



COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON TUESDAY, 22ND APRIL 2014 AT 5.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor D. M. Gray - Mayor
Councillor D.G. Carter - Deputy Mayor

Councillors:

Miss L. Ackerman, M. Adams, Mrs E.M. Aldworth, H.A. Andrews, A.P. Angel, Mrs G. Bevan, J. Bevan, P.J. Bevan, L. Binding, Mrs A. Blackman, D. Bolter, Mrs P. Cook, C.J. Cuss, H.W. David, H.R. Davies, D.T. Davies, R.T. Davies, N. Dix, C. Durham, Mrs C. Forehead, Ms E. E. Forehead, Mrs J. Gale, L. Gardiner, N. George, C.J. Gordon, R.W. Gough, D.T. Hardacre, D. Havard, C. Hawker, A.G. Higgs, G.J. Hughes, K. James, M.P. James, G. Johnston, Mrs B.A. Jones, G. Jones, G. Kirby, Ms P. Leonard, A. Lewis, K. Lloyd, C.P. Mann, S. Morgan, Mrs G. Oliver, Mrs R. Passmore, D.V. Poole, D.W.R. Preece, M.J. Prew, Mrs D. Price, J. Pritchard, J.A. Pritchard, D. Rees, K.V. Reynolds, J.E. Roberts, R. Saralis, Mrs M.E. Sargent, Mrs E. Stenner, Mrs J. Summers, J. Taylor, L.G. Whittle, T.J. Williams, R. Woodyatt

Together with:-

S. Rosser (Interim Chief Executive), S. Aspinall (Acting Deputy Chief Executive), D. Street (Director of Social Services), N. Scammell (Acting Director of Corporate Services), G. Williams (Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), J. Jones (Democratic Services Manager), M. Donovan (Project Lead 21st Century School), S. Harris (Acting Head of Corporate Finance) and E. Sullivan (Committee Services Officer)

Also present:-

Assistant Chief Fire Officer A. Thomas (South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority) and Area Manager and Head of Operations Officer D. Rose (South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs K.R. Baker, W. David, K. Dawson, C. Elsbury, J.E. Fussell, Mrs P.A. Griffiths, Mrs J.G. Jones, S. Kent, Mrs J. Summers and S. Skivens.

2. MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor referred to the many events and visits that he and the Deputy Mayor have undertaken since the last meeting and made specific reference to his attendance at the

opening of the Rhymney Integrated Health and Social Care Centre by His Royal Highness The Earl of Wessex, the spring conference of the Wales Association of Standing Councils for Religious Education hosted by Caerphilly and his attendance at the Young Consumers Awards and congratulated Blackwood Comprehensive School for reaching the finals. The Mayor referenced his visit to Westminster and in particular Prime Ministers' Question Time as well as his attendance at the installation ceremony of Lord Rowan Williams as Chancellor of the University of South Wales in a ceremony at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama.

He made reference to his charity evening at Blackwood Methodist Church and thanked all those that attended and confirmed that the evening had raised £1,500. The Mayor was pleased to announce that the sum for his charities, Latch and the Alheimers Society, now stands at £8,185.28.

The Mayor formally thanked the Deputy Mayor, the Civic Office and Officers for all their help during his mayoral year.

3. APSE ROADS, HIGHWAYS AND STREET LIGHTING AWARDS

Members were advised that apprentice Michael Davies was awarded the title of Apprentice of the Year at the recent Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) awards. As part of this apprenticeship Michael undertook a range of duties as a Highways Operative and submitted a portfolio charting his work in the department along with his studies at the National Construction College in Birmingham. The Highways Team were also awarded an Excellence in Training Standards Award from the APSE, for the outstanding training opportunities provided by the Highways apprenticeship scheme.

Apprentice Michael Davies, and Gareth Richards (Highways Maintenance Manager) received the award on behalf of the Highways service and in recognition of the achievement. Members wished to place on record their appreciation to all those involved in achieving the award.

4. PETITIONS

The Mayor received the following petitions presented by Members on behalf of local residents and indicated they would be referred to the appropriate directorate for attention.

- (i) In objection to and with grave concerns regarding the prospective planning application that may be made by Miller Argent to expand the open cast mine to the Nant Llesg site - Councillor C. Cuss.
- (ii) Say 'No' to Car Parking Charges at Penallta Park, Coetre Bargoed, Cwm Darren, Sirhowy County Park and Pen-y-Fan Pond - Councillor C.P Mann.

