



CABINET

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON TUESDAY, 3RD JULY 2012 AT 2.00 PM

PRESENT:

Councillor H.A. Andrews - Chairman

Councillors:

C. Forehead (HR and Governance/Business Manager), D.T. Hardacre (Performance and Asset Management), K. James (Regeneration, Planning and Sustainable Development), G. Jones (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing), R. Passmore (Education and Lifelong Learning), D.V. Poole (Community and Leisure Services), K.V. Reynolds (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services), T.J. Williams (Highways, Transportation and Engineering), R. Woodyatt (Social Services).

Together with:

A. O'Sullivan (Chief Executive), N. Barnett (Deputy Chief Executive), A. Heaney (Corporate Director Social Services).

Also present:

J. Rogers (Principal Solicitor), L. Lane (Solicitor), T. Broadhurst (Section Head Estates), C. Forbes-Thompson (Scrutiny Research Officer).

APOLOGIES

An apology for absence had been received from the Corporate Director of Education Lifelong Learning and Leisure.

11. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

12. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 19th June 2012 (minute nos. 7-10; page nos. 3-4) be approved and signed as a correct record.

MATTERS ON WHICH EXECUTIVE DECISIONS WERE REQUIRED

13. YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT TASK AND FINISH GROUP

The report was considered by the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 17th April 2012. The Scrutiny Committee endorsed the recommendations in the report and referred them to Cabinet for approval.

In February 2011 the Council agreed to establish a task and finish group to consider youth unemployment. The terms of reference of the review group were as follows: - To understand the context of youth unemployment; to map the current programmes to assist the young into employment; to identify and discuss the barriers to employment and skills gaps and to agree actions for improvement. The report outlines the main findings of the review group and makes a number of recommendations.

Members placed on record their appreciation of the contribution made by all those who had participated in the review and particular reference was made to Jess Tarling, a young persons representative from the Council's Hub Service, for her contribution.

It was noted that some of the recommendations of the review group are in the process of being implemented and that an update report would be brought back to Members in six months to monitor progress of all the recommendations.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the report:-

1. The Council should look at ways to boost employment, skills and training for young people both directly and indirectly;
2. The Council investigate inserting clauses into commissioning contracts for third party providers to encourage companies to provide trainee placements;
3. The Local Service Board should include 'addressing youth unemployment' as a priority in its single plan. The Council's approach to apprenticeships and trainee placements be adopted across the LSB. In addition the LSB look at inserting clauses into its third party contracts requiring companies to provide trainee places;
4. The Council improve its collaboration with further education colleges for the provision of work placements for students. In view of the variable success across the Council in the past, People Management and Development should have an overview and intervene when there are difficulties;
5. As part of its improvement process the Council should strengthen its succession planning arrangements in order to ensure that it has trained and experienced staff available if a significant proportion of its 50+ workforce retires over a short period of time;
6. The Council should review its job application form and develop a simpler version to include apprenticeship applications;
7. The Council should improve its communication with young people in order to develop a broader understanding of the range of jobs available in the Authority. This should include a post placement review of all apprenticeship and trainee placements;
8. The Council should seek to develop further proposals to take advantage of the full range of grant and income generation opportunities that may be available to support youth employment;

9. An update report be prepared and presented to Members in six months' time in order to monitor the progress of the recommendations.

MATTERS THAT REQUIRED A RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

14. VILLAGE GREEN APPLICATION - HAWTIN PARK FIELDS, PONTLLANFRAITH, BLACKWOOD

The report outlines the result of a non-statutory Public Inquiry held in relation to an application to register land at Hawtin Park Fields, Pontllanfraith, Blackwood as a village green.

The Head of Legal and Governance, by virtue of his delegated powers, authorised the appointment of Mr Alun Alesbury an independent Barrister-at-Law to hold a non-statutory Public Inquiry into the application. Mr Alesbury conducted the Inquiry between 17th and 20th January 2012.

The Inspector heard evidence from a number of local residents and from witnesses appearing on behalf of the objectors. A copy of his report, setting out the case for the applicant, the case for the objectors and all the evidence, was received. The Inspector concludes that the evidence does not in any event establish a convincing case that local people have been accessing this land for the full requisite 20 year period as of right and recommends that no part of the application site should be added to the Register of Town or Village Greens under Section 15 of the Commons Act 2006.

In paragraph 11.26 of his report the Inspector expresses surprise that the 'old bridleway' along the eastern edge of the present application site is not on any definitive map or otherwise recognised as a right of way and recommends that Council in its capacity as Highway Authority should look into whether that route should be properly recorded or registered as some kind of public right of way. Members of the Cabinet requested that this matter be investigated.

RECOMMENDED to Council that in accordance with the recommendation of the Inspector, for the reasons set out in his report dated 4th April 2012, the application to register land at Hawtin Park Fields, Pontllanfraith, Blackwood as a village green, be rejected.

In addition, having regard to the views expressed in paragraph 11.26, page 51 of the Inspector's report regarding the 'old bridleway' along the eastern edge of the present application site, Cabinet requested that consideration be given to investigating whether this route should be formally recorded or registered as a public right of way.

15. EXEMPT MATTERS

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 100A(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 paragraphs 12 and 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

16. LAND AT NORTH BLACKVEIN INDUSTRIAL ESTATE

The report sought approval to lease an area of land on the North Blackvein Industrial Estate for use as a metal recycling facility.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the officer's report, the recommendations at paragraphs 9.1 and 9.2 of the report be endorsed.

The meeting closed at 2.26 pm.

Approved and signed as a correct record subject to any corrections made at the meeting held on 17th July 2012.

CHAIRMAN