



CABINET

MINUTES OF THE REMOTE MEETING HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON WEDNESDAY, 22ND JULY 2020 AT 10.30 A.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor P. Marsden (Leader) - Chair

Councillors:

C. Cuss (Social Care and Wellbeing), N. George (Environment and Neighbourhood Services), C.J. Gordon (Corporate Services), B. Jones (Education and Achievement), S. Morgan (Regeneration, Transportation and Sustainability), L. Phipps (Homes, Places and Tourism), and E. Stenner (Finance, Performance and Planning).

Together with:

C. Harry (Chief Executive), R. Edmunds (Corporate Director – Education and Corporate Services), M.S. Williams (Interim Corporate Director – Communities).

Also in Attendance:

S. Harris (Acting S151 Officer), R. Hartshorn (Head of Public Protection, Community & Leisure Services), G. Mumford (Acting Senior Environmental Health Officer), S. Richards (Head of Education Planning and Strategy), R. Tranter (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), A. West (21st Century Schools, Admissions and Exclusions Manager), M. Williams (Interim Head of Property Services) and C. Evans (Committee Services Officer).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence received.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

M.S. Williams (Interim Corporate Director – Communities) declared an interest as a Member of the Committee for Penallta Rugby Club and left the meeting on Agenda Item 7- 21st Century Schools Band B Programme – Update.

3. CABINET – 24TH JUNE 2020

RESOLVED that subject to an amendment in relation to Minute number 6 – Council Response to the Coronavirus Pandemic, paragraph 23, which should state “The Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Transportation and Sustainability, in noting the incredible report and the awesome response by the organisation, and expressed his

great appreciation to all staff for their efforts during this time”, the minutes were approved as a correct record.

4. CABINET – 1ST JULY 2020

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 1st July 2020 were approved as a correct record.

5. CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME – TO NOTE

Cabinet were provided with the Cabinet Forward Work Programme, which detailed the scheduled reports from 22nd July 2020 to 28th October 2020. Members were reminded that the Cabinet Forward Work Programme is a working document and therefore subject to change.

Cabinet were asked to agree a report on Agile/ Flexible Working to be considered in September and it was noted that whilst the main focus has been the response to the current pandemic, it is anticipated that following August Recess, the Cabinet Forward Work Programme will provide a further horizon scan of upcoming reports to Cabinet.

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.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Forward Work Programme be noted.

MATTERS ON WHICH EXECUTIVE DECISIONS WERE REQUIRED

6. STRENGTHENING TEAMCAERPHILLY

The report provided Cabinet with an update on a series of whole authority reviews to the existing TeamCaerphilly Programme that will further support the delivery of a new operating model for the Council.

Cabinet noted that in the Summer of 2019, ‘TeamCaerphilly – Better Together’ Strategy was adopted as a means of creating and implementing a new operating model for the Council.

The whole organisation transformation programme was essentially based on three main pillars: Service Reviews; Commercialisation and Place Shaping as well as a range of additional programmes intended to create the culture and environment to deliver the overarching concept of ‘TeamCaerphilly – Better Together’.

It was noted that since the COVID-19 lockdown began in March 2020, many of the principles that TeamCaerphilly sought to embed have been on show daily. Staff have successfully operated in an agile way, officers from across the Council have come together to deliver a range of new services and residents and businesses have complemented those staff in going above and beyond through the variety of volunteering roles.

Having seen the impact of TeamCaerphilly, the opportunity now exists to embed many of the new approaches that have been employed in recent months as well as accelerating some of the wider work that will support these new models. The report set out a programme of Corporate Reviews that will help the Council achieve this aim.

The Chief Executive, in outlining the principle and issues identified within the report, drew Cabinet’s attention to the wider context and some of the issues facing the organisation and community such as Climate Change, Brexit, Recession, Pandemic and local issues faced by

local businesses and the community. It was noted that the response to the COVID-19 Pandemic has been all consuming, and the organisation has been turned on its head in order to respond and maintain service delivery to those most in need. In addition, preparation work has been underway should there be a second spike in the virus. It has therefore emerged that the community is reliant on the Local Authority, and as a result, 10 reviews are being proposed that will shape the Council and continue to provide an effective and efficient service.

Cabinet thanked the Officer for the report and discussion ensued.