Members were advised that two further petitions had been received, one to Councillor H.A. Andrews and one sent directly to the Council, also against car parking charges at country parks in the Caerphilly Borough. It was confirmed that they would also be referred to the appropriate directorate for attention.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor D. Bolter declared an interest in Agenda Item 8(4) as it relates to the review of the terms of reference of the Caerphilly Homes Task Group. Details are minuted with the respective item.

6. COUNCIL - 11TH MARCH 2014

RESOLVED that the following minutes be approved as correct records and signed by the Mayor.

Council held on 11th March 2014 (minute nos. 1 - 14 on page nos. 1 - 8).

7. PRESENTATION - SOUTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY - FIRE COVER REVIEW 2014

Councillor D.T. Davies (Chairman - South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority) introduced Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) Andy Thomas who gave a verbal update on the Caerphilly Fire Cover Review 2014.

It was noted that the last review had been undertaken in 1996 and given the changes to the service profile since that time and the challenges it faces going forward, the Authority considered it appropriate to undertake a full and fundamental view of its fire cover. Members were advised that all stations had been looked at in order to ensure best value was being provided to the public and communities they serve.

The methodology of the review was explained and included authority profiles, instant call rates, population demographics, dwelling and non-domestic property growth rates and the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation. Using the 'Mosaic Public Sector' software system to analyse the data, 4 key areas were identified for targeted prevention and this data was used to drive the review outcomes.

The three phases of the review were confirmed with Caerphilly, Rhondda Cynnon Taff and Merthyr Tydfil making up phase three of the process. Members noted the extensive consultation process undertaken with each of the unitary authorities areas and the review recommendations made for each phase were outlined.

ACFO Thomas confirmed that the review recommended no change to the service for the Caerphilly Unitary Authority.

Members thanked Assistant Chief Fire Officer Thomas for his presentation and noted the Caerphilly Fire Cover Review 2014.

REPORT REFERRED FROM CABINET

Consideration was given to the following report referred from Cabinet.

8. NEXT STAGES OF THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2015/16 AND 2016/17

The report which was considered and endorsed by Cabinet on 16th April 2014 detailed the proposed next steps in relation to progressing the budget strategy for 2015/16 and 2016/17.

Members were advised that the budget strategy would be taken forward via two main strands in order to achieve the estimated savings requirement of £13.4m. These strands being the delivery of further efficiencies of up to 3% on statutory or essential services and a review of discretionary services.

Members were referred to Appendix 1 of the report which detailed an initial list of discretionary services and were advised that the list presented in the report was subject to two minor amendments, the addition of Urban Renewal to the list and the review of Community Safety as listed to be changed to a Review of Community Safety Officers. These amendments had been reported to and endorsed by Cabinet on 16th of April 2014. Officers requested that any

comments or queries on the list be forwarded to the appropriate Directorate by Friday 25th April 2014.

In order to provide Members with every opportunity to fully scrutinise and comment on the specific proposals coming forward approval was being sought for a series of Special Scrutiny Committee meetings as outlined in section 4.4 of the report together with a Members Seminar to be scheduled on Monday, 19th May 2014.

Members considered the report in detail and it was proposed and seconded that the recommendations from Cabinet as outlined in the report together with the addition of Urban Renewal and the Review of Community Safety being changed to a Review of Community Safety Officers be endorsed. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the report the following recommendations from Cabinet be adopted:-

- (i) subject to the inclusion of Urban Renewal and Review of Community Safety being changed to a Review of Community Safety Officers, the list of discretionary services to be reviewed be approved;
- (ii) a series of Special Scrutiny Committee meetings as set out in paragraph 4.4 of the report be held to consider detailed reports on specific savings proposals.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

9. MEMBERS TRAINING AND SUPPORT

The report having been previously presented to the Standards Committee and Democratic Services Committee outlined improvements to the current Members' training and support arrangements through the implementation of a new scheme of Mandatory, Recommended and Requested training and a suite of training courses under these headings.

