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For all enquiries relating to this agenda please contact Emma Sullivan
(Tel: 01443 864420 Email: sullie@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Date: 6th April 2022

This meeting will be recorded and made available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items. Therefore the images/audio of those individuals speaking will be publicly available to all via the recording on the Council website at www.caerphilly.gov.uk

You are welcome to use Welsh at the meeting, a minimum notice period of 3 working days is required should you wish to do so.

Dear Sir/Madam,

A digital meeting of **Council** will be held via Microsoft Teams on **Tuesday, 12th April, 2022 at 5.00 pm** to consider the matters contained in the following agenda.

Yours faithfully,

Christina Harrhy
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A G E N D A

Pages

- 1 To receive apologies for absence.
- 2 Mayor's Announcements.
- 3 To receive petitions under Rule of Procedure 28(3).
- 4 Presentation of Awards.

A greener place Man gwyrddach



5 Declarations of Interest.

Councillors and Officers are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest(s) in respect of any item of business on this agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Officers.

To approve and sign the following minutes: -

- | | | |
|---|--|---------|
| 6 | Council held on 16th March 2022. | 1 - 12 |
| 7 | Special Council held on 24th March 2022. | 13 - 16 |
| 8 | To receive and to answer questions received under Rule of Procedure 10(4). | |

To receive and consider the following reports: -

- | | | |
|----|--|---------|
| 9 | Members Induction 2022. | 17 - 28 |
| 10 | Changes to the Family Absence Protocol for Members of Local Authorities. | 29 - 36 |

Circulation:

All Members And Appropriate Officers

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COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON WEDNESDAY, 16TH MARCH 2022 AT 5.00PM

PRESENT:

Councillor C. Andrews - Mayor

Councillors:

M. Adams, E.M. Aldworth, A. Angel, P. Bevan, C. Bezzina, C. Bishop, A. Collis, D. Cushing, C. Cuss, W. David, M. Davies, T.D. Davies, N. Dix, C. Elsbury, K. Etheridge, M. Evans, A. Farina-Childs, C. Forehead, E. Forehead, J.E. Fussell, N. George, C. Gordon, R. Gough, L. Harding, A. Hussey, M. James, L. Jeremiah, G. Johnston, B. Jones, S. Kent, G. Kirby, A. Leonard, P. Leonard, C. Mann, P. Marsden, B. Miles, S. Morgan, T. Parry, L. Phipps, D. Preece, J. Pritchard, J. Ridgewell, J. Roberts, R. Saralis, J. Scriven, J. Simmonds, S. Skivens, E. Stenner, J. Taylor, A. Whitcombe, R. Whiting, L. Whittle, T. Williams, W. Williams.

Together with:-

C. Harrhy (Chief Executive), R. Tranter (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), D. Street (Corporate Director Social Services and Housing), R. Edmunds (Corporate Director Education and Corporate Services), M.S. Williams (Corporate Director Economy and Environment), R. Tranter (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), G. Jenkins (Deputy Director Children's Services), L. Lane (Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer), E. Sullivan (Senior Committee Services Officer)

Also Present:

P. Diamond (Regional Partnership Board Manager and M. Gunter (Domiciliary Care Worker)

RECORDING, FILMING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS

The Chief Executive reminded those present that the meeting was being filmed but would not be live streamed, however 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 J. Bevan, S. Cook, K. Dawson, A. Gair, D. Hardacre, D. Harse, D. Havard, A. Higgs, V. James, G. Oliver, B. Owen, D. Price, M. E Sargent, G. Simmonds, J. Stone, C. Thomas and B. Zaplatynski.

2. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor referenced her recent attendance at the Gwent Your Voice, Your Choice Awards and congratulated all the successful groups recognised during the event which included two groups from Caerphilly County Borough.

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

Councillor Kevin Etheridge presented a petition for the Reinstatement of School Crossing Patrol at Blackwood Primary School on behalf of local residents in the interests of the safety and wellbeing of Primary and Nursery Children.

Councillor Kevin Etheridge also presented a petition from residents from Waunllwyn Crescent seeking the removal of the paved area and items on Waunllwyn Crescent following anti-social behaviour.

Councillor Andrew Whitcombe presented a petition from Cwmcarn residents to stop the GLJ Expansion Plan and to Say No to the Heavy Fraction Processor.

The Mayor accepted the petitions which would be actioned in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

4. PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

The Mayor confirmed that there were two awards to present to Council.

The Corporate Director for Social Services and Housing introduced Melony Gunter and advised Council as they were aware Domiciliary Care Workers often went above and beyond in the course of their duties but in this instance, Melony was not only prepared to help but to provide lifesaving assistance, when on the way to a call her car was flagged down by a member of the public looking for help for someone who had collapsed with a cardiac arrest. Melony provided support until the paramedics arrived and the huge difference that her actions made to this individual, who made a full recovery, cannot be underestimated.

Ms Gunter thanked Council for their kind words and expressed her appreciation for the invitation to attend Council.

The Mayor on behalf of Caerphilly County Borough Council thanked Melony for her life saving actions and recognised her bravery and compassion.

The Cabinet Member for Learning and Leisure advised Council that he was delighted to be able to introduce the award to Caerphilly Leisure Services. The Gold Award for Most Improve Member Experience was presented for the greatest increase in Net Promotor Score regarding Member Experience across the past year. The Cabinet Member congratulated the Team on this truly fantastic achievement as a testament to their hard work and dedication to deliver an exceptional members experience in a challenging year.

The Mayor thanked the Cabinet Member and asked Council to join with her in recognising the amazing efforts of the Leisure Services Team.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received at the start or during the course of the meeting.

6. MINUTES - COUNCIL – 26th JANUARY 2022

RESOLVED that the minutes of Council held on 16th November 2021 (minute nos. 1-12) be approved as a correct record.

7. MINUTES – SPECIAL COUNCIL – 24TH FEBRUARY 2022

RESOLVED that the minutes of Special Council held on 24th February 2022 (minute nos. 1-6) be approved as a correct record.

8. TO RECEIVE AND TO ANSWER QUESTIONS RECEIVED UNDER RULE OF PROCEDURE 10(4)

Question from Councillor S. Morgan to the Cabinet Member for Sustainability, Planning and Fleet, Councillor A. Whitcombe.

Can the Cabinet Member for Sustainability, Planning and Fleet outline what the Council is doing to tackle climate change?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Sustainability, Planning and Fleet.

We have made significant strides to achieving a reduction to Co2 emissions across the broad range of services. Since 2012, we have reduced carbon emissions from buildings and street lighting by more than 13,000 tonnes annually. In June 2019 this Council declared a Climate Emergency with cross party support. In November 2020 the Council approved our Decarbonisation Strategy setting out a detailed action plan for activities to take the Council to net zero by 2030. In accordance with Welsh Government legislation, we completed our CO2 baselining in October. This has given us a clearer understanding of where our emissions come from and what we need to do to tackle them.

We have implemented many changes to ensure we tackle one of the biggest issues of our time. Whether that has also been building new Carbon Net Zero homes, or investing in electric cars and charging points, we have acted with positive action.

To elaborate further, our planned construction of council homes will be amongst the most carbon free and have many innovative features to save energy and will be the pre-eminent homes in terms of energy efficiency. That efficiency not only benefits the environment but will have a significant impact on the fiscal outgoings for our tenants. Vital in these times of rising fuel costs.

We continue to reimagine our vehicle fleet replace fossil fuel vehicles with electric or low emission vehicles. Challenges remain in terms of our HGV and refuse fleet and examinations of alternatives needs to progress.

The Council has engaged with two substantial wind farm organisations and has entered into in depth studies of a solar farm either to be developed in partnership or by the authority alone.

The Cabinet Member explained that he had detailed notes that detailed a wide range of initiatives including community tree planting, carbon literacy training etc and he would, if Members were interested, be happy to circulate after the meeting.

9. NOTICE OF MOTION – SCHOOL CROSSING PATROLS POLICY

Consideration was given to the Notice of Motion which was received from Councillor Kevin Etheridge.

It was noted that the notice of motion has been considered by the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on the 8th February 2022 and had not been supported.

Councillor Etheridge outlined his Notice of Motion which requested a review of the School Crossing Patrols process undertaken by Caerphilly County Borough Council when a crossing patrol vacancy arises after the existing post holder has left or retired. He believed that the evaluation does not consider various factors including the number of entrances to a school, engagement and consultation with schools, parents and governors and concentrated on main entrances only.

Councillor Etheridge referenced an issue within his own ward which had keenly felt the withdrawal of the services, Blackwood Primary School. At the time of its evaluation only 87% of children were in attendance with many more not crossing at the survey location, which he considered did not provide an accurate picture for the assessment.

