



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH
ON TUESDAY, 21ST JULY 2009 AT 5:15 PM**

PRESENT:

Councillor J. Taylor - Chairman
Councillor M.E. Sargent - Vice Chairman

Councillors

H.A. Andrews, L. Binding, Mrs. A. Blackman, D Bolter, J.B. Criddle, D.T. Davies, J E. Fussell, Ms. L. Hughes, Mrs. V. Jenkins, G. Jones, K. Lloyd, D.V. Poole, K.V. Reynolds, A.S. Williams, T.J. Williams, J.M. Wilson

Also present:

Cabinet Member Councillor AJ Pritchard

Together with:

P. Evans (Head of Information, Communications, Technology and Property Services), C. Jones (Head of Performance and Policy), L Lucas (Head of Procurement) L Jones (ICT Operations Manager) N. Scammell (Head of Corporate Finance), S Ruddock (Senior Insurance and Risk Officer), J. Jones (Scrutiny Co-ordinator) and G George (Committee Services Manager)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K. Etheridge and S. Jenkins.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor K Lloyd declared an interest in agenda item 7(4) as a member of Hafodrynys Community Centre that had submitted an application for Discretionary Rate Relief.

2. MINUTES - 9TH JUNE 2009

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 9th June 2009 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THIS COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CALL-IN PROCEDURE

No matters had been referred to the Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the call-in

procedure.

4. REPORT BY CABINET MEMBER

The Scrutiny Committee received an oral report from Councillor A J Pritchard regarding the Employers side "take it or leave it" offer earlier this year of 0.5% across the board for NJC staff, with a deadline of 31 May.

The trade unions initially rejected this offer in favour of a 6% uplift, which was similarly rejected.

On 21 May, as part of the negotiations, the trade unions proposed a revised offer:-

- 1.25% increase for scp 4-10
- 1% for all others
- 1 days extra leave 2009/10 (for those on the minimum 20 day entitlement)
- 1 days extra leave 2010/11 (for those on the minimum 20 day entitlement)
- with some other bits and pieces on allowances

Local Government Employers side had, as yet, not responded and appeared to be sticking to the original offer.

It was clear that should there be no movement from the Employers side, then it would be the trade unions intention to ballot for strike action.

All authorities have been written to individually by the trade unions asking for support. The position in England was somewhat different to Wales where there were English Councils who had opted out of collective bargaining arrangements. This was not the case in Wales. The WLGA was asking for all authorities to work through them to ensure there was a co-ordinated Welsh perspective.

Members will be updated as the position develops.

5. CABINET REPORTS

The Cabinet report listed on the agenda (Twinning Arrangements) had not been requested to be brought forward for review at the meeting.

6. SCRUTINY REPORTS

Consideration was given to the following Scrutiny reports.

7. PRESENTATION ON THE RESULTS OF THE FEBRUARY/MARCH 2009 HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

Members considered the findings of the 2009 Household Survey that drew out the key results on overall levels of satisfaction with council services and perceptions of the quality of council services.

The results of this survey provided data for key performance indicators and were fed into Service Improvement Plans and Corporate Improvement Plan of the council. It would help to identify perceived areas of strength and weakness in council services, highlight areas of change in this level of service provision over the last two years, provide data for further

comparison in future years and help determine future priorities.

Members noted the survey results and the uses to which the data collected would be put. They also requested that Newsline and the Councils website contain contact details for members. This request would be discussed at the Members Services and Development Working Group meeting.

8. INSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS PRESENTATION

The committee welcomed Sue Ruddock Senior Insurance and Risk Officer who was present to give a presentation on Insurance and Risk Management. Her presentation covered:-

- Structure of the section
- Extent of Department responsibility and Risk Exposure.
- Main Functions of the Department
- Risk Standard and Identification.
- Liability Policy Excess History
- Total Cost of Insurance Risk.
- Claim Fund Evaluation.
- Future Cost Challenges
- Objectives

Members thanked her for the presentation.

9. GOVERNMENT CONNECT SURE EXTRANET (GCSX)

The committee noted the achievements made to date on implementing and using the Government Connect Secure extranet (GCSx) network within the council and the future plans for increased use by the council in working more efficiently and securely with partner organisations.

The new method of data sharing relied on using the GCSx network instead of using removable media such as CD/DVD. This would reduce the risk of data loss in future. The network also provided the means by which recently developed protocols for information sharing between Health, Police and the Authority, as a result of the work recently commissioned by the local service board (LSB), for specific client groups, can be achieved.

Members noted the information and asked for a progress reporting six months on the business benefits to the information sharing partners.

10. PROPOSAL FOR TASK AND FINISH GROUP - LOCAL PROCUREMENT

The committee considered a proposal to establish a joint task and finish group with Newport City Council to review local procurement by Gwent NHS Trust.

It is proposed to take advantage of the Welsh Assembly Government's announcement of the second year of its Scrutiny Development funding opportunity and submit a joint bid with Newport City Council for a joint task and finish group.

The committee, subject to a successful bid to the Scrutiny Development Fund, supported the proposal to establish a joint Task and Finish Group with Newport City Council to look at Gwent NHS Trust local procurement.

11. INFORMATION ON WELSH LANGUAGE COSTS FOR CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

It was agreed to place this item on the agenda for the next meeting for discussion

12. INFORMATION ITEMS

Members received and noted the following information items:

- (a) Delivering on the Equalities Agenda;
- (b) Local Service Board - minutes of meeting held on 19th May and 23 June 2009;
- (c) Discretionary Rate Relief applications;
- (d) Write Off Debts 2008/2009;
- (e) Treasury Management and Capital Financing Prudential Indicators outturn 2008/2009.

13. REQUESTS FOR AN ITEM TO BE INCLUDED ON THE NEXT AVAILABLE AGENDA

Members requested reports on the following items to be placed on the agenda for the next appropriate meeting.

- Assessment of Insurance risks by each directorate - Councillor V Jenkins

Approved as a correct record, and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 29th September 2009, they were signed by the Chairman.

The meeting closed at pm.

CHAIRMAN