volunteers due to the volume of work, small number of volunteers involved and lack of commercial funding (from the hospitality offer at the facility). Without support there was a risk that the Club would not be able to continue, the facility would be lost to the community, and the building for which there is no lease in place would be handed back to the Council.
- 5.3 Terms for a new 10 year Management Agreement were discussed and agreed with the Club in 2016, when the previous 21 year Management Agreement was due to expire. Unfortunately, the Club were not able to provide a new Club Constitution as they did not have the full complement of Trustees required. The Management Agreement could not therefore be completed. The Club has since continued to operate by holding over from the previous Agreement.
- 5.4 Under the terms of the newly drafted 2016 proposed management agreement, the Club would have been responsible for the full repair and maintenance of the indoor bowls centre as well as all costs associated with running the facility at a peppercorn rent. The income from a commercial operator managing the facility should allow obligations to be met in terms of repairs, maintenance and running costs of the facility.
- 5.5 Whilst the Council is not in a position to take on the direct responsibility for running the facility an interim measure has been put in place whereby the Council has recruited a member of staff to be a facility coordinator. The post is funded by the Club and employed by the Council for an initial period of 6 months commencing on Wednesday 4th January 2023. The aim is to allow the IIBC volunteers to focus on the bowls aspect of the club and to allow for other longer term options for the future of the Club to be explored.
- 5.6 Officers have held a number of meetings with the IIBC committee including a visit to the facility by the Leader, Corporate Director and Local Members. During these meetings the volunteers have stated that they are not able to run the facility on a commercial basis and have suggested a commercial operator option as long as the bowls activities are protected.
- 5.7 Following further discussions with the IIBC committee and local Members it is now

proposed that a procurement process is undertaken with a view to securing a commercial offer for the running of the Club. It is also proposed that a new agreement is entered into with the successful provider for a period of 10 years. It is also intended that the agreement is constructed in a way that will allow the successful provider to take advantage of the commercial offer represented by hospitality (bar, function suite and catering facilities) but that the IIBC Committee continue to organise the Bowls section / function of the Club.

- 5.8 There has been ongoing work to promote the Club in the community and on Sunday 11th December IIBC held their Annual General Meeting (AGM) with 19 attendees. This represents good progress for the Club and during the AGM a new bowls committee was established with a Chair and Vice Chair, Treasurer and an Assistant Secretary, the post of Secretary is yet to be filled.
- 5.9 The successful implementation of a commercial agreement will ensure continuation of the Islwyn Indoor Bowls Club and a sustainable future for the facility going forward.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 No assumptions have been made in this report.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The Integrated Impact assessment (IIA) suggests that a commercial agreement for the operation of the commercial aspects of Islwyn Indoor Bowls Club (IIBC) for the current and potential users would have a positive impact.
- 7.2 By developing the option of an appropriate franchise partner, IIBC will not only be able to operate on a more robust and sustainable footing but will be able to provide an increased and improved offer to those that attend the facility, along with creating increased opportunities through programme developments to support community cohesion and prospects for future employment.
- 7.3 Ensuring that IIBC is operating in a sustainable manner also improves the opportunities for residents to engage in activity that support improvements to physical and mental health and wellbeing. The IIA can be accessed from the following link:

[Link To IIA Islwyn Bowls Club](#)

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Council is required to add VAT where another organisation is invoiced for a member of staff. The IIBC are VAT registered and therefore are able to recover the VAT.
- 8.2 It is proposed that once a commercial operator has been procured and an appropriate agreement is signed that the peppercorn rent paid by the IIBC is discontinued and the Authority will have a direct financial relationship with the new provider,
- 8.3 In the event that the commercial offer is unsuccessful then it is likely that the building would revert to the Council.

- 8.4 It is likely that the Authority will need to engage specific procurement/ marketing / legal advice to secure a franchisee and ensure that any agreement is clear, unambiguous and enforceable. These costs will be met from existing revenue budgets.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 As outlined above, the Authority is currently supporting the IIBC with a temporary member of staff (to the end of the current indoor bowls season); It is not proposed that they would transfer employment to the new franchise arrangement.
- 9.2 Any new agreement will be between the Authority and successful commercial provider and it is expected that the Authority will monitor the success of the agreement and ensure that effective relationships are maintained between the operator and IIBC. This role will form part of the Sport and Leisure remit.

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 The consultees listed below have been consulted on this report and their views have been incorporated accordingly.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

Author: Jared Lougher, Sport and Leisure Development Manager, loughj@caerphilly.gov.uk.

Consultees:

Cllr Sean Morgan, Leader of Council
Cllr Chris Morgan, Cabinet Member for Waste, Leisure and Green Spaces
Councillor D.T Davies Chair Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee
Councillor A Hussey Vice Chair Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee
Cllr Colin Gordon, Ward member, Pontllanfraith ward
Cllr Mike Adams, Ward member, Pontllanfraith ward
Cllr Patricia Cook, Ward member, Pontllanfraith ward
Christina Harray, Chief Executive
Mark S Williams, Corporate Director for Economy and Environment
Rob Hartshorn, Head of Public Protection, Community and Leisure Services
Jeff Reynolds, Sport and Leisure Facilities Manager
Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Stephen Harris, Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer
Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services
Ben Winstanley, Head of Land and Property
Ian Evans, Procurement and Information Manager
Liz Lucas, Head of Customer and Digital Services

Agenda Item 8



CABINET – 25TH JANUARY 2023

PUBLIC INTEREST TEST – EXEMPTION FROM DISCLOSURE OF DOCUMENTS PARAGRAPHS 12 & 14 SCHEDULE 12A LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

**SUBJECT: EXTENSION TO FLEXIBLE RETIREMENT DUE TO EXCEPTIONAL
CIRCUMSTANCES – CORPORATE FINANCE**

REPORT BY: HEAD OF LEGAL SERVICES & MONITORING OFFICER

I have considered grounds for exemption of information contained in the report referred to above and make the following recommendations to the Proper Officer: -

EXEMPTIONS APPLYING TO THE REPORT:

Paragraph 12 – information about an individual and paragraph 14 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person.

FACTORS IN FAVOUR OF DISCLOSURE:

There is a public interest in the way in which the Council manages its workforce.

PREJUDICE WHICH WOULD RESULT IF THE INFORMATION WERE DISCLOSED:

The report contains details of an individual and their financial affairs.

MY VIEW ON THE PUBLIC INTEREST TEST IS AS FOLLOWS:

That paragraphs 12 and 14 should apply. I am mindful of the need to ensure the transparency and accountability of public authorities for decisions taken. However, disclosure of the information contained in the report could prejudice the individual, the subject of the report.

On that basis I feel that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. Members are asked to consider these factors when determining the public interest test, which they must decide when considering excluding the public from this part of the meeting.

RECOMMENDED DECISION ON EXEMPTION FROM DISCLOSURE:

On the basis set out above I feel that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, and that the report should be exempt.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. G. ...'.

Dated: 17th January 2023

Post: Head Of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer

I accept/~~do not~~ the recommendation made above.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. ...'.

Proper Officer

Date: 17th January 2023

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Agenda Item 9

By virtue of paragraph(s) 12, 14 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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