The Corporate Director for Economy and Communities confirmed that Blackwood Primary School had been offered a reassessment and Officers were awaiting a response from them. The assessment process was outlined, and Council noted that the assessment area is undertaken at the main crossing point, usually within 50m of the school entrance and for most schools the crossing point is generally at one location. It was noted that the adopted approach follows National Road Safety Guidelines and scoring matrix and the Council does not deviate from this guidance. The Corporate Director also confirmed that most local authorities applied these national guidelines.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport provided an update on the comments of the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee and expressed the opinion that the call for a review had not been made in the case, as the motion seemed to be very much focused on a single specific school rather providing a borough wide picture, a wider evidence base he felt, may have garnered more support for the motion but there was nothing within the motion as presented that illustrated where the current policy was lacking and how deviating from National Guidelines would accomplish increased safety. He also saw no evidence to support the development of a bespoke methodology and policy just for Caerphilly.

A Member referred to a similar case within their ward and referenced what he also considered to be a lack of consultation with the school and residents and felt that this was the important issue in this debate, and he would want to see consultation on the assessment process enhanced and would therefore welcome a review and would support the motion.

A Member also expressed concern in relation to pupil safety and the lack of consultation with parents on the safe crossing of children going into schools and so would support this request for a review.

Reference was then made to crossing criteria in terms of this notion of motion, and what seemed to be a very localised issue, the Member went on to summarise the various other programmes that feed into the Council's wider road safety programmes and initiatives, including the active

travel plan and parking enforcement around schools and asked Council to note that crossing patrols were not the only way to ensure children's safety when getting to and from school.

Members noted the impact of irresponsible parking and agreed that they would like to see wider traffic enforcement to allow the Council to tackle these concerns. It was noted that legislation was currently being developed to address these issues.

In closing the debate Councillor Etheridge emphasised that he was only calling for a review of the policy which in his opinion did not fully engage with parents and schools.

Following consideration and discussion it was moved and seconded that the notice of motion be supported and by way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation and in noting that there for 15 For, 36 Against and 1 Abstention the motion was declared lost.

RESOLVED that the motion not be supported.

10. NOTICE OF MOTION – STANDING UP FOR RESPONSIBLE TAX CONDUCT

Consideration was given to the notice of motion received from Councillor P. Marsden and supported by Councillors J. Pritchard, E Stenner, N. George, S. Cook, R. Whiting, C. Gordon, A. Whitcombe, W. Williams, G. Johnston, J. Simmonds, C. Andrews, D. Harse, L. Phipps, S. Morgan, D. Preece, L. Jeremiah, G. Kirby, A. Leonard, P. Leonard, B. Miles, C. Thomas, L. Harding, K. Etheridge, C. Mann, J. Taylor, J. Roberts, T. Parry, C. Bishop, M. Davies and A. Angel.

It was noted that in accordance with Rule of Procedure 11(3) of the constitution, the Mayor had agreed to allow the motion to be dealt with, without being first discussed at an overview and scrutiny committee in order to expedite business.

Councillor Marsden outlined her Notice of Motion which she advised Council had received cross party support. The Motion called on Council to: -

1. Approve the Councils for Fair Tax Declaration.
2. Lead by example and demonstrate good practice in our tax conduct as a council.
3. Ensure contractors implement IR35 robustly and pay a fair share of employment taxes.
4. Not use offshore vehicles for the purchase of land and property, especially where this leads to reduced payments of stamp duty.
5. Undertake due diligence to ensure that not-for-profit structures are not being used inappropriately as an artificial device to reduce the payment of tax and business rates.
6. Demand clarity on the ultimate beneficial ownership of suppliers and their consolidated profit & loss position.
7. Promote Fair Tax Mark certification for any business in which we have a significant stake and where corporation tax is due.
8. Support Fair Tax Week events in the area and celebrate the tax contribution made by responsible businesses who say what they pay with pride.
9. Support calls for urgent reform of EU and UK law to enable local authorities to better penalise poor tax conduct and reward good tax conduct through their procurement policies.

The Leader emphasised that paying tax should not be presented as a burden, it enabled the provision of services such as education, health and social care, providing flood defences, policing and defence and more action was needed to ensure that business across the UK demonstrate good tax conduct.

The Leader of the Plaid Cymru Group echoed the sentiments voiced within the Notice of Motion and referenced the proposed the inclusion of an additional point encouraging the public to exercise individual accountability and avoid organisations where tax avoidance has taken place.

The Leader apologised for the omission which had been neglected due to a timing issue and agreed that an additional point (Point 10) would be added to express the concerns raised. It was agreed that the public should be encouraged to consider what action they can take as individuals against organisations where tax avoidance has taken place, for example on principle choosing not to use those businesses or services.

Following consideration and discussion it was moved and seconded that the notice of motion subject to the amended wording be supported and by way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the amended notice of motion be supported.

11. NOTICE OF MOTION – UKRAINE

Consideration was given to the Notice of Motion received from Councillor P. Marsden and supported by Councillors A. Gair, L. Harding, C. Bezzina, S. Morgan, G. Kirby, D. Price, C. Thomas, G. Johnston, D. Havard, J. Simmonds, V. James, A. Collis, E. Aldworth, A. Hussey, R. Saralis, W. Williams, M. Adams, C. Andrews, M. Evans, K. Etheridge, C. Mann, J. Taylor, M. Davies, A. Angel, C. Bishop, J. Roberts, T. Parry.

It was noted that in accordance with Rule of Procedure 11(3) of the constitution, the Mayor had agreed to allow the motion to be dealt with, without being first discussed at an overview and scrutiny committee in order to expedite business.

Councillor Marsden outlined her notice of motion which Members noted had received cross party support, the motion asked that Council: -

- A. Recognises the suffering and resolve of the people of Ukraine, and those with close links to Ukraine.
- B. Condemns the unprovoked and unacceptable military attack against Ukraine by the Russian Federation and Belarus.
- C. Offers support if needed, through existing Council services, to residents with Ukrainian citizenship, or those with family members in Ukraine and affected areas.
- D. Welcomes the Welsh Government's commitment to accept refugees from Ukraine and resolves to accept and support refugees within the County Borough.
- E. Urges the UK Government to show compassion by waiving visa requirements for Ukrainian citizens seeking refuge from the military conflict.
- F. Supports moves by pension funds to divest from Russian linked companies.

Councillor D. Preece wished it noted that he had supported the notice of motion, but his name had not been recorded within the report and appendix, his support for the motion was noted.

A Member raised three points of concern in relation to the notice of motion, although he expressed his full support for the motion, he would be seeking clarification from the Chief Executive as to how the offer of support would be funded and how much funding would local authorities be receiving and finally how many refugees would Caerphilly County Borough be accommodating. He further queried if there were enough staff and provision in place to meet their needs, would children's services be involved and will be Council be undertaking any vetting such as DBS checks?

The Leader confirmed that funding would be a Welsh Government matter, however the Member must appreciate that this was a very fluid situation, furthermore all 22 authorities had agreed to see what could be accomplished on a regional platform to support Ukrainian refugees with their safety being of paramount importance. Council noted that normal protocols would be followed in terms of housing needs and directives from both UK and Welsh Government would also need to be put in place. The Leader emphasised that the important issue here was to stand in solidarity with Ukraine at this terrible time. Concerning the points raised the Leader confirmed that she would provide all Members with updates as soon as information became available.

A Members expressed concern with regard to the wording of points B and C, within point B with reference to Belarus and the wording of point C as he felt that a wider group of people not just Ukraine citizens were experiencing the terrible impact of the war and should be able to all on support.

The Leader agreed that she would accept a change to the wording of point C but would not amend any further points. Point C be rephased as: 'Offers support if needed, through existing Council services, all those with family members in Ukraine and affected areas', removing the reference to citizens.

Following considered and debate and by way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation the amended notice of motion was unanimously supported.

RESOLVED that the amended notice of motion be supported.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

12. REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP BOARD – POPULATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Consideration was given to the report which sought Council approval for the Caerphilly County Borough Council, Population Needs Assessment (PNA) prior to its submission to Welsh Government. Council was asked to note that the Population Needs Assessment is a statutory document required by Welsh Government once per electoral cycle. Members were advised that Local Authorities are required under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 to work in partnership with Health Boards to produce a regional PNA, which sets out the extent to which there are people in the area of the assessment who need care and support.

Members noted that the first PNA was approved across the region on the 1st April 2017 and formed the basis for the regional Area Plan which set out the partnership working and delivery of services in response to each core theme identified in the population needs assessment.

Council was asked to note that the PNA had identified and reinforced existing areas of need and priorities for action including continued support to looked after children and a reduction in out of county placements, ageing population, loneliness amongst older people and the increase in people living with dementia. Carers and the need for access to information, respite and mental health support, the need for emotional wellbeing and mental health support across the region. To mitigate the impact of COVID 19 pandemic and long covid and finally to support

vulnerable groups including people living with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, and autism.

