



COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MULTI-LOCATIONAL MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON WEDNESDAY, 27TH SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 5.00PM

PRESENT:

Councillor M. Adams – Mayor

Councillors:

C. Andrews, C. Bishop, M. Chacon-Dawson, R. Chapman, P. Cook, S. Cook, D. Cushing, C. Cuss, E. Davies, T. D. Davies MBE, G. Ead, C. Elsbury, G. Enright, K. Etheridge, M. Evans, A. Farina-Childs, E. Forehead, J. E. Fussell, A. Gair, C. Gordon, D. Harse, T. Heron, A. Hussey, D. Ingram-Jones, M. James, L. Jeremiah, G. Johnston, J. Jones, S. Kent, A. Leonard, P. Leonard, C. Mann, A. McConnell, B. Miles, C. Morgan, S. Morgan, T. Parry, L. Phipps, M. Powell, D.W.R. Preece, H. Pritchard, J. Pritchard, J.A. Pritchard, J. Rao, J. Reed, R. Saralis, J. Scriven, S. Skivens, E. Stenner, J. Taylor, C. Thomas, L. Whittle, S. Williams, W. Williams and C. Wright.

Together with:

C. Harrhy (Chief Executive), R. Edmunds (Corporate Director Education and Corporate Services), M. S. Williams (Corporate Director Economy and Environment), S. Harris (Head of Financial Services and Section 151 Officer), L. Lane (Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer), R. Kyte (Head of Regeneration and Planning), I. Mullis (Senior/Principal Planner), L. James (Principal Planner), J. Williams (Assistant Director Adult Services), C. Forbes-Thompson (Scrutiny Manager), E. Sullivan (Senior Committee Services Officer) and S. Hughes (Committee Services Officer).

Also in attendance:

P. Diamond (Head of Regional Partnership Team, Gwent Regional Partnership Board) and N. Harris (Service Manager, Partnerships and Development, Gwent Regional Partnership Board).

RECORDING, FILMING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS

The Chief Executive reminded those present the meeting was being live streamed, and a recording would be available following the meeting via the Council's website – [Click Here to View](#). She advised that decisions would be made by Microsoft Forms.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors E. M. Aldworth, A. Angel, A. Broughton-Pettit, N. Dix, C. Forehead, N. George, B. Owen, D. Price, J. Roberts, J. Simmonds, A. Whitcombe, J. Winslade and K. Woodland.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor S. Cook declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 7 – Gwent Regional Partnership Board (RPB) Area Plan and RPB Annual Report 22-23, as he works for the NHS. As this was a personal interest only there was no requirement for him to leave the meeting and he could take full part in the debate and vote. Details are also minuted with the respective item.

3. PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

South East Wales and Colleges Awards

At the Council meeting held on 4th July 2023 the Cabinet Member for Education and Communities announced the South-East Wales Schools and Colleges Awards, which saw a number of schools and their staff winning 7 categories in total.

The winners of the South East and Colleges Awards were:

Above and Beyond Award – Emma Watt (Safeguarding Lead - St Martin's School)
Primary School of the Year Award – Libanus Primary School
Secondary School Teacher of the Year – Becca Griffiths St Martin's School
Teaching Assistant of the Year - Kirsty Silcox – Ysgol Bro Sannan
Support Worker of the Year - Carolyn Hickling – Libanus Primary School
Class of the Year – 8A - Bedwas High School
Overall School of the Year Winner – Libanus Primary School

Although not all winners were able to attend Council, Nicola Williams and Lyn Richards of Libanus Primary School, Kirsty Silcox of Ysgol Bro Sannan and Carolyn Hickling were called forward by the Mayor for their achievements to be formally recognised by Council.

Gwent Adult Community Learning Partnership Awards

The Cabinet Member for Education and Communities was pleased to announce the Gwent Adult Community Learning Partnership Awards which recognised the incredible work carried out by staff and learners in the community. The Cabinet Member highlighted their support and dedication to lifelong learning throughout the borough, which is so important and very much appreciated by the people using these services.