The training and development framework was outlined in relation to the core skills, knowledge and competencies required by the different Councillor roles. It was noted that Mandatory training was associated with Member's statutory responsibilities, Audit Committee and regulatory committee membership and committees with personnel functions. Members serving on these committees would receive their mandatory training at least twice per Council term and should a Member fail to undertake any mandatory training their membership of said committee would automatically cease. It was noted that Member's induction training would include both mandatory and recommended elements. Induction training would be delivered within the first month of a new Council and would be offered to Members in the daytime and repeated in the evening in order to maximise Members opportunity to attend.

Recommended training would support Councillors in their various committee roles with attendance dependent on the individual Members specific committee roles. Requested training would continue to follow the already well-established process for identifying Members individual training needs, based on the training questionnaire and resulting training needs analysis conducted every two years. This process would run concurrently with the training and development framework as outlined.

The Officer referred Members to section 8.1 of the report and the consultation responses of the Democratic Services Committee and Standards Committee were outlined.

Members considered the report in detail and it was proposed and seconded that recommendations contained therein be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the report:-

- (i) the introduction of Mandatory Induction, Regulatory, Audit and Personnel Committee Training be approved;
- (ii) the membership of Regulatory, Audit and Personnel Committees be dependent on attending Mandatory Training be approved;
- (iii) the introduction of Mandatory Training be approved;
- (iv) Members commitment to participating in appropriate Recommended Training and completing a Training Needs Analysis undertaken every 2 years be approved;
- (v) those who refuse to attend Mandatory Training or who do not have good reasons for being unable to attend Mandatory Training be reported to the Standards Committee be approved;
- (vi) proposals be developed for appropriate training to be provided to Cabinet Members and Senior Officers to support the scrutiny function.

10. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15

The report detailed the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales' final determinations for 2014/15. It advised that this was the first increase to Member remuneration since 2011 and provided a 0.99% uplift in the basic salary together with a proportionate increase in other payments. The increases to the basic and senior salaries were confirmed and the different levels for the civic salaries were highlighted.

It was recommended that scrutiny committee Co-opted Members payments would remain unchanged at a maximum of 10 days per annum. However, the report proposed that given the increased roles and responsibilities associated with that of the Standards Committee this maximum limit not be applied this committee's lay (Co-opted) Members. Travel and Subsistence allowances would also remain unchanged.

Members were advised that following the introduction of the statutory Family Absence provisions the Panel had determined that a Member is entitled to retain a basic and senior salary when taking a period of family absence. Should a substitute Member be appointed to cover a senior salary position then they would be entitled to a senior salary allowance for the duration of the substitution.

In relation to the foregoing payments, it was noted that any Member or Co-opted Member may forego any part of their remuneration entitlement by independently and voluntarily giving notice in writing to the Chief Executive.

Members noted the determinations of the Independent Remuneration Panel and fully considered the options put forward for local determination. It was moved and seconded that Level 2 as detailed in section 7.1 of the report be approved as the appropriate level of Civic Salary for 2014/15, no allowance payment be made for travel claims for journeys made within Members wards and that recommendations 21.1 (b), 21.1 (c), 21.1 (e) and 21.1 (f) as detailed in the report be approved. By show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the report:-

- (i) Level 2, as detailed in section 7.1 of the report, be set as the appropriate level of Civic Salary for 2014/15;
- (ii) the maximum number of 10 days be payable to co-opted members of the Education for Life Scrutiny Committee be approved;
- (iii) no maximum limit on the number of days payable to co-opted (lay) members of the Standards Committee be approved;
- (iv) no allowance payment be made for travel claims for journeys made within Members wards;
- (v) the Monitoring Officer acts as the 'appropriate officer' for co-opted members serving on the Standards Committee and the Democratic Services Manager acts as the 'appropriate officer' for members serving on the Education for Life Scrutiny Committee;
- (vi) the determinations in relation to Family Absence be noted subject to a further report if it becomes necessary to appoint a substitute senior salary holder.

11. TIMING OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The report sought approval to amend the start time of scrutiny committee meetings in light of the introduction of the committee pre-meetings as part of the recommendations contained in the Scrutiny Improvement Action Plan and provided four options for Members consideration.

Members were advised that the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee had trialed members' pre-meetings with a half hour pre-meeting prior to its last meeting which had been well received. However concerns had been expressed that some Members, for example, those in employment, would not be able to participate in pre-meetings that began prior to 5.00pm.