It was noted that citizen engagement was a key requirement under the Social Services and Wellbeing Act and the population needs assessment had been developed and included qualitative data from a range of citizen groups.

The Mayor welcomed Mr Phil Diamond, Regional Partnership Board Manager to the meeting. Mr Diamond outlined the collaborative work that had taken place on the population needs assessment and its links to national strategies and partnership working.

Members fully supported the needs assessment and referenced section 5.4 of the report and emphasised the need to support the mental health of young adults who had experienced isolation and lack of socialisation because of the pandemic.

It was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained in the Officer's report be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the needs identified in the regional Population Needs Assessment be considered and accurate reflection of the local and regional needs and the Population Needs Assessment be endorsed.

13. NATIONAL COLLABORATIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR WELSH (LOCAL AUTHORITY) ADOPTION AND FOSTERING SERVICES.

Consideration was given to the report which sought Council approval to establish collaborative governance arrangements for the National Adoption Service (NAS) and Foster Wales (FW) through the creation of a Joint Committee supported by the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA).

Council noted that the National Adoption Service had been in place since 2014, hosted by Cardiff Council on behalf of all 22 local authorities. A review undertaken in 2018 recommended that the governance arrangements need to be strengthened to support the hosting and service delivery relationship and both the WLGA and Association of Directors of Social Services Cymru agreed with the recommendation that a Joint Committee should be established. During this same period Foster Wales was established and as the links between the two services are very clear it was seen as an opportunity to expand the remit of the proposed Joint Committee to include Foster Wales.

Members were advised that the Joint Committee would be comprised of Council Members and would oversee the production of annual reports, work programmes and budgets for the Central Support Team for both the National Adoption Services and Foster Wales, the funding for which would be top sliced from the RSG and administered through the WLGA.

Members thanked the Officer for his report and clarification was sought on the cost to the Council, did the Joint Committee mean that the responsibility for fostering/adoption provision was now out of Council hands and why Cardiff Council were chosen to host. The Officer confirmed that Cardiff Council had been selected by Welsh Government approximately 5/6 years ago and the arrangement stays in place. He reassured Members that provision stayed with the Council and there were no cost implications as funding was top sliced from the RSG and administered by WLGA.

The Chief Executive confirmed that although not detailed within the report the Head of Financial Services and Section 151 Officer had been consulted and was happy with the content.

Following consideration and discussion it was moved and seconded that the recommendation contained in the Officer's report be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that: -

1. The proposed arrangements for the National Adoption Service and Foster Wales through the establishment of the Joint Committee facilitated by the WLGA be approved.
2. The signing of the Joint Agreement be approved.

14. PUBLICATION OF THE PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2022/23

Consideration was given to the report which sought Council approval for the publication of the Authority's Pay Policy Statement 2022/23.

Council noted that the Pay Policy Statement is a statement of fact and contains the fully details of the remuneration position for the Council for 2022/23. It was a legislative requirement that this information is published on an annual basis by the 31st March each year.

Following consideration and discussion it was moved and seconded that the recommendation contained in the Officer's report be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation and in noting there were 41 For and 2 Abstentions this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that the publication of the Pay Policy Statement 2022/23 (Version 11) to the Council's website be agreed.

15. ROUND UP OF THE YEAR PRESENTATION

The Chief Executive introduced the presentation and advised Council that one of her responsibilities is to lead and manager the staff across the organisation and as the Authority approached the end of another financial year it was an opportune moment to update Council on what has been another challenging 12 months for the organisation as a whole.

Council was invited to view a video compilation that highlighted the many services that staff have delivered over the year that saw the Authority move from operating within an emergency pandemic response and gradually transitioning into recovery, moving slowly out of the coronavirus pandemic. The Chief Executive advised Council that despite the challenges Team Caerphilly had excelled and proven, once again to be flexible, resilient, and adaptable. The Council had responded with a focus upon people and place, refocusing and reframing services to meet the changing needs of communities. Reference was made to the challenges presented by the winter's storms and the way in which the Emergency Response Team rose to those challenges was highlighted.

The Chief Executive confirmed that the multi-million-pound place shaping framework was also embedded during this period and significant process was being made across the corporate plan priority reviews.

The Council had continued to keep its 600 plus services operation each and every day. This commitment had not gone unnoticed with the Authority being recognised externally by peers for a wide range of achievements at a number of prestigious awards.

On a personal level the Chief Executive expressed her pride in the depth and breadth of what had been achieved by so many in the face of such significant adversity and advised Members of her admiration for the passion displayed by such a fantastic team.

The Chief Executive then introduced each of the Corporate Directors who highlighted the key successes of their own Directorates.

The Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services highlighted the key areas for his directorate and confirmed that over £30m of 21st Century Schools projects were progressing though to the decision-making process, a Workforce Development Strategy, a Wellbeing Strategy and a Staff Benefit and Recognition Scheme had been introduced. Agile working had been further embedded across the organisation, a borough wide antenatal to 7 years early support system had been introduced, an Inclusion Compendium and Enablement and Progression Framework had also been introduced. Together with these successes Council was asked to note that there had been significant investment into furthering Welsh Medium provision, over £5m invested into the expansion of Childcare provision across Caerphilly, the multi-million pound EdTech programme had been rolled out across schools and the Community Empowerment Fund had been developed for Members.

The Corporate Director of Social Services and Housing highlighted the key areas for his directorate and confirmed that the £260m Welsh Housing Quality Standard programme had been completed, the Empty Homes Strategy has been launched and the Council had delivered 16 new Council homes via S106 Agreement with Llanmoor, the first new Council homes in 19 years. The Council had supported 1,652 unpaid carers by administering grants, supported hundreds of residents to return home from hospital providing in excess of 442,340 hours of care and finally the Corporate Director highlighted the opening of the state-of-the-art facility 'Ty Pawb' in Bargoed, providing mental health and therapeutic services for looked after children.

The Corporate Director for Economy and Environment highlighted the key areas for his directorate and confirmed that the Council had completed the development of new high-quality business units at Ty Du and the Lawns, Rhymney, the first new Council Units delivered in over 30 years. Successfully reopened the Cwmcarn Forest Drive following a programme of significant investment to resurface and reinstate the drive. The flagship reuse shop in Penallta had also been completed. In relation to the air pollution issue in Hafodyrnys, the Corporate Director confirmed that the demolition of 23 homes which would improve the air quality in this area, a new state of the art fitness suite had been opened in Newbridge Leisure Centre and an Athletics Hub in Oakdale, 3G pitch at Idris Davies School and Hockey Hub at Sue Noakes had all been opened during the past 12 months.

The Chief Executive recognised the fantastic achievements that had happened over the last 12 months and in concluding the presentations emphasised the any opportunities to come as the organisation moves forward in its contact strive for excellence.

The Leader of Council thanked the Chief Executive and Corporate Management Team for the video and presentations and asked Council to take a moment to reflect on the collective efforts of the whole organisation which the presentation brought to vividly to life. The Leader placed on record her thanks to all the staff of Caerphilly County Borough Council and formally recognised the power and impact of what Team Caerphilly could achieve when working together as one.

Members placed on record their thanks to the staff of Caerphilly County Borough Council and agreed that the presentation had brought into sharp focus how hard each and every person had worked. Members expressed their appreciation for the dedication of staff and particular reference was made to the free-school meals deliver service as an outstanding achievement and the finest example of Team Caerphilly in action.

Members congratulated staff on the successes achieved and were mindful that all this had taken place whilst still delivering day-to-day services without disruption. The work of Highway Services was then recognised, and the Member applauded the renewal work that had taken place in the Nelson area, which had been completed through the night with an absolute minimum of disruption to residents.

Members also placed on record their thanks to Refuse and Waste Management Services, School Staff, Domiciliary Carers, Residential Care Workers who had worked on the front lines throughout the pandemic to ensure the health and safety of our service users.

The Chief Executive expressed her gratitude to Members for their kind words and advised Council that she would personally ensure that those messages were communicated to all members of staff.

The presentation was noted.

The meeting closed at 19:25pm

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 12th April 2022 they were signed by the Mayor.

MAYOR

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COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON THURSDAY 24TH MARCH 2022 AT 5.00PM

PRESENT:

Councillor C. Andrews - Mayor

Councillors:

M. Adams, A. Angel, C. Bishop, C. Cuss, W. David, T.D. Davies, N. Dix, C. Elsbury, K. Etheridge, M. Evans, A. Farina-Childs C. Forehead, E. Forehead, A. Gair, N. George, C. Gordon, R. Gough, L. Harding, D. Havard, A. Hussey, V. James, G. Johnston, B. Jones, S. Kent, G. Kirby, A. Leonard, P. Leonard, P. Marsden, B. Miles, B. Owen, S. Morgan, T. Parry, L. Phipps, D. Preece, J. Pritchard, J. Ridgewell, J. Roberts, R. Saralis, J. Simmonds, E. Stenner, J. Taylor, C. Thomas, A. Whitcombe, R. Whiting, L. Whittle, T. Williams, W. Williams, B. Zaplatynski.