A Cabinet Member noted that the report sets out a brave and ambitious set of service reviews which will assist to do more with less and afford Officers more ownership in their areas of work, leading to a leaner and more efficient Council. Commercialisation has been a key focus within the report, and it will provide a cultural change for many working and living in the Borough. As a result, a Member sought further information on the communication plans in place in order to deliver a clear message to all those involved and reassure those reluctant to change. Officers explained that the main aim to assure that this process is something that will be done with and not to them, consultation and communication is fundamental, however there could be decisions required that some aren't happy with. Co-Production is critical and there will be detailed information provided on the Caerphilly website, engaging Communities and groups going forward. In addition, in respect of Commercialisation, this is something that has previously been agreed to, and assurances were given that the aim is not for profit, but to reinvest into services, enabling them to be more self-sufficient. Cabinet were assured that this process will seek to use Welsh Government support and funding where available.

The Leader reiterated that Co-Production is really important in the process and will help to reshape Caerphilly County Borough Council as we know it, whilst ensuring that service delivery to the Community remains.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the report be approved. By a show of hands, this was unanimously agreed.

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

- i) The Corporate Reviews set out within the report be endorsed and included within the TeamCaerphilly -Better Together Programme;
- ii) It be noted that Members of the Council's Leadership Team will lead the Corporate Reviews and will be supported by an appropriately resourced project team.

7. 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES BAND B PROGRAMME - UPDATE

The report provided Cabinet with an update on the 21st Century Schools and Colleges Band B Programme and sought Cabinet approval to proceed to consultation in respect of the phase 1 projects which includes Trinity Fields Special School and Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon.

Cabinet noted that the report provided an update on the current position of the Band B (£78 Million) 21st Century School and Colleges Capital Programme, and the priority schemes identified for Phase 1 of the Band B programme are an expansion of provision at Trinity Fields School and relocation and expansion of Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon on the former Cwmcarn High Site.

It was noted that both projects have recently received approval from the Welsh Government (WG) to proceed to Full Business Case stage subject to Cabinet approval to undertake a full consultation which is scheduled for the Autumn Term 2020.

Cabinet were asked to note that both projects are in the early development stage and officers will ensure that Members are updated on a regular basis in relation to all aspects of the proposal e.g. financial, business case, consultation process etc.

Cabinet thanked the Officers for the report and discussion ensued.

In noting the positive report, a Cabinet Member explained that it is clear that Cwm Gwyddon is in need of an upgrade as the site has been outgrown. In respect of Trinity Fields, the school is a phenomenal success, and with the growth in the area of need and proximity to the hospital, the development is key. Clarification was sought on the collaborative work with the Health Board on these projects. Officers assured members that the aspiration is not one-sided, and commitment has been received from both the Health Board and the Local Authority to support the development. It is the ambition that there will be a link between Social Services and Education, and with the site being adjacent to the hospital, with the facilities on offer, collaboration is paramount.

The Cabinet Member for Education applauded the Officers on the remarkable report and outlined the work that is coming into fruition as a result of the project. Members were urged to visit the Trinity Fields site if they haven't already done so, to see the exceptional work and service provision to the most vulnerable children within the borough. The Officer added that both sites, and their facilities are also a community asset for the children of the borough, as are all 21st Century Schools.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

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

- i) The report be noted;
- ii) Consultation on both projects be approved, the consultation will be undertaken in line with the Welsh Government School Organisation Code;
- iii) The additional contribution to each project, as outlined in paragraph 5.2.6, 5.3.7 and Section 10 of the report be approved.

8. CONSTRUCTION OF A REPLACEMENT PLAY AREA, PONTLLANFRAITH

The report sought Cabinet approval to construct a new play area off the Courthouse car park on the B4251 in Pontllanfraith, to replace a play area that will be decommissioned when construction of the Chartist Gardens development commences, and further seeks Cabinet approval to utilise reserves to fund the works.

Cabinet noted that the proposed Chartist Gardens development was given planning consent in July 2020 and the development will include a recreation area, but this will not be a like for like replacement, for an existing play area, which is typically used by families arriving by car and will be decommissioned when construction commences in 2021. In order to ensure that the public access play provision in the Pontllanfraith area is not diminished it is proposed that a replacement play area will be constructed adjacent to the Courthouse car park on the B4251 in Pontllanfraith.

Cabinet were asked to note that the estimated cost if constructing the new play area is £90,000 to £110,000 and it is proposed that Capital Earmarked Reserves are utilised to fund the project.

Cabinet thanked the Officer for the report and discussion ensued.