The winners of the Gwent Adult Community Learning Partnership Awards were:

- Tutor of the Year – Peter Steer
- Group Award – Pottery Club including the following members, Sally Lloyd, Graham Sharp, Marianne Harry, Kay Hawkesford, Lyn Conlin, Lorraine Adams and Charlotte Victoria
- Learners of the Year – Cathy Vlahos and Jenny Sibley

Not all winners were able to attend Council, Peter Steer and Jo Richards were invited forward by the Mayor in order for Members to congratulate them all on their achievements.

Workforce Development Award

The Cabinet Member for Prosperity, Regeneration and Climate Change was delighted to announce that the Authority won the Workforce Development Award at the UK Asbestos Training Association Awards earlier this year. The Council's asbestos awareness and training program has provided its service to thousands of staff and contractors who assist with the maintenance of council houses, schools and corporate buildings. The Cabinet

Member recognised that this hardworking team is a real asset to the Council, and greatly appreciated the diligent work they put into their training program in order to keep us all safe.

Ali Evans, Gavin Davies and Helen Hill from the Health and Safety Department were invited forward by the Mayor in order for Members to recognise this fantastic achievement.

4. COUNCIL HELD ON 4TH JULY 2023

RESOLVED that the minutes of Council held on 4th July 2023 be approved as a correct record.

4a. STATEMENT FROM THE LEADER OF COUNCIL

With the permission of the Mayor, the Leader of Council delivered the following statement.

I would like to take this opportunity to update you with our ambitious plans to transform and improve Council services, as part of an exciting programme of positive change which is currently gathering pace across this organisation.

Over recent months, the agile space on floor one has become a hive of activity, and I know some of you have had the opportunity to call in and find out more about what's going on. It's been great to see staff from a range of services come together and collaborate on a transformation programme which seeks to rethink and reshape the way we do business in future. News of Caerphilly's Transformation programme has certainly spread to other members of the Local Government family. Recently, when I and a small contingent of members went to the WLGA conference in Llandudno, many other Council Leaders were keen to understand Caerphilly's approach to the current financial stress, that all Councils are under. While many other Councils are talking about cutting services and making redundancies to deliver balanced budgets, Caerphilly's approach of Transformation, is certainly raising a few eyebrows.

Tomorrow morning the Minister for Finance and Local Government, Rebecca Evans, is coming here to meet with us, to see the work going on in the agile space on the first floor, to see firsthand the bold and radical approach we are taking to continue to serve the public, whilst adapting to the many significant challenges ahead. I will be explaining that we are rethinking and reshaping our offer, that this includes using fewer buildings, being more business-minded, and making our services more accessible. How we will work to meet the needs of our communities more efficiently and how we'll explore other ways to deliver services, when it makes sense to do so.

Members, we must engage with our communities to understand the needs of our residents and provide the right support to meet those needs as simply as possible. Where residents need services that we don't provide, we will signpost them to the most appropriate partners to access the support they need. We understand that some roles may need to change, and we expect there to be a reduction in staff numbers. We will look at retirement, voluntary departure options, moving within the organisation to new opportunities and we will assess how roles can be reimaged going forward.

As you can see, a huge amount of work has already been undertaken by Officers and the Cabinet, with some excellent support and challenge from our advisors, Perago. I would like to personally thank all the staff who have worked so hard already to develop this ambitious programme of change. But this is just the beginning - as we move towards delivery, even more effort will be required to ensure we meet our aims. This isn't going to be easy, but this is absolutely the right thing to do, our residents deserve nothing less. We have learnt that when we work together as TeamCaerphilly, we can make a long-lasting impact. We can only do this if we work together – Officers, Members, the public and our partners. It is

therefore really important that all Members across the Chamber understand what we are doing and why we are doing it.