Together with:-

Officers: C. Harrhy (Chief Executive), D. Street (Corporate Director Social Services and Housing), L. Lane (Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer), L. Rawlins (Armed Forces Liaison Officer), H. Lancaster (Senior Communications Officer), K. Peters (Policy Manager), E. Sullivan (Senior Committee Services Officer)

REPRESENTING THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION:

M. Jones MBE, K. Terry, A. Williams, A. Lesley and G. Hill.

RECORDING, FILMING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS

The Chief Executive reminded those present that the meeting was being filmed but would not be live streamed, however 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 J. Bevan, P. Bevan, A. Collis, S. Cook, D. Cushing, K. Dawson, M. Davies, J. Fussell, D. Hardacre, D. Harse, A. Higgs, M. James, C. Mann, G. Oliver, D. Poole, D. Price, M. E Sargent, J. Scriven, G. Simmonds, S. Skivens, J. Stone, and B. Zaplatynski and R. Tranter (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), R. Edmunds (Corporate Director Education and Corporate Services) and M.S. Williams (Corporate Director Economy and Environment).

In noting the apologies for absence, the Mayor made specific reference to those received from Councillor Alan Higgs and Councillor Colin Mann.

Council was asked to note that Councillor Alan Higgs, Armed Forces Champion was unwell with Covid-19 and so would not be in attendance. Councillor Higgs had been tireless in support of the Armed Forces during his time as Armed Forces Champion and had very much wanted to be part of this evening's proceedings.

The Mayor also asked Council to note that Councillor Colin Mann, Leader of the Plaid Cymru Group was attending a family funeral and had expressed his regret at not been able to be present this evening, however Councillor John Taylor would be speaking on behalf of the Plaid Cymru Group later in the proceedings.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of Interest were received from Councillors K. Etheridge, D. Havard, A. Hussey and G. Johnston who declared a person interest in relation to Agenda Item No. 3 – To Award the Freedom of Caerphilly County Borough to the Royal British Legion in that there are Members of the Royal British Legion. As this was a personal interest only there was no requirement for them to leave the meeting for the Freedom of the Borough Award.

3. TO AWARD THE FREEDOM OF CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH TO THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

The Mayor welcomed Mr K. Terry, the Royal British Legion's Membership Council Representative for Wales, Mr. Alan Williams from the South East Wales District, Mr M. Jones MBE, Chair of Gwent County and Mr. G. Hill to this special evening.

The Mayor addressed Council and the representatives of the Royal British Legion and asked Council to note that last year the Royal British Legion reached a significant milestone in their impressive history when they celebrated their official centenary.

During the past 100 years they have built and enduring legacy by providing invaluable support to our Armed Forces across the length and breadth of the UK. The Mayor expressed her pride in being able to attend Armed Forces Celebrations across the county borough and witnessed first hand the integral part played by the RBL in these events.

On behalf of the Council and all residents across Caerphilly County Borough, she thanked the RBL for their tireless support, dedication and outstanding fundraising efforts that had benefitted so many over the past century.

The Mayor was honoured to grant the Freedom of Caerphilly County Borough to the Royal British Legion and she was sure that every Member of this Authority agreed this as fitting recognition of the outstanding contribution they make to our society every single day.

The Mayor then introduced the Leader of Council, Councillor Philippa Marsden. The Leader echoed the words and sentiments expressed and agreed that this was indeed a fitting tribute to this wonderful organisation and fully supported the granting of this prestigious honour. The RBL have been a constant reassuring presence for so many people over the past century and was sure that they would continue to be so for many more years to come, offering the same amazing level of support to those people who need it most.

The Leader referenced the important role of local branches and in particular thanked Mr Ken Terry for his part in Armed Forces Day Celebrations over the years, these events would not have been possible without his support and guidance.

The Mayor then introduced the Chief Executive, Mrs Christina Harrhy. The Chief Executive thanked both the Mayor and Leader for perfectly expressing the privilege and pride the Council left in bestowing this honour to the Royal British Legion. The support that they provide to veteran individuals and their families was priceless. Services such as the Royal British Legion play a pivotal role in ensuring the rights of the Armed Forces Community are protected and are at the forefront of providing help and support to those who have fought for us and our freedom. Which seemed particularly poignant today as we witness the horrific images of the war in Ukraine.

The Chief Executive expressed what an honour it was to witness the huge effort that takes place locally to fundraise and the detailed planning that takes place each year for the Armistice events in so many of our towns. She also expressed her pride in the residents of the borough who are so supportive of each of these causes.

The Chief Executive wished the Royal British Legion continued success and felt that there was no doubt that they would continue to thrive for the next 100 years and beyond and offered her heartfelt congratulations on this richly deserved honour.

The Mayor called on Councillor John Taylor on behalf of the Plaid Cymru Group. Councillor Taylor passed on the apologies of Councillor Mann for not being able to attend this evening and echoed the comments of the Mayor, Leader and Chief Executive. Councillor Taylor on behalf of the Plaid Cymru Group thanked the Royal British Legion for all that they do to support our ex-service men and women, for the help they provide to the Armed Forces Community, their charitable endeavours and for the amazing efforts they make every year in commemorating Armistice Day.

The Mayor then called on Councillor Kevin Etheridge on behalf of the Independents Group. Councillor Etheridge, on behalf of his Group, expressed his pride and privilege in being able to honour the Royal British Legion with this the highest award the Council can make.

To accept the Freedom of the Borough Award, the Mayor called on Mr Ken Terry, Wales Representative on the Royal British Legion's Membership Council.

Mr Terry as both a resident of Caerphilly County Borough and Wales Representative to the Royal British Legion expressed his pleasure in being able to receive such a prestigious honour on behalf of the Charity.

The RBL has a long-standing friendship and strong working relationship with Caerphilly County Borough Council, which has been truly commendable at ensuring local armed forces personnel, veterans and their families receive the support they need. Working together Caerphilly and the RBL have celebrated, commemorated and remembered the contribution of our armed forces in conflicts and in peace-keeping duties around the world.

Mr Terry explained that the Legion was formed in the aftermath of the most destructive war the world had ever seen and brought together four ex-servicemen's organisation under one umbrella. The very first Poppy Appeal back in November 1921 raised £106,000, which would equate to approximately £5.3m today. Since then, the Poppy Appeal has been an annual opportunity for communities to show their support.

The people of Caerphilly County Borough are incredible supporters of the armed forces communities and Mr Terry expressed his sincere thanks for their on-going support.

Council noted how over the last 100 years the Royal British Legion had reinforced their charitable aims of welfare, campaigning and remembrance. Nationally responding to around 100,000 requests every year and spending £1m every week on care, with each and everyone resulting in a life changing outcome for that individual or family. The last 2 years the RBL have

supported the nations response to Covid-19 by building nightingale hospitals, running vaccinations centres, supporting ambulance crews and maintaining the availability of PPE.

As the Royal British Legion approach their 101st Anniversary, it is under no illusions that their work is done, the charity will stand ready to continue to hold governments to account and to step in and support where there is a need worldwide and would continue to uphold remembrance as a social good that is relevant for all communities. The Charity stands ready and prepared for the challenges to come into the next one hundred years.

Mr Terry on behalf of the Royal British Legion thanked Caerphilly for this extremely prestigious honour.

The Mayor then invited Members who wished to comment to indicate and make representations.

Members echoed the comments made and thanked Mr Terry and his colleagues for attending and placed on record their thanks to volunteers who worked so tirelessly making collections and organising events. A Member also wished to place on record his thanks to the Council for taking on the marshalling of Remembrance Day Commemorations when Gwent Police stepped back. The Member also recognised the work done by the Council cleaning cenotaphs and preparing roads.

Mr. M. Jones MBE on behalf of the Royal British Legion, thanked Members for their kind words and offered an open invitation to all to attend the culminating event of the centenary celebrations being held in Waun Fawr Park on the 14th May 2022. This afternoon of music and celebration would include 'Beating the Retreat' by the Royal Welsh Guards.

Members expressed their immense pride at being present at this momentous occasion, honouring this incredible organisation and the exceptional work that it does, which had such resonance at this time with the war in Ukraine.

Councillors who were also Members of the Royal British Legion placed on record their thanks to the Council for recognising the work of the Legion and also recognised the sacrifice of the men and women in our armed forces. Members paid their respects to those that served and who are currently serving this country so bravely.