The practical considerations of changing the start to scrutiny committee meetings were noted and the possible impact on Officers, Facilities Management and Outside Body Representatives due to later or earlier start and finish times were considered.

It was noted that any change in the start time of scrutiny committee would need to be applied consistently across each of the Council's 5 scrutiny committees to ensure that Members, Officers, the Public and Press were clear about the timing of scrutiny committee meetings.

Members fully considered the different options presented and it was moved and seconded that Option 4 as detailed in section 4.6 of the Officers' report be approved. By show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the report : -

- (i) Option 4 as detailed in section 4.6 of the report be approved whereby the pre-meeting for scrutiny committees will be held on the same day as the scrutiny committee from 5.00 p.m. until 5.30 p.m;
- (ii) a 5.30 p.m. start time for all 5 Scrutiny Committee meetings be approved.

12. REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE - CAERPHILLY HOMES TASK GROUP

Councillor D. Bolter declared an interest in that he is a council tenant. As a special dispensation had been previously granted to Councillor Bolter in this regard there was no requirement for him to leave the Chamber.

The report was considered by the Caerphilly Homes Task Group on 16th April 2014 and sought approval to revise its terms of reference.

Members were advised that the recent review and updating of the Council's Constitution had identified that a review of the terms of reference of the Caerphilly Homes Task Group was required. Arising from current governance considerations, advice had been received that the public sector housing scrutiny function must sit within the remit of one of the formally constituted scrutiny committees.

The revised terms of reference as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report was presented to the Caerphilly Homes Task Group for comment as part of the consultation process and as a result of those discussions two minor amendments were requested.

1. Purpose - Item No. 9 - To make recommendations to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee/Cabinet as appropriate and that Tenant Members be represented at the Scrutiny Committee when reports relating to public sector housing are under consideration.
2. Frequency of Meetings - That meetings of the Caerphilly Homes Task Group be held at Penallta House.

Members considered the revised terms of reference as detailed in the report and the amendments recommended by the Caerphilly Homes Task Group and it was moved and seconded that they be approved. By show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the report the revised terms of reference for the Caerphilly Homes Task Group including the aforementioned amendments be approved.

13. IMPLICATIONS OF THE SCHOOL STANDARDS AND ORGANISATION (WALES) ACT 2013 AND SCHOOL ORGANISATION CODE ON THE DETERMINATION OF SCHOOL ORGANISATION PROPOSALS

The report updated Members on changes to the way in which school organisation proposals including those which receive objections are approved and or determined following the implementation of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and associated School Organisation Code which came into effect on 1st October 2013.

Members were advised that following the implementation of Part 3 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, local authorities were now responsible for determining most school organisation proposals including those which receive objections with some exceptions. The new requirements placed on local authorities and the options available in respect of the local decision making process which may be adopted by Council were detailed and the effect of the changes on the 21st Century Schools Programme were noted.

Having regard for the Code and that Cabinet already has extensive experience of school organisation proposals through the 21st Century Schools Programme, the Executive was considered to be appropriately placed to accept this new statutory responsibility.

Members fully considered and noted the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and it was moved and seconded that recommendations contained in the Officer's report

be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the report:-

- (i) the new legislation and associated regulations be noted;
- (ii) the approval and/or determination of school organisation proposals including those which receive objections (except for those that are required to be considered by Welsh Ministers) be a function exercised by Cabinet;
- (iii) the Monitoring Officer be authorised to make the necessary changes to the Scheme of Delegations in the Council's Constitution.

14. QUESTIONS UNDER RULE OF PROCEDURE 10(2)

Consideration was given to the following question submitted under Rule of Procedure 10(2). In accordance with the revisions to the constitution, the answer is also provided.

Living Wage - to the Cabinet Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Reynolds, from Councillor Mrs. A. Blackman

How many of the Council's employees are now receiving the Living Wage and what is the anticipated overall cost to the Council's Budget for the coming financial year 2014/15?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services - Councillor Keith Reynolds

The number of Council employees receiving the Living Wage supplement as at March 2014 is 2059 individuals. This number includes all individuals employed as casuals.

The total cumulative cost to the Council included in the Budget up to and including 2014/15 is £897k.

The meeting closed at 6.20 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 10th June 2014 they were signed by the Mayor.

MAYOR