At a time of such financial crisis as this, party politics should take a backseat to shared responsibility. It's vitally important that you all become engaged in this work over the coming weeks and months as we seek to turn some of the emerging proposals and ideas into reality. I urge you all to visit the hive of positive activity erupting from the first floor, be part of this positive process which promises to chart a new and exciting course for this Council, as we navigate through these difficult times. By working together, we can create a better future for all our residents and I look forward to working with you all, from all sides of the Chamber, to deliver this for our residents.

Councillor L. Whittle responded as the leader of the Plaid Cymru Group. He expressed his support and the support of the Plaid Cymru Group for the Transformation Programme and informed of a meeting held with the Chief Executive. Concerns were raised regarding signposting residents to the most appropriate partners to access the support they need, in that it does not negate any responsibility the Council has for providing services, particularly in relation to answering e-mails. Assurance was given that the Council will continue to deliver all the statutory services required by residents. However, it was emphasised that in some cases residents are often better directed to other appropriate services, such as the Citizens Advice Bureau. It was acknowledged that a number of e-mails and telephone calls have been unanswered and assurance was given that the Transformation Programme will indeed make sure that phone calls and e-mails are answered very efficiently.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

5. PROVISIONAL REVENUE BUDGET OUTTURN FOR 2022/23

Council noted that the report had been considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 26th July 2023 and the recommendations in paragraphs 3.1.1 to 3.1.4 had been unanimously agreed.

Members were advised that decisions in respect of General Fund Reserve were a matter for full Council and therefore consideration was given to the report that provided details of the provisional revenue budget outturn for the 2022/23 financial year prior to the completion of the annual external audit of the accounts by Audit Wales.

Clarification and further information were sought on a number of issues and Officers responded to the points raised.

Clarification was sought as to why the General Fund balance is being maintained at £15.166m, which is higher than 3% of the net revenue budget. The Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer explained that 3% is the minimum balance recommended. Members were advised that given the significant financial challenges that the Council faces, moving forward, it is prudent that the General Fund balance be maintained at a slightly higher level. It will also allow some breathing space for the changes that will be proposed as part of the Council's Transformation Programme to be fully worked out and implemented.

A Member referred to the Provisional Outturn Summary at Appendix A of the report and asked whether the underspend for schools could be offset by the underspend for Education and Lifelong Learning totalling £2.858m. The Head of Financial Services and S1151 Officer clarified that the £2.858m underspend is for the Education and Lifelong Learning Directorate, excluding schools. The schools in-year overspend is ringfenced, consequently school balances as of 31st March 2023 are £11.1m. Members were assured that the Education Finance Team work very closely with schools to devise recovery plans which are kept under review and to help them manage situations where there are deficits.

Further questions were raised in relation to the General Fund balance and the total amount held in reserves. Council was advised of a report that is being prepared which will provide Members with details on the reserves currently held and identify which reserves can potentially be released to balance the budget next year. In response to a request for further information on the General Fund balance in relation to other local authorities, a link to the relevant website to be provided by the Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer following the meeting.

It was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained in the Officer's report be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation (and in noting there were 48 For, 2 Against and 5 Abstentions) this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that: -

1. The proposed use of surplus General Fund balances totalling £3.455m as detailed in Section 5.11 of the attached report be considered and approved.
2. The recommendation of the Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer to maintain the General Fund balance at £15.166m be approved.

6. CONSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND POLITICAL BALANCE

Consideration was given to the report which sought Council approval to agree that all 60 non-executive Members shall have the right of membership of joint meetings of Scrutiny Committee and asked Council to note the outcome of the review of the political balance as a result of a by-election and a reduction in the number of Members within the Independent Group.

There were no questions received on the content of the report. It was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained in the Officer's report be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation (and in noting there were 49 For, 3 Against and 3 Abstentions) this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that: -

1. All 60 non-executive members will be members of the Joint Scrutiny Committee.
2. Co-opted members to be invited to a meeting of the Joint Scrutiny Committee if the subject matter is relevant to them.
3. The Chair of each Joint Scrutiny Committee meeting will be one of the three Scrutiny Committee Chairs and will be determined by the subject matter.
4. The Council's Monitoring Officer is given approval to amend the Council Constitution to reflect these changes.
5. The review of the political balance for the authority as set out in Appendix 1 with no change to the allocation of seats be noted.