A Member expressed his personal pride in being able to visit troops in Afghanistan and advised Council of how serving personnel had spoken highly of the Royal British Legion. The Member referenced the work done by a friend Mrs Hilda Jenkins supporting our armed forces veterans and in memory of this he was delighted to play a part in honouring the Royal British Legion for all their sterling work throughout the entire county borough.

The Mayor in concluding proceedings formally announced that the Royal British Legion were admitted as Honorary Freeman of Caerphilly County Borough.

The meeting closed at 17:35pm

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 12th April 2022 they were signed by the Mayor.

MAYOR



COUNCIL – 12TH APRIL 2022

SUBJECT: MEMBERS INDUCTION 2022

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The report outlines the proposed induction programme for newly elected and returning Councillors following the local government elections in May 2022.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The work of a Councillor is complex and challenging and the political, legislative and local landscape in which they work is changing constantly. Communities have high expectations of their elected representatives from the day of their election and throughout their period of office. It is therefore essential to be able to quickly and successfully navigate the different aspects of local government. This report outlines the importance of induction and presents a draft induction programme for approval.
- 2.2 The Induction Programme and considered by the Democratic Services Committee at its meeting on the 17th March 2022 who unanimously recommended its approval to Council.
- 2.3 Members of the Democratic Services Committee requested that further detail be included in the description of the 17th May 2022 Seminar – Member Support and Working in a Digital Environment to clearly outline the subjects being covered and this has been updated in the programme attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.4 Since the programme was considered by the Democratic Services Committee the order of two planned sessions have been changed to facilitate a request from the Head of Housing for a special meeting of the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on Thursday 9th June 2022. To ensure that the Scrutiny Committee Members appointed at the AGM receive this mandatory training prior to this meeting, the Introduction to Scrutiny Induction Session will be brought forward to the 6th June 2022 and the Equalities and Diversity Induction Session will now take place on the 13th June 2022 (subject to confirmation from the facilitator).

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 That Council: -

- (i) Note the comments of the Democratic Services Committee; and
- (ii) Approve the Updated Member Induction Programme 2022 (Appendix 1).

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To support newly elected and returning Councillors understand their roles and responsibilities as elected Members

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 An induction programme is an important development opportunity as it enables Councillors to quickly become familiar with how the council works, the rules and procedures under which it operates and the complexities of the elected member role.
- 5.2 The proposed induction programme (Appendix 1) will be delivered over the first few months of the new Council term and will provide Members with an opportunity to clearly establish their roles and responsibilities and to build positive working relationships with Officers from the outset. The programme has been designed to highlight key council information and its policies and procedures which should enable Councillors to actively and rapidly participate in the business of council, increasing their confidence in their ability to make informed and effective decisions from the start of their term of office. The draft Induction Programme has been informed by the [WLGA Competency Framework](#) and will also tie into the wider Members Training and Development Programme that will run for a 2-year period following the election.
- 5.3 To support the induction programme an electronic Members Information Pack will also be produced and will include a timetable of meetings, links to core policies and procedures, frequently asked questions and useful contact numbers and will be distributed to Members when they sign the Acceptance of Office register and collect their IT Equipment. Paper copies will also be made available on request. It is also proposed to circulate a copy of the Induction Programme as agreed by Council to prospective candidates in advance of the elections as an awareness raising exercise.

Overview of the Induction Programme

Presentation and Directorate Show Case 'Your Council'

- 5.4 The programme will commence on Tuesday, 10th May 2021 with a 'Directorate Show Case' Exhibition and Presentation. Our aim is to add additional value to the Show Cases and Induction Training Sessions by providing a live event to those Members wishing to connect remotely. However, the provision of the live event connection will depend on the progress of the refit of the Penallta House meeting rooms required to facilitate the provision of multi-location meetings. The Presentation from the Chief Executive will provide an overview of the key roles and functions of the Council, its Officers and Members, which will include organisational values and behaviours. The Show Cases will provide Members with the opportunity to find out more about the Councils' services and meet Senior Officers as well as other Councillors. Corporate Directors and Heads of Service will be in attendance and provide Members with

useful point of contact information and an organisational chart of their service area.

Each meeting room will host a Corporate Directorate, where the services provided will be highlighted, Rhymney Room will host Corporate Services and Education, the Sirhowy Room will host the Economy and Environment Directorate and the Ebbw Room will host Social Services and Housing.

As we need to plan these activities now but cannot know the position in terms of COVID 19 in May 2022, it is felt that the Showcase Exhibition as run in 2017 would not be appropriate to duplicate given continuing uncertainties. The proposed committee room 'Show Case' set up also helps to support staff that maybe utilising the agile working hubs throughout the day as it would minimise disruption this area of the building.

Mandatory Induction

- 5.5 The Mandatory Induction seminars presented are considered to be essential and encompass Members' statutory responsibilities and regulatory committee membership. These seminars will include Code of Conduct and Governance Arrangements, Information Governance and Data Protection, Licensing and Planning and Equalities and Diversity and will be delivered before the full committee cycle begins.

Recommended Induction

- 5.6 The Recommended Induction seminars presented are considered to be important but not essential and include Smart and Safe Working Practices, which will look at Social Media and managing an on-line presence and hints, tips on working safely in the community and help provided to support mental health and work life balance; Introduction to Finance which will explain where the Council gets its funding and help Members to understand financial terminology, budget setting and medium term financial planning.

Part of the feedback that we received on the 2017 Induction Programme was that Members felt there was not enough information on the different directorates and how they worked. We have taken these comments on board and have incorporated a series of Introductory Sessions that will be facilitated by each Corporate Director and will provide Members with more detail on that Directorate's areas of responsibility, projects and plans coming forward.

The Recommended Induction programme also includes a series of mini 'Introduction to Committee' training sessions. All new Councillors, along with the committee membership, will be encouraged to attend these sessions which will explain the terms of reference for that committee, introduce them to the Officers they are likely to see on a regularly basis and take them through any decision-making considerations or appeal processes that they need to take into account. Newly elected Members will also be encouraged to attend and observe meetings if possible as an induction activity.

5.7 Wider Induction Process

As the end of the year progresses Members Seminars will incorporate topics that will introduce Partnership organisations such as the Gwent Public Services Board, and

the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board and will also inform Members of their commitments as part of their wider Councillor role such as Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence and Unconscious Bias and Protected Characteristics.

- 5.8 It should be noted that there may need to be minor date and or facilitator changes to the attached induction programme, and the subsequent Members Support and Development Programme depending on facilitator availability. Where such changes are required, we will notify Members in advance.

After Induction - Training Needs Analysis – Requested Training

- 5.9 During December 2022-January 2023 a training needs analysis questionnaire will be compiled and distributed. Members' responses will be analysed and from this the 2023-2025 Members Support and Development Programme will be developed which will be presented to the Democratic Services Committee for approval prior to its recommendation to Council.
- 5.10 We will continue to offer a mix of tutor led training sessions physical and online sessions, e-learning modules and seminars. As always, we will continue to support Members individual training requests within budgetary constraints.

5.11 Conclusion

The proposed induction programme will provide the best footing possible for newly elected Councillors as well as updating and informing returning Councillors. Allowing them to embrace roles and responsibilities with confidence and hit the ground running.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 No assumptions have been made.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The Induction Programme 2022 forms part of the Council's commitment to Diversity in Democracy as it has been developed in line with the Diversity in Democracy Action Plan by providing training opportunities via multiple media and at staggered times. Sessions have been designed to ensure that Councillors are valued, developed and supported.

[Link to Integrated Impact Assessment](#)

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Costs associated with the Induction Programme will be met from the Council's existing Members' training budget provisions

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The administration of the programme means additional tasks for the Democratic Services staff, but these will be met through existing budgets.

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 The Democratic Services Committee considered Members Induction Programme at its meeting on the 17th March 2022. The views of the Committee are outlined below.
- 10.2 A Member requested that further detail be included in the description of the induction session on Member Support and Working in a Digital Environment to better reflect the topics being covered. It was felt that this session would be of particular importance to newly elected Councillors, the Member expressed the opinion that this session should be mandatory. The Senior Committee Services Officer confirmed that she would update the programme in line with the Members comments and provided a more in-depth description of the areas that would be covered.
- 10.3 Concerns were raised with regard to connectivity issues and what actions could be taken to resolve the ongoing problems, reference was also made to the age of some of the CCBC routers and their reliability. Officers were aware of a work being done by IT Services into Wi-Fi provision and would make further enquiries on behalf of the Committee. The Committee noted that the upgraded meeting room hardware and new webcasting software might assist, however individual broadband speeds and usage and the impact on connectivity quality would be very difficult to consistently mitigate. The Officer explained that this was due a variety of factors, for example, higher general demand for broadband in evenings, more than one user within a household streaming at the same time as a meeting, area coverage by a particular provider etc. A Member who had opted to use his own broadband provider and access CCBC via vpn commented on the reliability of this method of connection and advised that he had never experienced any connectivity issues.
- 10.4 The Democratic Services Committee fully supported the Induction Programme and emphasised that Members should make every effort attend the sessions. A Member referred to the poor attendance levels at a previously arranged training session, which had been very interesting and hoped to see this improve, given the efforts of Democratic Services staff and Facilitators in providing the sessions.