A Cabinet Member, in noting the proposal sought further information on the site and whether the play equipment would be an upgrade. Officers explained that the land does have some size constraints, however, it is the intention to provide new equipment and updated and improved facilities.

Cabinet felt that the final proposal should benefit from some screening and it was agreed that this would be considered and discussed with relevant cabinet members outside of the meeting at a later date.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

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

- i) The proposed construction of a new play area be approved;
- ii) The review, as part of the wider scrutiny of car parking charges, of parking charges for the Courthouse car park and in particular that consideration is given to making the first three hours of parking free of charge be approved;
- iii) That the use of up to £110,000 of Capital Earmarked Reserves be approved to fund the project.

9. PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER – DOG CONTROL ON SPORTS PITCHES

The report sought Cabinet approval to consult on the amendment to the Public Spaces Protection Order 2017 (PSPO) to include the exclusion of dogs from marked sports pitches.

Cabinet noted that Public Spaces Protection Orders were introduced by the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, and can be used to regulate activities, in particular public places to ensure that the law-abiding majority can use and enjoy public spaces safe from anti-social behaviour. As such, these orders provide an opportunity to enhance the Council's enforcement ability to respond to public opinion regarding dog fouling.

It was noted that in September 2017, Cabinet approved and adopted the Public Spaces Protection Order 2017; the Order includes the following restrictions: -

- Excluding dogs from all enclosed children's play and multi-use games areas
- Requiring dogs to be kept on leads in enclosed memorial gardens
- Requiring dog owners to remove dog faeces in public places
- Requiring dog owners to carry an appropriate receptacle for dealing with the waste that their dogs produce (that is to always have the means to pick their dog faeces)
- Requiring dog owners to put their dogs on a lead when directed to do so by an authorised officer on any public land where the dog is considered to be out of control or causing harm or distress to prevent a nuisance.

In addition to the decision to proceed with the above proposals, Cabinet also resolved at an earlier meeting held on 18th January 2017 that the proposal to exclude dogs from all council owned sports/playing pitches on a seasonal basis should be omitted at that stage of the process, and be reviewed after a period of 12-months or once the impact of the above provisions can be established.

Consequently, the report presented a review of the current position regarding dog fouling since implementation of the Order including the results of an informal consultation undertaken with sports clubs across the county borough; (the results of which were detailed within the report) with 88% agreeing that dogs should be prohibited from marked sports pitches. An

overview of the consultation responses (summary report) was attached at Appendix 1 of the report.

A portfolio of all marked council sports pitches was included at Appendix 3 of the report.

Cabinet thanked the Officer for the report and discussion ensued.

A Cabinet Member, in noting the number of complaints received and actions taken, as outlined at 5.7 of the Officers report, sought what further action has been taken to address the issue. Officers explained that routine patrols are undertaken and complaints are noted and responded to, with targeted patrols with enforcement action undertaken where possible. It was noted that a campaign has been underway to promote responsible dog ownership, in the hope to educate offenders and prevent further enforcement requirements.

In supporting the consultation, a Member expressed concerns for the impact on local sports teams where games have had to be cancelled as a result of dog fouling on sports pitches, and queried the form of consultation that will be undertaken and the inclusion of sports clubs. Officers explained that online consultations will be undertaken, as well as informal consultation options, in order to target as many users as possible. It was noted however that the current order lapses in October, and as a result of Covid-19, it has not been possible to bring an earlier cabinet report in relation to the existing PSPO. In the interim period the existing PSPO provisions could be extended under the scheme of delegation by the Head of Public Protection. This time limited extension could then be replaced by new provisions which cabinet would consider after this consultation process.

Discussions took place around the impact of fouling on sports pitches and the potential health issues. Officers explained that, even following removal of faecal matter, there is still a contamination, in particular of roundworm eggs, which can cause to significant health issues and can last up to 3 years in the soil, therefore, in the interest of health and wellbeing, a ban of dogs on sports pitches is more beneficial.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved. By a show of hands, this was unanimously agreed.

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

- i) It be agreed to undertake a 10-week public consultation exercise on the proposal to amend the Public Spaces Protection Order 2017 to include a provision to exclude dogs from marked sports/playing pitches when it becomes possible to carry out meaningful consultation with the public and relevant stakeholders;
- ii) It be agreed that the Public Space Protection Order will last for a three-year period.

The meeting closed at 11.45am.

Approved and signed as a correct record subject to any corrections made at the meeting held on 9th September 2020.

CHAIR