7. GWENT REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP BOARD (RPB) AREA PLAN AND RPB ANNUAL REPORT 22-23

Councillor S. Cook declared a personal interest as he works for the NHS. As this was a personal interest only there was no requirement for him to leave the meeting and he could take full part in the debate and vote.

The Mayor welcomed P. Diamond (Head of Regional Partnership Team, Gwent Regional Partnership Board) to the meeting.

Consideration was given to the report to update Members on the work of the Gwent Regional Partnership Board (RPB) in fulfilling local authority statutory duties required under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 for the Regional Area Plan 2023-2027, and RPB Annual report 2022/23.

A Member asked how effective the democratic process is within the Regional Partnership Board (RPB). The Cabinet Member for Social Care and the Head of Regional Partnership Team explained that the RPB is one of the largest in Wales, statutory members are Cabinet Members, Directors and leads for Social Care, together with Health Board officials and Third Sector representatives. It was highlighted that Third Sector representatives have a standing agenda item at each meeting.

Clarification and further information were sought in relation to grant funding and best value. In response the Cabinet Member for Social Care and the Head of the Regional Partnership Team provided information on the Regional Integration Fund and the number of schemes that are running or have been confirmed. It was highlighted that there are also Gwent wide schemes across Health and Social Care, which are accessed by Caerphilly residents. Council was advised that the Gwent Regional Partnership Board will be submitting Welsh Government returns in relation to various funding streams and that the Annual Report sets out some of the progress made to date. It was highlighted that value for money is an item discussed at every RPB meeting.

In response to a Member's query the scrutiny process for the RPB Area Plan and Annual Report was outlined, including how Members will be updated going forward. The Head of Regional Partnership Team highlighted the importance of all Members, across all parties, of having the opportunity to provide feedback, comments and suggestions on the RPB Area Plan and Annual Report.

It was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained in the Officer's report be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms (and in noting there were 54 For, 0 Against and 1 Abstention) this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that: -

1. The joint commitments within the Area Plan be considered.
2. The RPB Annual Report and progress made against the objectives be reviewed; and any feedback/comments be provided.
3. The joint priorities in the Area Plan and Caerphilly Integrated Service Partnership Board plan be noted, and at a future date, how these can be integrated in the Council's corporate plan going forward be discussed.

8. ADOPTION OF THE JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SOUTH EAST WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

Consideration was given to the report to seek Council approval for the scrutiny arrangements for the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee ('SEWCJC'). Council was asked to consider the details of the report and endorse the recommendations regarding the Scrutiny arrangements for the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place in accordance with the relevant legislation as outlined in the report.

It was clarified that the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal will also perform the same function for the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee.

In response to a Member's request, information on the total expenditure for the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal and the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee to be provided following the meeting.

It was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained in the Officer's report be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms (and in noting there were 50 For, 1 Against and 3 Abstentions) this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that: -

1. The CCRCJ JOSC be appointed as the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the SEWCJC.
2. The Draft Terms of Reference for its functions in respect of the SEWCJC, as attached at Appendix 2, be approved.
3. The cost of administering the JOSC for the SEWCJC will be included in a service level agreement between RCTCBC and the SEWCJC, to be concluded in due course, be noted.

9. WAIVER OF 6 MONTH COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE RULE

Consideration was given to the report to seek Council approval for a request received for an extension to the six months Councillor Attendance Rule from Councillor Dianne Price in accordance with the relevant legislation. Members were advised that due to poor health and ongoing medical treatment Councillor Dianne Price has been unable to attend a Council meeting since 8th June 2023 and on medical advice is unable to attend any further meetings for several months. A request has been received by the Monitoring Officer for Council to consider approving an extension to the usual six-month attendance rule to enable Councillor Price to remain in office until she is able to resume normal duties when she returns to good health.