Having fully considered the report it was moved and seconded that the Democratic Services Committee recommended that Council approve the Members Induction Programme 2022 and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously agreed.

RECOMMENDED that Council approve the Members Induction Programme 2022.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government Act 2001

Author: Emma Sullivan (Senior Committee Services Officer)
sullie@caerphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: C. Harrhy (Chief Executive)

D. Street (Corporate Director Social Services and Housing)
R. Edmunds (Corporate Director Education and Corporate Services)
M.S. Williams (Corporate Director Economy and Environment)
R. Tranter (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer)
L. Lane (Deputy Monitoring Officer and Head of Democratic Services)
S. Harris (Head of Financial Services and Section 151 Officer)
Councillor P. Marsden (Leader of Council)
Councillor C. Mann (Leader of Plaid Cymru Group)
Councillor K. Etheridge (Leader of Independents Group)
Councillor M. James (Chair Democratic Services Committee)
Councillor G. Kirby (Vice Chair Democratic Services Committee)
Democratic Services Committee

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Updated Induction Programme 2022

Background Papers:

[WLGA Competency Framework](#)

INDUCTION EVENTS TIMETABLE 2022

DATE AND TIME	EVENT
5th May	Local County Borough Council Elections
Monday, 9th May 9.30am – 12.30pm 1.30pm – 4.30pm 5.30pm – 7.30pm	ALL ELECTED MEMBERS Signing Register/Collection of Members Packs/Photographs/HR and Salaries and Wages, distribution of IT Equipment (process will take approximately 30 minutes) – morning and afternoon sessions for building orientation and tour of Penallta House Offices
Tuesday, 10th May 4.00pm Market Place offered 5.00pm Presentation 6.00pm – 7.00pm Market Place	Presentation and Directorate Showcase ‘Your Council’ – Christina Harhry, Dave Street, Richard Edmunds, Mark S. Williams, S. Harris and Heads of Service. Presentation by the Chief Executive on the key services provided by Council, organisational values and behaviours which will be held in the Council Chamber, Penallta House in person and by Live Event (offered as a choice to returning Members). Directorate Show Case set up will be held in the Rhymney (Corporate Services and Education), Sirhowy (Economy and Environment) and Ebbw (Social Services and Housing) Rooms by Directorate with an integrated simultaneous Multi-Locational Event. This will provide Members with the opportunity to find out more about the Council’s services and meet senior officers and other Councillors.
Wednesday, 11th May 2.00pm and 5.00pm	All Members Seminar - Code of Conduct and Governance Arrangements (Mandatory – combined with Live Event) - Rob Tranter/Lisa Lane/Gareth Jenkins (Safeguarding/Corporate Parenting) Presentation to explain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor role and responsibilities • Decision Making and Council Governance Structures • Code of Conduct • Overview of the Council’s Constitution • Rules of Debate • Corporate Parenting/Safeguarding Policy Held in the Council Chamber, Penallta House and via Microsoft Teams
Thursday, 12 th May 2.00pm and 5.00pm	All Members Seminar - Meeting Participation – Conduct and Etiquette — Lisa Lane/Rob Tranter/Cath Forbes-Thompson, Emma Sullivan (Recommended – combined with Live Event) To include training on Speaking at Meetings, Respect and Conduct, Motions and Amendments and Webcasting, Meeting Recordings Dos and Don’ts for physical and multilocal meetings
Monday, 16th May	All Members Seminar – Information Governance and Data Protection (Mandatory – combined with Live Event) – Carl Evans (Information Governance)

2.00pm and 5.00pm	<p>Presentation to explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the requirements of data protection legislation and the penalties if data protection rights are not upheld, including the risk of up to £500,000 fines for mishandling of information. how to handle information safely and effectively, and to comply with your data protection and freedom of information legal obligations, to protect the Council, the public, and yourselves. <p>Held in the Council Chamber, Penallta House and Online Live Event</p>
Tuesday, 17 th May 2.00pm and 5.00pm	<p>All Members Seminar – Member Support and Working in a Digital Environment – Mark Cooper, Michelle Riley, Emma Sullivan, Lisa Lane, Cath Forbes-Thompson (Recommended combined with Live Event)</p> <p>To include training on Microsoft Office, Meeting Requests, Mod. Gov. Meeting Packs, Members Portal, Services Requests and Multi-Location Meetings, CCBC Website, meeting the Democratic Services Team, Points of Contact, Equipment Support and Stationery Request.</p> <p>Members will be taken through the use of Outlook, finding information on the CCBC Website, using the Members Portal for service requests, sources of information and alerts, accessing Committee Documents and how to use zoom functions, search pdfs, changing backgrounds and screen brightness for ease of use and hints and tips for working well digitally.</p>
Wednesday, 18 th May 5.00pm	<p>All Members Seminar – Smart and Safe Working Practices – IT, Communications Unit and Head of People Services, Health and Safety – CCBC Officers/WLGA/Gwent Police (Recommended Combined with Live Event)</p> <p>The presentations to explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to work safely in the community Organising and holding ward surgeries Using Social Media/Social Media Policy Manging your on-line presence Stress Management, Personal Resilience and Work Life Balance <p>Held in the Council Chamber, Penallta House and Online Live Event.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF COUNCIL The Council Chamber, Penallta House</p>
Monday 23 rd May 5.00pm	<p>All Members Seminar (Recommended) – An introduction to Social Services and Housing Directorate</p> <p>Corporate Director for Social Services and Housing/ Assistant Directors/Chief Housing Officer</p> <p>Presentation on the Directorate Areas of Responsibility, Chief Officers, Projects and Plans and the role of the Elected Member within this area (Corporate Parenting, Safeguarding, Reporting and Supporting, Scrutiny - Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee & Social Services Scrutiny Committee)</p>

	<p>Communications Unit to provide a short video clip.</p> <p>Held in the Council Chamber, Penallta House and Online Live Event</p>
<p>Tuesday 24th May</p> <p>5.00pm</p>	<p>All Members Seminar (Recommended) – An introduction to Education and Corporate Services Directorate</p> <p>Corporate Director for Education and Corporate Services/Heads of Service/Chief Education Officer</p> <p>Presentation on the Directorate Areas of Responsibility, Chief Officers, Projects and Plans and the roles of the Elected Member within this area (21st Century Schools, Education Attainment, Education Admissions and Appeals, Finance, Performance, IT and Customer Services, Licensing & Trading Standards, Transformation, Scrutiny – Education Scrutiny Committee and Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee)</p> <p>Communication Unit to provide a video clip.</p> <p>Held in the Council Chamber, Penallta House and Online Live Event</p>
<p>Wednesday 25th May</p> <p>5.00pm</p>	<p>All Members Seminar (Recommended) – An Introduction to Economy and Environment Directorate</p> <p>Corporate Director for Economy and Environment</p> <p>Presentation on the Directorate Areas of Responsibility, Chief Officers, Projects and Plans and the roles of the Elected Member within this area (Regeneration, Waste, Engineering, Parks, Highways, Civil Parking, Town Centres, Business Development, Scrutiny – Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee, Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee and Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>Communications Unit to provide video clip.</p> <p>Held in the Council Chamber, Penallta House and Online Live Event</p>
<p>Thursday, 26th May</p> <p>5.00pm</p>	<p>All Members Seminar (To Include Lay Members of Governance and Audit Committee) – Introduction to Finance, Governance and Audit</p> <p>(Mandatory for Members of the Governance and Audit Committee – Recommended to Newly Appointed Councillors)</p> <p>Presentation will explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where the Council gets its funding and how it is spent • Understanding Financial Terminology • Budget setting and medium-term financial planning • The role of the Governance and Audit Committee <p>Held in the Council Chamber, Penallta House and Online Live Event</p>
<p>MEETING CYCLE BEGINS</p>	