Members expressed get well wishes for Councillor Dianne Price. It was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained in the Officer's report be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms (and in noting there were 54 For, 0 Against and 1 Abstention) this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that: -

1. That the current absence from all Council and Committee meetings of Councillor Dianne Price due to her ill-health be authorised and approved for a further period of six months ending on 8th June 2024, or until she resumes attendance if that is sooner, in accordance with section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972.

10. CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN UP TO 2021 - ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2023 (INCLUDING THE ANNUAL COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY REPORT)

Consideration was given to the report that allowed full Council to consider the findings and recommendations of the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan 2023 Annual Monitoring Report (2023 AMR). The report sought Council approval for the 2023 Annual Monitoring Report and for its submission to the Welsh Government by 31st October 2023, in

order to satisfy the Council's statutory requirements. A summary of the report was provided for Council.

Clarification and further information were sought on a number of issues and Officers responded to the points raised.

Reference was made to the tables detailing payments and spend within areas that are not covered by Local Councils. In response to a Member's query, the Corporate Director for Economy and Environment provided an update on the car parking provision at Oakdale Sports Pavilion.

Further information was sought regarding the 2nd Replacement Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 31st March 2035. The Head of Regeneration and Planning reminded Members that the public consultation exercise was undertaken in October and November 2022. At the Council meeting on 4th July 2022 a recommendation for a temporary halt in the preparation of the 2nd Replacement Local Development Plan to allow the completion of a regional piece of work on growth and migration to be prepared as required by Welsh Government to inform LDP preparation across the region. Members were informed that a new report will be presented to Council for consideration, in the new year, which will determine the way forward. Further to a request, the Cabinet Member for Planning and Public Protection provided an update on the 2nd Replacement Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan.

It was noted that the Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Public Protection have met with the Minister for Climate Change and will be meeting with Welsh Government Officers to address any concerns regarding the 2nd Replacement Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan Up to March 2035.

In response to a Members query, the Head of Regeneration and Planning provided clarification on the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). It was explained that the Council receives 85% of the CIL (inclusive of the 5% administration fee) and that the Council is constrained on how the CIL is spent but not constrained to the area within which it is being raised. It was highlighted that a list of all infrastructure that could be delivered through CIL is set out in Regulation 123 List, which is available to view on the Council's website. It was noted that Community Councils receive 15% of the CIL and it is for them to determine how it is spent. Clarification was also provided on the figures in 5.19 and 5.21 of the report and Head of Regeneration and Planning offered to provide further clarification in writing upon request.

Following on from the previous discussion a Member sought further information on the amount of CIL money spent this year. The Head of Regeneration and Planning confirmed that there is no requirement to spend the CIL on an annual basis. Members were advised that Caerphilly County Borough Council took a decision to accumulate the funding in order to fund strategic infrastructure projects and allocated funding has been committed to the Caerphilly Leisure and Wellbeing Centre.

Reference was made to CIL payments made to relevant Community/Town Councils, particularly in relation to the north of the valley. The Head of Regeneration provided an explanation as to why no CIL payments have been received in certain areas and re-iterated that 85% of the CIL, which the Council retains, can be spent anywhere in the county borough.

Reference was made to the strategic site in Maesycwmmmer and it was agreed that an update would be provided at the appropriate time.

It was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained in the Officer's report be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation (and in noting there were 48 For, 0 Against and 5 Abstentions) this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that: -

1. The findings of the 2023 Annual Monitoring Report be considered, noted and approved.
2. The 2023 Annual Monitoring Report (including the Annual Community Infrastructure Levy Report) be submitted to the Welsh Government before the deadline of 31 October 2023.

11. TO RECEIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR

The Mayor's Civic Diary Engagements were noted.

12. TO RECEIVE PETITIONS UNDER RULE OF PROCEDURE 28(3)

There were no petitions received.