Monday, 30 th May 2.00pm and 5.00pm	<p>All Members Seminar – Planning (Mandatory for Members of the Planning Committee – Appointed at AGM and Recommended to Newly Appointed Councillors)</p> <p>Background and introduction to the Council’s Planning responsibilities.</p> <p>Held in the Council Chamber, Penallta House and Online Live Event.</p>
Wednesday, 1 st June 2.00pm and 5.00pm	<p>All Members Seminar – Licensing (Mandatory for Member of the Licensing Committees and Recommended to Newly Elected Councillors)</p> <p>Background and introduction to the Council’s Licensing and Trading Standards responsibilities</p> <p>Held in the Council Chamber, Penallta House and Online Live Event.</p>
Monday 6 th June 5.00pm	<p>All Members Seminar - Welcome to Scrutiny – C. Forbes-Thompson/Mark Jacques</p> <p>(Mandatory for Scrutiny Members appointed at AGM – Recommended for all Other Councillors)</p> <p>A guide to Scrutiny and your role as an elected Member.</p> <p>Held in the Council Chamber, Penallta House and Online Live Event</p>
Tuesday, 7 th June 5.00pm	COUNCIL
Wednesday, 8 th June 4.00pm – 5.00pm Formal Meeting	<p>INTRODUCTION TO THE PLANNING COMMITTEE (30 MINS) – FOLLOWED BY THE FORMAL PLANNING COMMITTEE AT 5.00PM</p> <p>(Mandatory for Planning Committee Members)</p>
Thursday, 9 th June 10.00am	TAXI AND GENERAL LICENSING SUB COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday, 13 th June 5.00pm	<p>All Members Seminar – Equalities and Diversity</p> <p>(Mandatory For All Members)</p> <p>Held in the Council Chamber, Penallta House and Online Live Event</p>
Tuesday, 14 th June 1.00pm – 2.00pm	<p>INTRODUCTION TO THE GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE (30 MINS) – FOLLOWED BY THE FORMAL MEETING AT 2.00PM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of Reference for the Committee • Asking Questions • Meeting Procedures and Voting <p>Held in the Sirhowy Room, Penallta House.</p>
Monday, 20 th June	All Members Seminar – Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner

5.00pm	<p>(Recommended to All Members)</p> <p>Members will be introduced to and receive a presentation from the Office of the Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner.</p> <p>Held in the Chamber at Penallta House</p>
Monday, 11 th July 5.00pm	<p>All Members Seminar (Recommended) – Gwent Police</p> <p>(Recommended to All Members)</p> <p>Members will receive a presentation from the Chief Constable for Gwent Police.</p> <p>Held in the Chamber Penallta House</p>
	AUGUST RECESS
Monday 19 th September 5.00pm	<p>Member Training – Chairing Skills in a Multi-Locational Environment</p> <p>Members will receive training on how to Chair a multi-location meeting effectively, the role of the Chair, preparation, best practice and managing a successful meeting.</p> <p>(Highly Recommended for Newly Appointed Chairs, Those Chairing Multi-Locational Meetings for the first time and Those with an interest in Chairing Meetings).</p>
Monday 10 th October 5.00pm	<p>All Members Seminar (Mandatory) – Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence</p>
Monday 14 th November 5.00pm	<p>All Members Seminar (Mandatory) –Unconscious Bias and Protected Characteristics - Shiny Red Apple (Anna Morgan Facilitator)</p>

- The provision of a simultaneous live event will depend on the progress of the refit of Penallta House meeting rooms to support multi-locational meeting requirements.

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COUNCIL - 12TH APRIL 2022

SUBJECT: CHANGES TO THE FAMILY ABSENCE PROTOCOL FOR MEMBERS OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

REPORT BY: HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND DEPUTY MONITORING OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the changes to the Family Absence Protocol for Members of Local Authorities which increases the amount of paid absence a member is entitled to in respect of adoption leave and to seek approval from Council to incorporate the amended Protocol within the Constitution.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 To ask Council to note the changes to the period of adopter's absence for members as a result of the Local Government and Elections Wales Act 2021 and to authorise the Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer to incorporate the amended Protocol within the Constitution.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Council is asked

- 3.1 To note the content of the report and the changes made to the Family Absence for members of Local Authorities Protocol as set out in Appendix 1 and
- 3.2 To authorise the Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer to amend the Constitution by substituting the existing Protocol with the amended version attached.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To give effect to the changes made to adopter's absence for members.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 At its meeting on 17th March 2022, the Democratic Services Committee considered and noted the following background information and changes to the Family Absence Protocol for Members of Local Authorities.
- 5.2 By way of background Part 2 of the Local Government Wales Measure 2011 introduced a new entitlement to family absence for Councillors subject to prescribed conditions being met which were set out in The Family Absence for Members of Local Authorities (Wales) Regulations 2013 (the 2013 Regulations). The regulations limited the maximum period of absence that could be taken for each of the five types of family absence: maternity absence, newborn absence, adopters' absence, new adoption absence and parental absence.
- 5.3 The Council adopted a Family Absence for Members of Local Authorities Protocol which is contained within Part 5 of the Constitution and a copy of which is attached at Appendix 1.
- 5.4 In more recent times Councils and the Welsh Local Government Association made representations for the regulations to be brought up to date. In response Welsh Government undertook consultation at the end of 2020 seeking views on the proposal to increase the period of adopter's absence from 2 to 26 weeks which was unanimously supported to those who responded to the consultation.
- 5.5 As a result the changes were brought about by the Local Government and Elections Wales Act 2021 (the Act) which removed the limitations on the maximum absence periods enabling them to be set at any level through new regulations.
- 5.6 The Family Absence for Members of Local Authorities (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2021 updated the 2013 Regulations to include specific provisions relating to adopters' absence increasing it from 2 to 26 weeks thus mirroring the period of absence for maternity leave. This will enable biological and adoptive parents to take the same amount of family absence to enable them to provide a supportive and nurturing environment for their children in the early stages of developing relationships and bonding. This is an important equality and diversity reform for local elected members.
- 5.7 The entitlement arises at the physical date of placement of the child with the member for adoption. It is the actual date of placement of the child, which is important for the start of this absence, not the date of placement according to any legal document. No evidence of adoption is required from the member in order to be entitled to a period of adopter's absence. Multiple children adopted at the same time would not enable a member to take multiple periods of adopter's absence.
- 5.8 A member who satisfies prescribed conditions as to their relationship with another person who is adopting a child as set out in the protocol may take two weeks new adoption absence. A member is not entitled to take adopter's and new adoption absence in relation to the same child. Multiple children adopted at the same time would not enable a member to take multiple periods of new adoption absence. If a member jointly adopts a child with another member, one member may elect to be the child's adopter for the purposes of the Regulations and would be entitled to a period of adopter's absence. The other member would not be entitled to a period of adopter's absence but would be entitled to a period of new adoption absence.

- 5.9 The regulations make a number of changes for adopter's leave similar arrangements to those already in operation regarding maternity leave and include the following

Prescribes conditions a member must satisfy in order to be eligible for adopter's absence and procedures for varying the start date and duration of absence.

Provides that the period of adopter's absence is 26 weeks (subject to a member giving notice under the new regulation 14) and makes provision about the period of absence in situations where more than one child is adopted as part of the same arrangement.

Prescribes the period within which adopter's absence must start and that a member may choose the date on which the adopter's absence starts.

Prescribes how a member may bring a period of adopter's absence to an end.

Makes applicable to adopter's absence the same procedure for determining whether a member may undertake certain duties during their adopter's absence as applies to members wishing to undertake certain duties on maternity absence

5.10 **Conclusion**

Council is asked to note the content of the report and the updated provisions included in the Family Absence Protocol in red at Appendix 1 and to authorise the Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer to amend the Constitution to incorporate the updated Protocol.

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

- 6.1 The changes reflect the legislative requirements and as such no assumptions are necessary within this report.

7. **SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 As the report reflects statutory changes no Integrated Impact Assessment is necessary.

8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 The report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales includes provision for family absence whereby an elected member on a basic salary or a senior salary holder is eligible, they will continue to receive their salary for the duration of the absence. It is a matter for Council to decide whether to make a substitute and must follow the provisions in the IRP report and the budgetary provision will be considered as and when necessary.

9. **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no personnel implications arising from this report.

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 This report represents statutory changes however a copy of the report has been provided to the consultees below.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government and Elections Wales Act 2021 and The Family Absence for Members of Local Authorities (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2021

Author: Lisa Lane Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer

Consultees: Councillor Colin Gordon Cabinet Member for Corporate Services
Christina Harrhy, Chief Executive
Dave Street Corporate Director Social Services and Housing
Richard (Ed) Edmunds Corporate Director Education & Corporate Services
Mark S Williams Corporate Director Economy and Environment
Robert Tranter Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer
Stephen Harris Head of Financial Services & Section 151 Officer

PROTOCOL FAMILY ABSENCE FOR MEMBERS OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The Family Absence for Members of Local Authorities (Wales) Regulations 2013 **as amended by the Family Absence for Members of Local Authorities (Wales) Regulations 2021** create an entitlement of Members to the following types of Family Absence:

(a) **Maternity Absence** – Available to pregnant Members who can take an absence period of up to a maximum of 26 weeks.

(b) **Newborn Absence** – Available to a Member who is married to, the civil partner or partner of a child's mother and expects to have responsibility for the upbringing of the child. Up to two consecutive weeks are available to be taken within 56 days of a child's birth.

(c) **Adopter's Absence** – Available to a Member who adopts a child **who can take an absence period of up to a maximum of 26 weeks. ~~Up to two consecutive weeks are available to be taken within 56 days of a child being adopted. Where more than one child is placed with the member as part of the same arrangement, a member is entitled to adopter's absence only in respect of the first child placed with the member for adoption.~~**

(d) **New Adoption Absence** – Available to a Member who is married to, the civil partner or partner of a person adopting a child and expects to have responsibility for the upbringing of the child. Up to two consecutive weeks are available to be taken within 56 days of a child being adopted.

(e) **Parental Absence** – Available to a Member who has or expects to have responsibility for the care of a child and does not satisfy the criteria for Maternity Absence, Newborn Absence, Adopters Absence or New Adoption Absence. Up to 90 days can be taken in a single or a series of absences from the date a councillor assumes responsibility for the care of a child under the age of 14 and ends 1 year later.

2. Members can claim a period of Family Absence by satisfying the following requirements:

2.1 Maternity Absence

(a) No later than 15 weeks before the expected week of childbirth or, if that is not practical, as soon as reasonably practical, a Member must give written notice to the Head of Democratic Services of:

- a. The Member's pregnancy.
- b. The expected week of childbirth.
- c. The date on which the Member intends the maternity absence will start.
- d. The duration of the period of maternity absence. The period of absence will be 26 weeks unless the Member specifies a shorter period of time.

(b) A Member can vary the period of absence by giving the Head of Democratic Services a new start date at least one week before the intended start date or at least one week before the new start date or, if that is not reasonably practicable, as soon as possible. Regardless,

Maternity Absence will start automatically on the day after childbirth, if the baby is born before the date specified by the Member.

(c) A Member must provide a certificate from a registered medical practitioner or midwife stating the expected week of childbirth if requested to do so by the Head of Democratic Services.

(d) A Member can vary the duration of Maternity Absence by giving the Head of Democratic Services written notice of the new duration by giving at least one weeks notice before the expected end of the absence or, at least one week before the intended new end of the period of absence or, if that is not practical, as soon as is reasonably practical.

(e) Maternity Absence may begin between the start of the 11th week before the expected childbirth and the day after childbirth occurs.

(f) Although a Member can choose the day on which their maternity absence starts, if a member is absent from a meeting during the 4 week period before the start of the expected childbirth due wholly or partly to pregnancy, the Maternity Absence will begin on the day after the meeting from which the Member was absent.

(g) A Member may cancel Maternity Absence at anytime before the start of Maternity Absence by giving written notice to the Head of Democratic Services.

2.2 Newborn Absence

(a) A Member must give the Head of Democratic Services written notice of the date the Member intends the period of Newborn Absence to start. The period of absence will be 2 consecutive weeks unless the Member specifies a shorter period of time.

(b) Newborn Absence may be taken between the day of childbirth and 56 days after that date.

(c) A Member may cancel Newborn Absence at anytime before the start of Newborn Absence by giving written notice to the Head of Democratic Services.

2.3 Adopter's Absence

(a) A Member must give the Head of Democratic Services written notice of the date the Member intends the period of Adopter's Absence to start ***and the duration of the period of adopter's absence the member intends to take if less than 26 weeks. Adopters' absence may begin either on the day on which the child is placed with the member for adoption or on any of the 14 days preceding that day and a member can chose the start date within these parameters. The period of absence will be 2 consecutive weeks unless the Member specifies a shorter period of time. The period of adopter's absence will be 26 weeks unless the member gives written notice that the period of adopter's absence will be shorter than 26 weeks.***

(b) A Member can vary the start date of the Adopter's Absence by giving the Head of Democratic Services written notice of the new start date at least one week before the original start date or at least one week before the new start date whichever is the earlier or, if that is not reasonably practicable, as soon as is reasonably practicable.

c) A Member can vary the duration of Adopter's Absence by giving the Head of Democratic Services written notice of the new duration at least one week before the expected end of the absence originally notified by the member or, at least one week before the new intended end of the period of absence whichever is the earlier or, if that is not practical, as soon as is reasonably practical.

(d) A Member may bring the period of adopter's absence to an end earlier that notified above by notifying the Head of Democratic Services in writing of their intention to do so at least 7 days before their return.

(e) A Member may cancel a period of Adopter's Absence at any time before the start of Adopter's Absence by giving written notice to the Head of Democratic Services

2.4 New Adoption Absence

- (a) A Member must give the Head of Democratic Services written notice of the date the Member intends the period of Adopter's Absence to start. The period of absence will be 2 consecutive weeks unless the Member specifies a shorter period of time.
- (b) New Adopter's Absence may be taken between the date on which a child is placed with the adopter and 56 days after that date.
- (c) A Member may cancel New Adopter's Absence at anytime before the start of New Adopter's Absence by giving written notice to the Head of Democratic Services.

2.5 Parental Absence

- (a) A Member must give the Head of Democratic Services written notice of:-
 - a. Their intention to take parental Absence.
 - b. The date on which the Member intends the Parental Absence will start.
 - c. The duration of the period of Parental Absence.
 - d. Whether the absence is intended to be taken as a single period or as a series of absences. Where Parental Absence is to be taken in a series of absences, a Member must give the Head of Democratic Services advance written notice of the intended start date and duration of each period of parental Absence.
- (b) If requested to do so, a Member must give the Head of Democratic Services evidence in relation to the extent that they have responsibility for the child.
- (c) The period of absence will be up to 90 days which can be taken in a single or a series of absences from the date a councillor assumes responsibility for the care of a child under the age of 14 and ends 1 year later.
- (d) A Member may cancel Parental Absence at anytime before the start of Parental Absence by giving written notice to the Head of Democratic Services.
- (e) A Member may bring any period of Parental Absence to an end earlier than intended by notifying the Head of Democratic Services in writing of their intention.

2.6 Records and Notification of Family Absence

- (a) The Head of Democratic Services will keep a record of all notifications and periods of maternity absence, parental absence, newborn absence, adopters' absence and new adoption absence (collectively referred to as family absence) taken and will inform the Mayor, Leaders of each political group and Chair of Democratic Services Committee of all periods of family absence.

2.7 Cancellation of Family Absence by Council

- (a) If the Head of Democratic Services suspects that a Member is not entitled to the family absence as notified, he/she may cancel or end a Member's family absence if he/she is of the view that the Member is not entitled to such absence in accordance with the Regulations.
- (b) A Members remuneration will be withheld if a Member does not return from family absence by the date determined in paragraph (c) below.
- (c) In the event of a decision by the Head of Democratic Services to cancel the Family Absence he/she shall notify the Mayor of his intention to cancel and thereafter give written notice to the Member of the decision to cancel or bring to an end the period of family absence and the date from which the Member must return from family absence.

2.8 Members right to Appeal against Cancellation of Family Absence

(a) A Member may within 28 days of being notified by the Head of Democratic Services that a period of family absence being cancelled or ended, complain in writing to the Head of Democratic Services regarding the cancellation.

(b) The Head of Democratic Services will refer any complaint received under para (a) above to the Panel constituted in accordance with the Family Absence for Members of Local Authorities (Wales) Regulations 2013 who will determine the complaint made.

(c) The Panel may:-

- Confirm the decision of the Head of Democratic Services; or
- Substitute its own decision as to the Member's entitlement to family absence in accordance with the Regulations.

2.9 Members request to perform duties/attend meetings during a period of Family Absence

(a) Any Member on Family Absence may subject to paragraph (b) and (e) below:-

(i) Attend any meeting or perform any duty associated with being a councillor within specific dates.

(b) The Member must obtain the permission of the Mayor (or Deputy in his or her absence) before attending any meeting or exercising any duty.

(c) In seeking permission the Member will (if able) specify start and finish dates in any application to suspend Family Absence.

(d) The Mayor will inform Leaders of each political group of the Council before granting permission under paragraph (b) above.

(e) A Member may complain in writing to the Head of Democratic Services regarding a refusal under paragraph (b) above.

(f) The Head of Democratic Services will refer a complaint under para (e) above to the Mayor of the Council.

(g) A Panel constituted in accordance with the Family Absence For Members of Local Authorities (Wales) Regulations 2013 will determine a complaint made under paragraph (e) above.

(h) The Panel may: -

- Confirm the decision of the Mayor of the Council (or Deputy in his or her absence); or
- Substitute its own decision as to the Member attending any meeting or performing any duty.