13. TO RECEIVE AND TO ANSWER QUESTIONS RECEIVED UNDER RULE OF PROCEDURE 10

Question from Councillor A. McConnell to the Cabinet Member for Prosperity, Regeneration and Climate Change, Councillor J. Pritchard

Can the Cabinet Member for Prosperity, Regeneration and Climate Change provide an update on our events programme?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Prosperity, Regeneration and Climate Change to Councillor A. McConnell

Thank you, Cllr McConnell, for your question. Can I firstly begin by placing on record my thanks to our wonderful events team, who work so hard to ensure the events across the county borough take place. Can I also thank some of the Town and Community Councils who have also contributed to some of our events with funding and volunteering. We have an extensive events programme in Caerphilly County Borough, which is supported by residents and visitors. We've made a conscious decision to focus our events in our town centres to benefit our existing traders by attracting additional footfall. More events means higher footfall.

By the end of 2023 we will have organised 13 events across the county borough, including, Blackwood, Risca, Caerphilly, Ystrad Mynach and Bargoed. The regular events programme has helped bring people together to provide joy and entertainment at a time when we really need it. Our events, which are highlighted on the Visit Caerphilly website, really goes into some detail, so members can read more about them at their leisure. Whilst all the events have been great, the main highlight of the year for me was the inaugural Pride Caerffili. We can all be proud of the day 24th June 2023. We, as an inclusive Council, became the first Council in Wales to run our own Pride event. We saw thousands of people line the streets to show their support for the event. We were bold and did not shy away from showing leadership and bringing the public with us in our solidarity to the LGBTQ+ community. There are so many people that made this fantastic event happen - too many people to mention in my statement, but the Equalities Team were fantastic and a big thank you to all those who played their important roles.

Another key event in the event diary was the Tour of Britain cycling event that came through the county borough. We made a compelling case to Welsh Government and the organisers for its return, and what a great day we had earlier this month! The event put Caerphilly

county borough on the international platform, sharing our fantastic county borough to an audience of millions. The vibe was absolutely amazing and made me incredibly proud to be part of the TeamCaerphilly. Earlier in the year we held the Bargoed May Fair. Speaking to many people at the event, it was clear how happy people were who came along to have a great experience. The busiest day in Bargoed for many years, which again is important when we're trying to support our town centres and boost economic activity.

We've been able to fund this year's events programme through the utilisation of the Shared Prosperity Fund. As we finalise our 24/25 events programme, we need to be mindful of our reducing budgets, however, I can offer my assurance that we will continue to exploit all avenues of funding to keep the events programme both relevant and vibrant. The public support the events in their tens of thousands, and I look forward to seeing residents enjoying our Christmas event programme.

14. TO RECEIVE AND TO ANSWER QUESTIONS RECEIVED UNDER RULE OF PROCEDURE 10

Question from Councillor K. Etheridge to the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Property and Highways, Councillor N. George

To ask the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Property and Highways to confirm that all children's transport provision is being met under the school transport tender process, and no child is left behind during this process with all tenders being met.

Response from the Leader of Council to Councillor K. Etheridge

For the commencement of the academic year 2023/2024 the Transportation Department has successfully secured 144 new contracts through the Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for taxi, minibus and wheelchair accessible vehicles. In addition to this, 191 contracts were successfully awarded last academic year which are still active, which have not expired this year.

At present the Home to School Transport Department has 19 contracts advertised under the above DPS for tender. There are various reasons why these contracts are being advertised, such as late requests, new requests or changes in transport provisions. Some of the contracts advertised are new contracts, whilst some contracts tendered, have subsequently been re-tendered multiple times. 8 out of the 19 contracts have been re-advertised multiple times, the 8 contracts consist of 11 learners all of which are claiming fuel reimbursement as an interim measure.

The Home to School Transport department is experiencing a shortfall in available transport operators that can fulfil the number of contracts required, in particular for the start and finish time of the normal school day. Notwithstanding this, where the department is unable to secure transport for any learner's, parents are offered fuel reimbursement or a bus pass as an interim measure until transport is secured.

The meeting closed at 6.57 p.m.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 29th November 2023 they were signed by the Mayor.

MAYOR